The Policy and Practice Impacts of the ESRC's 'Responsive Mode' Research Grants in Politics and International Studies

Appendices to Main Report

Report to the Economic and Social Research Council

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LSE Public Policy Group
London School of Economics

The study team

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About LSE Public Policy Group (PPG)

PPG undertakes pure and applied research, policy evaluation and consultancy for government bodies, international organizations and major corporations active in the fields of policy evaluation, public management, budgeting and audit, and e-government, survey or focus group research, public opinion, and the design of election systems.

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Appendix A: Methods Summary

A1. The research for this report was conducted by members of the LSE Public Policy Group (assisted by a research assistant) in the period between January and June 2007. We used the following methods in a particular chronological sequence, broadly as set out below.

a. Unobtrusive measures

A2. This approach to research is 'non-reactive' and unobtrusive because the various techniques can be undertaken largely or completely unbeknown to the subjects of study (in this case our funded lead researchers). When asking researchers directly about the impact of their work, there is always the danger that they will either give an overblown or exaggerated account impact, or indeed underestimate it either out of humility or lack of awareness. Unobtrusive measures provide independent proxies or indicators of impact that can be important in controlling for distortions of perception, and increasing the likelihood of being able to isolate (or at least estimate) an 'actual' level of impact.

i. Review of End of Award reports

A3. Early in the research we reviewed and coded up specific details about all 39 responsive mode (RM) case study projects in our dataset. Roughly half of these projects ended in 1998 and the other half ended in 2001. We developed a coding frame to assess the subjective content of the research, the methods used in the research, the characteristics of the researchers and their affiliated organizations, size of grant, reported activities to achieve dissemination, and impacts claimed. We also recorded all publications and other materials listed as major outputs, and we used these as a basis for further research in citations online.

ii. Online search for references to project outputs

A4. The development of online databases and search tools such as Google has radically increased the potential for bibliographic methods using citations and other more general referencing across different policy areas and literatures. At an early stage in this research we designed a coding sheet that would allow us to record the extent to which each listed output from each project is referenced in both academic and non-academics arenas. We used the following the databases and search tools:

- International Bibliography of Social Sciences (IBSS);
- Web of Science;
- Google (advanced search);

- Google Books; and
- Google Scholar.

For each of our 39 projects, we ran systematic searches for variations of the title of the stated outputs (176 in total and an average of 4.5 per project), including the surname of researchers, and we recorded the range of relevant references returned in the first 50 results. We provide a copy of the coding frame in Appendix B, along with more detailed information about the methods used for systematizing the search and reducing the variability of results (particularly in the case of Google).

A5. This data was transferred from coding sheets into an SPSS database and forms the basis for establishing a picture of the variation and extent of coverage of research outputs in different policy areas and arenas. We divided our coded results into four main types of references as follows:

- Copies of the actual output or publication found online;
- References to the output or publication in academic journals, books, other non-standard publications, conferences, press and media, university reading lists, and so on;
- Other subsequent publications authored or co-authored by the named researchers in related or similar topic areas;
- References to other publications authored or co-authored subsequently to the research project.

This approach allows us to gauge the level of direct referencing to specific outputs from the project, and also to get a picture of the extent to which researchers have achieved coverage or impact from subsequent publications that may have followed on from the project work.

A6. There are obviously limitations on the extent to which Google data can provide a proxy for the broader societal coverage and impacts of academic research. So it is important to stress that we treat this data as just one of a range of evidence sources available to us, and that any conclusions we draw in this report are based on careful triangulation with other sources such as interviews or surveys. With this caveat in mind, the processing power of Google makes it a relatively good proxy for the existence of material on the internet, and its processing speed makes it a tool which this kind of bibliographic research cannot really afford to ignore. The way in which Google search algorithms are set up means that there is a good chance that relevant references will appear relatively early on in the results. We decided to limit our coding to the first 50 results in Google, Google Scholar and Google Books. This limit was needed within our finite research resources, but also because the likelihood of a significant number of relevant results appearing outside of the top 50 Google returns is low.

b. Email survey of lead researchers

A7. In March 2007 we sent out an email questionnaire to our 39 lead researchers to get their views on the impact achieved from the research project both at the time of the research and during the period between the end and present day. Given that projects ended in 2001 or earlier, this required quite onerous retrospective reflection from our researchers (and we are grateful to them for making the effort involved). In order to facilitate this recall process, we provided a list of the outputs or publications originally included in the End of Award (EOA) report, *plus* a short list of five or so subsequent outputs that we had found during our online searching and which we considered to be potentially high impact. As well as asking researchers to complete the questionnaire as fully as possible, we also asked them to review this short list of subsequent publications and to add in anything which we had missed. We achieved a response rate of 76 per cent (23 responses of 29). Despite quite rigorous follow-up procedures using both repeated telephone and email contacts, we found a small proportion of researchers to be unreachable. Two researchers did not wish to take part in the review. A small number of researchers have since retired from academia and some are now working oversees, and so we did not count those in the total of 29. The full list of those providing survey and an interview:

COMPLETED SURVEY AND INTERVIEW	INSTITUTION
Dr Geoffrey Scott Aikens	Cambridge University
Professor Malcolm Anderson	Emeritus, Edinburgh University
Professor Rob Baggott	De Montfort University
Professor Richard Chapman	Durham University
Professor David Denver	Lancaster University
Professor Keith Dowding	London School of Economics
Dr Geoffrey Dudley	University of the West of England
Professor Richard English	Queen's University Belfast
Professor Theo Farrell	King's College London
Professor Barry Gills	Newcastle University
Professor Ron Johnson	University of Bristol
Professor Andrew Jordan	University of East Anglia
Dr Josie Kelly	Aston Business School
Dr Kelley Lee	London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine
Professor Tariq Modood	University of Bristol
Dr Sarah Oates	University of Glasgow
Professor Tony Payne	University of Sheffield
Professor Christopher Pierson	University of Nottingham
Professor Jeremy Richardson	Nuffield College, Oxford
Professor Michael Rush	University of Exeter
Dr Margaret Scammell	London School of Economics
Professor Jonathan Tonge	University of Liverpool
Professor Gill Walt	London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine
Professor Paul Whiteley	University of Essex

Note: One academic completed a survey but we were not able to follow this up with an interview.

c. Semi-structured interviews with lead researchers

A8. On receipt of completed email questionnaires, we contacted the lead researchers to arrange a telephone interview to discuss their responses and wider issues relating to impact. All lead researchers except one who returned questionnaires agreed to take part in a telephone interview. Interviews were semi-structured in that we worked through subsequent publications to ensure that we had a complete picture of the major items, and then worked through the individual questions from our survey to ensure that we had as complete a picture as possible of different ways in which projects achieved impacts. Most interviews were between 45 minutes and one hour.

d. Follow up interviews with likely 'impactees'

A9. During interviews with researchers, we asked them to provide names and contact details for organizations that were either users of the research or could be viewed as likely impactees from the research. Most researchers were able to nominate at least one organization or individual for follow up interviews, but there was a good deal of 'churn' where the people nominated had retired, moved onto other work or were not contactable. We conducted 17 interviews or email exchanges with impactees. These interviews were generally shorter in length. Although we asked specifically about the impacts of ESRC-funded projects, at this distance most impactees' comments were more generally about how academic research can achieve stronger policy and practice impacts. The full list of impactees:

INTERVIEWEE	POSITION	ORGANISATION
Dr Louise Appleton	Principal Research Officer, Office of Chief Researcher	Scottish Executive
Dr Susan George	Chair of Planning Board	Trans-national Institute, The Netherlands
Lord Tony Giddens	Visiting Professor	London School of Economics
Professor Wyn Grant	Principal Investigator on the Rural Economy and Land Use programme of the Research Councils	University of Warwick
Professor Jim Hoare	President	British Association of Korean Studies
Helen Irwin	Clerk of Committees, Study of Parliament Group	House of Commons
Michael Kell	Electronic Service Delivery	Department of Communities and Local Government
Paul Middleton	Account Director	YouGov
Alan Milburn		Labour MP
David Miliband	Secretary of State	Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Anya Millington	Social Research and Evaluation	Department for Transport
Ian Mills	Managing Director	SMSR Ltd
Professor the Lord	Conservative Party Commission on	Hull University

