

Lessons from the REF

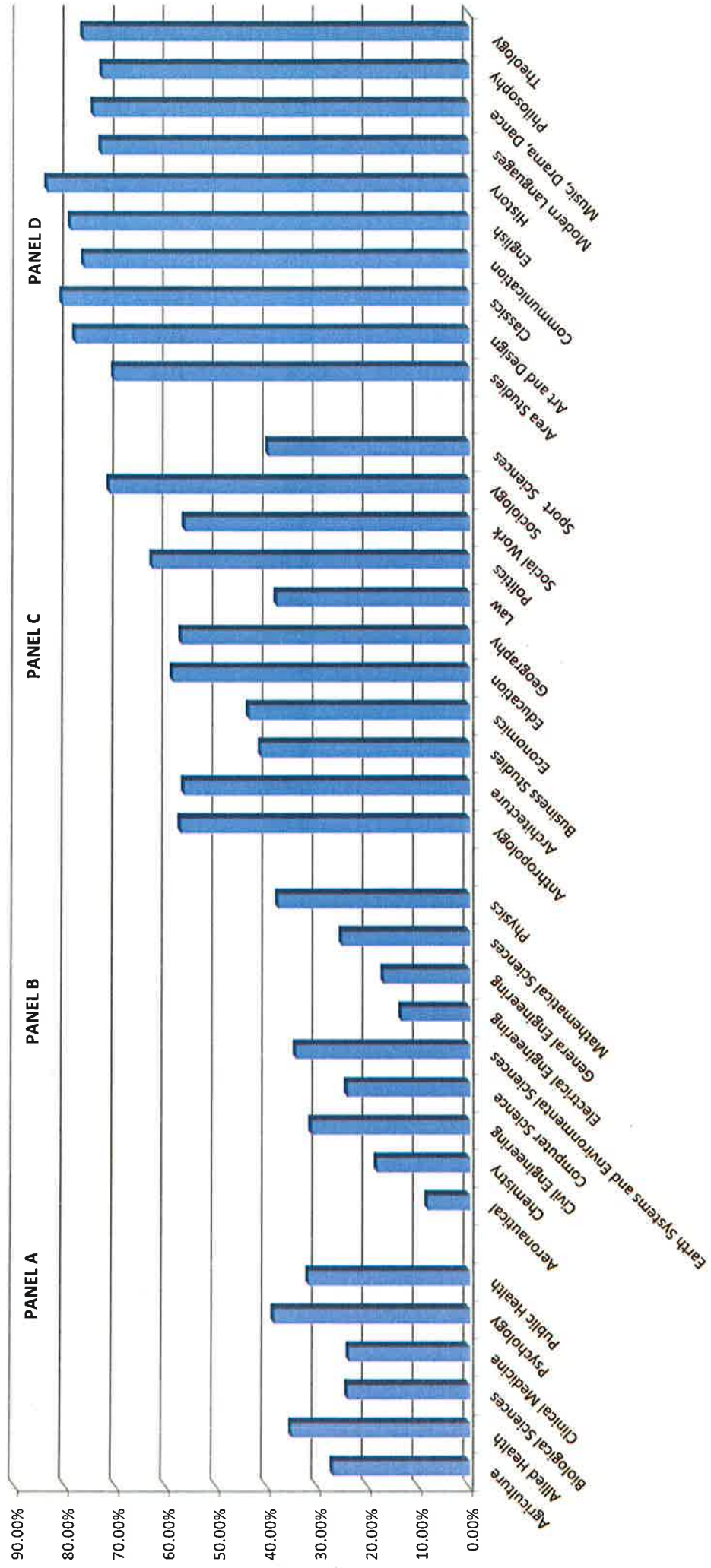
Reviewing the REF impact case studies and
templates

