

THE ACADEMY

Developing Liverpool

RESEARCHING

Report on Making an Impact 2019



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Executive Summary

Making an Impact 2019 was even more ambitious, designed to respond to Liverpool's research staff diversity and their ability to engage with development. Taking place over 7 weeks, 150 external and internal speakers provided 58 development sessions, with over 1300 registrations from 600 individuals.

In support of the University's Vision to be "globally recognised in all our research and impact activities", and to help deliver the Research and Impact Strategy which "is first and foremost about our people; creating the right environment and supporting our researchers at every career stage" (Strategy 2026, p.6,p.10), The Academy partnered with colleagues from Research, Partnerships & Innovation (RPI) to design and deliver [Making an Impact 2019](#) between the 13th May – 28th June 2019.

Making an Impact 2019 was designed as a series of connected development activities focused around the Industrial Strategy priorities and supporting University of Liverpool staff, in particularly the talent pipeline of Early Career Researchers, to develop their multi-disciplinary research-impact related knowledge, skills, attributes and competencies. It focused on the four of the five foundations of the Industrial Strategy:

- Ideas: encouraging University of Liverpool staff to explore innovative ideas and solutions in relation to the impact of their research
- Skills: ensuring participants develop and reflect on skills that will enable their greater contribution to the impact agenda.
- Business environment: supporting participants' ideas around IP and commercialising their research
- Communities: enhancing the capabilities and impact of multi-disciplinary researchers who advance the communities within which they are based, and the wider UK populace

(DBEIS, 2017)

Making an Impact 2019 sessions consisted of a mixture of workshops, seminars, facilities tours, an informal café, masterclasses, bootcamps, a keynote address, panel discussions, 1:1 surgeries and showcases. (Figure 1.1 on p.7-10). The Series aimed to:

- Foster a culture of learning and development by providing rich, varied, high-quality development opportunities for researchers at all stages of their careers
- Develop Liverpool researchers for future roles in careers both within and outside academia
- Stimulate conversations with employers and leading industry professional across different sectors
- Build on the success and longer term outcomes of [Making an Impact Week 2018](#)
- Utilise short term investment from HEIF Industrial Strategy funds for maximum return

The [Making an Impact 2019 Framework](#) consisted of impact clusters and a knowledge and skill axis. Participants were able to build a tailored experience of Making an Impact 2019 based on their respective research impact needs, ambitions and interests. Communications for the Series included two Twitter competitions that sought to further participants engagement with research-impact related activities: [Impact of Development Weekly Twitter Competition](#) and the [Stories of Impact Twitter Competition](#). Both competitions formed a useful strategy to get participants to engage in public dissemination about the impact of the development activity in relation to the Industrial Strategy foundations and priorities.

In accordance with the University's HR Excellence in Research Award (Section 2.3.1 of the [University's 2017-2019 Concordat Implementation Plan](#)), Making an Impact 2019 sessions were mapped against the [Vitae Researcher Development Framework](#) which describes the knowledge, behaviour and attributes of successful researchers.

The evaluation outlined in this document consists of a post-6-month point evaluation of Making an Impact Week 2018, as well as primary data from two surveys administered during Making an Impact 2019. Participants' qualitative evaluations (n=394) of the extent to which Making an Impact 2019 it achieved its stated objectives are overwhelmingly positive. Key themes are summarised in the table on the following page:

Making an Impact 2019 Objective	Key themes arising from participants' evaluation feedback
Foster a culture of learning and development by providing rich, varied, high-quality development opportunities for researchers at all stages of their careers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A base of activity for the launch of new and talented early career researchers at Liverpool • Overall design of the Making an Impact Activity • Empowering research-impact sessions
Develop Liverpool researchers for future roles in careers both within and outside academia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting space and time for collaborative reflection on research design and process, findings and overall progress • Equipping and supporting researchers to be adaptable and flexible in an increasingly diverse global research environment and employment market • High-quality variety across the sessions that meets researchers' career development needs
Stimulate conversations with employers and leading industry professional across different sectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing networks and relationships with research • Developing flexible knowledge exchange strategies, which recognise the roles that partners and collaborators may wish to play • Challenging research-impact related myths and enabling insightful thinking and reflection
Build on the success an longer term outcomes of Making an Impact Week 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledging of the expertise and active roles played by research users in making impact happen • Consistently working towards excellent infrastructure, leadership and management support • Immediate impacts on current research-impact working practices
Utilise short term investment from HEIF Industrial Strategy funds for maximum return	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involving users at all stages of the research, including working with user stakeholder and participatory groups • Developing good understanding of policy/practice contexts and encouraging users to bring knowledge of context to research by offering high quality content • Involving intermediaries and knowledge brokers as translators, amplifiers and network providers of research impact • Augmenting a commitment to portfolios of research activity that build up reputations with research users

Participants' quantitative feedback was similarly positive. Evaluations highlighted the tremendous success of this activity: 88% indicated respective sessions met their expectations; 84% noted that sessions met their needs; and an overwhelming 90% confirmed the sessions supported their future needs and career plans.

Facilitators' feedback was also sought during Making an Impact 2019. Key themes arising from their comments (n=48) related to the usefulness of pre-event communications; flexibility before and during the event; on-site organisation; engagement of and contribution by participants.

The [University's 2017-2019 Concordat Implementation Plan](#) outlines actions that that the University commits to undertake in order to retain its HR Excellence in Research Award. Making an Impact 2019 met the University's commitment to the support and career development of researchers in accordance with the success measures for Sections 3.2.1 and 3.3.1 of the University's 2017-2019 Concordat Implementation Plan.

Evaluations of Making an Impact 2019 sessions will inform the ongoing planning and delivery of researcher development made available to staff by The Academy, in liaison with partners across the University and beyond.

MONDAY 13 MAY		
Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) – because you want your research to make a real difference (Workshop) Clarence Room, Foresight Centre 09:30-12:30	Conflict resolution in the research environment (Workshop) Waterhouse Room, Foresight Centre 13:30-16:30	
WEEK 1 13 – 17 MAY		
TUESDAY 14 MAY		
Presenting to a Wider Audience (Workshop) Clarence Room, Foresight Centre 09:30-12:30		
WEDNESDAY 15 MAY		
Getting Attention: Elevator Pitching (Workshop) Training Room 1, Foresight Centre 10:30-11:30	Managing Project Delivery (Workshop) Training Room 1, Foresight Centre 14:00-16:00	
FRIDAY 17 MAY		
The Fall and Rise of the Country House (Keynote) Gallery, Foresight Centre 10:00-12:00	Prof Louise Kenny's Impact Matters seminar series (Seminar) Sherrington Building, Seminar Room 4 12:30-14:00	Who's reading your research? Using Altmetric to track the reach and potential impact of your work (Workshop) IT Suite, Foresight Centre 14:00-15:00

MONDAY 20 MAY	
Creating Stories of Impact Part 1: Using your smartphone to create a short research video (Workshop) Hub Lounge, Foresight Centre 10:00-16:00	
TUESDAY 21 MAY	
Research Staff Association: Building career impact and networking (Workshop) Chandler Room, Foresight Centre 10:00-12:00	Tours of Sensor City: Inside a Global Innovation Hub (Facilities Tour) Sensor City 14:00-15:00
WEDNESDAY 22 MAY	
Presenting to a Wider Audience (Workshop) Clarence Room, Foresight Centre 09:30-12:30	Research Café special edition collaboration edition with LJMU (Informal Café) Thornton Room, Foresight Centre 14:30-16:30
THURSDAY 23 MAY	
Masterclass: Winning Collaborative Innovate UK Bids (Masterclass) The Thornton Room, Foresight Centre 10:30-12:30	How my PhD led me to become a Subject Matter Expert (Seminar) The Thornton Room, Foresight Centre 14:00-15:00
FRIDAY 24 MAY	
How Can Elements Help you Capture and Track your Research Impact Activities? (Seminar) Waterhouse Room, Foresight Centre 11:30-12:30	

WEEK 2
20 – 24
MAY

An initiative by The Academy and RPI

Register for sessions on The Academy's website:
www.liverpool.ac.uk/researcher/making-impact
 @LivResearcher and @LivUniAcademy



