

Management & Evaluation of Social Impact

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SESYNC and Resources for the Future

Social Impact Presumes

- A Center value proposition emphasizing **beneficial non-academic outcomes**
 - Outcomes valued by NGOs, local communities, businesses, government institutions
- Center activities that involve stakeholders in **co-development** of
 - Research questions, process, products

Metrics & Management: A Spectrum

Co-
Development

What you do

Diffusion

What others do with
what you do

Social
Change

The ultimate
social impact

Metrics & Management: A Spectrum

Co-
Development

Diffusion

Social
Change

Can be executed &
monitored internally

“Cooked into” culture,
programs, incentives

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Diffusion

“Uptake” of research by
stakeholder audiences

Requires monitoring of
after the fact, non-
academic outcomes

Social
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Diffusion

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Social
Change

Attribution of changed
real-world decisions,
actions, discourse

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The Horizon of
Accountability?

Metrics and Management

- Recruitment of non-academic, non-scientist participants
 - Incentives, identification
 - Iteration and facilitation
 - Evidence of knowledge user impact on research questions & outcomes
- Non-academic products
 - Support and track as legitimate outcomes



Co-
Development

**“Stakeholder
participation” as
metric**

Metrics

- Non-technical publications
- Participant presentations to non-academic audiences
- “Citations” by non-academic institutions or media
- New advisory or research/funding relationships between participants and non-academic institutions



Diffusion

Management Options

- Who makes the reporting happen, and how?
 - Incentivized reporting (tied to salaries, promotion, fundraising)
 - Staffing to track diffusion outcomes
 - Partner self-reporting with “nudges”



Diffusion

Metrics and Management

- Metrics: Effective stories
 - Your research's *contribution* to change
- Key evidence
 - Beyond the scientific
 - Durability of contributions
 - Institutional relationships cultivated
 - How you educated others and built trust



Social Change

Summary

- Managing and measuring social impact
 - Co-development
 - Necessary, relatively straightforward
 - Research diffusion outcomes
 - Doable, but more difficult/costly
 - Social change
 - Difficult for centers to manage and to measure quantitatively