Norton of Louth	Strengthening Parliament	
Tony Pike	Social Research	Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Clare Short		Labour MP
Dick Sorabji	Deputy Director	New Local Government Network
David Walker	Editor, Public	Guardian

e. Literature review and collection of background data on Responsive Mode funding

A10. We have incorporated findings and conceptual insights from other recent or currently ongoing work commissioned by the ESRC on the impacts of its funded research. We have also carried out a careful review of recent bibliographic and other impact-focused research. We provide a short bibliography of the most important literature in Appendix G.

f. Interviews with comparator organizations

A11. We asked researchers and impactees for their views on the role and the performance of the ESRC in supporting and guiding funded researchers to achieve impacts. Some researchers mentioned other funding bodies from which they have received funds, and that have been proactive in helping them to get the most from their research findings. We followed up with these potential comparator bodies, particular those in the UK, to find out more about practice and strategies on impact issues. We have been fortunate to draw upon the reports of previous ESRC research, particularly some comparable studies on policy and practice impacts. We are also grateful to ESRC staff for providing very helpful background information on how the RM grants operate. The full list of interviewees in this area:

INTERVIEWEE	POSITION	ORGANISATION
Dr Philip Cowley	Included in 'Heroes of Dissemination' ESRC publication	University of Nottingham
Dr David Guy	Head of Knowledge Transfer	ESRC
Lisa Hill	Head of Evaluation	Arts and Humanities Research Council
Ed Hughes	RAE Manager	HEFCE
Elizabeth Ollard	Assistant Secretary, Research Grants	British Academy
Saskia Walcott	Head of Communications	ESRC
Dr Gary Williams	Senior Science Manager in the Research, Training and Development Directorate	ESRC
Dr Mari Williams	Head, Evaluation and Policy Unit	Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council
Dr Astrid Wissenburg	Director of Communications and	ESRC

	Information	

g. Triangulation

A12. Having accumulated a large amount of evidence from different methods, we have also been careful to sift it carefully, and to apply qualitative checks to the discrete bodies of evidence accrued. In evaluating data from different sources, we have sought to weigh up policy and practice impacts on individual and relative scales, looking for claims and confirmation that impacts did exist. These deliberations can never be totally accurate or effective, but they act as a useful filter to ensure that all the projects are assessed in a reasonably consistent and relatively sceptical manner.

Appendix B: Detailed methods section on the Google searches

B1. An important part of this research has been to conduct an online bibliographic search for citations and references to published outputs generated from our 39 case study projects, and related outputs completed after the end of the grant period. This Appendix describes the methods we used for this work, and the coding frame adopted.

a. Coding frame

B2. We designed the coding frame to capture data about four separate aspects of outputs generated by the researcher(s) during the project and in the subsequent period. These four aspects are as follows:

[1] Full text of the nominated outputs either in journals, books or in non-published format on websites;

[2] References to nominated outputs in academic journals, books, working papers, or other non-standard academic or practitioner publications;

[3] Subsequent outputs published by the same authors and focusing on similar or related content to the research project in question. They can comprise journal articles, books, working papers, or any other outputs; *and*

[4] References to subsequent published outputs by the same authors.

B3. Categories [1] and [2] above allowed us to gauge the extent of dissemination of actual outputs from the research project. Most project teams nominated four or five publications and/or outputs which could be seen as the most significant outputs from the research, and we therefore searched on the extent that these outputs could be found (i.e. were available online) and the extent to which they were referenced by other academics and practitioners. Recognizing that impact often takes time to happen, and that the specific projects we looked at were frequently part of a wider body of ongoing work, we also searched for related subsequent publications by the same authors and again, the extent to which they were referenced by other academics and practitioners. This two-level approach allowed us to build up a picture of the impact of the specific projects in question and also the follow-on impact to which these specific projects may have led.

B4. We trained a research assistant during February 2007 to conduct online searches using the coding frame on the following databases and search tools:

- Web of Science;
- International Bibliography of Social Sciences;
- Lexis-Nexis Executive;
- Google Advanced Search;
- Google Books;
- Google Scholar.

Our researchers typed in the full name of the research output and the surnames of lead researchers into the search facility. We focused on the first 50 results in each case. Each result in turn was scrutinized and the relevant sections of the questionnaire were ticked and if necessary populated with information about the organizations or websites citing the publication. We recorded the names and date of all references to publications in academic journals, and for other non-standard references, we recorded the names of the referencing bodies. For subsequent publications, we recorded the name of the journal or book, the title of the subsequent publication, and in relevant cases, the geographical region of the referencing body. For each project output, we could therefore build up a detailed picture of references based on the first 50 returns in each search facility.

B5. Each project output was subject to survey in each search facility by the same researchers working in one sitting. This ensured that we reduced the amount of duplication of references to as close to nil as possible. Researchers were asked to keep a close check on the same returns showing up in different searches (particularly journal articles). The searches were conducted in the order listed above, starting with these two major academic databases, and then continuing on to the three consecutive Google searches. Surveys were done on separate sheets to ensure that we could identify which results came from which searches. For each output, researchers finished with five completed survey forms covering the first 50 results from each search. In cases where the full title of the paper and the surname returned fewer than fifty results, we instructed researchers to carry out a series of back-up searches using various different permutations of title and name.

B6. Having completed the search of both academic databases, researchers were asked to begin with an advanced level Google search. In practically all cases, these searches returned at least 50 results. Researchers worked through the questionnaire as before. Having completed the first Google search, researchers then carried out a search on Google Books, being careful not to double count any references which had been returned in the advanced Google search. Finally, researchers worked through the Google Scholar results taking similar care. It is not possible to say with one hundred percent confidence that duplications in recording did not occur. If indeed they did, then this would present a more optimistic picture of coverage and impact than was in fact the case.

B7. Having completed all five searches for each output named in the EOA report, we combined results. Academic citations from the Web of Science and the IBSS were combined and recorded in an Excel spreadsheet. We then summed the results from the three Google searches to give an overall Google reference score for each output. In theory, Google scores would be out of a total of 150, however in practice this total is somewhat artificial as duplications were relatively common. As a result we simply established a cumulative reference count for each category of search, and do not imply that these figures are 'out of 150'. **Figure B1** gives an example of the data for one output publication.

Figure B1: An example of the data collected for one output publication

	[1] above	*[2] above*	*[3] above*	*[4] above*
	References in journals or books (standard academic)	Other references (non-standard)	Subsequent output publications	References to subsequent output publications
Web of Science	4	*NA*	7	24
IBSS	2	*NA*	3	10
Combined	**6**		**10**	**34**
Google Advanced	2	6	4	16
Google Books	0	*NA*	3	5
Google Scholar	1	8	7	12
Total Google	**3**	**14**	**14**	**33**
TOTAL combined	**9**	**14**	**24**	**67**

Figure B1 serves merely as an example of the overall quantitative picture that we can establish for each of the named research outputs. In this exemplar case, we found 15 direct references to the output in academic journals or books (none of these would be duplicated citations). In addition we also found 14 references to the output in other publications (see the coding frame for different categories including working papers, university reading lists, conference events and so on). As an indication of subsequent activity in this area, columns 3 and 4 above give data on the references to subsequent related publications. This example suggests a relatively high degree of impact for the nominated publication and also clear signs of further work in the specific subject area.

B8. Each project generally has up to five nominated publications. As a proxy for the overall impact of the project publications, we have simply averaged out these respective scores. Figures in the main report showing impact scores are calculated by attributing a basic weighting to each of the four categories as follows:

[1] Direct academic references to the output *multiplied by* 4;

[2] Other references to the output *multiplied by* 3;

[3] Subsequent publications *multiplied by* 2;

[4] References to subsequent publications *multiplied by* 1.

Summing the product in each of the four cases gives us an overall dissemination and impact score. We have tried different weightings and find that the relative order is largely the same in most cases, so we stick with this simple 4,3,2,1 rating.

B9. The forms used by the research team to record Google, Google Books and Google Scholar searches are included below.