Delegate workbook

Disciplinary differences

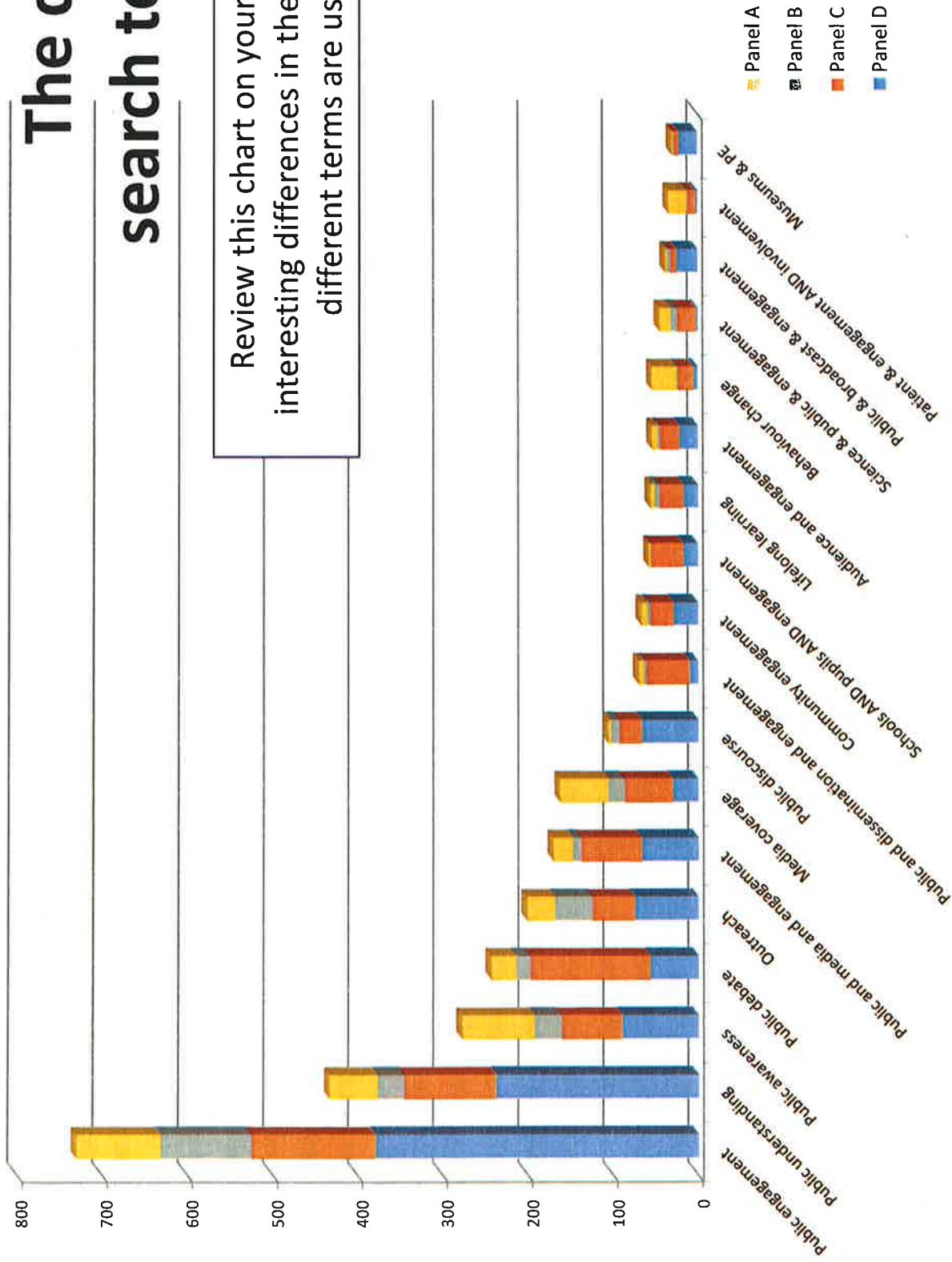
The extent and nature of engagement with the public differs significantly between the four main panels, and within them

'Engaging the public' case studies as a proportion of total submitted case studies %



The distribution of search terms by panel

Review this chart on your tables. Do you notice any interesting differences in the frequency with which the different terms are used in the different panels?

