

Strategies for the management and adoption of impact capture processes within research information management systems

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Why is impact information important: Higher Education context and drivers

Research Assessment Exercise (RAE 2008) – academic outputs only

Up to 30% of an organisations turnover- highly varied

Public accountability requirement leads to the Research Excellence Framework (REF 2014)

PLUS impact (20% weighting)

Increasing funding drivers

- E.g. Horizon 2020

Formal information management system solution required

Overview

Coventry University is the leading UK, modern university

Vertigo Ventures is an impact consultancy

Vertigo Ventures, has been using and expanding its tool- **VV-Impact Metrics** with UK universities to **support their REF submissions** by identifying impact pathways, impact indicators, evidence collection and analysis **to improve the quality of the evidence and narrative in section 4 of their REF case studies.**

Vertigo Ventures has been working with **Coventry University** to use its **VV-Impact Metrics tool in their self-service module (ERIC) to create a systemised data capture platform** that can be readily used by the academic community to input data.

What is impact

- Impact definition by Research Councils UK
 - ***‘The demonstrable contribution that excellent research makes to society and the economy. Economic and societal impacts embrace all the extremely diverse ways in which research-related knowledge and skills benefit individuals, organisations and nations...’***

Kellogg's Foundation Logic model:



Impact going forward

- Need to capture information for each step in real time
- Systematic approach required for information storage

Challenges

1) Standardisation of impact

- Lack of consensus over impact meaning and application across disciplines
- Proximal vs. distal effects
- Translation
- Lineation

2) Intangibility

- Impacts not observable or tangible
- Proxy measures
- Viability and acceptability
- Continuing need to assess suitability of alternative measures.

3) Determining achievement

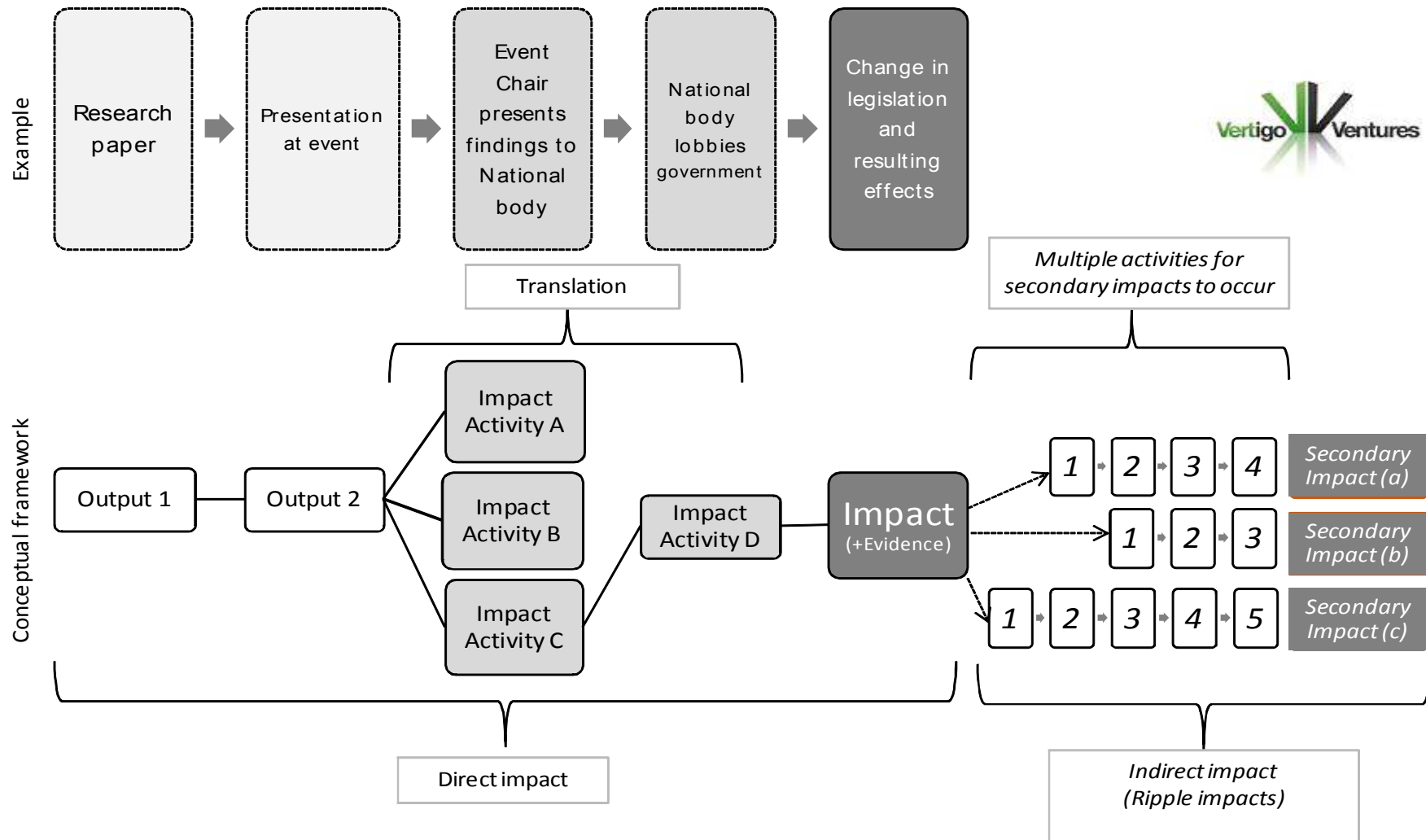
- Iterative and evolving context
- Determining when an impact has been 'achieved'.
- Judgements of scale/ success
- Overarching monitoring requirements
- Beneficiary group stability