Name of paper:	
Author(s)	

You found the full text of the paper *(either PDF or HTML)*					
In a journal	Yes No	*Name / year*			
Part of edited book	Yes No	*Name / year*			
Policy document	Yes No	*Name / year*			
Other formal publications	Yes No	*Name / year*			
As a working paper on a…					
University website					
Government website					
Policy development body website					
Another website					
Personal or research group website	Yes No	*Name*			
Name of organization / year		*Name of organization / year*			
Name of organization / year		*Name of organization / year*			
Name of organization / year		*Name of organization / year*			
Abstract *only* in an academic database					
Abstract *only* elsewhere					
Review of the paper in a journal					
Review of the paper elsewhere					
Name of organization / year		*Name of organization / year*			
Name of organization / year		*Name of organization / year*			
Name of organization / year		*Name of organization / year*			

You found references to this specific paper				
In the bibliography of a journal paper				
Name of journal / date	*Name of journal / date*			
Name of journal / date	*Name of journal / date*			
Name of journal / date	*Name of journal / date*			
Name of journal / date	*Name of journal / date*			
Name of journal / date	*Name of journal / date*			
Name of journal / date	*Name of journal / date*			
Name of journal / date	*Name of journal / date*			
In a working paper bibliography	*UK*	*US*	*EUR*	*Other*
In a university reading list	*UK*	*US*	*EUR*	*Other*
In a book bibliography	*UK*	*US*	*EUR*	*Other*
Events or programmes	*UK*	*US*	*EUR*	*Other*
Government publications	*UK*	*US*	*EUR*	*Other*
Policy development bodies	*UK*	*US*	*EUR*	*Other*
Other website references	*UK*	*US*	*EUR*	*Other*
Name of organization / year	*Name of organization / year*			
Name of organization / year	*Name of organization / year*			

Name of organization / year	*Name of organization / year*
Name of organization / year	*Name of organization / year*
Name of organization / year	*Name of organization / year*
Name of organization / year	*Name of organization / year*
Name of organization / year	*Name of organization / year*

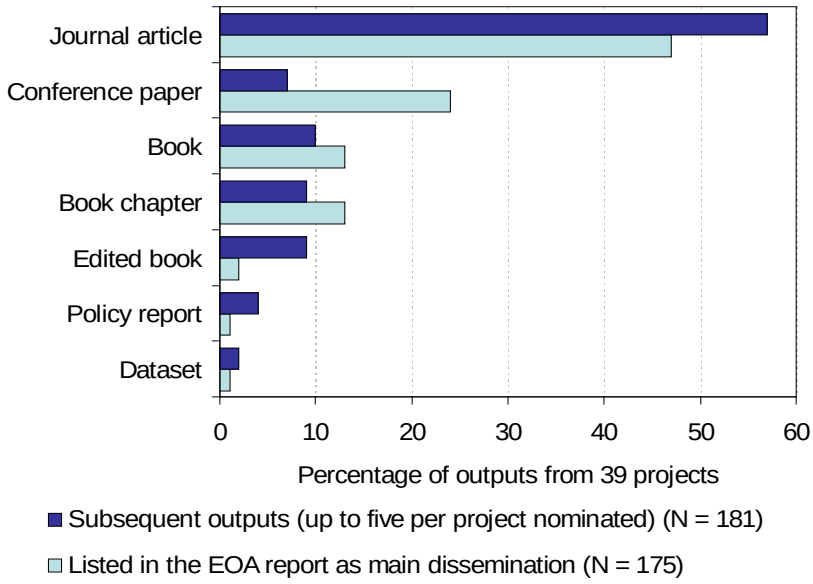
You found related output by the exact authors	
In a journal	
Name of journal / date	*Title of paper*
Name of journal / date	*Title of paper*
Name of journal / date	*Title of paper*
Name of journal / date	*Title of paper*
Name of journal / date	*Title of paper*
As working papers	
Book chapters	
Edited books	
Monographs or collaborative books	
Name of book / date	*Name of book / date*
Name of book / date	*Name of book / date*
Name of book / date	*Name of book / date*
Events/ programmes / conferences	
Policy consultancy	
Other material by exact authors	

You found references to other subsequent papers by the exact authors				
In a journal paper bibliography				
Name of journal / date	*Name of journal / date*			
Name of journal / date	*Name of journal / date*			
Name of journal / date	*Name of journal / date*			
Name of journal / date	*Name of journal / date*			
Name of journal / date	*Name of journal / date*			
In a working paper bibliography	*UK*	*US*	*EUR*	*Other*
In a university reading list	*UK*	*US*	*EUR*	*Other*
In a book bibliography	*UK*	*US*	*EUR*	*Other*
Events or programmes	*UK*	*US*	*EUR*	*Other*
Policy development bodies	*UK*	*US*	*EUR*	*Other*
Other website references	*UK*	*US*	*EUR*	*Other*

Appendix C: Variations in impact profiles across different projects

C1. As discussed in the main reports, research teams were asked to list up to five publications in the End of Award (EOA) report which are the most important (and highest profile) in terms of dissemination of research findings. For our 39 projects we identified 175 listed outputs. **Figure C1** below shows the range of outputs nominated by research teams, just under half of which were journal articles and just under one quarter conference or working papers. Our unobtrusive survey work and interviews allowed us to get a picture of five of the most important subsequent publications for each project, and journal articles appear again as the most commonly occurring.

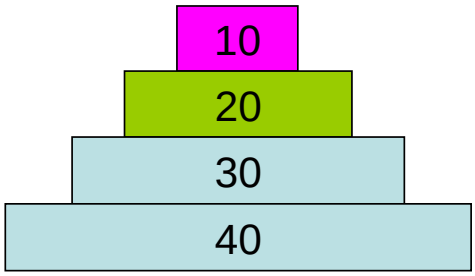
Figure C1: An indication of the range of outputs generated from our 39 projects



C2. For each identified output, we carried out a systematic search for references to it, as set out above in Appendices A and B. Using the four categories described in the Appendices above and included in **Figure C2** below, we counted the total number of references found using academic databases and Google. We used a conservative weighting to enhance the profile of direct references to specific outputs, multiplying Level 1 references by 4, Level 2 references by 3, Level 3 references by 2 and Level 4 references by 1. We summed these four multiplied figures, to obtain a Total Output score for each listed output, and then calculated the percentage accounted for by each category type. Figure C2 below gives an illustration of how this works and possible different profiles that could be achieved looking across these four percentages.

Figure C2: Illustrative hypothetical examples of how we organized our unobtrusive web search material

These graphics illustrate the four categories which we have used to shape our unobtrusive web searches. The categories are briefly outlined in the first item below and explained in more detail in the Methods sections. The coloured text refers to the equivalent coloured boxes. The figures in the boxes are illustrative only and show the percentage of total references found in each category.



Academic references to the listed output (journal articles or books)

Other direct references to the listed output

Other subsequent work on a related subject by the same authors

References to other subsequent work on a related subject by same authors

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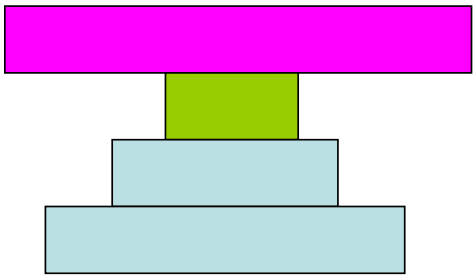
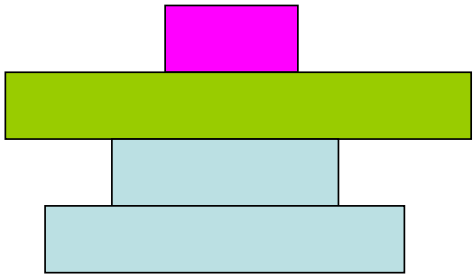
Example 1



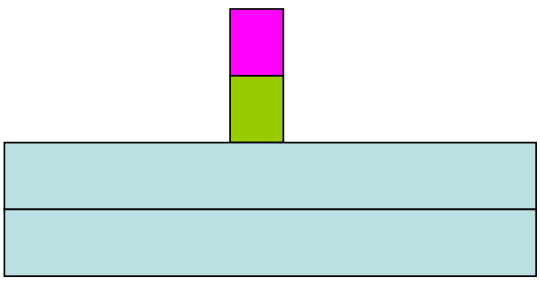
Direct academic references to the listed output are numerous relative to the other three levels. Any impact is likely to be directly mediated through this output, for example a key journal paper or a popularly cited book or book chapter.