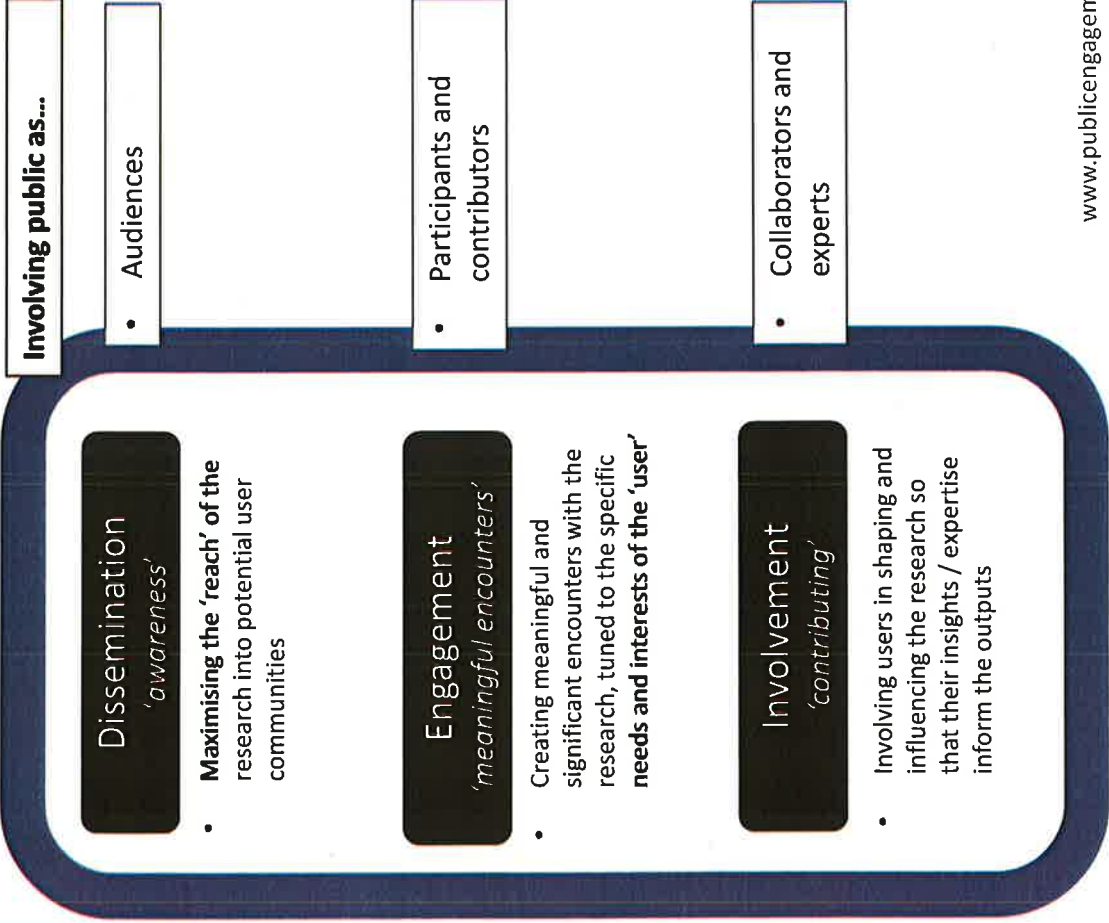


Key findings

From our initial review of the case study database

- **Public engagement is pervasive:** 3108 of the 6640 case studies (47%) made some reference to engaging with the public.
- **Public engagement can happen 'alone' but more often is integrated into a blend of external engagement, with policy or the professions, very occasionally with business:** This suggests a significant virtuous circle or association: those institutions that engage well with a range of different stakeholders include 'the public' as one of those groups
- **Public engagement is more prevalent in the Arts and Humanities:** The extent of public engagement reported across the four main panels differed strikingly. There was surprisingly little public engagement reported in areas like medicine and public health, where there has been a long standing expectation that researchers should engage patients. This merits deeper analysis.
- **Different 'flavours' of public engagement feature in different discipline areas:** for instance, 'outreach' is prevalent in physics
- **Public engagement is nearly always focussed on changes to understanding and awareness. Much more rarely is it foregrounded as a route to realising legal, technological or commercial impacts or on more instrumental outcomes:** many researchers default to a paradigm of public engagement as 'dissemination', and in the process limit its potential to contribute at all stages of the research cycle. The public are most often framed as an 'audience' for research, rather than experts in their own right or as active participants in the process
- **Evidence provided of impact on public understanding and awareness is often weak:** usually, researchers limit their evidence to a list of the outlets they have used and the numbers of people engaged.
- **Public engagement is often 'mediated' through the involvement of organisations like schools, broadcasters, charities or museums:** there is significant potential to benefit from these organisations' expertise in engagement and evaluation of impact, but this is rarely made explicit in the case studies (for instance, by utilising evaluations conducted by them)
- **Case studies involving engagement with the public are as likely to be rated as 4* as those that don't:** anecdotally, there was nervousness in the sector that public engagement would be valued less highly than other types of engagement. This finding challenges that assumption.

WHY?



Through various mechanisms

- Media
- Websites
- Databases / archives
- Social media
- Publications
- Performances
- Exhibitions
- Presentations
- Festivals
- Outreach
- Education
- Lifelong learning
- Debates
- Consultancy
- Network-building
- Training and development
- Advisory groups
- Consultation
- Co-production

A BBC television news story enabled widespread public awareness of the user interface concept developed by the **Glyndŵr** researchers and the achievements of the research.