KEY

IMPACT CLUSTERS

- SOCIETY
- ENVIRONMENT OR QUALITY OF LIFE
- CULTURE
- HEALTH
- PUBLIC POLICY OR SERVICES
- THE ECONOMY
- BEYOND ACADEMIA

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS ELEMENTS

- A Research partnerships
- B Working with business
- C Working with the public and third sector
- D Skills, enterprise and entrepreneurship
- E Local growth and regeneration
- F IP and commercialisation
- G Public and community engagement
- Lunch provided
- Refreshments provided

Figure 1.1: The Making an Impact Week programme of activity (page 1 of 4)

TUESDAY 28 MAY	
Innovation, Collaboration and Business Insights (Workshop) The Thornton Room, Foresight Centre 09:30-12:30	Attracting your own funding (Workshop) Thornton Room, Foresight Centre 13:30-16:30
WEDNESDAY 29 MAY	
Boosting the impact of your publications (Workshop) Thornton Room, Foresight Centre 09:30-12:30	Social media bootcamp (Bootcamp) Thornton Room, Foresight Centre 13:30-16:30
THURSDAY 30 MAY	
Flight Simulation Tour: Looking to the future (Facilities Tour) Walker Building 11:00-12:00	Creating Stories of Impact: 1:1 Surgeries (1:1 Surgeries) Westbury Room, Foresight Centre 13:30-16:30
FRIDAY 31 MAY	
Prof Louise Kenny's Impact Matters seminar series (Seminar) Brodie Tower (BROD-406/406a) 12:30-14:00	Tours of Sensor City: Inside a Global Innovation Hub (Facilities Tour) Sensor City 14:00-15:00

WEEK 3
28 – 31
MAY

MONDAY 3 JUNE	
Peer Review: What really happens? (Workshop) The Chapel, Foresight Centre 10:30-11:30	Tour of the University of Liverpool Formula Motorsport Facilities (Facilities Tour) Walker Building 14:00-15:00
TUESDAY 4 JUNE	
Making meaningful impact with your research (Workshop) Thornton Room, Foresight Centre 10:00-14:00	Making the headlines: An introduction to engaging with the media (Seminar) The Gallery, Foresight Centre 14:00-15:30
WEDNESDAY 5 JUNE	
Real World Impact: What does an impact on culture, heritage and society look like? (Panel Discussion) The Thornton Room, Foresight Centre 11:00-12:00	Culture Club – Exploring New Cultural Collaborations with National Museums Liverpool (Networking Lunch) Thornton Room, Foresight Centre 12:00-13:00
THURSDAY 6 JUNE	
Walking down the pathway to impact with everything in hand: developing your communications strategy (Workshop) Chandler Room, Foresight Centre 10:00-12:00	Open Research – what does it mean and what's it all about? (Seminar) The Chapel, Foresight Centre 14:00-15:00
FRIDAY 7 JUNE	
Maximizing and Demonstrating the Impact of Your Research (Workshop) Thornton Room, Foresight Centre 09:30-12:30	Stand Out From the Crowd – Maximizing Your Personal Impact and Reputation (Workshop) Thornton Room, Foresight Centre 13:30-16:30

WEEK 4
3 – 7
JUNE

An initiative by The Academy and RPI

Register for sessions on The Academy's website:
www.liverpool.ac.uk/researcher/making-impact

@LivResearcher and @LivUniAcademy



KEY

IMPACT CLUSTERS

SOCIETY | ENVIRONMENT OR QUALITY OF LIFE | CULTURE | HEALTH | PUBLIC POLICY OR SERVICES | THE ECONOMY | BEYOND ACADEMIA

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS ELEMENTS

- A Research partnerships
- B Working with business
- C Working with the public and third sector

- D Skills, enterprise and entrepreneurship
- E Local growth and regeneration
- F IP and commercialisation
- G Public and community engagement

Lunch provided

Refreshments provided

Figure 1.1: The Making an Impact Week programme of activity (page 2 of 4)

MONDAY 10 JUNE		
Maximising Impact (Seminar) Thornton Room, Foresight Centre 10:30-11:30	Creating Stories of Impact: 1:1 Surgeries (1:1 Surgeries) Westbury Room, Foresight Centre 13:30-16:30	
WEDNESDAY 12 JUNE		
Developing a Commercial Proposal (Workshop) Waterhouse Room, Foresight Centre 10:30-12:30	Pitching Your Project (Workshop) Waterhouse Room, Foresight Centre 14:00-16:00	
THURSDAY 13 JUNE		
Negotiating Your Way to Success (Workshop) Chandler Room, Foresight Centre 09:30-12:30	Getting Attention: Elevator Pitching (Workshop) Chandler Room, Foresight Centre 14:00-15:00	
FRIDAY 14 JUNE		
Creating Stories of Impact Part 2: Editing your Research Video (Workshop) Thornton Room, Foresight Centre 09:30-12:30	Prof Louise Kenny's Impact Matters seminar series (Seminar) 502 Flex 2 12:30-14:00	Blogging for Research (Workshop) Thornton Room, Foresight Centre 13:30-16:30

WEEK 5
10 – 14 JUNE

MONDAY 17 – WEDNESDAY 19 JUNE		MONDAY 17 JUNE	
Science Entrepreneur Experience (Bootcamp) VR Suite, Materials Innovation Factory 09:30-16:30	Tour of The Materials Innovation Factory (Facilities Tour) Materials Innovation Factory 12:00-13:00	What is FAIR data? Can it help with Impact? (Seminar) Thornton Room, Foresight Centre 14:00-15:00	
TUESDAY 18 JUNE		WEDNESDAY 19 JUNE	
All you ever wanted to know about Knowledge Exchange and Innovation vouchers but were afraid to ask (Seminar and Panel) Hub Lounge, Foresight Centre 10:30-11:30		Tour of The Materials Innovation Factory (Facilities Tour) Materials Innovation Factory 10:30-11:30	
THURSDAY 20 JUNE		FRIDAY 21 JUNE	
Reacting to the News: Using your knowledge to gain media coverage (Panel discussion) The Thornton Room, Foresight Centre 10:30-11:30	Raising your research profile by writing for The Conversation (Interactive seminar) The Gallery, Foresight Centre 14:00-15:30	Masterclass: Winning Collaborative Innovate UK Bids (Masterclass) Hub Lounge, Foresight Centre 10:00-12:00	

WEEK 6
17 – 21 JUNE

An initiative by The Academy and RPI

Register for sessions on The Academy's website:
www.liverpool.ac.uk/researcher/making-impact

@LivResearcher and @LivUniAcademy



KEY

IMPACT CLUSTERS

SOCIETY	ENVIRONMENT OR QUALITY OF LIFE	CULTURE	HEALTH	PUBLIC POLICY OR SERVICES	THE ECONOMY	BEYOND ACADEMIA
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KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS ELEMENTS

- A** Research partnerships
- B** Working with business
- C** Working with the public and third sector

- D** Skills, enterprise and entrepreneurship
- E** Local growth and regeneration
- F** IP and commercialisation
- G** Public and community engagement

- Lunch provided
- Refreshments provided

Figure 1.1: The Making an Impact Week programme of activity (page 3 of 4)

MONDAY 24 JUNE	
Tour of the University of Liverpool Formula Motorsport Facilities (Facilities Tour) Walker Building 10:00-11:00	Controversial research: working with the Science Media Centre (Seminar) Hub Lounge, Foresight Centre 14:00-15:30
B C D G	G ☕
WEDNESDAY 26 JUNE	
Making an impact by engaging with policy makers (Seminar) Chandler Room, Foresight Centre 10:30-11:30	Empowering Women in STEM: an honest account from a #newPI (Seminar) Chandler Room, Foresight Centre 14:00-16:00
G	D ☕
THURSDAY 27 JUNE	
First class fellowship: how to make your fellowship proposal stand out from the crowd (Seminar) Hub Lounge, Foresight Centre 10:30-11:30	Flight Simulation Tour: Looking to the future (Facilities Tour) Walker Building 14:00-15:00
A B C D E F G	A B
FRIDAY 28 JUNE	
Impact Acceleration Showcase (Seminar and showcase) Hub Lounge, Foresight Centre 11:00-13:00	
A B D F ✂	

WEEK 7
24 – 28
JUNE

The Academy promotes and enables the development of high performance in leadership and management, research, education and professional practice, working with partners across the University of Liverpool and beyond to achieve the highest standards of excellence. Find out more about development opportunities available to you at: www.liverpool.ac.uk/intranet/the-academy

An initiative by The Academy and RPI

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@LivResearcher and @LivUniAcademy



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- D Skills, enterprise and entrepreneurship
- E Local growth and regeneration
- F IP and commercialisation
- G Public and community engagement

- ✂ Lunch provided
- ☕ Refreshments provided

Figure 1.1: The Making an Impact Week programme of activity (page 4 of 4)

1. Context

The University of Liverpool's vision is to be "globally recognised in all our research and impact activities", and to help deliver the Research and Impact Strategy which "is first and foremost about our people; creating the right environment and supporting our researchers at every career stage" (University of Liverpool Strategy 2026, 2016, p.6,p.10).