Example 2



Direct academic references to this output are relatively few and far more numerous are other references to the output, for example policy or practitioner publications, press or media coverage, university reading lists or other website material.

Example 3



Direct references to this output are very few, however we are able to find numerous references to subsequent work by the same authors relating to the same or very similar topic areas. This suggests that although the direct of listed outputs is relatively small, they are part of continued and relatively high profile work in this area.

Appendix D: Suggestions on how to improve the methodology used

D1. The approaches used here may have wider adaptability in comparable reviews in future. We set out here some suggestions for doing things somewhat differently in any re-run exercise.

D2. One of the key elements in the design of our methods was to conduct much of the unobtrusive work prior to interacting with the researchers through the survey and interviews. This was helpful for us because it allowed us to get to know about the projects in some detail before interviewing researchers, and we think it was useful for the researchers themselves as it meant that we could prepare a short summary of outputs and subsequent outputs with their survey, in order to jog memories and lend credibility to our research efforts. However, one of the drawbacks of this ordering was that we were unable to start surveys and interviews before completing the time-consuming unobtrusive work, which meant that timelines were pressured from early on in our work. Ultimately, we probably did not factor in enough time for the unobtrusive work, which may have contributed to our having less time for the intensive process of seeking out impactees for follow-up interviews. Overall though, some time was saved because the sequence of our methods meant that we knew quite a bit about projects prior to interviews and so did not have to do this background research twice. We could also establish common knowledge with researchers quickly, freeing more time to talk about their specific policy and practice impacts.

D3. The unobtrusive work involved a great many hours of detailed searching and recording of information. Whilst we stuck tightly to a procedure for entering search terms and analysing the results there are inevitably some factors which can impinge on the accuracy of the results. These include slightly variable search results, particularly for Google based searches, since algorithms are updated very regularly. We do not think these changes would affect the first 50 search results we looked at significantly. However, limiting our analysis to the top 50 search terms is of course an arbitrary limit and the overall detail of the results would be slightly different if infinite resources and patience were allowed for exhaustive search analysis. Lastly, checking outputs and assigning them to categories on our code frames was not a fail-proof task given instances where otherwise identical articles have different titles, for example. And coding an output could take place in more than one category, such as a working paper delivered at a conference of third sector practitioners.

D4. Bringing the different Google searches and the database searches together will tend to smooth out any small rough edges. We also verified the most important related outputs by checking them with the lead researchers when we sent the survey to them and interviewed them about their project. The survey itself was designed to capture both quantitative information about lead researchers' projects and their perceived impacts, and more nuanced qualitative text on examples and suggestions. One major drawback is that we did not attain a 100 per cent response rate, so that some of our analysis is limited. (There is some evidence that the non-returners tended to fit into a particular part of the overall impact environment.) Another inherent drawback of surveys is that users can choose how many questions to answer, and how much detail to provide. However, we were able to partly address this problem by going through unanswered questions by phone, or persuading respondents to expand answers during the interview. Overall, the survey responses have provided us with a rich source of hard data and qualitative perceptions.

D5. The semi-structured nature of the interviews meant that we began by going over the survey return (there were very few cases when we did not have a completed survey prior to interview), checked the subsequent publications we had found, and clarified the timelines and outputs of the research. We then discussed impacts and further publications and projects and impacts of the work. During the interviews, contextual issues were often raised, such as academic pressures for publications, and the way networks beyond academia are established. These qualitative discussions helped inform our analysis.

D6. One of the last elements of the interviews typically involved asking researchers to nominate impactees with whom we could follow up their work, not as a check on the quality of work, but to confirm and understand the nature of the impact made by the project we were looking at. The diversity of the projects meant that some researchers were able to furnish us with names and organizations from whom we obtained feedback about impacts in emails and interviews, whilst others were largely unable to provide particular impactees. The inevitable degree of 'churn' in people's responsibilities over six or nine years meant that some contacts were no longer appropriate. Thus our work in this area has been more exploratory than the more systematic evidence we have been able to collect elsewhere. In a three year follow up study, it should be feasible to do more.

Appendix E: Responsive Mode funding and the characteristics of the 39 projects studied

E1. In common with other research councils, the ESRC allocates its funding to different streams, broadly to either directive mode (DM) or responsive mode (RM) projects. DM funding supports more managed research where individual applications form part of a wider, semi-permanent Centre or Programme, for which a specific amount of core and revenue funding is guaranteed by the Research Council over a fixed length of time. The mix of DM and RM funding varies sharply between the Research Councils. For instance, the Arts and Humanities Research Council delivers around two-thirds of its funding through responsive mode equivalent grants, while the ESRC (in common with other research councils) has broadly the reverse proportions, where only around one third of its funding supports applications for RM projects.

E2. The RM process relies on researchers submitting grant proposals for consideration by the ESRC. It differs from the directive mode in that there is not a stimulus from the ESRC on the subjects it favours funding, nor a specification in advance of the size of grant funding. The basic operations of the RM are sketched below. Projects vary quite considerably in terms of their lengths and amount of award. But the basic process for assessing the merits of the application, lightly monitoring the progress of the research and assessing the outputs remains constant in all cases (see also **Figure E1** below):

Pre-funding approval stages:

1. An individual researcher or a group in a higher education institution draws up and submits an application to ESRC (no deadline).
2. The application is received by ESRC; referees are identified and approached and agree to review the proposal.
3. The application is sent to the referees who consider it.
4. The referees submit comments and recommendations to ESRC, suggesting one of three options: (a) accepting the proposal as it stands; (b) accepting with some modifications (including reducing the award size sometimes); c) rejecting the application.
5. The ESRC confirms the referees' judgements and a Committee determines that funding is available, given their competing bids of similar quality.
6. Applicants are informed of the decision in their case.

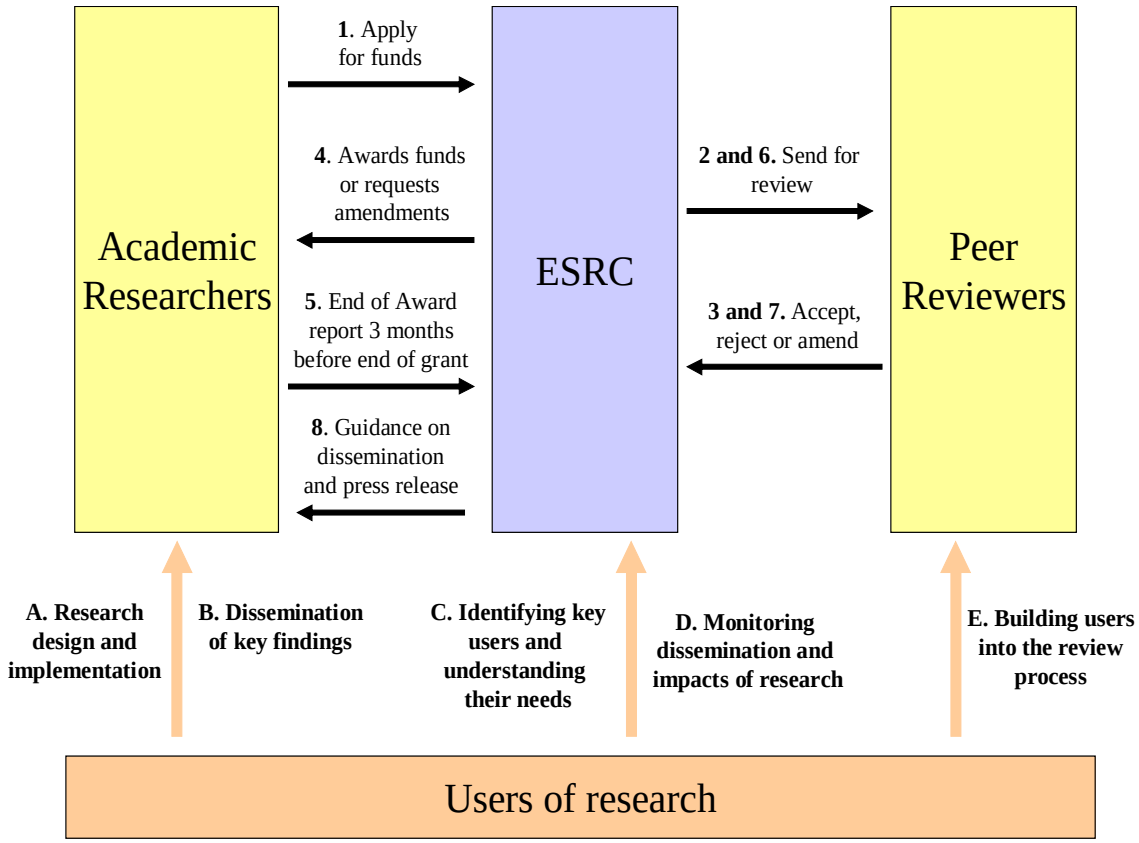
7. If the decision if a) or b), applicants then decide whether to continue on the basis of referees' judgements and comments. There may be some negotiation with the ESRC over proposed changes to an application, or new information may be added. If the decision is to reject, then applicants can try again with a revised application at any point in future.

