

# ROOTOS

Research in Occupational Therapy  
and Occupational Science Foundation



**Network Meeting  
22<sup>nd</sup> January 2024**



# What is research impact and how can we plan for and evaluate impact?

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# What we'll cover today

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- What is research impact?
- Why is this important for you and your research?
- How to begin to consider the potential impact of your research.
- What is a research impact case study?

# Impact!

IMPACT = BENEFIT

*'Impact is the good that researchers can do in the world'*  
(Reed, 2018, p. 15)

[I want to learn more about impact | Fast Track Impact](#)  
[accessed 22.1.2024]

# What is research impact?

- “Impact is demonstrable or perceived benefits to individuals, groups, organisations and society (including human and non-human entities in the present and future) that are causally linked (necessarily or sufficiently) to research”

*Reed et al., 2021*

[I want to learn more about impact | Fast Track Impact](#)  
[accessed 22.1.2024]

How do you know if your research  
has made a difference?

Has your research changed  
occupational therapy education or  
practice?

If yes, has this then benefitted  
recipients of OT?

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# Example - Impact of the Structured Observational Test of Function (SOTOF): example feedback from people with stroke who had undertaken SOTOF

Poor insight following a stroke may hamper peoples' engagement in rehabilitation. Participants with stroke appeared to gain some insight into their functional problems and abilities through doing SOTOF.

- ▶ *"I was shocked actually...I thought I could do a lot more than that...I didn't follow them [SOTOF instructions] as straight as I thought I would"* (Participant 8).

People need to see progression and improvements during rehabilitation, and SOTOF demonstrated progress with recovery, for example:

- ▶ *'Simple everyday tasks become a problem...and pouring the drink [SOTOF task 3] felt as though they were coming back'* (Participant 6).

Patients reported doing the SOTOF was useful and interesting, and they learnt from doing it.

[feedback collected through semi-structured interviews with 10 patients; Marrison, 2020].

**SOTOF**

# Example: Impact of SOTOF - occupational therapists' views

- ▶ Feedback from occupational therapists who have attended SOTOF training workshops indicated SOTOF
- ▶ *'...help[s] me identify patients' rehab. potential and to support my clinical reasoning and be more person-centred';*
- ▶ SOTOF assists with *'...being able to track change and help with insight'* and provides *'more accurate assessment of strengths and deficits to plan ... interventions'*

Marrison (2020) reported that the SOTOF identified a patient who had right / left discrimination problems that had not been discovered in previously undertaken functional or cognitive assessments.

**SOTOF**



# Example: SOTOF's impact: Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) focus group

SOTOF's ability to identify functional improvements was reported by staff for example:

- ▶ *'it was a good assessment really to show that they had moved on considerably from when they were first on the ward'.*

SOTOF was useful to inform treatment planning:

- ▶ *'The scores show so clearly... where their difficulties are. And then we could ... get together a really good programme of treatment and therapy'.*

[stroke rehabilitation ward multi-disciplinary team's view of SOTOF collected via survey n=8 and focus group n=11; Marrison, 2020].

## Example: impact of the Activity Card Sort- United Kingdom version (ACS-UK) occupational therapists' views

- Evaluation of the implementation of ACS-UK into older people's mental health services in two NHS Trusts found the ACS-UK has:
  - ‘...*been beneficial for service users who do not have language skills anymore... [with] our more advanced dementia service users that can still look at a visual cue and ...works really well*’.
- Clinicians reported the ACS-UK ‘*definitely [provides] more information*’ [compared to another assessment used previously] and ‘... *it helped their partner get involved as well, they ... did it together and they looked at things that they could work on together*’.



# Example: Impact of the ACS-UK occupational therapists' views

- Some people with mental illness or dementia find it hard to identify meaningful activities, and the ACS-UK helps with this: *'When I've used it, people have said "oh no, don't really have many hobbies or anything" ...and ... when you go through it, you find a plethora of things to do... also you build that great rapport with people and therapeutic relationship.'*
- The ACS-UK provides a: *'...detailed account of what the person used to do, now does, how much etc, and also some of the reasoning - this makes it easier to consider [the therapists'] role and possibilities in enabling the person to engage'*
- *'In clinical practice with people with dementia the Activity Card Sort UK (ACS-UK) has been useful in terms of talking about activity, promoting communication that is meaningful and measuring activity participation/promoting ideas for new activities to add meaning to everyday life.'*



