

Connecting social science research to policy audiences

POLICY@SUSSEX | AUTUMN 2017

Why engage with policy?

Policy makers and civil servants need evidence to inform their decisions, and will seek information from experts to guide their actions. Whilst needing to maintain an awareness of the topical or pressing issues in a particular field, they often rely on academic research to highlight problems and outline possible solutions.

It is never too early to consider the impact potential of your research. From the outset, you will need to consider:

- How could your research shape policy?
- What solution(s) do you offer?
- Who are your main stakeholders – who are you trying to influence, who do they listen to, and what relationships do you have already?
- Why is this topic important / relevant now?

How we can make a difference

Our team's expertise can help you find the right time, place, audience and format for presenting your research, thus maximising your opportunities to inform and shape policy debates.

Policy@Sussex increases the capacity of academics to engage with policy-relevant stakeholders, and develop targeted dissemination and impact-generation strategies.

We offer a range of support tailored to your objectives:

- Assist with impact planning through 1-2-1 meetings
- Facilitate stakeholder mapping
- Monitor and inform you of upcoming opportunities to participate in policy processes
- Enable engagement with Parliament and the civil service
- Communicate and disseminate your research to policy-focused audiences
- Advise on tracking and gathering evidence for the REF

Policy@Sussex can...

Assist with impact planning through 1-2-1 meetings

- Advise on SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-oriented) impact strategies and develop plans to achieve them
- Help to draft convincing pathway to impact statements for funding bids
- Provide advice on budget and requisite resources
- Assist with impact-specific funding applications

Facilitate stakeholder mapping

- Identify policy-relevant stakeholders (All Party Parliamentary Groups, Select Committees, MPs)
- Map stakeholder influence, connectors and appropriate communications channels
- Support network building

Monitor and inform you of upcoming opportunities for policy engagement

- Use the DeHavilland political tracking tool to run bespoke searches within your research area and/or using specific search terms
- Provide a forward planner of upcoming inquiries, consultations, as well as meetings, events and reports within your area of interest