4) Attribution and ownership

- Impacts are rarely generated alone
- Intellectual property
- Time lags

Secondary, indirect impacts or 'ripple effects':

Ripple effects:



Conceptual diagram of primary, secondary and 'ripple' impacts

VV-Impact Pathway Model (copyright Vertigo Ventures Ltd 2014)

Role of information management

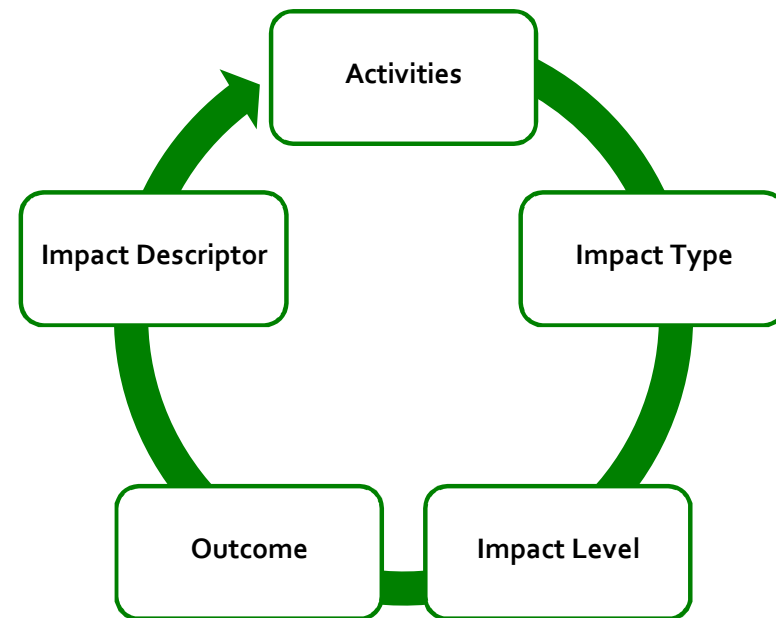
Information management solutions need to:

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| 1) Enable multiple end users to appraise and collect high quality impact evidence rather simply focusing on data input | 2) Optimise ease of capture and storage of impact data to support facilitated/ self service use and institutional reporting | 3) Support adoption and engagement through clear impact planning pathways and appropriate vocabulary |
|--|---|--|

Powered by VV-Impact Metrics

An established impact taxonomy

1. Cited in papers and builds on the Kellogg's Foundation Logic Model
2. User-tested taxonomy across disciplines
 - In use as part of an impact capture system for a UK university
 - Been used with UK-wide universities to evidence REF case studies
3. Replicable, simple process to identify impact
4. Precise indicators for evidencing impact
5. Actively maintained by Vertigo