Hancock received EPSRC public engagement funding to build an EvoFIT installation at the Sensation Science Centre in Dundee. Visitors are able to interact with EvoFIT at a specially designed station, where they can try evolving a composite for themselves, while another station explains the science behind the exhibit. The centre attracts over 70,000 visitors per year, representing a significant impact on public understanding of the science of face identification

The OPAL Water Centre at UCL, funded to a total of £732k, developed an innovative educational national water survey programme accessible to people of all ages and abilities, promoted especially within disadvantaged communities. The Survey encouraged greater understanding of the aquatic environment through public participation in water quality and aquatic biodiversity assessment and used high-quality research to link the community, voluntary and statutory sectors

WHO WITH?

CIVIL SOCIETY

'Research by members of the Department of Media and Communications on news and journalism in the digital age has been used to develop **civil society engagement** and high-level recommendations to media policy-makers and politicians, on media reform and the Leveson Inquiry. Recommendations made in the research on collaborative relationships between news organizations and **civil society associations** have been implemented across the country by the Media Trust'

POLICY

'Through practice-based projects, his research continues to deepen and extend the understanding of innovative Brazilian arts practices in Britain. Heritage has forged new opportunities for UK arts practitioners to develop their work in Brazil and shaped new **policy exchanges** between ministerial/governmental and non-governmental **organisations**'

DEMOGRAPHICS: age, race, sex, economic status, level of education, income level and employment

Clubs and societies

Charities

Faith groups

CIVIL SOCIETY

Charities & associations; societies and clubs

Think tanks

Museums, galleries, libraries

Associations

POLICY

Policy makers, Local government regulators, civil servants

National government

Quangos

Health services

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

Professionals and practitioners

Schools and colleges

Broadcasters

Researcher

BUSINESS

Companies, SMEs, entrepreneurs

Large companies

Social enterprises

SMEs

PUBLICS

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

'Professor Lois Weaver joined QMUL Drama in 1997. Her research-led practice as artist, curator and activist has had substantial impact within the cultural world of live art where she has influenced the practice of both emerging and established artists, and the programming and curation of performance. She has facilitated, mentored and directed a range of **artists**; opened up new spaces for **performance's production and presentation**; and actively supported other **curators** in the expansion of live art programming, especially in **London**' (19055)