Enable engagement with Parliament and the civil service

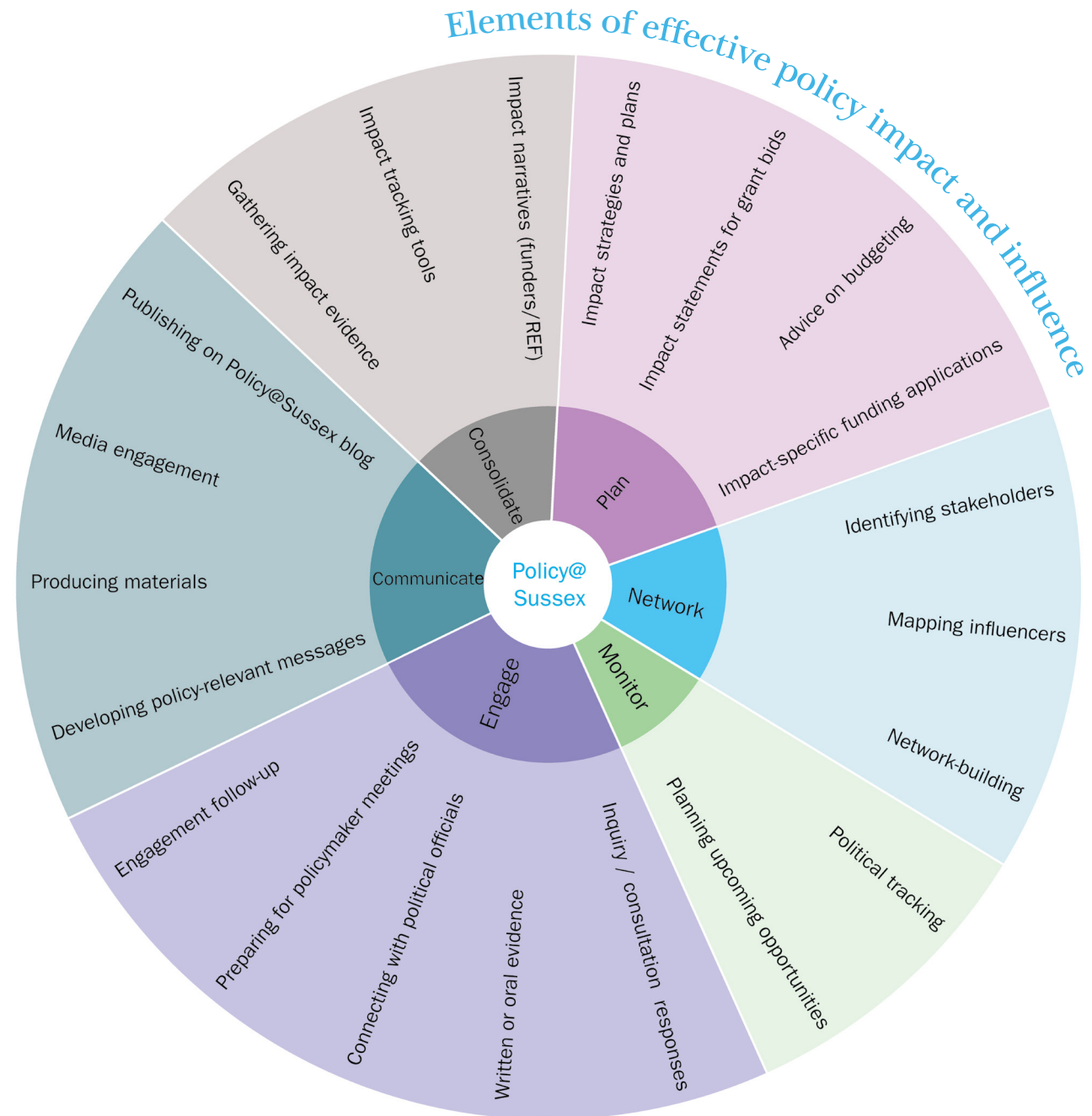
- Help with responding to Select Committee inquiries or Government consultations
- Advise on submitting written or oral evidence
- Help to set up and prepare meetings with parliamentary and civil service officials
- Support engagement follow-up

Communicate and disseminate your research to policy-focused audiences

- Assist with developing policy-relevant key messages and recommendations
- Develop specific materials such as Research and Policy Briefs, including drafting, proofing and inputting to a professional template
- Facilitate media engagement (in conjunction with the Press team)
- Publish your briefings and blogs on the Policy@Sussex blogsite

Advise on tracking and gathering evidence of impact

- Suggest what kinds of evidence should be gathered to support impact claims
- Offer a range of tools that can be used to track impact
- Assist with the preparation of reporting documents, including drafting impact narratives (for funders / REF)



Bridging the gap between research and policy

The Policy@Sussex team can help devise and implement a strategy for policy communications, engagement and impact for your research, or assist with a smaller project of policy relevance.

From using a political tracking tool to developing bespoke materials, we will help you to monitor policy-engagement opportunities, identify relevant political contacts, develop policy messages and appropriate outputs and ensure they will resonate with your target audiences.

In addition to templates for a Research or Policy Briefing, Policy@Sussex have created a range of guides, to supplement our services, including:

- [Working with Select Committees](#)
- [How to write a Research or Policy Briefing](#)
- [How to turn your research paper or article into a blog](#)

These, and examples of Policy and Research Briefings, can be found on the Policy@Sussex blog.

About us

Policy@Sussex is a flagship initiative of the ESRC impact accelerator that connects policy-relevant social science research and policy makers, influencers and other stakeholders.

We are a team of Professional Services (PS) staff currently based across three Schools – Business, Management and Economics, Global Studies, and Education and Social Work – but are open to working with PS staff in other Schools.

We work closely with academics, Research Quality and Impact, Media Relations and Public Affairs teams to maximise impact and contribute to the REF 2021 agenda.

CONTACT

If you would like an initial meeting to talk through how we might be able to help, do get in touch.

Email: policy_engagement@sussex.ac.uk

Blog site: blogs.sussex.ac.uk/policy-engagement