Post-funding approval stages

8. The applicants receive their agreed award level and commence research.
9. Interaction with ESRC staff may occur during the period of the award, depending on the length of the award with larger projects requiring small progress reports and on the requirements of grant holders, for instance over viring monies between headings or extending timelines.
10. The nearness of the award's end date triggers a reminder from ESRC.
11. Within 3 months of termination of the award, grant holders complete an End of Award (EOA) report, detailing the methods used, their main results, the publication outputs achieved and the dissemination of findings that have been undertaken.
12. The EOA report is sent by the ESRC to nominated and other rapporteurs, who provide an academic assessment of the project.
13. The ESRC may draft a press release for the project which is agreed with the grant holders.
14. Further co-ordination between ESRC and the grant holders regarding dissemination may occur (e.g. producing a piece for *The Edge*; an invitation to ESRC events etc.)
15. The dissemination and publication of outputs continue, and these publication outputs are added to the *ESRC Society Today* online database. (Researchers are sent yearly reminders to this effect.)

E3. Essentially once the ESRC allocates funding for RM projects based on peer review of their applications, it then allows the award holders to carry out their research unhindered apart from annual checks on spending progress. If the researchers want assistance, the ESRC is on hand to advise, but most researchers' next most substantive interaction is confined to just prior to the award period ending, to ensure that the EOA report is completed within 3 months of the project finishing. The EOA report is assessed by rapporteurs - experts in the area of the project - on a 4-point scale ranging from Outstanding, through Good to Problematic to Unacceptable. Those projects which are scored as Outstanding or Good usually trigger a press release managed by the ESRC and agreed with the lead researcher. Around 10 press releases per month are generated for Outstanding or Good RM projects. Once the requirements of the EOA report have been finished, it may be that there is no further interaction between researchers and the ESRC.

Figure E1: Responsive Mode application and award process



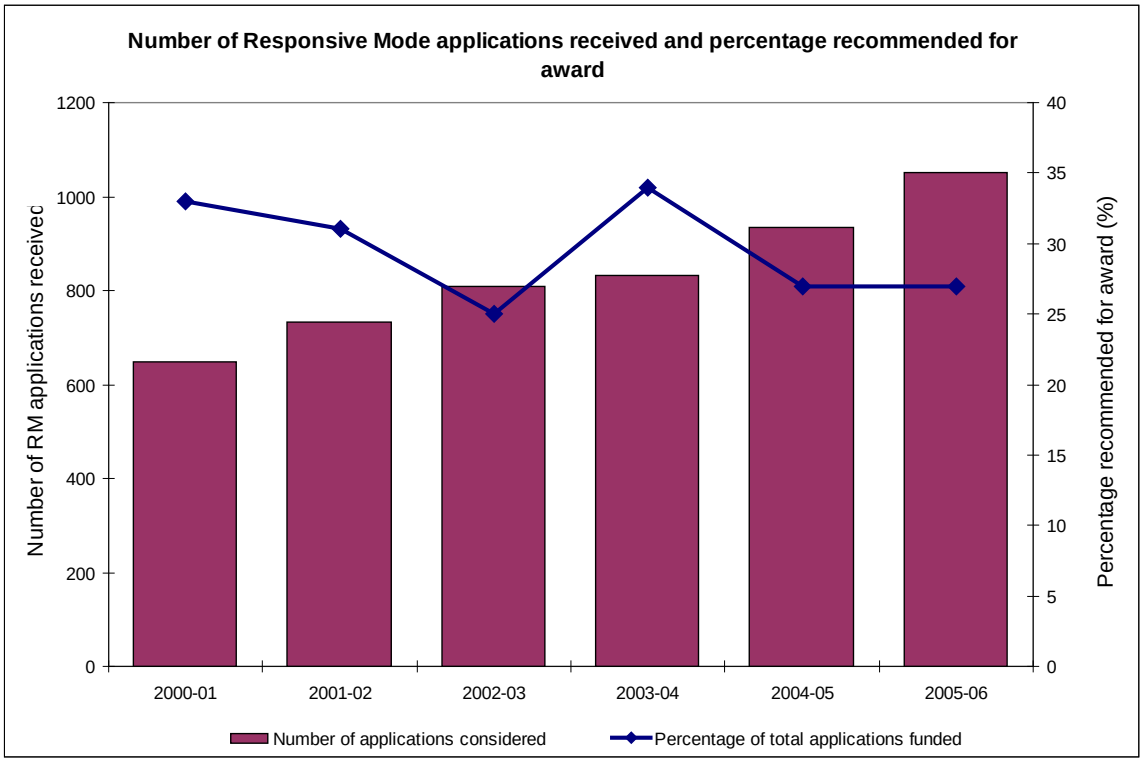
E4. In interviews we found a range of views on the relative value of RM and DM funding. For researchers RM grants are a valuable source of money for speculative and innovative applications (sometimes even the funding of 'crazy ideas'). The process allows researchers to 'develop and build' research expertise over time. It leaves the substantive decision making on research agendas to the 'people who know' (that is, academic experts in the different fields). And it can be a good way for new researchers to establish themselves in their field, acquiring not only substantive outputs but also experience in managing funds and delivering a successful project. Not surprisingly, most of the lead researchers we spoke to about RM were enthusiastic about it, since they had been successful at least once in obtaining funding through this route. Many of these researchers supported an increase in the proportion of total ESRC funding allocated to RM.

E5. By contrast, some interviewees from funding bodies told us that it is not a sustainable position to continue to leave a major area of research expenditure largely unmanaged. There appears to be a widespread perception amongst the ESRC personnel we interviewed that the RM process involves distributing relatively small amounts of money and a concern that projects funded tend to be quite disparate in terms of their subject and size. We also found in interviews with lead researchers that

funded researchers rarely know about other projects in the RM category under way at the same time as their work, even when it was relevant for their own research.

E6. Yet in terms of content, money, and demand from academics RM funding is clearly very important. Cumulatively the RM category makes up around £26 million of a total ESRC research expenditure of £83 million. **Figure E2** shows that the number of RM applications to ESRC have increased over time by around two thirds in the period from 2000 to 2006, while the proportion of all RM mode grants funded has fluctuated in a band between 26 and 34 per cent.