VV-Impact Metrics

- Vertigo Ventures (www.vertigoventures.com) was founded in 2009 to support organisations demonstrate their social, financial and environmental impact using empirical evidence. Vertigo Ventures developed a database of impact information – called VV-Impact Metrics – providing a framework for identifying and capturing pathways to impact at the organisational and project levels. The system supports impact pathway planning and monitoring to generate greater impact with evolving metrics¹¹. VV-Impact Metrics has been developed for use across sectors (including industry), is aligned with international reporting guidelines and has already been used for impact reporting across academic disciplines. It builds on the Kellogg's Foundation Logic Model approach, and aligns with the CERIF schema for impact data management¹². VV-Impact Metrics provides:
- Consistent and standardised indicators, providing comparability and opportunity for data aggregation.
- Structured impact data, allowing central teams to generate organisational performance reports for key stakeholders and providing defensible, attributable data for monitoring and grant writing (e.g. Horizon 2020)
- A flexible and evolving framework which grows with use and the impact agenda
- An institutional memory to overcome issues of academics moving between organisations
- Interoperability between the impact system and existing CRIS and related systems.
- Interoperability and commonality across academic and non-academic sectors for outcomes based reporting
- Auditable data via real-time impact evidence collection along a defined pathway. Organisations can track impact and monitor impact, amplify the reach and significance and accurately demonstrate the role of the research in generating this.
- Identification of both prospective and retrospective impact pathways to support impact planning from project inception
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- VV-Impact Metrics has been incorporated into Coventry University's Impact Capture system and continues to evolve through live use.

“Embedding Research Impact at Coventry” (ERIC)

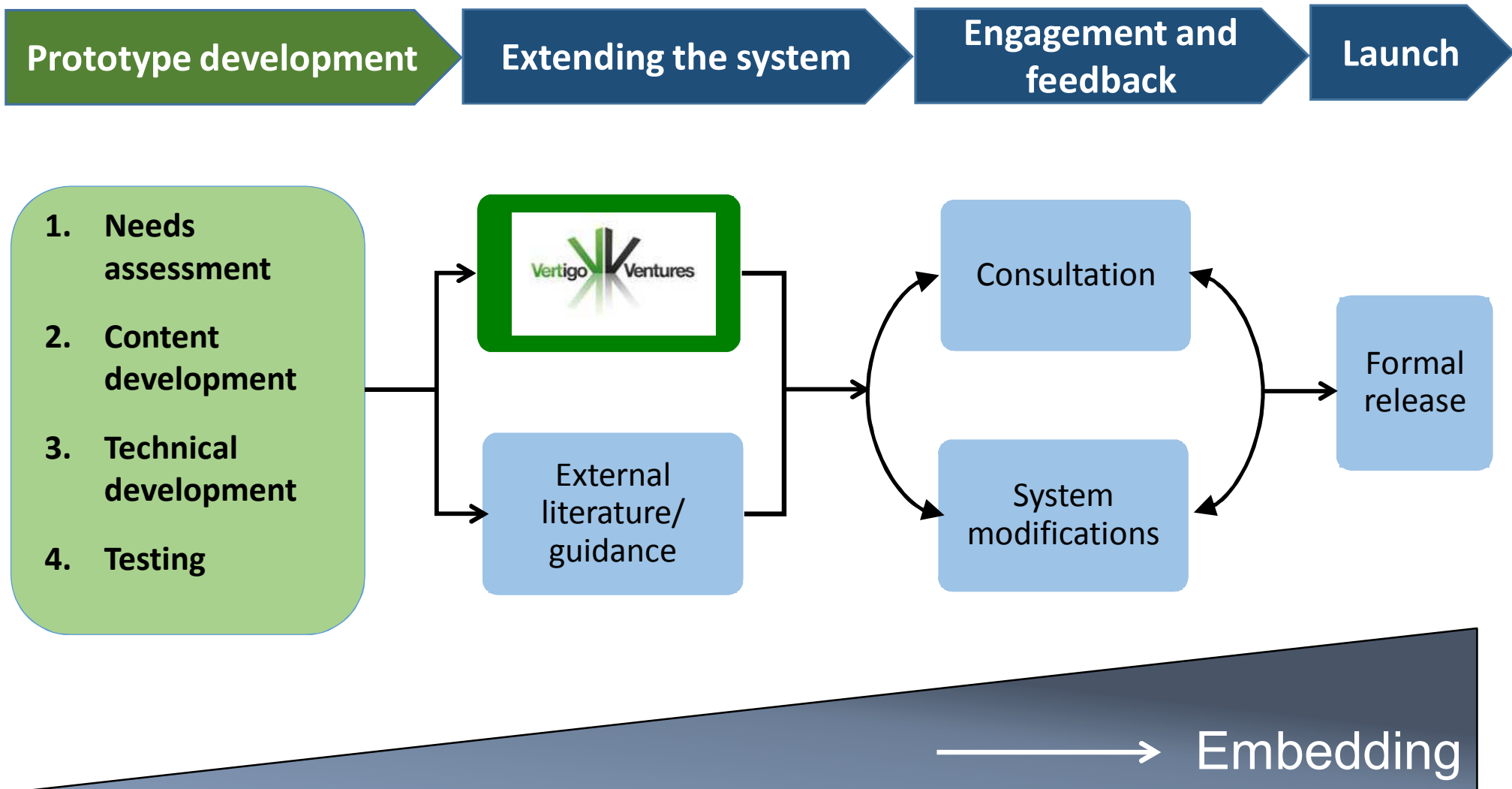
JISC funded project, May-Nov 2012 to develop and test a prototype Impact Capture System

