

Impact, social science and humanities

Workshop in Oslo, 27th March 2017 10-18 organised by the Oslo Institute for Research on the Impact of Science (OSIRIS) in collaboration with NOS-HS

Venue: House of Literature (Litteraturhuset), Wergelandsveien 29, Oslo, Amalie Skram room

Registration required: Please send an email to Tina Næss: tina.nass@tik.uio.no before March 25th



Impact is the new buzzword in science policy used for the relationship between science and society and for the expectations that science in one way or another will lead to benefits outside of the scientific community. It is ubiquitously found in EU policy documents and research support, and it is an ever more central term in national evaluation efforts. The UK Research Excellence Framework (REF) with its methodology of combining traditional research evaluation with “impact case studies” is rapidly spreading to other countries, not least in the Nordic region.

But impact is a complex term. Although representatives of social science and humanities may find the concept less alien to their disciplines’ nature than “innovation” or “utility value”, impact still leads to difficult questions about evaluation, timing, indicators and policy. Research councils have a particularly intricate role in the impact agenda. They design evaluations of impact, they demand that funding applicants are able to articulate possible pathways to impact, and they depend upon these activities to show their funding ministries that research can be tied to the grand challenges facing society.

This workshop aims to highlight this multifaceted role of research councils when it comes to impact. It will contain keynotes representing theoretical and practical analyses as well as roundtable discussions with researchers and practitioners. The intended audience is individuals involved in policy, funding, administration and support of research within social science and humanities as well as researchers interested in the topic of impact. The workshop is funded by the Nordic research councils’ collaborative organisation NOS-HS.

Programme

10:00 Coffee and registration

10:30 Opening of the workshop by Taran Thune, OSIRIS, University of Oslo

Session 1 – impact and social science/humanities research

10:40 Claire Donovan, Brunel University: Committing Metricide: For an ethical “impactology”

11:20 Magnus Gulbrandsen, OSIRIS, University of Oslo: Do we need a separate discussion about impact for humanities and social science?

12:00 Lunch

Session 2 – how can policies and funders support impact

12:45 Perspectives on impact from policymakers (e.g. what do research councils and policymakers do to promote impact) - (10 minutes each) followed by short discussion:

Denmark - Professor Ole Hammerslev Chair of the Danish Council for Independent Research

Finland - Professor Sami Pihlström, Academy SSH council member. Professor of Philosophy of Religion, Faculty of Theology, University of Helsinki

Iceland - Eyjólfur Guðmundsson, Rector at the University of Akureyri

Norway - Senior adviser Iselin Theien PhD, Department for Strategy and analyses, Division of Science, The Research Council of Norway

Sweden - Sten Söderberg. Analyst at the Swedish Research Council

13:45 Paul Benneworth, University of Twente: Impact and public values

14:25 Coffee break

Session 3 – measuring impact

14:45 Leonie van Drooge, Rathenau: Assessing the impact of the social sciences and humanities: the Dutch approach

15:25 Jordi Molas-Gallaert, INGENIO/CSIC/Polytechnic University of Valencia: Assessing the impact of the social sciences and humanities: the SIAMPI approach

15:55 Coffee break

Session 4 – humanities in the future

16.15 The new Norwegian White Paper on the humanities. Presentation by Hanne Monclair, special advisor at the Ministry of Research and Education.

16.35 Comments to the White Paper by Professor Sverker Sörlin, Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm.

16.55 Final panel debate: the role of research councils in promoting impact.

Participants: Professor Sami Pihlström, Senior adviser Iselin Theien, Analyst Sten Söderberg, Rector Eyjólfur Guðmundsson and Associate Professor David Budtz Pedersen (Co-Director of the Humanomics Research Centre, Aalborg University Copenhagen).

17.30 End of workshop