Figure E2: The number of applications for responsive mode grants and their success rate, 2000 to 2006

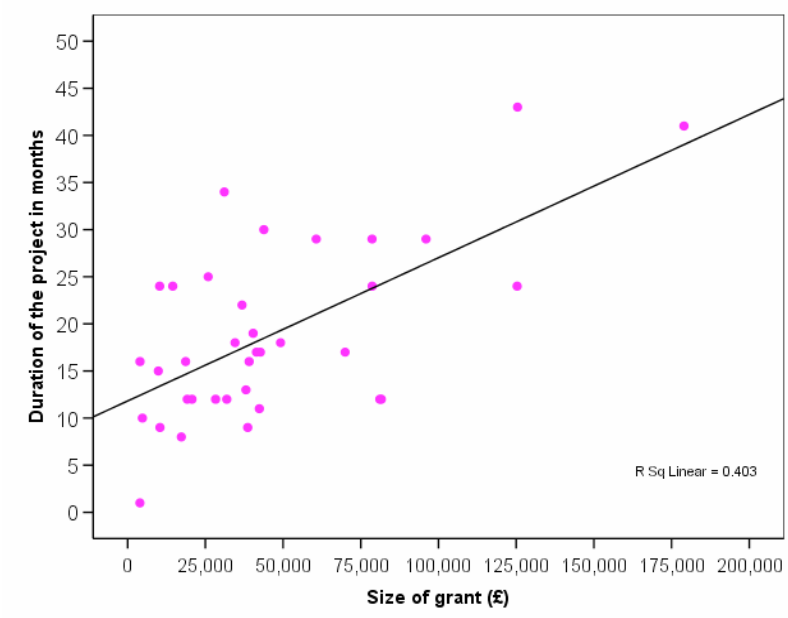


RM grants in political science and international studies

E7. Politics and international studies projects make up around 30 per cent of RM expenditure annually. Twenty projects were completed in 1998, the first of our specified data set years, and nineteen in 2001, the second year, giving a total population for our analysis of 39 projects. The smallest grant involved was around £3,000 and the largest grant was £215,000. Projects less than £50,000 varied quite considerably in terms of the duration of the funding period, from 2 months to around three years. The main cluster of projects cost less than £50,000 and lasted between 10 and

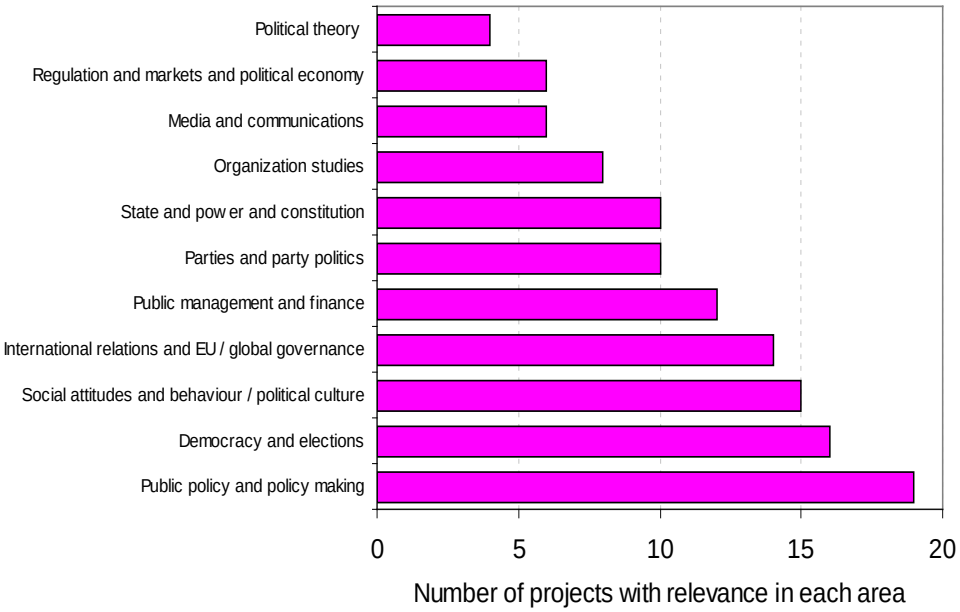
20 months (14 projects in total). The shortest project lasted around 8 months from its start to the end of award report, and the longest took around 45 months. **Figure E3** shows that there is a reasonable association between the size of award and the length of that project, perhaps limited by the different methods employed, the number of people working on each project and the amount of time their lead researchers could devote to the project amongst their other academic responsibilities.

Figure E3: Size of grant and duration of the funding grant



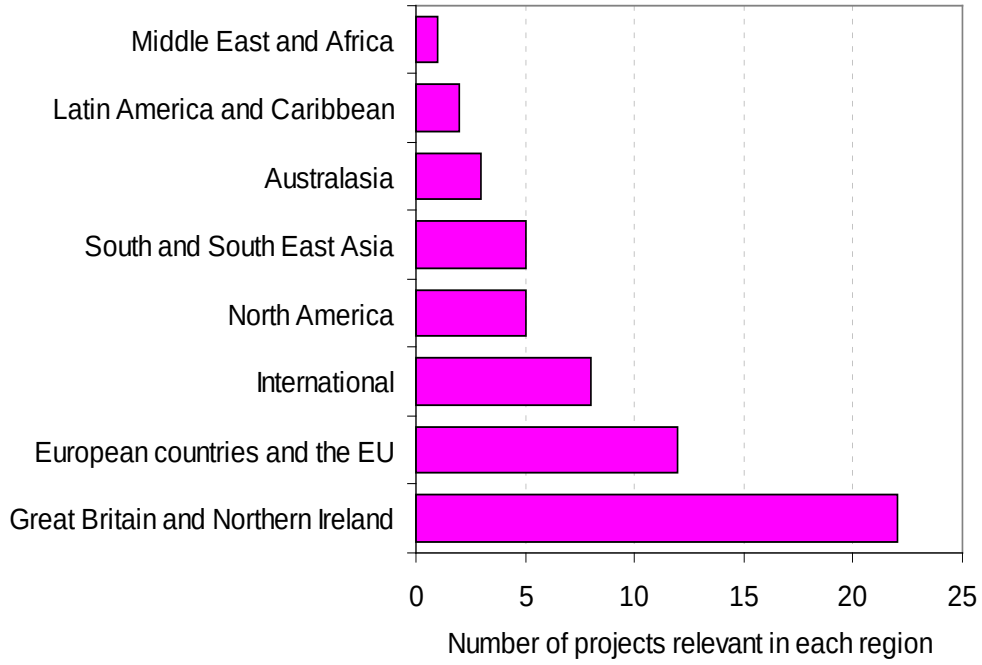
E8. We coded each project in terms of their detailed subject areas within political science. Most projects touched on more than one subject area, and often up to three or four. Around one half of the projects had direct and specific relevance for current public policy and policy making. Studies relating to the study of democracy, democratic institutions and development, and elections were also common. **Figure E4** shows that only four projects had direct or partial relevance for political theory and philosophy. This initial variety of the projects suggests that trying to evaluate all of them in terms of their economic impact could be difficult, and that the scale of impacts are likely to vary widely.

Figure E4: Detailed subject areas covered



E9. **Figure E5** shows that over half of the projects funded focus on issues relating to Great Britain and Northern Ireland. European countries and EU issues were covered in just under one third of projects. Five projects focused on issues relating to south Asian and south East Asian countries.

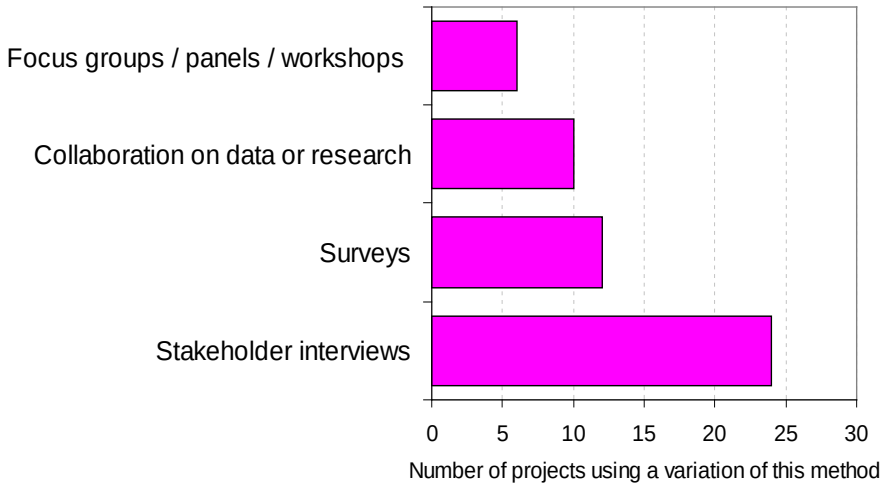
Figure E5: Geographical areas covered by research projects