Programme of work to develop system and engage academic staff across university

Prototype mandate:

- Build and monitor ongoing impact portfolios within existing CRIS (institutional memory)
- Reduce reporting burden for REF 2020
- Support funding bids/reports to funders
- Support marketing, case studies and reputation building

ERIC Development process



Impact Capture System Overview

- Add details of (multiple) planned impacts, those which occur unexpectedly or remove those which do not transpire.
- Plan, collect and store evidence for the impacts
- Four steps to add an impact (based on VV-Impact Metrics):



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Activity Statement

Impact

[Add a new impact](#)

For the full list, view the [Impact search area](#)

Project	Impact Area	Impact Level	Impact Type	Impact Descriptor	Other	Description (if your reference only)
Evaluation of the new Sexual Assault Referral Centre in Warwickshire	BUSINESS (Organisational, economic, Government and legal)	Organisation: Public services (eg healthcare, education, social care, police)	Development or creation of a new service	...	...	Creation of a new weight loss service for local NHS
Evaluation of the new Sexual Assault Referral Centre in Warwickshire	SOCIAL (people, health, society and community)	Individual: "End User" (eg. patient, audience, consumer, employee)	Improved clinical outcomes for patients	...	...	...

[1. Plan impact and evidence](#)
[2. Assign expected dates for evidence](#)
[3. Add more impacts](#)

Step 1: Plan impact and evidence

Use the following drop down boxes to choose the area, level and type of impact. You can also add a more detailed description.

This step must be completed before progressing

Impact Area (required)

Impact Level (required)

Impact Type

Impact Descriptor

Description (for your reference only)

Health and welfare

Health and quality of life

Change in wellbeing, quality of life or other psychological factor

Not selected

Not selected

Improved confidence scores

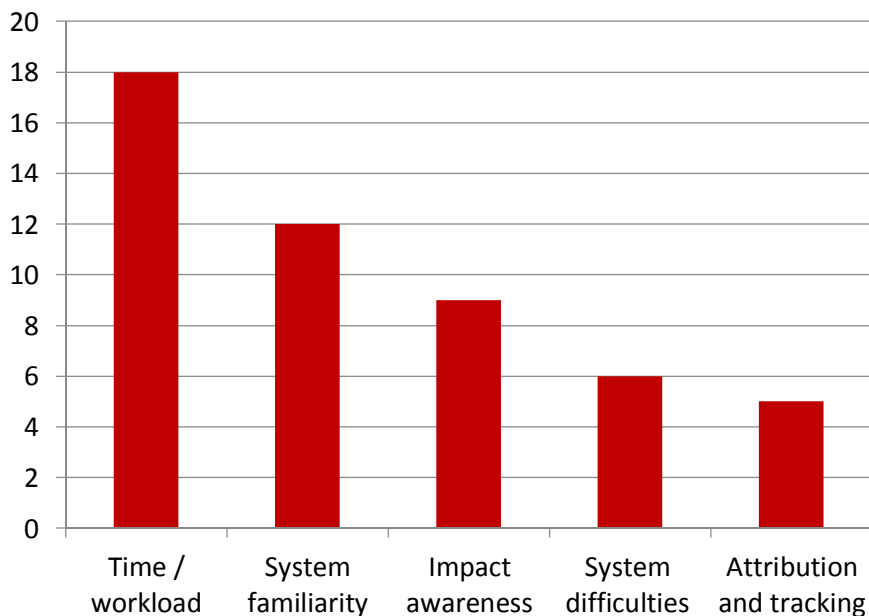
Improved intention / likelihood to perform a behaviour