The Academy continues its partnership with colleagues from Research, Partnerships & Innovation (RPI). Previous activity in the form of [Making an Impact Week 2018](#) (MaIW) has been very well received, and participant feedback indicated the usefulness of and demand for an ongoing pan-institutional development programme.

Building on the success of MaIW 2018, RPI made available additional HEIF funding for researcher development activity across UoL in 2019. As the funding was derived from the HEIF industrial Strategy, its use aligned with knowledge exchange and impact, and supported priorities in the government's Industrial Strategy white paper. This focus of and partnership for additional researcher development activity at UoL also arrived at an opportune time in view of the then-ongoing [review of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers](#). The review included several recommendations on how to enhance the working conditions and environment for researchers. Key elements include recommendations that references in the current Concordat that describe leaving academia in negative terms, such as "attrition from the research path" are deleted. The revised [Researcher Development Concordat](#) (the Concordat) places an overall increased importance on the personal and career development of researchers, and includes specific individual, institutional and funder obligations to "provide opportunities, structured support, encouragement and time for researchers to engage in a minimum of 10 days professional development pro rata per year, recognising that researchers will pursue careers across a wide range of employment sectors." (Vitae, 2019, p.6)

Furthermore, the Concordat review has highlighted the need for HEIs to invest in the talent pipeline and promote broader career options, particularly in relation to the UK Industrial Strategy which highlights innovation as a major element within its ambitions of ensuring our research base is the world's best and creating a country of innovators (Industrial Strategy White Paper, 2017).

Starting from a desire to present a fresh, innovative approach to research impact development, Making an Impact 2018 was conceived as an intensive, yet flexible, series of opportunities for research staff to enhance their skills and knowledge in relation to all aspects of research impact. Making an Impact Week 2018 was linked to the International Business Festival 2018, and consisted of 90 external and internal colleagues engaging staff in thinking about their research impact, how it can be conceptualised, enriched, supported and sustained. Almost 800 registrations, comprising approximately 400 individual participants, engaged with 5 days of intensive development across 28 sessions. Evaluation of the event highlighted the success of this approach, with 87% indicated respective sessions met their expectations, 82% noting that session met their needs and an overwhelming 90% confirmed that respective sessions supported their future needs and career plans.

Making an Impact 2019 further extended the success of this work in developing a step-change approach to the support of researcher development at Liverpool and the place of researchers within our institutional culture.

Making an Impact 2019 consisted of an even more ambitious series of development opportunities designed to enhance all areas of research impact while responding to the diversity of our researcher population and their ability to engage with development. Taking place over 7 weeks from May to June 2019, this year's Making an Impact series saw 150 external and internal speakers provide 58 development sessions, with over 1300 registrations from 600 individual members of university staff.

Making an Impact 2019 continues to be a particularly significant initiative in the context of the forthcoming Research Excellence Framework (REF). Research in relation to the effects of the research excellence framework research impact agenda on early- and mid-career researchers (ECRs and MCRs) reiterate how crucial it is for them to be well placed to engage with the research impact agenda, and how their understanding of research impact may influence their capacity to be returned to REF, as well as their ability to access research funding. (Marcella et al, 2018). The study goes on to affirm how wider research impact "will only be achieved if development needs of those in the earlier stages of a career in the discipline are addressed." (Marcella et al, 2018, p. 617).

2. Aims and objectives of Making an Impact 2019

A key consideration in planning Making an Impact 2019 was aligning development activities with the ISCF wave 3 challenge areas (Innovate UK, 2019), the engagement of stakeholders across industry, parliament, third sector units, as well as the HE sector. The February 2019 Research England report on Universities delivering the Industrial Strategy affirmed the importance of academics and centres, stating “There is some experimentation in ... training and development in entrepreneurship. There is also expenditures of all types on a great range of R&D and innovation centres, clusters and the like, across many different technologies.” (Research England, 2019b, p.9).

Making an Impact Week 2018 was highlighted in the report within the Liverpool vignette under the section “Supporting IS related events and training” as an example of the ambitious plans to seize wider opportunities to deliver the Industrial Strategy. (Research England, 2019b, p.14)

With this in mind, and the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021 approaching, Making an Impact 2019 targetted the enhancement of the research environment at UoL. The Activity further strengthened UoL’s position as the go-to place for established and aspiring research leaders through the quality of our environment and support. The aim of Making an Impact 2019 was to make room for innovative research staff development activity to demonstrate UoL’s “strategy and resources to support research and enable impact” (REF2021, p.97). Making an Impact 2019 supported UoL’s “institutional-level environment statement, providing evidence about how equality and diversity in research careers is supported and promoted across the institution.” (Research England, REF 2021, 2019a, p.16).

It is worth noting here the definition of impact for REF2021:

For the purposes of the REF, impact is defined as an effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, beyond academia. Impact includes, but is not limited to, an effect on, change or benefit to:

- *the activity, attitude, awareness, behaviour, capacity, opportunity, performance, policy, practice, process or understanding*
- *of an audience, beneficiary, community, constituency, organisation or individuals*
- *in any geographic location whether locally, regionally, nationally or internationally.*

(Research England, REF 2021, 2019a, p.107)

UoL’s “‘vitality and sustainability’, including the approach to enabling impact from its research, and its contribution to the vitality and sustainability of the wider discipline or research base” (REF 2021, p.12) were key elements of Making an Impact Activity. Additionally, the Activity supports UoL’s environment statement by informing our institutional approach to supporting interdisciplinary research and collaborations both within and beyond academia (Research England, REF 2021, 2019a, p.32).

Making an Impact 2019 sought to addresses the environment elements in REF 2021, which relate to UoL’s Strategy for research and enabling impact (including integrity, open research, and structures to support interdisciplinary research) and UoL’s support and training of research staff (Research England, REF 2021, 2019a, p.97). Making an Impact 2019 therefore focused on developing participants’ research impact attributes in relation to:

- Ideas: explore innovative ideas and solutions in relation to the impact of their research
- Skills: develop and reflect on skills that will enable greater contribution to the impact agenda.
- Entrepreneurship: supporting ideas around IP and research commercialisation
- Communities: enhancing the capabilities and impact of multi-disciplinary researchers

(DBEIS, 2017)

Furthermore, as an ECR-development activity, Making an Impact 2019 addressed UoL’s commitments to support the support and career development of researchers in accordance with the [University’s 2017-2019 Concordat Implementation Plan](#) (Section 2.3.1). The plan outlines actions that that the University commits to undertake in order to retain its HR Excellence in Research Award, which is due for a review at the eight-year point in January 2020. All Making an Impact 2019 sessions were mapped against [Vitae Researcher Development Framework](#)

([RDF](#)). The RDF describes the knowledge, behaviour and attributes of successful researchers. The mapping of Making an Impact 2019 activity against the domains of the RDF is indicated in [Appendix 1](#).