# How is the quality of research judged?

**Originality:** the extent to which the output makes an important and innovative contribution to understanding and knowledge in the field

**Significance:** the extent to which the work has influenced, or has the capacity to influence, knowledge and scholarly thought, or the development and understanding of policy and/or practice

## Research Quality

**Rigour:** the extent to which the work demonstrates intellectual coherence and integrity, and adopts robust and appropriate concepts, analyses, theories and methodologies

**Impact:** impact is defined as an effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, beyond academia.

# Research impact criteria for the UK REF2021

**Significance:** the degree to which the impact has enabled, enriched, influenced, informed or changed the performance, policies, practices, products, services, understanding, awareness or well-being of the beneficiaries.

**Reach:** the extent and/or diversity of the beneficiaries of the impact, as relevant to the nature of the impact. (It will not be assessed in geographic terms, nor in terms of absolute numbers of beneficiaries.)

# Research Impact

- After your research has been completed
- For some studies impact may occur during research process, for example through collaborative research, co-design, action research.
- We need to plan for research impact during the research proposal stage, it is harder to work on impact once the research is completed.

# Types of impact

The type of impact your research might have is specific to each project and therefore, like research, impact is wide ranging and varied. Some of the key areas of research impact include:

- Cultural impact
- Economic impact
- Environmental impact
- Social impact
- Impact on health and wellbeing
- Policy influence and change
- Legal impact
- Technological developments

<https://www.york.ac.uk/staff/research/research-impact/impact-definition/> [accessed 12.12.2023]

# TOP 5 TIPS

## Fast track your research impact: Using your research to make a difference

### FIND OUT WHO'S INTERESTED

- Work out as early as possible who outside the academy is interested in your research and might benefit from it.
- If you can't think of anyone, get help from someone who is better connected than you.
- If you have limited time, prioritise the most important organisations or groups, for example that are highly influential or vulnerable and hard-to-reach.

### START WITH THEIR NEEDS RATHER THAN YOUR IDEAS

- Reach out to those you've prioritised, explaining how your work might address their interests or benefit them.
- Meet them in listening mode, putting yourself in their shoes to understand how they see the world.
- Work with them to make an impact plan that delivers clear benefits, with tailored activities and get their help to put it into action.

### KEEP THEM ENGAGED

- Deliver quick wins, for example turning your literature review into a briefing note.
- Regularly get feedback on how the research is progressing and their priorities and contexts are changing, for example via a Stakeholder Advisory Panel.
- Co-design and produce events (e.g. industry workshops) and outputs (e.g. policy briefs) together, sharing resources so you can follow up with participants effectively.

### LEARN ABOUT WHAT WORKS

- Remain curious about who has benefited and how, looking for unintended consequences, learning from mistakes and building on what works.
- Create a space where you and other team members can quickly and easily keep evidence of impacts e.g. an email folder, a shared online document or an app like Evernote or OneNote.
- For significant impacts, research your impact and provide evidence that your research played a significant role.

### REMEMBER WHY YOU ARE A RESEARCHER

- To engage with impact, you don't have to be someone who wants to change the world.
- You might simply be curious. Ask how engaging with the public or stakeholders might enable you to ask new questions and learn interesting things.
- Rather than engaging in impact just to tick boxes for funders or enhance your career, find impact opportunities that inspire you and remind you why you love being a researcher.