POLICY

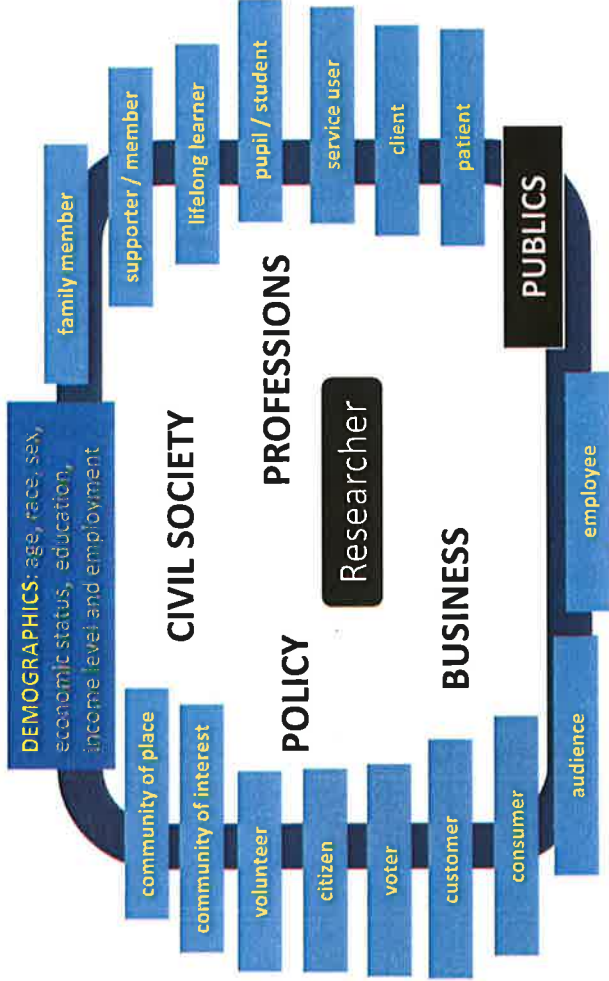
'The research played a significant role in guiding **policy** by informing the development of the Department of **Health's End of Life Care Strategy**, launched in 2008 and led by the National End of Life Care Programme'

WHO WITH?

'UPSI's work has provided an evidence base about how to engage effectively with **communities** so that policing interventions target those issues influencing how people think, feel and act about their safety'.

'Galaxy Zoo (GZ) is among the most successful online citizen science project ever undertaken, relying on hundreds of thousands of **volunteers** to classify galaxy images'.