Whilst of particular relevance to Early Career Researchers, specific elements of the programme were directly relevant to PGRs and more experienced academics and researchers. The objectives of Making an Impact 2019 were defined as follows:

- Foster a culture of learning and development by providing rich, varied, high-quality development opportunities for researchers at all stages of their careers
- Develop Liverpool researchers for future roles in careers both within and outside academia
- Stimulate conversations with employers and leading industry professional across different sectors
- Build on the success and longer term outcomes of [Making an Impact Week 2018](#)
- Utilise short term investment from HEIF Industrial Strategy funds for maximum return

3. Making an Impact 2019 Framework

The Academy sought to develop a research-informed framework that addressed the needs of researchers in relation to the Higher Education Industrial Strategy, knowledge exchange, supporting and developing a broad range of knowledge-based interactions between the University of Liverpool and the wider community, targeting research impact activities which result in economic and social benefit to the UK (HEFCE, 2017, 2018). Current research-based studies about evidence of impact from public engagement with research, including an analysis of a successful case study from the UK's Research Excellence Framework (REF), were also explored. Research indicated the positive outcomes from development programmes of informing inspiring public engagement sessions and activities, illustrating how engagement goals can match definitions of impact for the REF, and summarizing types of evidence used to demonstrate 'reach' and 'significance' of impact in media engagement, face-to-face engagement and online engagement, which represent common activities undertaken by many researchers. (Copley, 2018).

The resulting framework was developed on the basis of impact clusters surrounding a knowledge and skills axis. (Figure 1). The impact clusters were derived from Making an Impact Week 2018 feedback (Section 6.1 of this report) and the definition of impact for REF2021 in [REF Guidance on Submissions](#) (Research England, REF 2021, 2019a, p.68). They were as follows

- Making an Impact on Society
- Making an Impact on the Environment or Quality of Life
- Making an Impact on Culture
- Making an Impact in Health
- Making an Impact on Public Policy or Services
- Making an Impact on the Economy
- Making an Impact beyond Academia

The knowledge and skill axis was based on the 7 [proposed perspectives of the KEF](#) (Research England, 2019a, p.8) on which KE peer clusters will be benchmarked.

- A. Research partnerships
- B. Working with business
- C. Working with the public and third sector
- D. Skills, enterprise and entrepreneurship
- E. Local growth and regeneration
- F. IP and commercialisation
- G. Public and community engagement

As a result of this groundwork, the [Making an Impact 2019 framework](#) was developed, and single Making an Impact 2019 sessions were mapped against multiple clusters using the model indicated in Figure 3.1. Depending on the core element(s) of the knowledge and skills axis that specific sessions were focused on, participants were then able to frame their engagement in relation to the impact clusters. Care was taken to be mindful not to silo areas, as researchers' work overlaps, eg: working in Technology, but also in Policy. This issue was addressed by mapping the sessions against multiple impact clusters as well as knowledge and skills axes.



Figure 3.1: The Making an Impact 2019 Framework

4. Key Numbers



Figure 4.1: Making an Impact 2019 key figures

The breakdown of participation by Faculty is indicated in Table 4.1 on the following page. Further information about Schools, Institutes and participant job roles can be found in [Appendices 2 and 3](#).

Session	Number of participants	Faculty				
		HLS	SE	HSS	Central Services	Other
Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) - because you want your research to make a real difference	16	2	7	3	2	2
Conflict resolution in the research environment	17	10	2	0	4	1
Presenting to a Wider Audience	9	3	2	3	0	1
Getting Attention: Elevator Pitching	16	6	2	4	2	2
Managing Project Delivery	22	9	4	3	1	5
The Fall and Rise of the Country House	67	1	3	21	14	21
Prof Louise Kenny's Impact Matters seminar series	32	23	2	2	2	3
Who's reading your research? Using Altmetric to track the reach and potential impact of your work	20	6	4	9	1	0
Creating Stories of Impact Part 1: Using your smartphone to create a short research video	19	6	4	6	1	2
Research Staff Association: Building career impact and networking	17	6	10	1	0	0
Tours of Sensor City: Inside a Global Innovation Hub	15	1	3	1	6	3
Presenting to a Wider Audience	4	1	2	0	1	0
Research Café' special edition collaboration edition with LJMU	32	2	5	8	1	12
Masterclass: Winning Collaborative Innovate UK Bids	36	12	13	2	4	3
How my PhD led me to become a Subject Matter Expert	17	5	6	3	2	1
How Can Elements Help you Capture and Track your Research Impact Activities?	16	7	2	3	0	0
Innovation, Collaboration and Business Insights	21	5	5	0	1	0
Attracting your own funding	25	12	9	1	0	1
Boosting the impact of your publications	22	10	5	2	1	0
Social media bootcamp	24	11	3	3	2	5
Flight Simulation Tour: Looking to the future	9	0	2	0	0	0
Creating Stories of Impact: 1:1 Surgeries	0	0	0	0	0	0
Prof Louise Kenny's Impact Matters seminar series	48	32	0	0	2	4
Tours of Sensor City: Inside a Global Innovation Hub	15	3	3	3	1	5
Peer Review: What really happens?	20	1	4	2	0	3
Tour of the University of Liverpool Formula Motorsport Facilities	9	2	1	0	2	4
Making meaningful impact with your research	21	5	2	2	1	1
Making the headlines: An introduction to engaging with the media	33	3	3	4	1	2
Real World Impact: What does making an impact on culture, heritage and society look like?	44	3	2	13	14	12
Culture Club – Exploring New Cultural Collaborations with National Museums Liverpool	30	1	0	8	11	10
Walking down the pathway to impact with everything in hand: developing your communications strategy	33	16	2	3	1	1
Open Research - what does it mean and what's it all about?	20	3	4	2	2	1

Session	Number of participants	Faculty				
		HLS	SE	HSS	Central Services	Other
Maximizing and Demonstrating the Impact of Your Research	19	5	6	4	0	0
Stand Out From the Crowd - Maximizing Your Personal Impact and Reputation	26	13	5	1	0	0
Maximising Impact	25	1	5	5	9	5
Creating Stories of Impact: 1:1 Surgeries	4	0	0	0	0	0
Developing a Commercial Proposal	26	2	8	0	2	4
Pitching Your Project	15	2	4	2	1	2
Negotiating Your Way to Success	16	6	4	2	2	2
Getting Attention: Elevator Pitching	19	5	5	2	1	0
Creating Stories of Impact Part 2: Editing your Research Video	23	5	2	3	1	2
Prof Louise Kenny's Impact Matters seminar series	38	36	0	0	3	9
Blogging for Research	21	6	4	2	1	1
Science Entrepreneur Experience	37	13	24	0	0	0
Tour of The Materials Innovation Factory	12	2	3	1	3	3
What is FAIR data? Can it help with Impact?	15	6	2	1	1	1
All you ever wanted to know about Knowledge Exchange and Innovation vouchers but were afraid to ask	36	5	16	11	3	1
Tour of The Materials Innovation Factory	9	2	3	0	5	4
Reacting to the News: Using your knowledge to gain media coverage	19	5	11	8	1	0
Raising your research profile by writing for The Conversation	21	11	12	6	0	2
Masterclass: Winning Collaborative Innovate UK Bids	30	2	7	12	3	6
Tour of the University of Liverpool Formula Motorsport Facilities	11	2	3	0	3	0
Controversial research: working with the Science Media Centre	2	0	0	0	0	1
Making an impact by engaging with policy makers	33	10	7	11	3	2
Empowering Women in STEM: an honest account from a #newPI	31	14	7	1	4	6
First-class Fellowship: How to Make Your Fellowship Proposal Stand Out from the Crowd	37	17	14	3	1	2
Flight Simulation Tour: Looking to the future	20	4	3	2	5	6
Impact Acceleration Showcase	20	1	15	1	3	0
Totals	1294	413	346	236	135	164

Table 4.1: Making an Impact participation by Faculty

5. Planning, Design and Delivery

Making an Impact 2019 was a series of connected development activities focused around the Industrial Strategy priorities and supporting University of Liverpool staff, in particularly the talent pipeline of Early Career Researchers, to develop their multi-disciplinary research-impact related knowledge, skills, attributes and competencies so as to optimally engage with the ISCF wave 3 challenge areas (Innovate UK, 2019). Making an Impact 2019 was specifically planned, designed and delivered with the purpose of nurturing the talent of tomorrow; recognising that “The Industrial Strategy is more than a set of policies and commitments. It is a new way of working... to build long-term partnerships with business, academia, and local leaders... to build a Britain fit for the future.” (Rt Hon Greg Clark MP, Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, DBEIS, 2018).

