



RCUK Digital Economy Theme 'Telling Tales of Engagement' Competition 2016

Call type: Expressions of Interest

Closing date: 01 December 2016 at 12.00

Related themes: Digital economy

Summary

The RCUK Digital Economy (DE) Theme is running a competition designed to help capture and promote the impact that your digital economy research is having. Three prizes of £10,000 are available to support researchers to further tell the story of research impact in an interesting and engaging way to a wider audience.

New for this year, the TTE (Telling Tales of Engagement) 2016 competition has two aims. We want you to:

1. tell stories that describe how your pathway to impact genuinely unfolded, to help the wider research community and public understand how impact really occurs and what benefits have (or are expected to be delivered) from your research;
2. explain how you will use the prize, to engage the public with your research; to show how the benefits of your research help make a contribution to various challenges and to help address the RCUK's equality, diversity and inclusion agenda.

To apply, please complete the online form addressing the questions in the Call Scope by 12:00 noon Thursday 01 December 2016.

Background

Research Councils UK defines impact as 'the demonstrable contribution that excellent research makes to society and the economy'. Impact embraces all the diverse ways that research-related skills benefit individuals, organisations and nations. These include (but are not limited to):

- Fostering global economic performance, and specifically the economic competitiveness of the United Kingdom;
- Increasing the effectiveness of public services and policy;
- Enhancing quality of life, health and creative output.

A key aspect of this definition is that potential impact must be demonstrable. It is not enough just to focus on activities and outputs that promote engagement, such as staging a conference or publishing a report. Evidence of the research impact is required, for example, that it has been taken up and used by policy makers or has led to improvements in services or industry.

The DE Theme takes Impact seriously and through two significant review exercises, has identified some aspects that could usefully be taken on board in developing plans for the TToE activities. Given the DE community's significant role in the overall impact agenda addressing societal and other challenges¹, we want the DE community to help share better understanding of the overall impact process to other sections of the research community who are maybe not so advanced in their thinking and practice. This includes a better understanding of the whole Impact agenda, what makes successful impact, recognition of the breadth of their impact and its benefits; it would help researchers set impact related goals and metrics and help us provide guidance on developing pathways to impact.

We recognise that telling the story around the economic and societal benefits arising from DE research can provide an opportunity for researchers to develop transferable and career-enhancing skills, as well as providing inspiration to the next generation of researchers. The latter is important because the long term strength of the UK research base depends on harnessing all the available talent. As a funder of research, we are committed to attracting the best potential researchers from a diverse population into research careers. To learn more about RCUK's vision for public engagement with research and the RCUK Action Plan on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, please see: <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/pe/public-engagement-with-research-strategy/> and <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/funding/diversity/> as well as <https://www.epsrc.ac.uk/funding/equalitydiversity/>. We therefore require submissions to describe how public engagement activities will be undertaken to tell good impact stories, helping to address and show how this can help address the RCUK's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion agenda.

Funding available

Funding is available to support three awards, each for £10,000, to support an activity or activities that will allow you to tell your impact story in creative, interesting and engaging ways to a wider audience and the public.

Activities could include (but are not limited to): video or podcast production, outreach activities to schools, public lecture series, community events, artistic interpretation or specialised media training or attendance at a high profile, non-academic focused conference.

Project funding will be up to 18 months in duration, starting from April 2017 onwards.

¹ 2012 Digital Economy Theme Impact Review - <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/RCUK-prod/assets/documents/documents/RCUKDEconReport.pdf>

Scope of competition

The two aims of this competition are to:

- 1) capture the impact that your digital economy research is having, how this impact unfolded and what benefits have (or are expected to be delivered) from your research, and
- 2) explain how you will use the prize funding to engage the public with your research; to show how the benefits of your research help make a contribution to various challenges and to help address the RCUK's equality, diversity and inclusion agenda.

Your entry must address the following questions:

- What is the research challenge/project?
- What were the outputs of the research?
- What has been the impact of these outputs? Who/what did the research have impact upon?
- What has changed positively as a result of the research and how did this change happen? What is the evidence of a positive change?
- How do you propose to 'tell the story' of your impact and public engagement?
- Which sections of society/members of the public will you seek to engage with utilising the prize funding and for what purpose?
- How will you creatively and meaningfully engage with the public for mutual benefit?
- How will your public engagement contribute to the development of your research and its impact?

