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## **LISEN: Impact in UKRI Grant Applications**

**Will Summers, BBSRC, Joint Head of Research and Innovation Funding**

**Involved in implementing impact assessment guidance**

**Robyn Thomas, NERC, Associate Director, Discovery Science, Talent & Skills**

**Involved in the transformation programme to develop simpler and better funding processes**

All 7 UKRI Councils contributed to this session through internal discussions



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# Impact definitions



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Different aspects of the definition will be assessed based on the type of call

Specific strategic initiatives may have a narrower focus



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# Application quality



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- Impact is no longer a box ticking exercise
- Activities are no longer being shoe-horned into applications
- There's less 'workshops, websites and waffle'

Activities now better fit the maturity and context of the research

The work of Impact Professionals has improved the richness and quality of proposals, challenging us to make tough funding decisions

Some applications to do more fundamental research give impact a backseat which costs the application as impact is a key assessment criteria



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# Types of impact activities



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For longer grants  
there is greater  
scope for impact  
work

For research  
networks and  
institutions we  
want to see  
communication,  
engagement and  
capacity building  
plans

Citizen science and  
co-production is  
desirable where  
appropriate. We  
are changing our  
policy framework  
to remove barriers  
to these activities.



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## Costs



- Costs should:
  - Fit the scheme
  - Be justifiable
- Patents are not an allowable cost



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# Application Assessment



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# Impact Evaluation



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Reviewers don't assess  
impact evaluation plans

Analyse their portfolio  
rather than breadcrumb  
trails from individual  
projects to impact

Use REF case studies to  
see where their grants  
have generated impact