The Making an Impact 2019 Steering Group was chaired by the Director of The Academy and an initial scoping discussion was held on 11th February 2019. This was followed by a series of Steering Group meetings during which keynote speakers were finalised and session formats were proposed. It was decided to brand the activity as ‘Making an Impact 2019’ building on the existing ‘Making an Impact’ sessions delivered at Liverpool, and the established success of Making an Impact 2019. The Academy’s Research Staff Developer led and managed the coordination of the event. A chronology of the key actions that The Academy led and engaged in, in relation to the planning, comms and marketing and delivery of the Week are indicated below:

	Key Actions	Timeline
Planning Stage	Steering Group meetings commence, during which dates, keynote speakers and the ethos of the Series are confirmed, including the Making an Impact 2019 framework.	February 2019
	Prospective speakers and facilitators contacted (sample email included in Appendix 4) and dates confirmed in diaries of senior staff.	March 2019
	Sessions are finalised and mapped according to Making an Impact Framework. Concurrent liaising with the web team and the creation of Eventbrite pages for participants’ registration to be managed by the Academy.	March-April 2019
Comms and Marketing	Rollout of the Making an Impact 2019 comms strategy (Appendix 5) and series of tweets that were developed specifically for the purpose of promoting individual and general sessions (Appendix 6)	April 2019
	Commissioning supplier for Making an Impact 2019 printable programme (Figure 1.1 of this report) and marketing imagery (Appendix 7) Raising new supplier requests for those not already on the system + booking travel and accommodation for speakers and facilitators. CSD contacted for technical support during the keynote sessions – including the livestream of the keynote, which was accessed from 13 remote locations including Pakistan, Sheffield and Liverpool.	April 2019
	Development of the Making an Impact 2019 website , and programme broken down by week, including specific keys for which participant groups would benefit the most from individual sessions. A comprehensive, searchable online programme was also made available for participants.	April-May 2019
Before and During the Series	All hosts and facilitators sent personalised pre-information emails (Appendices 8 and 9). Permission sought from keynote speakers to stream capture their sessions.	Early May 2019
	The Academy’s in-house marketing and comms strategy supplemented the work of EMRC to publicise Making an Impact 2019	May-June 2019
	Minor adjustments also made to the programme, eg: room changes due to flooding or to accommodate session capacities as per registration numbers. Details communicated accordingly to participants and noticed placed at old and new rooms.	May-June 2019
	Personalised emails (Appendix 8) + Eventbrite auto-reminders to all participants registered for Making an Impact 2019 sessions	May-June 2019

Table 5.1: A chronology of key actions led by The Academy

The final Making an Impact 2019 programme consisted of a mixture of workshops, seminars, facilities tours, an informal café, masterclasses, bootcamps, a keynote address, panel discussions, 1:1 surgeries and showcases.

Making an Impact 2019 sought to further participants engagement by offering two Twitter competitions:

1. [Impact of Development Weekly Twitter Competition](#): Designed to foster conversations and participant engagements during Making an Impact 2019, participants were invited to tweet a thought on how a session has inspired their research-impact related development or upload an image of their engagement with any of the events during the programme stating what has made the most impact to them.
2. [Stories of Impact Twitter Competition](#): This exciting opportunity was designed to encourage research staff from across the University to foster interdisciplinary networking and promote the communication of ideas. It was open to participants of the Creating Stories of Impact series of workshops during Making an Impact 2019. The style and scope of the showcase allowed researchers to present their ideas and work in the form of short films for a lay audience.

Both competitions formed a useful strategy to get participants to engage in public dissemination about the impact of the development activity in relation to the Industrial Strategy priorities. Winners were showcased in the weekly staff news articles and each winner received a signed copy of 'Academic Enterprise: A Field Guide', by Andrew Corcoran. A practical guide for academic faculty to begin commercialising their research. The book balances the needs of teaching, research and innovation to develop academic entrepreneurs that will have a positive long-term impact upon the academy, the economy and society as a whole.

Of note was the winning entry for the Stories of Impact showcase competition. [Dr Frances Sherratt](#), a research associate based in the [Institute of Population Health Sciences](#) developed a video titled 'Qualitative research in clinical trials'. Fran's video was selected as the front-runner based on its original approach to showcase research impact across disciplinary, technical and/or other boundaries. It can be viewed [here](#).

Reflecting on the work undertaken for Making an Impact 2019, a series of recommendations are proposed as effective practice for future activities:

- Further targeted support, such as a designated colleague from ERM to lead in planning the communication of how multi-activity cross-overs (such as Making an Impact and potentially the IBF in 2020) are relayed to participants and followed through.
- Funding to be made available to develop marketing images (The Academy funded a number of such imagery and marketing material for 2019 ([Appendix 7](#)) which was instrumental in enhancing visibility of the activity across the University and on social media)
- Steering Group members should actively disseminate event via appropriate stakeholder forums.
- Senior leaders to be briefed and actively advocate for the event in the run up to delivery.

6. Participants' and Facilitators' Feedback

The feedback reported in this document consists of primary data based on one post-Making an Impact 2018 survey, and two surveys that were administered during Making an Impact 2019.

6.1 Making an Impact Week 2018 post-6-month point feedback

Feedback from Making an Impact Week (MAIW) 2018 at the 6 month point (n=17 responses) contributed to informing the design of Making an Impact 2019. A breakdown of responses is indicated in [Appendix 13](#) of this report. Responses highlighted the following positive outcomes of MAIW 2018:

- Highlighted the relevance and importance of knowledge transfer
- An opportunity for the participation of Professional Services staff and to visit other areas across the University
- Participants more confidently able to explain research-related impact

Notable actions arising from MAIW 2018 included reports by two participants who affirmed the difference the activity made to their research-impact related practice:

- When discussing possible pathways to impact with applicants.

- System and process improvement for developing impact.
- One participant's co-presenter invited them to speak in a School Forum about the subject they presented on, and as result, the participant was able to engage a number of professional services staff who support research impact across the Humanities and Social Sciences.

Other comments included participants engaging in more enterprising activities, and comments related to this included:

- *"The MaIW was useful in providing opportunities to see the diverse range of activities undertaken in the University. This contributed in a way towards engagement in enterprising activities."*
- *"It was also great to see industry partnerships integrated into the space."*

With regard to future Making an Impact activities, notable participants' responses referenced the overall value of the activity in terms of capacity-building for their respective work environments, to meet the growing demands across the University and wider Industrial strategy priorities:

- Delivery of sessions to relevant groups, eg: assisting impact leads with their local needs / sessions
- Wider dissemination and information regarding institutional procedures for impact development
- Something for people who think their work won't ever have impact – on the various alternative ways they can get involved in the wider vision of why universities exist for the greater good.
- How to set up your own podcast or blog (and sustain it).
- More time for feedback and discussion among participants—especially across different departments/faculties.
- Include impact / professional development resources relevant to basic science research
- Career opportunities in KE and Impact
- More practical examples of bringing impact networks together
- Focus on different areas of impact development - policy, health, economic, cultural etc.
- Better recording / reporting / showcasing of impact activity
- Specific cross discipline 'sandpits' for impact idea development

The feedback above contributed to the planning and design of Making an Impact 2019, which shall be further explained in the sections to follow.

6.2 Methodology for evaluating Making an Impact 2019

For Making an Impact 2019, there were 394 respondents to the participant survey ([Appendix 10](#)) and 48 respondents to the facilitator's survey ([Appendix 11](#)).

The Kirkpatrick model of evaluation (Kirkpatrick, 2009) is being applied to evaluate the development impact of Making an Impact 2019 and to evidence value for money. The model constitutes "four levels" of evaluation for measuring the effectiveness of development activity. These four levels of evaluation – Reaction (Level 1), Learning (Level 2), Behaviour (Level 3), and Results: Organisational Performance (Level 4) – consist of building 'a chain of evidence'.

All participants will be contacted again in December 2019 and then in June 2020 with a follow-up about the longer-term outcomes of the sessions and how they have applied the knowledge, skills and expertise gained during Making an Impact 2019 in their respective work environments. The model will also be useful to gauge how participants continue to cultivate the cross-disciplinary conversations and ideas that were initiated during the Week.