E10. We reviewed the range of methods used in the research projects, shown in **Figure E6**, and found that finding that most projects used stakeholder interviews (some reports did not list their

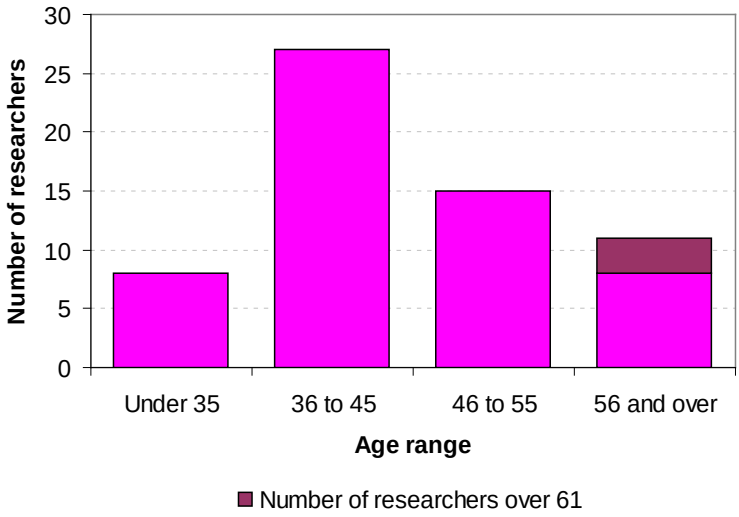
methods in the EOA reports or used only archive research). Less than one third of projects used surveys of some description, and only a small minority used other more interactive or experimental methods such as workshops or panels.

Figure E6: Methods used in the research projects



E11. **Figure E7** highlights that we found a fair degree of variation in the ages of funded researchers (at the end of the projects). The modal age bracket is 36 to 45 years. Of 63 lead researchers funded, around 1 in 10 researchers were under 35 years. Around 1 in 6 researchers were over 56, but only a small handful were aged over 61.

Figure E7: Age group of funded researchers



E12. **Figures E8 and E9** provide some additional background on variations amongst the politics and international studies projects we studied. We show that six major universities accounted for just

under half of all the academics funded, including Glasgow, Oxford and Manchester. Twenty four universities accounted for the other half. Three or four staff from 'new universities' were included in the total of 30 researchers funded. Most researchers across our projects came from political science and international relations departments, with a scattering from social policy and geography, only one from a business studies department, and none from economics.

Figure E8: The universities of lead researchers at the time of grant award

University Affiliation	Number of researchers
Glasgow University	5
London University	5
Oxford University	5
Manchester University	5
Sheffield University	5
London School of Economics	4
Bristol, Cambridge, De Montford, Durham, Edinburgh, Essex, Exeter, Lancaster, Nottingham, East Anglia	2
Aston, European University Institute, Leeds, Liverpool, Newcastle, Queens Belfast, Reading, Salford, Southampton, Strathclyde, Sunderland, Sussex, Wales, Warwick	1
TOTAL RESEARCHERS	**63**

Figure E9: The department affiliations of funded researchers

Department type	Number of researchers
Politics / Government	34
International Relations	12
Geography	4
Public Policy	4
Health	3
Sociology / Social Science	3
Media / Communications	2
Business School	1
TOTAL RESEARCHERS	63

Appendix F: Lead Researchers Survey

Policy and Practice Impact Case Study of ESRC Grants and Fellowships in Political Science and International Studies

Survey of successful grant applicants for projects ending 1998 and 2001

Project title:

• This survey asks some simple questions about your ESRC funded project.

• We have tried to make the questions as self-explanatory as possible, to save you time; please refer to the end of this document for further guidance.

• Please refer to the accompanying summary information about references to your project's outputs that we have found; we would be grateful if you could *confirm/ edit/ add* any references as necessary.

• You can email EMAIL ADDRESS or call us on PHONE NUMBER to ask for a hard copy of the survey to complete, or to ask any questions.

LSE Public Policy Group
DATA PROTECTION STATEMENT
All information supplied is kept confidential by the LSE Public Policy Group. It will be used solely for the purpose of this independent review work for the ESRC.

Survey form sent to:

Name of funded research project:	
Name(s) of research applicant(s):	
Date of research start:	
Date of research completion:	

This document is a read-only form allowing text and data to be filled in at marked fields. The following fields are used in this form:	
>>	Field requiring text in your own words. You may want to paste in text already available to save time.
☐	Field requiring a cross. To mark the box, click anywhere on it.
A	Some questions ask you to look through a list of options, and then choose answers from a drop down menu of these options. These fields are marked in pink.
PLEASE REMEMBER It is important to save this document onto a disk or your computer hard drive, and SAVE the work regularly. The information that you fill in is not saved automatically.	

1 ▶ Here are some common ways academic research could achieve an impact.

A. Circulating copies of the relevant papers

B. Seminars or sessions to develop the work

C. Making relevant papers and materials available on the internet

D. Publishing papers in academic journals

E. Presenting the work at conferences

F. Briefing policy makers or practitioners

G. Sharing of relevant data

H. TV or radio work

I. Book chapters or edited publications

J. Other *(please specify below)*

Which were the main ways in which you achieved an impact from your research project?

Please fill out the fields below by choosing the relevant letters from above. You do not need to fill in all 6 fields below if they are not applicable.

The main ways of achieving impacts were…	X	X	X
Other ways were…	X	X	X

Please give details particularly relating to any which were especially effective in achieving an impact.

>>

2► *The project we are asking about was completed a considerable time ago, and we understand that at that time electronic modes of dissemination were not so developed as they are now.* **But have you used any of the following means to boost impact since completing your research?**	Please tick any that apply
Posted papers on an existing website	☐
Posted papers on a personal website	☐
Deposited the paper/ materials in an online research archive	☐
Made available data online (*excluding* Essex Data Archive)	☐
Other *(please specify)*	☐

Please give details about the means used, particularly relating to any which were especially effective in achieving an impact.
>>

3► Did this research project lead to or form the basis for any further funding in the field or subject of research?

Funding from…	Amount of funding (£)	Date of funding award (Month / Year)
ESRC	£>>	>>
Another academic research body	£>>	>>
Government or public sector body	£>>	>>
Academic institution	£>>	>>
International organization	£>>	>>
Business or private organization	£>>	>>
Representative or Third sector body	£>>	>>
Another institution (please specify)	£>>	>>

Please add here any details of research projects for which you have provided data. Or if this was a stand-alone project, please indicate that here.
>>

4 ▶ Here are some types of organisations that are often impacted by academic research. Could you say how far you think your research had an impact on each of these?

(Tick 1 to 7 on the scale, where 1 = low impact and 7 = high impact)

	Low impact 1	2	3	4	5	6	High impact 7	Not sure
Policy makers in UK central government	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Policy makers in regional or local government	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Public sector bodies	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Business firms/ industry	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Interest groups and representative bodies (e.g. trade unions / professional bodies / associations)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Research institutions / think-tanks	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Third sector organizations (e.g. charities / NGOs)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other academics	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The general public	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
International organizations	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Foreign governments	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other (please specify below)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

5 ▶ Looking back at the *completed research*, could you say which specific organizations you had some impact on?

Please add details about the *nature* of the impacts you achieved.
>>

6► Did this research project lead to any new collaboration or strengthen any existing collaborations with other organizations?

	New collaboration with…	Strengthened existing collaboration with…
Other academic institutions in the UK	☐	☐
Other academic institutions abroad	☐	☐
UK central government organizations	☐	☐
UK local government organizations	☐	☐
Foreign government organizations	☐	☐
International organizations	☐	☐
Business or private organization	☐	☐
Representative bodies	☐	☐
Third sector bodies	☐	☐
Another institution (please specify)	☐	☐

Please add here any details of new or strengthened collaborations with other institutions.
>>

7 ▶ Thinking about how long it takes for research to achieve impacts, please could you score the overall impacts of your projects, across the three time periods below.
(Please tick one on a scale from 1 to 7, where 1 = low impact and 7 = high impact)

	Low impact 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 High impact	Not sure
Immediate / short term impact *(within a year of completion)*	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	☐
Medium term impact *(1 to 3 years after completion)*	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	☐
Long term impact *(3 or more years after completion)*	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	☐

Please feel free to tell us more about your response to this question.
>>

8 ▶ Were any unexpected or serendipitous impacts of this research project?