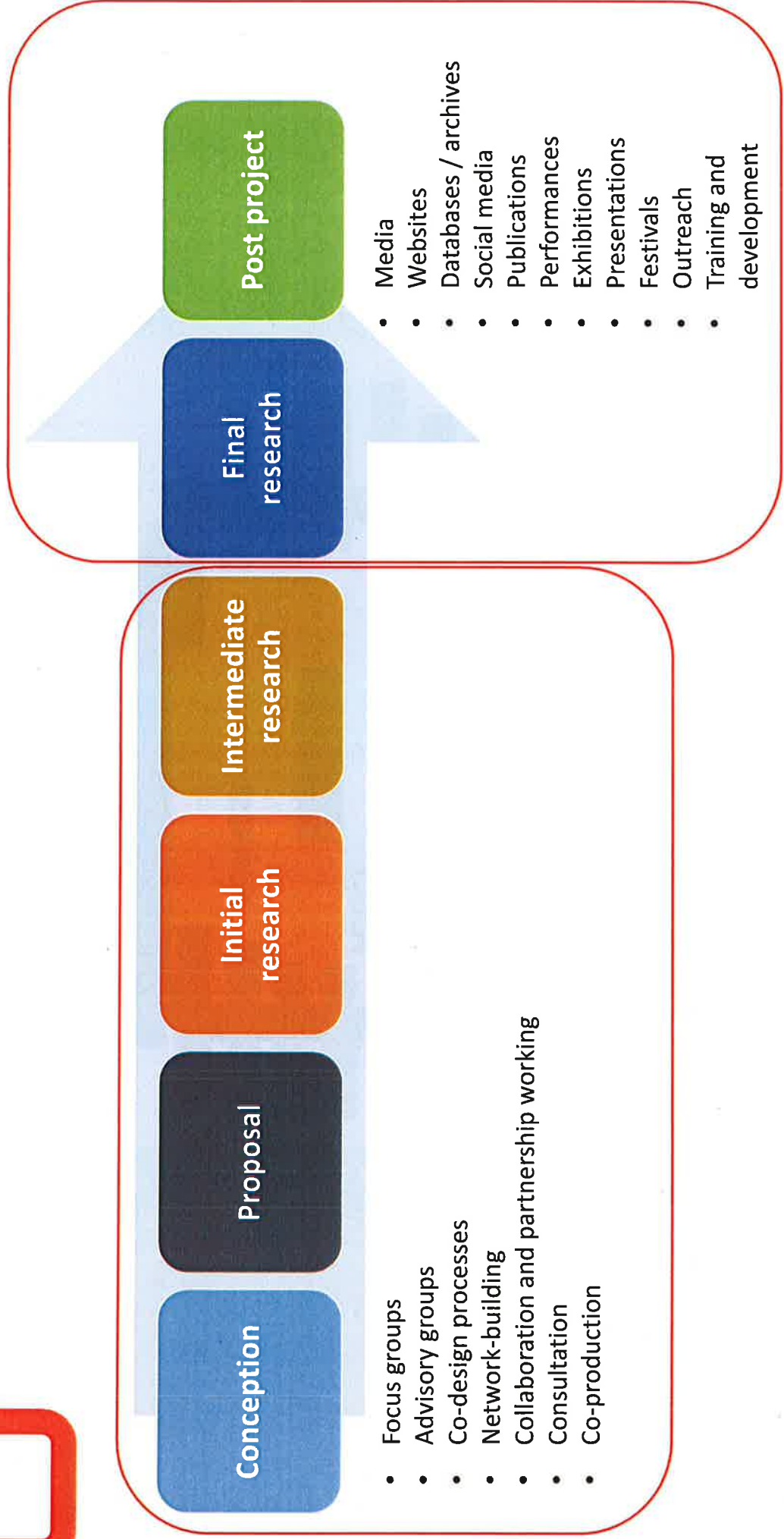
'Open Data has lowered barriers to data access, increased government transparency and delivered significant economic, social and environmental benefits. Southampton research and leadership has led to the UK Public Data Principles, which were enshrined in the UK Government Open Data White Paper, and has led to data.gov.uk, which provides access to 10,000 government datasets. The open datasets are proving means for strong **citizen engagement**'



'This case study focuses on the research conducted by members of the UoA examining the services offered to **service users and carers** in secure settings. It has had a significant impact on the development of professional practice in secure settings based on the views, experiences, and needs of service users and carers. It has established service user and carer engagement in research conducted in secure settings. It has also informed service and policy developments in the United Kingdom and internationally'.

'Dr Walmsley has worked on numerous studies relating to the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) relating to the tourism and hospitality sector. The purpose of the research was to **inform consumers** about the impacts of tourism, influence their selection of hotel groups and investigate different corporate policies and practices'

WHEN?



HOW?

'Classic' public engagement

'Classic' public engagement involves researchers engaging directly with a community of place / interest – e.g. with adult learners – with this engagement forming the backbone of the case study.

Explore the Deep: Public Engagement with Deep-Ocean Research We have achieved these impacts through: interactions with print, online, and broadcast media that have brought our research to millions; series of talks and events that have inspired specific audiences of tens of thousands; and a network of interactive online resources that has enabled people worldwide to share in our exploration of deep-ocean environments and their biodiversity

'Mediated' public engagement'

'Mediated' public engagement sees an active collaboration with an intermediary organisation(s) like a charity, museum, media or school to reach their audience / public

'Reading the riots' & increasing public understanding The Unit's Criminal Justice group has carried out a significant body of research relating to youth disaffection, anti-social behaviour and policing. This led to Newburn being approached by *The Guardian* to establish a joint research project following the 2011 riots in England. The ensuing research achieved very wide reach via conventional print and other media, informing public understanding of the riots and challenging conventional wisdom about their causes.