# Top 5 tips to Fast Track your research impact

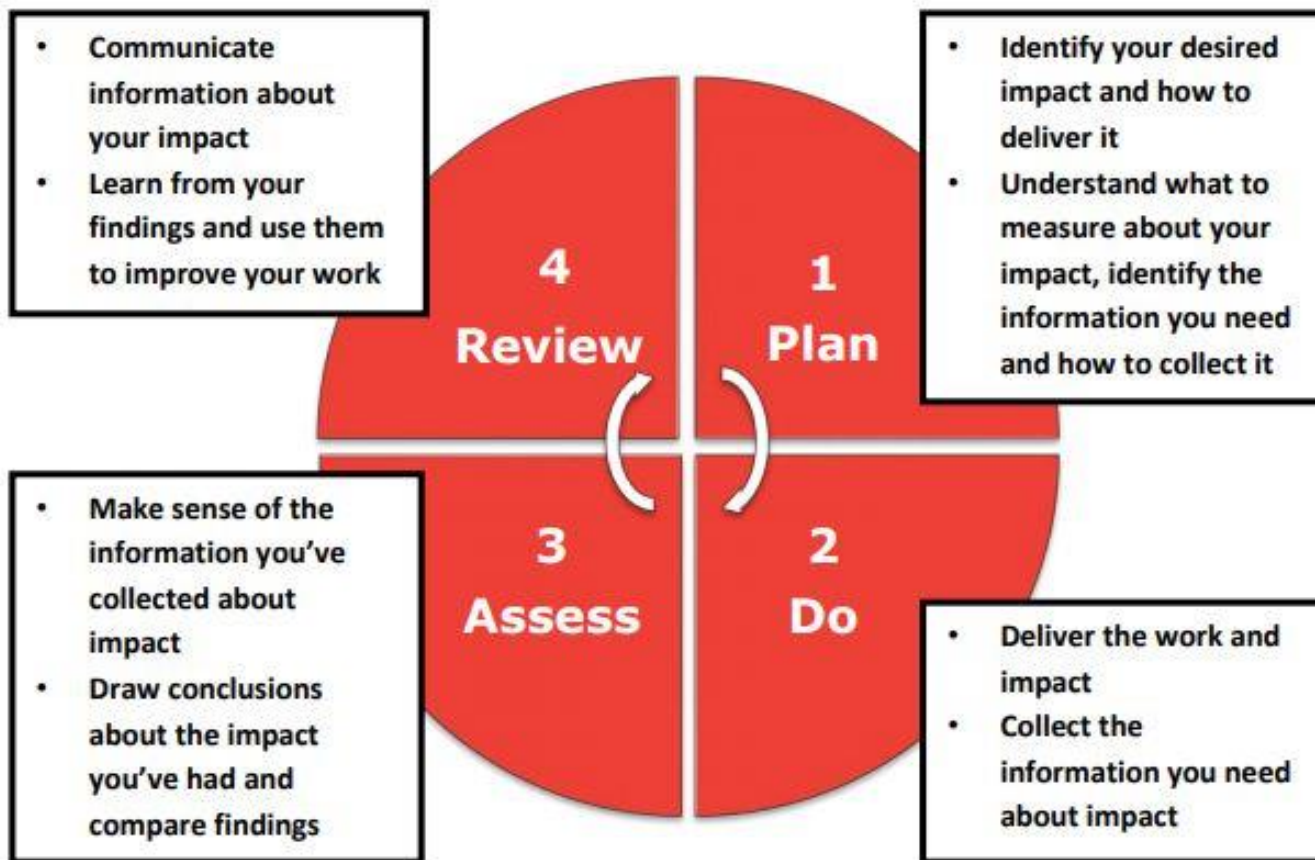
<https://twitter.com/fasttrackimpact/status/1420315924956127233?s=20> [accessed 122.1.2024]



# Good impact practice

## The cycle of impact practice

There are four main areas of activity that make up impact practice:



Source: Inspiring Impact: The Code of Good Impact Practice, NCVO, 2013 p. 6.  
<https://www.inspiringimpact.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Code-of-Good-Impact-Practice.pdf> [Accessed 22.1.2024]

# Example Pathways to impact

- Stakeholder advisory panel for your research project
- End of project stakeholder meetings
- Disseminating your research to potential beneficiaries
- Disseminating your research to people (e.g. occupational therapy clinicians, educators) who will be a pathway to impact
- Create an infographic summarising research findings
- Have a research newsletter

See: [I want to learn more about impact | Fast Track Impact](#) [accessed 22.1.2024]

# A 'so what?' summary



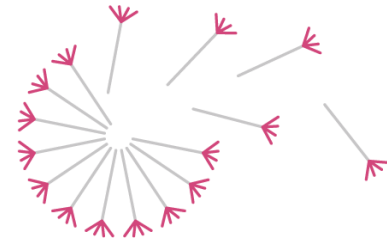
- People want to know that rigorous research is available, but they do not necessarily want to read it all themselves.
- Your So What? Summary should contain enough essential information to hook people in, and clear signposting to where they can find out more. It cannot, and should not, include everything.
- Your summary should be no more than 800 words (two sides of A4) and be possible to read in 5 minutes or less
- Include details of your research process and findings and clearly signpost to available reports
- Use graphics and visuals wherever possible to summarise information

<http://socialcareresearchimpact.org.uk/impact-tools/so-what-summary/> [accessed 22.1.2024]

# Resources and Newsletter

## Fast Track Impact

Get more impact | Get your time back | Get inspired



[Resources | Fast Track Impact](#)