Your entry should tell a story that describes how the pathway to impact of your research really unfolded. Your story should clearly show the link between the impact and the research by describing how the impact of your research arose and evidencing positive changes.

Your story should help the wider research community and public understand how engagement and impact happens. We hope that allowing you to tell the full story of your engagement and pathway to impact should stimulate thinking on more imaginative and illustrative ways to tell the story of your engagement and the resulting impact.

Judging Process and Criteria

A Panel comprising of academics, businesses, public engagement experts and Research Council staff will assess the entries on the following criteria before selecting the winning entries:

- Strength of research impact evidence;

- Potential scope for further impact;
- Creativity and quality of approaches to public engagement, mutual benefit and addressing the RCUK Equality, Diversity and Inclusion agenda;
- Contribution of the case to spreading understanding of the nature of impact pathways and what features of work/collaboration etc make for a successful outcome;
- Originality and fit for purpose of activity/activities to tell the impact story.

Eligibility

Entrants

All researchers employed or registered at a UK Higher Education Institute (HEI) who would be eligible for RCUK grant funding (<https://www.epsrc.ac.uk/funding/howtoapply/fundingguide/>) are eligible to apply.

Applications are not limited to individuals, a team of researchers can apply but a lead person must be named. The prize money can be split between the team as appropriate.

For lead applicants not eligible for direct EPSRC grant funding (PhD students, post-doctoral researchers, research assistants) we expect an eligible advisor to be named on the application form along with that of the applicant.

Applications from users and the Third Sector are welcome, but note that an eligible named advisor is required and must be named on the application form along with the applicant.

Research

The research must be within the remit of the RCUK Digital Economy Theme but does not necessarily need to have been supported by the DE Theme core funding held by EPSRC. Ideally it should relate to previous Research Council support.

Entries will be accepted from researchers that have already used their research in an activity to demonstrate its impact, for example a video, public lecture, but who wish to widen the potential audience or explore complementary activity/activities that are new.

How to Apply

Please complete the SmartSurvey via the EPSRC call page (<https://www.epsrc.ac.uk/funding/calls/ttoe2016/>), addressing the questions in the "[Scope of Competition](#)" section and taking into account the "Guidance on completing SmartSurvey" notes below.

Please ensure you include a single A4 PowerPoint slide which summarises your entry in an interesting and engaging way.

The deadline for receipt of proposals is noon Thursday 01 December 2016.

Entrants should note that the PowerPoint slide submitted may be publicly available;

therefore it is advised that:

- No material that is confidential is included in the application;
- The necessary permissions to share the information are sought in advance from the relevant people;
- The information contained may potentially be used for publicity material by the Research Councils and third parties. Notification of this will be given to entrants where possible.

Successful Entries Only

- **Following the competition:** If you are successful, payment will be made to your HEI, who will then be responsible for issuing the award and ensuring funds are released as required. EPSRC reserve the right to retain 40% of the total funding until an account of the expenditure has been submitted from the University Finance Office.

Guidance on completing SmartSurvey

Please ensure your entry addresses the questions in the [Scope of the Competition section](#) as well as the guidance below.

Question	Guidance
Please describe the research field (max ~100 words)	Please describe the research area that you are working in.
Please describe the impact of the research (up to1000 words)	Please describe the impact of your research detailing what this impact was; who or what it has had impact upon and how this impact was brought about and by whom. The story will provide evidence (quotes, conversations, meeting details, etc) to support the story of how the research impact unfolded.
Please describe how you propose to further 'tell the story' of the impact (up to1000 words)	Please describe your ideas on how you intend to use the £10,000 to tell the story of the impact that your research has had. What creative and high quality engagement activities will you undertake? In particular, how will you reach out to other researchers? And how will you reach out to, the general public and targetted communities (eg school children, teenagers) to help address the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion agenda?

PowerPoint slide to summarise research and its impact	Please provide one PowerPoint slide that describes your research and the impact that it has had in an interesting and engaging way.
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Key dates

Activity	Date
Closing date for the submission of entries	01 December 2016
Duration of award	Up to 18 months, starting from April 2017 onwards

Contacts

If you have any questions, please contact:

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