'Blended' public engagement'

Here, public engagement forms part of a wider knowledge exchange project – e.g. to engage policy makers, practitioners and service users around a particular health issue.

Improving understanding, implementation and uptake of advance care planning for end of life care
'The Sue Ryder Care Centre has enhanced the understanding, implementation and uptake of advance care planning for end of life care. Its work has shaped **public policy** and influenced national initiatives that have improved quality of life and reduced the number of deaths in hospitals. The research has been cited as an exemplar by the World Health Organisation and has helped inform **polycymaking** at European level. It has **guided professional practice**, educated care staff and contributed to a more positive **public attitude** towards talking about end of life issues'

'Behind the scenes' public engagement'

Here there is no direct engagement with publics – all the effort is put into improving the quality of public engagement being undertaken by intermediary organisations, by influencing their practice or making new resources available

Improving the quality of news coverage across the BBC in a devolved UK
Our recommendations were adopted by the BBC which took action based on our findings to improve news coverage across all its outlets. Our follow-up study, conducted a year after this intervention, found that BBC news coverage had changed to become more accurate, and better reflected post-devolution politics in the **UK**.

'Bolt on' public engagement'

Here there is a cursory role for public engagement (for instance, some media coverage was achieved) but it is peripheral to the main engagement activity being undertaken.

Influence on UK Government's Nuclear R&D Programmes and Policy
The Committee does a significant amount of public engagement and this has led to several radio appearances and work with public and other stakeholders in the UK and abroad. **Grimes'** high media profile and TV/radio appearances during the Fukushima accident were responsible for the UK public remaining positive about the nuclear option



WHAT IMPACT?

Communicating the meaning of the research beyond academia

Conceptual

Knowledge and understanding

- Circulate new ideas
- Deepen understanding
- Promote learning
- Enrich research

• Sir Andrew Burns, Britain's Envoy for Post-Holocaust Issues, says "The IOE's approach marks a shift away from simple 'lessons of the Holocaust' to genuine engagement with the complexity of the past, and deep learning about one of the most traumatic events in human history," he says. "What is remarkable is the extent to which such complexity can be made accessible to pupils."

Enjoyment, inspiration, creativity

- Fun
- Innovation
- Creativity
- Being inspired
- Experimenting

• It was found that being able to contribute to a national research programme was a key motivating factor for many participants; public involvement created a greater sense of connection and ownership of local spaces

• The school science coordinator said the pupils "were truly enthralled and excited to be taking part in a real scientific investigation"

Attitudes and values

- Self-reflection
- Motivation
- Empathy and tolerance

• A follow-up evaluation of the 2010 event showed all respondents would recommend a similar event to someone else and that around a third felt more comfortable about discussing death and dying

Instrumental



Influencing policies, products and services to better reflect public interests

WHAT IMPACT?

Access to resources

- New
- Enhanced

Some 1,200 individuals requested copies of the original version, which an evaluation found was used by a wide range of healthcare professionals and accessed by service users directly [d]. Users reported that it helped facilitate otherwise "difficult" conversations.