[The Fast Track Impact | Newsletter](#)

[Free training and discussion groups |  
Fast Track Impact](#) [accessed 22.1.2024]



# VICTOR

visible impact of research

- The VICTOR tool consists of a questionnaire designed to provide a guiding framework within a structured interview, or as a self-completed questionnaire to gather impacts from researchers, research participants, managers and clinical teams.
- The six domains of impacts include health benefits of participants, service and workforce changes, research profile and capacity, economic benefit, organisational influence, knowledge production and exchange.
- Developed in a partnership between NIHR, 12 NHS Trusts and CLAHRC
- The VICTOR tool is available free for download from this link: [VICTOR – Visible Impact of Research | e-repository \(nihr.ac.uk\)](#) [accessed 22.1.2024]

# Evidencing and evaluating impact

- It is more than research citations
- Collect data on impact (e.g. via surveys, interviews, and focus groups)
- Testimonials
- Consider the power of stories and narratives
- Start presentations about your research with the potential impact/benefit to stakeholders

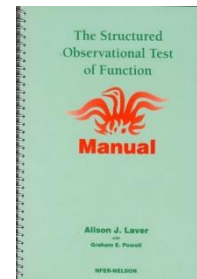
# Example impact study

Improving occupational therapy assessment through the implementation of two standardised assessments in clinical practice: an impact case study

[Impact case study : Results and submissions : REF 2021](#) [accessed 22.1.2024]

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UNIVERSITY



# Example Pathways to impact for SOTOF and ACS-UK

▶ SOTOF and ACS-UK have been disseminated via:

- ▶ Publications (+ open access on University research repository)
- ▶ Mentions on Twitter (now X)
- ▶ Mentioned on the University website
- ▶ Workshops delivered at my University as part of the Health continuing professional development portfolio
- ▶ Workshops delivered on request in NHS Trusts
- ▶ Conference presentations at national and European conferences (uploaded to University's open access repository and ResearchGate)
- ▶ Invited presentation at the OT Show
- ▶ Stand at the European Network of Occupational Therapists in Higher Education (ENOTHE) conference in Athens
- ▶ Invited teaching / presentations on SOTOF
- ▶ SOTOF available from the Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOT) library





## Example pathways to impact for SOTOF and ACS-UK

- ▶ Twitter (now X): successful strategy for dissemination. E.g., 1 tweet led to 52 requests for SOTOF from occupational therapists and students in England, Wales, Scotland, Turkey, USA, Philippines, and Australia.
- ▶ Following other social media dissemination, SOTOF also has been requested by occupational therapists in Singapore, New Zealand, Lithuania, Poland, and Canada.
- ▶ Some occupational therapy students introduced the SOTOF and/or ACS-UK on practice placements leading to OT clinicians requesting the assessments.
- ▶ Two databases created, one for each assessment, and when people receive a copy of SOTOF and/or purchase or request information about the ACS-UK, they are invited to join the relevant database. This is used to keep colleagues updated about assessment developments and to contact colleagues regarding further research or implementation evaluation.



## Evaluation of Impact for SOTOF and ACS-UK in two NHS Trusts

- ▶ Internal University funding supported an impact evaluation in two NHS Trusts where training was delivered on SOTOF and ACS-UK
- ▶ Two research assistants conducted and analysed:
  - ▶ anonymised on-line survey
  - ▶ in-depth semi-structured interviews
  - ▶ a focus group with occupational therapists in the other Trust;
- ▶ One occupational therapists (who led the implementation in their Trust) provided a testimonial letter for the impact case study.
- ▶ Testimonials - letters and emails
- ▶ Review of wider literature citing either assessment

# Potential benefits from your research project?

- Who might benefit from your research project?
- Why might they benefit?
- What types of impact might your research project lead to?

# Potential benefits from your research project?

- How could you ensure these potential benefits happen?
- How could you evaluate the impact of your research?
- How could you communicate the findings of your research to potential users who might benefit from the findings?

