

Panel C criteria:

Impact template

1. The impact template (REF3a) presents submitting units with an opportunity to describe how they have sought to enable and/or facilitate the achievement of impact arising from their research and how they are shaping and adapting their plans to ensure that they continue to do so in the future. This is distinct from evidence provided in the environment template, which should describe how a unit supports the production of excellent research.
2. The evidence put forward should concentrate on how the unit has facilitated the achievement of impact. The main panel recognises that there may be support available to encourage the achievement of impact within the submitting unit's institution, but notes that submissions should specify how any institutional support has contributed to the unit's approach, rather than simply stating its existence.
3. The sections of the impact template should provide explanation of and evidence for:
 - **Context.** Submissions should describe the main non-academic user groups, beneficiaries or audiences for the unit's research, the main types of impact specifically relevant to the unit's research, and how these relate to the range of research activity or groups in the unit.
 - **Approach to impact.** Submissions should describe the unit's approach and its infrastructural mechanisms to support staff to achieve impact, during the period 2008-2013. This may include (but is not limited to):
 - how staff in the unit engaged with or developed relationships with key users in order to develop impact from the unit's research
 - evidence of the nature of those relationships
 - how the unit has specifically supported staff to enable impact to be achieved from their research
 - how the unit has made use of institutional support, expertise, or resources to provide support to its staff.
 - **Strategy and plans.** Submissions should describe clearly stated goals and plans for maximising the potential for impact from current and future research.
 - **Relationship to the case studies.** Submissions should describe the relationship between the support for impact described and the case studies (although the main panel acknowledges that impacts may have been serendipitous rather than planned, or may have arisen from research prior to the period 2008-2013). This could include details of how, for example, particular case studies exemplify aspects of the approach adopted, or how particular case studies informed the development of the unit's approach.

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4. The sub-panels will assess impact according to the generic criteria and level definitions in 'guidance on submissions', Annex A, Table A3. The criteria will be understood as follows:
 - a. **Reach** will be understood in terms of the extent and diversity of the communities, environments, individuals, organisations or any other beneficiaries that have benefited or been affected.
 - b. **Significance** will be understood in terms of the degree to which the impact has enriched, influenced, informed or **changed** policies, opportunities, perspectives or practices of communities, individuals or organisations.
5. In considering reach, the potential domain for an impact will be taken into consideration. In other words, reach will not be assessed in purely geographic terms, nor in terms of absolute numbers of beneficiaries, but rather in terms of the extent to which the potential number or groups of beneficiaries have been affected. It is, for example, recognised that a policy issue affecting one region of the UK uniquely has that region as the potential domain for the impact, and that defines the boundaries of the possible reach achievable.
6. Each case study will be assessed in terms of the reach and significance of the impact on a holistic basis, rather than assessing each criterion separately.