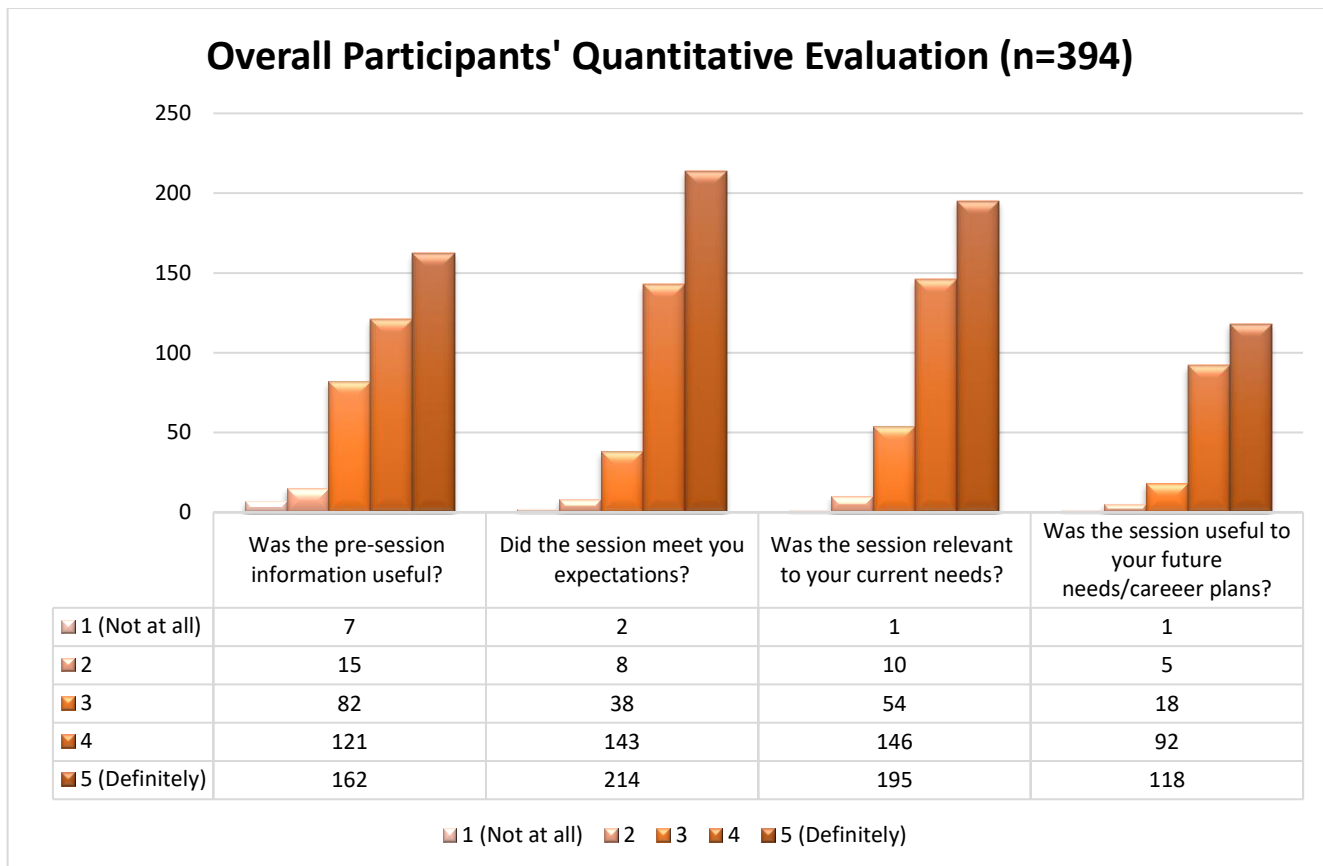
6.3 Internal and External Activity

During Making an Impact 2019, a mix of 150 external and internal speakers and facilitators engaged colleagues from the University in thinking about research impact across 58 individual sessions – how it can be conceptualised, enriched, supported and sustained. Experts delivered focused sessions aimed at enhancing the skills of researchers, as they improve their personal ability to develop and communicate the impact of their work. The impact of both internal and external activities are indicated in the following sections of the report.

6.3 Participants' Feedback: Reaction and Learning

This section shall explore participant feedback in the context of these objectives, focusing on their reactions and the learning. The themes are supported with a representative selection of participants' testimonies.

In addition to the qualitative feedback about participants' reaction and learning that is discussed later in this section, the quantitative evaluation based on Questions 1-4 of [Appendix 11](#), is indicated in Figure 6.1 below:



*All participants did not answer every question

Figure 6.1: Participants' Quantitative Evaluation of Making an Impact 2019

Key themes from participants' qualitative feedback (n=394) were framed around how Making an Impact 2019 augmented factors that support research-impact.

Participants reported how the series enabled them to **establish networks and relationships with research users** and the benefits of meeting other participants from different backgrounds and research areas and brainstorming ideas and how their research could overlap:

"The session didn't link to my own research interest but does link to my personal interests. I really enjoyed the opportunity to listen and engage with a session outside of my own area and think sessions like this are vital for opening up inter-disciplinary interactions and just expanding knowledge for the sake of knowledge. More like this please." (external facilitator: The Fall and Rise of the Country House)

Acknowledgement of the expertise and active roles played by research users in making impact happen was also mentioned a number of times by participants who commented about the usefulness of sessions in terms of information to take back to their teams and delivery partners:

“AS KE pre-Award officer, I attended to understand how the money is spent on student projects, and this event gave me a valuable insight into the decisions behind these grants and the items being costed. Thus my understanding and connection with the School was clarified and I understood the real world application of the money.” (internal facilitator: Tour of the University of Liverpool Formula Motorsport Facilities)

This was echoed by another participant – a researcher who has returned to academia after a career industry – who stated that consideration of the session on social value in relation to impact was:

“Extremely though provoking. Everyone needs to be considering this, coming from a career in the third sector it is talked about but mainly only from and to be real the negative must be considered too. Take this talk on the road!” (internal and external facilitators: Maximising Impact)

The **involvement of users at all stages of the research, including working with user stakeholder and participatory groups** was another notable theme that emerging from participants feedback, enabling them to map out the key stakeholder matrices and the key research messages that resonate with the diverse groups. Notable feedback in this regard came from a participant who was present for the panel session that showcases initiatives and work across the Liverpool research landscape to continue to create and improve cultural collaborations with stakeholders beyond academia. They reported:

“Really interesting presentations from National Museums Liverpool (NML), and the School of History and the School of Music. Useful panel discussion and audience Q&A too.” (internal and external facilitators: Real World Impact: What does making an impact on culture, heritage and society look like?)

Added to this was feedback from another participant who attended a session about bringing research to the attention of policy makers and engaging with parliamentary select committees:

“Excellent info, very well presented great to hear a real-life case study and so key to be able to meet the contacts at UoL that have they knowledge.” (internal facilitators: Making an impact by engaging with policy makers)

The significance of **developing flexible knowledge exchange strategies, which recognise the roles that partners and collaborators may wish to play** was also another theme that arose from feedback about Making an Impact 2019. One participant commented:

“I have been thinking about creating a research blog for a few years, but have been stuck at where to begin. Now I have lots of ideas any many tools to help me form those ideas into blog posts. I’ve also received useful feedback on my first draft. Overall, I think this has been very helpful and I am sure to use these tips for my future work.” (external facilitator: Blogging for Research)

Developing good understanding of policy/practice contexts and encouraging users to bring knowledge of context to research by offering high quality content was related to a key objective of Making an Impact 2019, and this was mentioned with specific examples across multiple sessions, as indicated in one participant’s testimony:

“The way [facilitator’s name redacted] unpacked the Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) framework was really useful and connected directly with my own context. Conversations with other researchers was a huge benefit.” (external facilitator: Responsible Research and Innovation)

Whilst another early career researcher commented:

“As a research fellow, I wish I had this program during my PhD to give insight into other career paths. I think this offers valuable training in how to convert an idea into a business and would highly recommend to PhD” (internal and external facilitators: Science Entrepreneur Experience)

Another key theme that arose from participants’ feedback related to **augmenting a commitment to portfolios of research activity that build up reputations with research users**, with a number of them commenting about the usefulness of sessions in terms of broadening their skillset with how to have wider research impact and the importance of being visible. These included researchers across the career spectrum. For instance, a post-doctoral researchers reported:

“After this session I feel I have got a better understanding of how to maximise and demonstrate my research impact, how to write a good proposal for a postdoctoral position for on-going funding.” (external facilitator: Maximizing and Demonstrating the Impact of Your Research)

and

“Excellent session which transformed my understanding of the process for bringing scientific discoveries to market.” (internal and external facilitators: Science Entrepreneur Experience)