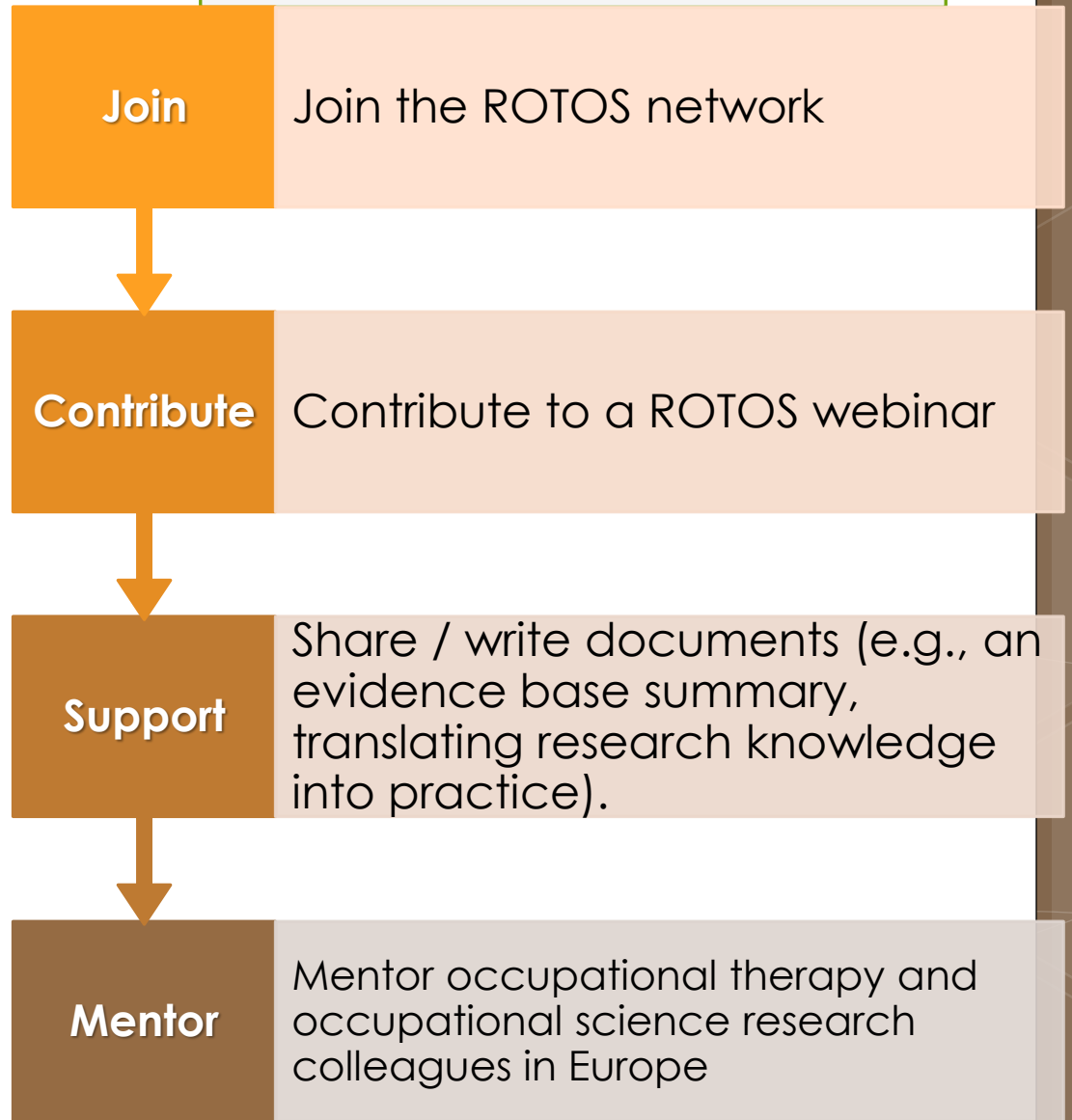


How are you planning to share your results with participants?

# Thoughts, comments and questions



# Ideas for how to get involved with ROTOS



# How to get involved with ROTOS

**Help**

Help identify priorities for occupational therapy and occupational science research and pedagogical research in Europe



**Contribute**

Contribute to leadership for occupational therapy and occupational science research



**Engage**

Engage in fundraising activities to support ROTOS projects and actions





# How to get involved

- ROTOS website:

<https://www.rotosfoundation.eu/>

- Contact us using the form:

<https://www.rotosfoundation.eu/contact-us/>



@therotosfoundation

@\_ROTOS\_

Also find us on [LinkedIn \(20+\)](#) [Facebook](#)

# UK Research Evaluation Framework (REF) Impact Case Studies

- [Impact database : Results and submissions : REF 2021](#) [accessed 22.1.2024]
- <https://impact.ref.ac.uk/casestudies/> [accessed 22.1.2024]

# References and resources

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