Quality of life

- Health
- Education
- Leisure
- Economic
- Rights
- Safety & cohesion

Data published in 2012's Fourth Annual Report revealed the Strategy's effect on reducing the number of people dying in hospital: between 2008 and 2011 around 30,000 more were able to pass away in their usual place of residence

Economic return

- Commercial return
- New funding
- Efficiency
- Employment

From 2008-12, Delgado programmed 67 Spanish-language films attracting audiences of 21,856 and generating £193,525.50 from ticket sales. Of these films, 9 have secured UK releases, generating cinematic box-office and DVD sales

Environment / public realm

- Public realm
- Biodiversity

The public surveyed over 25,000 sites across England and entered the information into the OPAL national database; ii) communities contributed data to local research studies;

Products/ services

- New
- Enhanced
- Changed
- Stopped

Reynolds's expert advice in almost all areas of modern and contemporary children's literature has been instrumental in many of the most significant acquisitions to the Collection

Policies/ regulations

- New
- Sustained
- Shaped
- Removed

In the Criminal Justice area the innovative 'Reading the Riots' study (see ICS) provoked widespread debate and led the Home Secretary to announce a review of police 'stop and search' practices

Capacity building



Influencing individual and collective behaviour and skills to realise public benefit

WHAT IMPACT?

Social mobility / equity

- School readiness
- School attainment
- Participation in education
- Participation in employment
- Access to professions
- Access to services

Of more than 45,000 OPAL Water beneficiaries (who actively took part in activities), 17% were classified as 'hard-to-reach' and included deprived communities, people with special educational needs, victims of domestic abuse and black and minority ethnic groups. 240 surveys were conducted in the country's 20% most deprived areas, and 483 in areas in the two highest crime domains.

Activity, behaviour, progression

- What people do
- Intention to act
- New skills
- Change in how manage lives

At just one of 13 schools with whom we have worked in our direct engagement, we interacted with more than 1,100 pupils. This school has reported a year-on-year increase in pupils applying to study marine sciences at University, with staff also noting "a massive and positive impact on teaching and learning with those groups of students" and that our contributions to CPD for teachers "inspired me and many other teachers to include more contemporary marine science in our day-to-day teaching"

Collaboration / networks

- New
- Enhanced

Since 2009 the coalition has gained 20,000 members from across the NHS, voluntary and independent health and social care sectors, community organisations and academia

Professional practice

- New frameworks
- Changed practices

Between March and September 2012 Gentle Dusk, a London-based consultancy specialising in preparing and supporting end of life care, trained 32 volunteers. In September 2012 Gentle Dusk secured new funding from NHS London to train 30 volunteers attached to GP practices. Twelve community groups benefited from courses run by Rowcroft Hospice, Devon, in March 2012

Key findings: how to construct an excellent case study

What?

A convincing account of the significance of the research: why it matters beyond academia. Who should care about it? What is distinctive about its potential?

Where?

An explicit, intelligent acknowledgement of the external context, and a clear grasp of the potential contribution of the research to **influence thinking, practice and people's capabilities**

Who with?

A clear articulation of the key publics and partners involved and a rationale for their involvement, with evident insight and knowledge about their interests, motivations and needs in relation to the research

Why?

A confident sense of purpose animating the engagement that underpins the impact claimed

When?

An intelligent sense of timing to maximise the potential impact of the engagement activity, with activities differentiated by the phase of the research

How?

Drawing on appropriate methods, tailored to purpose, context and the publics they are seeking to engage

With what impact?

Able to talk convincingly about the difference it has helped to generate, and making credible claims for the contribution made by the research

Key findings: public engagement in the impact templates

The Impact Templates submitted by the highest performing Units of Assessment reveal that successful departments pay attention to the following

- High performing units of assessment typically embed a strategic approach to public engagement in their overarching approach to impact.
- Even if they submitted relatively few case studies featuring public engagement, they still recognised the value and significance of public engagement to their broader work as a department

The key features which consistently appeared, and which reflect critical cornerstones of effective support for PE included:

- Treating public engagement as an integral part of their impact strategy
- **Clearly articulating who their 'publics' are**
- Expressing an explicit rationale for their public engagement activity
- Having an authentic flavour to their public engagement, sensitive to their discipline, context and values
- Investing in building sustained partnerships and collaborations with external intermediary organisations
- Deploying appropriate methods, and investing resources and effort to develop their expertise in engagement
- Investing in the creation of a culture in which researchers are supported and incentivised to engage with the public