Whereas more experience academics stated:

"[facilitators' names redacted] were very focused on what we most needed to know and [facilitator name] was a great example of an academics real-life experiences of reacting to the news by going on TV. useful and encouraging." (internal and external facilitators: Reacting to the News: Using your knowledge to gain media coverage)

Participants also reported how Making an Impact 2019 enabled them to **consistently work towards excellent infrastructure, leadership and management support**, with one reporting:

"I have never developed a pathway to impact so it was really helpful to learn more about the process and understand how comms objectives fit with it." (internal facilitator: Walking down the pathway to impact with everything in hand: developing your communications strategy)

Others, particularly early career researchers, reported on the usefulness of sessions for their personal career development, as illustrated by the following feedback:

"Very useful session particularly the parallels of conflict in the research environment and elsewhere. Also useful tools for dealing with conflict." (external facilitator: Conflict resolution in the research environment)

The **involvement of intermediaries and knowledge brokers as translators, amplifiers and network providers of research impact** was another key theme that emerging from participants evaluations, as indicated in this testimony:

"Haven't had the opportunity to see Sensor City before. Walk past it everyday and comes up regularly in terms of research applications. Found it very useful and have a contact there now should and need to introduce new members of staff within the School to use their services." (external facilitator: Tours of Sensor City: Inside a Global Innovation Hub)

Supporting space and time for collaborative reflection on research design and process, findings and overall progress was a frequently-mentioned theme in relation to the impact of Making an Impact 2019, including a short-term outcome for one participant who reported:

"A very clear and though provoking session with lots of practical advice that allowed me to think about real-world problems. I managed to solve a particular problem I had with my own pathway to impact proposal during the session and now feel armed for future bids." (internal facilitator: Walking down the pathway to impact with everything in hand: developing your communications strategy)

And another who stated:

"Really useful to have dedicated space to think about my proposal. Good to talk to others with experience of this or thinking about it." (external facilitator: Attracting your own funding)

Participants also overwhelmingly reported the positive impact of the series in terms of how they were **empowering research-impact sessions**:

"Very well delivered and thought provoking. Some interesting actions to take from the session and take into the workplace. Glad I attended. Enjoyed the impact sessions I attended – feel very much empowered by them." (internal facilitator: Empowering Women in STEM: an honest account from a #newPI)

Whilst another professional services member of staff affirmed:

"I would now feel comfortable in assisting and encouraging academics to use this tool." (external facilitator: Creating Stories of Impact Part 1: Using your smartphone to create a short research video)

Sessions were also successful in **challenging research-impact related myths and enabling insightful thinking and reflection** from participants' perspectives, as evidenced by one who reported:

"Challenged my thinking around the issue. As we have a focus on positive, I have never really thought about having net impact by including negative. Also the concept of continuing targets for increasing impact." (internal and external facilitators: Maximising Impact)

Whilst another stated:

"Nice forum for good discussion. Enjoyed this session. Thanks for all your hard work organising all the activities. some of them have really changed the way I think, so it is very much appreciated." (internal facilitator: Empowering Women in STEM: an honest account from a #newPI)

With regard to **equipping and supporting researchers to be adaptable and flexible in an increasingly diverse global research environment and employment market**, Making an Impact 2019 successfully achieved this aim as evidenced by the following feedback:

"The roleplay was useful in helping use the learning and be self-aware of how we are in these situations, so can improve going forward. Learnt some good models e.g. salami and sentences to say I've realised it's a lot about confidence though, as you can have all the know-how but if you're timid/falter it probably doesn't work." (external facilitator: Negotiating Your Way to Success)

Participants were particularly appreciative of the diversity of insights and the **high-quality variety across the sessions that meets researchers' career development needs**:

"Extremely informative overview into innovation, collaboration. Very knowledgeable speaker, would highly recommend the session particularly enjoyed the case studies and examples. Would have been happy for the session to have been longer." (external facilitator: Innovation, Collaboration and Business Insights)

A number of participants commented about the relevance of sessions to their future development plans and reported **immediate impacts on their current research-impact working practices**:

"Very good. The sessions were well pitched and interesting. The instructor was engaging and listened, providing direct and relevant feedback. I believe that this will help my future plans and it has already had a positive influence on my current working practices." (external facilitator: Creating Stories of Impact: 1:1 Surgeries)

Whilst another reported:

"Great workshop, a nice overview of things to consider for social media that I hadn't thought of. Will be implementing straight away, thanks." (external facilitator: Social media bootcamp)

Making an Impact 2019 was commended as **a base of activity for the launch of new and talented early career researchers at Liverpool**, with one participant reporting:

"Two prospective doctoral students who have also been in contact with me... Both are mature students who were recently awarded their masters with particularly high marks, and are looking to continue working in the intersection between museums, archives, community heritage, and historical archaeology... (engaged with the Making an Impact programme with the potential to) launch some new and talented early careers at Liverpool." (internal and external facilitators: Culture Club – Exploring New Cultural Collaborations with National Museums Liverpool)

A number of participants fed back positively about the **overall design of the Making an Impact Activity**:

"Having mentioned the Making an Impact weeks to ex-colleagues at Chester and Lancaster Uni's, they were particularly envious and inspired by the breadth, duration and accessibility of UoL's programme and strongly commended Liverpool for such a thoughtful range of highly relevant events." (internal and external facilitators: Real World Impact: What does making an impact on culture, heritage and society look like?)

Whilst others commented on the duration of the series, stating:

"I thought organising Impact week over several weeks rather than one worked better (sessions are spread out) However, this means that during these 7 weeks it is very difficult for other departments to organise any events as they clash with Making an Impact events nearly every time. It might be useful to do this over a shorter period of time for next year (4 weeks maybe?) so that it does not disrupt the organisation of other events for too long (but its definitely worth doing this over several weeks)" (internal facilitators: Peer Review: What really happens?)

Detailed participants' evaluations have been shared with all facilitators for their respective sessions.

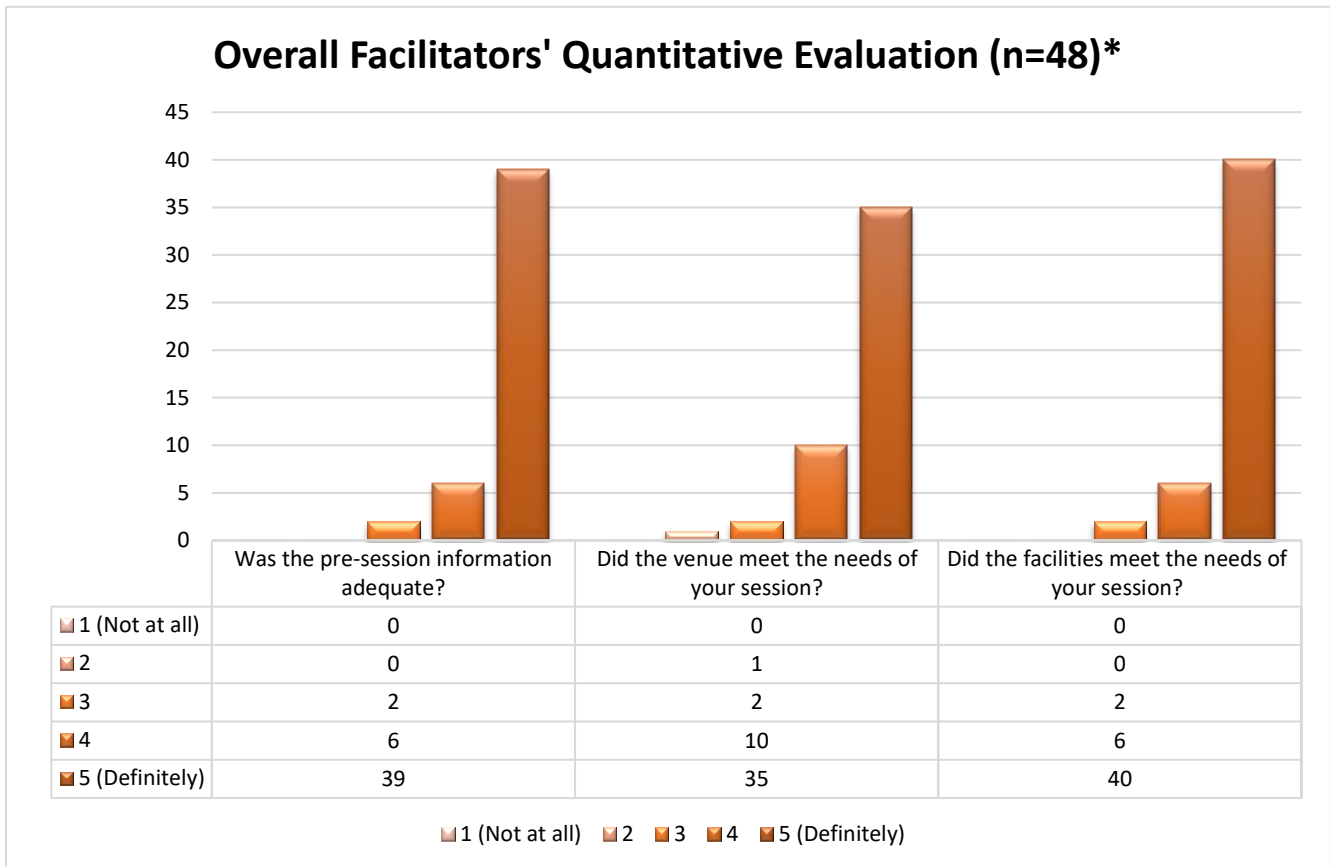
Table 6.1 on the following page summarises the key themes arising from participants' feedback, mapped against the objectives of Making an Impact 2019 to indicate how they were successfully achieved:

Making an Impact 2019 Objective	Key themes arising from participants' evaluation feedback
Foster a culture of learning and development by providing rich, varied, high-quality development opportunities for researchers at all stages of their careers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A base of activity for the launch of new and talented early career researchers at Liverpool • Overall design of the Making an Impact Activity • Empowering research-impact sessions
Develop Liverpool researchers for future roles in careers both within and outside academia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting space and time for collaborative reflection on research design and process, findings and overall progress • Equipping and supporting researchers to be adaptable and flexible in an increasingly diverse global research environment and employment market • High-quality variety across the sessions that meets researchers' career development needs
Stimulate conversations with employers and leading industry professional across different sectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing networks and relationships with research • Developing flexible knowledge exchange strategies, which recognise the roles that partners and collaborators may wish to play • Challenging research-impact related myths and enabling insightful thinking and reflection
Build on the success an longer term outcomes of Making an Impact Week 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledging of the expertise and active roles played by research users in making impact happen • Consistently working towards excellent infrastructure, leadership and management support • Immediate impacts on current research-impact working practices
Utilise short term investment from HEIF Industrial Strategy funds for maximum return	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involving users at all stages of the research, including working with user stakeholder and participatory groups • Developing good understanding of policy/practice contexts and encouraging users to bring knowledge of context to research by offering high quality content • Involving intermediaries and knowledge brokers as translators, amplifiers and network providers of research impact • Augmenting a commitment to portfolios of research activity that build up reputations with research users

Table 6.1: Key evaluation themes mapped against Making an Impact 2019 objectives

6.4 Facilitators' Feedback and Evaluation

The quantitative evaluation based on Questions 1-3 of [Appendix 12](#), are indicated in Figure 6.2 below:



*All participants did not answer every question

Figure 6.2: Facilitators' Quantitative Evaluation of Making an Impact 2019

Facilitators commented on the **usefulness of pre-week communications** that were sent to them:

"I enjoyed delivering the session, and appreciated the prompt and detailed information from colleagues in The Academy on numbers registered, and the split between Faculties and career stages, which allowed us to tailor the content." (internal facilitator)

It was evident from the feedback received that the organiser's **flexibility and timely communications before and during the event** was an important element of success:

"The EventBrite page and the pre-session emails contained everything attendees needed to know, and were updated promptly when we supplied additional information." (internal facilitator)

There were also a number of positive observations about the venue and **on-site organisation**:

"Excellent, thank you. The programme/workshops and accommodation was really well organised and I was always informed well in advance. A pleasure to work with the Making an Impact team, thank you!" (external facilitator)

A key theme that emerged from facilitator's feedback was the constructive **engagement of and contribution by participants** who attended their sessions:

"Thankyou for the very comprehensive pre-course information. The room was just right and your researchers were a joy to work with." (external facilitator)

In summary, the data from participants and facilitators indicates positive impacts across participants' personal, socio-cultural, cognitive, and professional competencies. The sessions have led to improvements in the manner in which staff feel able to support and deliver research impact via a more informed and evidence-based approach. The Making an Impact series that the Academy leads on as an annual fixture in the University's calendar, is now known as an instrumental research-impact related activity in terms of fostering conversations on impact between staff across the University, enriching their professional networks.

The evidence presented supports Liverpool's ambition to "make our staff feel valued, empowered and free to innovate in pursuit of our strategy" (Strategy 2026, p.17). Participant testimonies are also evidence of progress towards a culture of research development at the University of Liverpool.

7. Overall Reflections

Making an Impact 2019 sought to support researchers and research-related staff at Liverpool develop the skills they need to do the high-paid, high-skilled jobs of the future. It focused on the four of the five foundations of the Industrial Strategy:

- Ideas: encouraging University of Liverpool staff to explore innovative ideas and solutions in relation to the impact of their research
- Skills: ensuring participants' develop and reflect on skills that will enable their greater contribution to the impact agenda.
- Business environment: supporting participants' ideas around IP and commercialising their research
- Communities: enhancing the capabilities and impact of multi-disciplinary researchers who advance the communities within which they are based, and the wider UK populace

(DBEIS, 2017)

The Series aimed to create the conditions where successful businesses could emerge and grow from researchers' ideas, and enable them to explore innovative activities that would contribute to the future of the institution and the wider community. The programme was specifically designed to identify development sessions that would support researchers; engagement with industries that are of strategic value to the UK economy. Key sessions were intended to inspire, nurture and augment the formation of partnerships between researchers, industries and government. These priorities align with the Government's Industrial Strategy (Industrial Strategy White Paper, 2017).

Making an Impact 2019 continued to provide a step-change in development practice at Liverpool, in seeking to provide innovative research-impact development opportunities to all University staff. The Series successfully achieved its core purpose of supporting the University's Vision to be "globally recognised in all our research and impact activities", and aiding the delivery of the Research and Impact Strategy which "is first and foremost about our people; creating the right environment and supporting our researchers at every career stage" (Strategy 2026, p.6, p.10). The success of Making an Impact 2019 also relates back to the University's commitments to the support and career development of researchers in accordance with the success measures for Sections 3.2.1 and 3.3.1 of the [University's 2017-2019 Concordat Implementation Plan](#).

The Series met its key objectives and deliverables in relation to the development of staff engagement with research impact, particularly in relation to the above-mentioned four strands of the Industrial Strategy. The involvement of diverse stakeholders – ranging from external directors across industries, to leading third-sector professionals, internal impact-related champions, external development experts, facilities and technicians, academic, research and research-related professional staff – is evident in sections 6.2 and 6.3 of this report.

The themes arising from participants' feedback indicate the successful development of core knowledge, skills and capabilities in relation to research impact. These outcomes include the development of personal, socio-cultural, cognitive, and professional competencies. It is now critical that we sustain the momentum generated through what has become an annual series of Making an Impact activities at the University of Liverpool, and channel it towards the continued support of the University's Research and Impact Strategy. Indeed, nurturing the core capabilities of staff through collaboration, innovation and enhancement is at the core of The Academy's remit, as we provide

opportunities for continuous improvement at individual, team and organisational levels in pursuit of Liverpool's strategic objectives.

The Academy's management and administration systems and workflow processes ensured the smooth running of the event and mitigation of risks. Strategic planning measures via the Kirkpatrick model are in place to evaluate the longer-term outcomes of Making an Impact 2019 against objectives and to evidence a Return on Investment, as has been done for Making an Impact 2018 (reported in Section 6.1 of this report).

Finally, the financial viability of the activity has been demonstrated through the following measures: participant testimony about quality of sessions; participant overall evaluations; resources that facilitated knowledge and skill development in relation to research impact.

8. References

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