Please tell us what they were.
>>

9 ▶ Can you provide any specific examples of how this research has influenced policy, service delivery or contextual thinking?

Area of influence/ Our research…	*Directly* influenced a change	*Contributed* to a broader change or indirectly or influenced a change	Formed part the *contextual* or *background* for a change
Had an impact on policy thinking amongst stakeholders or decision-makers	>>	>>	>>
Had an impact on how services are delivered or policy is implemented	>>	>>	>>
Had an impact in wider public debates about policy or service delivery	>>	>>	>>

10► Overall, please in your own words could you tell us a bit about any major impacts from your research project?

>>

11► What was the most satisfying or worthwhile impact that you would point to?

>>

12► Were there any aspects where you hoped to have more impact than proved to be the case?

>>

13► Here are some barriers which may restrict the impact of academic research from achieving maximum impact. Could you say which of these are important in your type of research?

	Yes	No	Not sure
Lack of guidance from research funders about what impacts they expect	☐	☐	☐
Lack of resources in research teams to do impacts / dissemination work	☐	☐	☐
Overly ambitious expectations of impacts from funders	☐	☐	☐
Topic area is not really marketable enough	☐	☐	☐
Inexperience with press or media	☐	☐	☐
Small community of interest for this research work	☐	☐	☐
Resistance from user groups to take work into account	☐	☐	☐
Key findings are not written up in a 'punchy' enough way	☐	☐	☐
Other (please specify below)	☐	☐	☐

14▶ Here are some ways in which the ESRC often helps provide teams in achieving impacts from their research work. Please indicate if any of these applied to your project.

	Yes	No	Not sure
Providing written guidance	☐	☐	☐
Putting you in touch with communications or impact specialists	☐	☐	☐
Providing informal guidance and advice	☐	☐	☐
Organizing events and seminars focusing on impact issues	☐	☐	☐
Creating networking opportunities	☐	☐	☐
Providing extra funding for impact work	☐	☐	☐
Providing training on media skills	☐	☐	☐
Conducting publicity work on your behalf	☐	☐	☐
Other (please specify)	☐	☐	☐

Please comment on:
a) What ESRC did that was helpful for you in achieving impacts.
>>

b) Was there anything that you have liked more help from the ESRC on?
>>

15► How would you rate how the ESRC contributed or helped you to achieve impacts for your project in each of the following areas? *Please choose from the drop down menu by clicking on the labels below*	
Making clear at the application stage which types of impact would be valuable	Choose from this drop down menu
Liaising with you throughout the research on how impacts might be achieved	Choose from this drop down menu
Providing guidance about how to maximize the impacts of your research	Choose from this drop down menu
Encouraging you to actively disseminate your research findings	Choose from this drop down menu
Evaluating or checking the impacts of your research at the end of research report stage	Choose from this drop down menu
Keeping you informed and encouraging you to seek impacts in the post-funding period	Choose from this drop down menu

16► Do you have any suggestions for how the ESRC could improve its support on maximizing the impact of the research projects they have funded?
>>

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP

Guidance and background to the survey

This survey focuses on efforts that you undertook during and after the research project funded by the ESRC (shown below) to maximise the impact of this work across relevant expert communities and society at large. We are interested to find out more about:

- **Strategies you have used to maximize the impact of your work;**
- **What the main impacts have been in the short and long term;**
- **Your views about how the ESRC has helped you to realise impacts; *and***
- **Your views on how the ESRC can boost the impact of its funded research.**

We have sent this survey to around 40 ESRC grant holders who completed projects in 1998 or 2001.

Enclosed with this survey is a pro forma listing all the relevant publications and dissemination outputs that you named in the End of Award report (including the text you wrote on dissemination and impact). We have also included in this material the data from our search for other related papers subsequently published by your research team on similar themes. We would be very grateful if you would review this material and add any other relevant items that we may have missed.

We hope you can work through this survey, completing as much as possible. We would also like to contact you to arrange a suitable time to telephone you to talk through your responses and other more general issues relating to the ESRC impact specification and assessment work.

We are very grateful for your cooperation on this work. We hope that it will help to improve the quality of strategies and support provided by the ESRC to maximise the impact of its funded research.

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Appendix H: Glossary

AHRC: Arts and Humanities Research Council.

BBSRC: Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council.

Bibliometric measures: bibliometric or bibliographic measures provide researchers with a great quantity of information which can be used to undertake bibliometric analyses.

Citations: A credit or reference to another document or source which shows both influence and authority.

Dissemination: The process of publicly communicating either the information gained or the lessons learned from a research project in the hope that it is useful in reaching decisions, making changes, or taking specific action.

Economic impact: The following definition is taken from Research Council Economic Impact Group (2006): 'An action or activity has an economic impact when it affects the welfare of consumers, the profits of firms and or the revenue of government. Economic impacts range from those that are readily quantifiable in terms of greater wealth, cheaper prices and more revenue, to those less easily quantifiable, such as effects on the environment, public health and quality of life.'

Google: for this research we used http://www.google.com.

Google Books: searches full text of books and includes an 'About this book' page with basic bibliographic data like title, author, publication date, length and subject. For some books, it shows additional information like key terms and phrases, references to the book from scholarly publications or other books, chapter titles and a list of related books. Available on http://www.google.com/books.

Google Scholar: allows a wide ranging search for scholarly literature. It can search across many disciplines and sources: peer-reviewed papers, theses, books, abstracts and articles, from academic publishers, professional societies, preprint repositories, universities and other scholarly organisations. Available at http://www.google.com/scholar.

Harzing 'Publish or Perish' tool: This is a software program that retrieves and analyzes academic citations. It uses Google Scholar to obtain the raw citations, then analyzes these and presents a number of statistics.

Harzing-generated Age-weighted Citation Rate: The AWCR measures the average number of citations to an entire body of work, adjusted for the age of each individual paper. It was inspired by Bihui Jin's note *The AR-index: complementing the h-index*, ISSI Newsletter, 3 (1), 2007, p. 6. The Publish or Perish implementation differs from Jin's definition in that it sums over *all* papers instead of only the h-core papers.

Hirsch's h-score: Proposed by J.E. Hirsch in his paper *An index to quantify an individual's scientific research output, arXiv:physics/0508025,* 5 (29), September 2005. It aims to provide a robust single-number metric of an academic's impact, combining quality with quantity.

IBSS: International Bibliography of the Social Sciences. Available at http://www.ibss.ac.uk.

Impact: We have taken a wide definition of impact in this report, from research that directly influences policy makers decision making through to research that adds to a consensus which acts as a background to policy making.

Non-responsive analysis: See unobtrusive measures.

Outcome: A result or a consequence of a research project.

Output: A piece of work arising from the case project being examined. This could be a published output, for example a journal article, book chapter or book; a dissemination output such as a conference paper or working paper; or a networking output such as a briefing meeting with policy makers.

Portfolio approach: the idea that the ESRC could look at responsive mode projects as a whole set or portfolio whereby they should expect to see some projects having strong policy and practice impacts and others perhaps having solely academic impacts.

R & D: research and development.

RCUK: Research Councils UK, the strategic partnership of the UK's seven Research Councils.

Responsive mode grants: Research grants permit individuals or groups of researchers, usually based at UK Universities and Higher Education Institutes, to undertake anything from a small project to a large-scale survey, provided that it falls within ESRC's scientific remit. Grants may be awarded for a period of up to five years for basic research in the social sciences as well as for more applied topics.

Unobtrusive measures: Research methods that enable data collection but do not interact with the subject in focus. The measures are not liable to subjective impressions.

Web of Knowledge: Bibliographic database which provides a single route to all the Thomson Scientific products. Available at http://wos.mimas.ac.uk.