[Add an impact not currently listed](#)

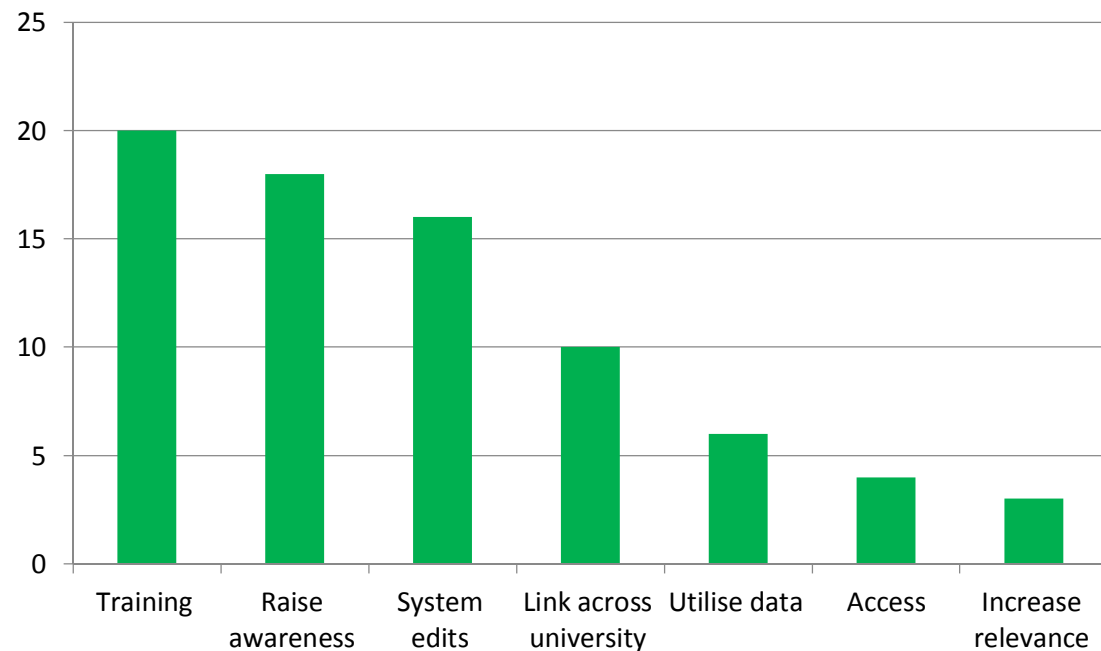
Coventry consultation feedback: Engaging with impact

- In-depth consultation with academic (multiple disciplines), business/research support staff and strategic leads (total of 30 individual interviews plus series of discussions with strategic groups)
- Barriers and facilitators to using ERIC:

Barriers



Facilitators



Strategies employed by Coventry to support adoption

Phased launch with academic groups

Training for academics and Research leads

1-2-1 support for academics

Alignment with funding team

- Offline use by academics for proposal writing

Academic advice-seeking about impact

Communications campaign to broaden the impact agenda beyond REF



Opportunities

Build academic awareness of the impact capture system

Embed impact and behaviour change

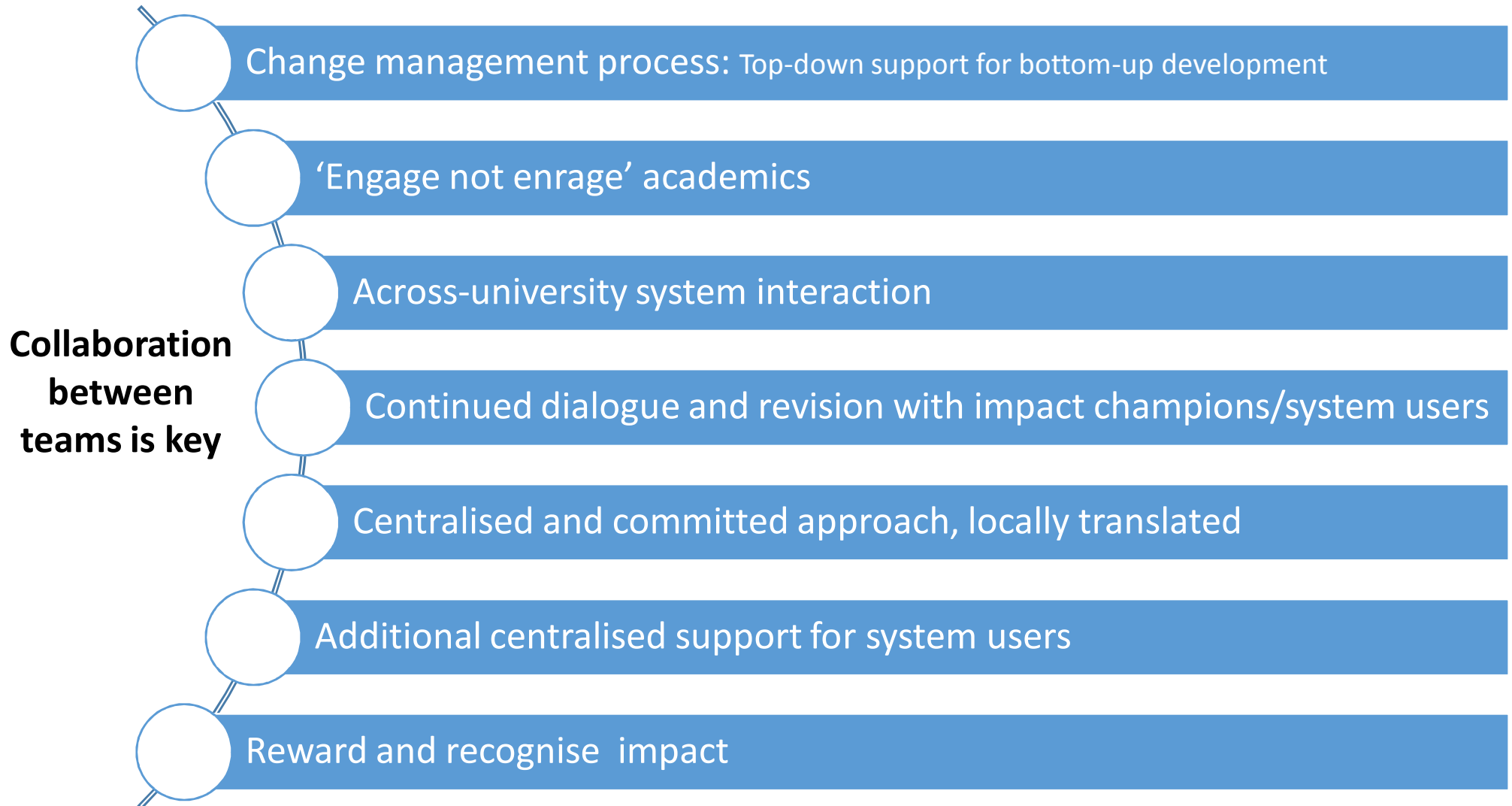
Growth of impact culture through training

Develop tools for enhancing impact planning/measurement to amplify research impact

Work with university teams to identify opportunities to scale research impact early on

Upgrade current CRIS and evolve impact infrastructure

Making it work....



Concluding thoughts

Urgent need for smart and integrated management of impact data across the Higher Education sector

Solutions must incorporate culture and behaviour change

Solutions must use a standardised impact taxonomy

Thank you

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