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## The International School on Research Impact Assessment

# Understanding Stakeholders and Their Needs

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Hosted by:



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# Learning outcomes

- Identify all stakeholders who will be the primary users of the assessment
  - Identify other stakeholders with key interests
- Analyse stakeholders' perspectives and needs
- Judge and/or negotiate how best to balance potentially competing interests and expectations



# Importance of stakeholders

- RIA is conducted to have an impact on stakeholders' understanding, beliefs and behaviour
- RIA is often conducted to answer questions posed by specific stakeholders (and of close interest to others)
- So know who your stakeholders are!



# Types of stakeholders

- Funders of research
  - the public; government; research funding bodies; universities/institutes
- Doers of research
  - universities/institutes; departments; teams; researchers
- Others
  - patients; professional organisations; policy analysts; the public



# How to identify stakeholders

- Organisation or programme strategic plan
- Board members for the organisation
- Organisation mission/vision
- Potential groups to be impacted (ask senior or programme management)
- Others?



# Stakeholder perspectives

- Funders of research
  - demonstrating money well spent; making the case for more money; learning how to improve outcomes through changed allocations
- Doers of research
  - demonstrating research effort and career well spent; making the case for more money; demonstrating personal achievement for career advancement



# How to identify stakeholder needs and perspectives

- Surveying stakeholders
- Interviews
- Previous evaluations for stakeholders
- Other RIAs
- Stakeholder documents (e.g., strategies, missions/visions)
- Others?



# Learning activity 1



- Overall Case Example
  - Who are primary users?
  - What are their perspectives & needs?
  - Are there other key stakeholders?
  - What are their perspectives & needs?
- 5 minutes table discussion; 5 minutes entire group discussion





# Research Excellence Framework (REF)

- REF rates performance of academic staff and departments in UK universities, in terms of:
  - External funding won
  - Publications and PhDs awarded
  - Impact
- It is used to guide research infrastructure funding allocation to universities



# “Impact” in the REF

- “an effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, beyond academia”
- evidenced by specific examples of impacts . . . and by the submitted unit’s general approach to enabling impact . . . The focus . . . is the impact of the . . . unit’s research, not the impact of individuals or individual . . . outputs



# Learning activity 2



- UK Research Excellence Framework
  - Who are primary users?
  - What are their perspectives & needs?
  - Are there other key stakeholders?
  - What are their perspectives & needs?
- 5 minutes table discussion; 5 minutes entire group discussion



# Key messages

- RIA is done for a purpose – stakeholders are key
- There can be a wide range of stakeholders, and their perspectives can differ
- It is important to consider all main stakeholders, not only the direct “customer” for an RIA



# Recommended reading

- On the REF:
  - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Research\\_Excellence\\_Framework](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Research_Excellence_Framework)
  - <http://www.ref.ac.uk/pubs/2011-02/>



# Thank you!

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