

Glossary of terms for research impact

Glossary Term	Description
ABS ANZSRC codes	Australian Bureau of Statistics - Australian and New Zealand Standard Research Classification Codes. The primary codes for reporting include Field of Research Codes and Socio-economic Objectives.
Attribution	The ascription of a causal link between observed or expected to be observed changes and a specific intervention. It represents the extent to which observed development effects can be attributed to a specific intervention or to the performance of one or more partner taking account of other interventions (or factors).
Baseline study	An analysis describing the situation prior to a research intervention, against which progress can be assessed or a comparison made.
Beneficiaries	The individuals, groups or organisations, whether targeted or not, that benefit directly or indirectly from the research.
Case study	A data collection method that involves in-depth studies of specific research cases or projects within a program. The method itself is made up of one or more data collection methods (such as interviews and file review).
Causality	A direct or indirect link between a research investment and an outcome. The basic principle of causality is determining whether the results and trends seen in research are actually caused by a specific intervention.
Counterfactual	The situation or condition which hypothetically may prevail for individuals, organisations or groups in the absence of a specific research intervention.
Effectiveness	The extent to which the outcomes and impacts of a research intervention were achieved or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.
End user	The person(s) or organisation(s) that will use or benefit from the product or service arising from the research.
Engagement	Engagement describes the interaction between researchers and research organisations and their larger communities/industries for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge, understanding and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity.
Evaluation	Evaluation is the systematic acquisition and assessment of information to ascertain the value and merit of a subject (e.g. a program, policy, technology, person, need, activity etc.). Evaluation uses a set of criteria that may be ex-ante (prospective), ex-post (retrospective).
Evidence (for impact)	The available body of facts or information indicating whether a belief or proposition is true or valid. Evidence of research impact, for example, could include the extent to which research outcomes have been taken up and used by policy makers, and practitioners, or have led to improvements in services or business.
Evidence based policy	Policy informed by results or information from research of good quality or other well-grounded empirical practices.
Impact pathway	An analysis or plan which identifies causal links by which research achieves or will achieve its impact. It is used by researchers and research planners to identify hypotheses about the route from research-specific activities, through to uptake and adoption of research outputs, and the realisation of subsequent future intended impact(s). This includes defining the changes and linking processes, and indicators to measure progress towards intended impact(s).
Impact, research	Is the demonstrable contribution that research makes to the economy, society, culture, national security, public policy or services, health, the environment, or quality of life, beyond contributions to academia.

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Indicator	Are quantitative of the degree to which a result is occurring over time. In identifying and developing indicators it should be considered that they are: quantitative; internationally recognised; relevant; repeatable, verifiable and time-bound.
Innovation	Is the invention and implementation of a new or significant improvement in, for example, a product (good or service), process, new marketing method or a new organisational method in business practices, workplace organisation or external relations. Innovation is more than just the generation of novel ideas or the dissemination of knowledge, it is about making a change or doing something in a new way. It is the implementation element that separates <i>knowledge</i> and <i>invention</i> from <i>innovation</i> .
Knowledge transfer/translation	See also Research and Technology Transfer. Knowledge transfer is deliberately embedding knowledge for use in a context beyond the researcher's own sphere.
Metrics	A system of related measures used to assess performance of research and quantify particular characteristic outputs or outcomes of that research.
Monitoring	A continuing function that uses the systematic collection of data on specific indicators to provide management of an ongoing research intervention.
Opportunity cost	The foregone potential value of a project when a competing project or activity choice is made.
Outcomes, Research	Research outcomes are the effects or manifestations of research and research outputs.
Research	Research is defined as the creation of new knowledge and/or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way so as to generate new concepts, methodologies, inventions and understandings. This could include synthesis and analysis of previous research to the extent that it is new and creative. This definition of research is consistent with a broad notion of research and experimental development (R&D) as comprising 'creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of man [human-kind], culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications'.
Research collaboration	Researchers and research organisations engaging with other researchers and research organisations for mutual support and contribution to the conduct of research.
Research excellence	See also Research Quality. Research excellence is where research is deemed to be of high standard as independently judged by peers.
Research Impact	Research impact – see Impact, Research.
Research inputs	The financial, human, material and knowledge resources used to deliver a research intervention.
Research or Technology Transfer	Engagement with end users or facilitators including industry, on research outcomes, and transferring it to development phase.
Research Outputs	Products (including traditional and non-traditional research outputs), services or results (e.g. report) produced as a result of undertaking research.
Research quality	The standard of reliability, validity, credibility and ethical practice of a piece of research.
Return on research investment	A measure that evaluates the performance of the research investments including economic, social, and/or environmental impacts.
Scalability of evaluation	The ability of an evaluation process to be transferable, both in terms of the level at which evaluation is undertaken (from whole of system down to individual researcher level), and also across the breadth and diversity of the innovation system.

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Stakeholders	A person, company, community or industry with some interest in the research intervention.
Uptake and Adoption	The application of research outputs by users, resulting in outcomes. This may involve complex processes over time, whereby research outputs (e.g. knowledge, technologies, intellectual property) are adapted, built upon and operationally applied. Evidence of engagement, uptake and adoption, may include licenses, incorporation into policies or standards, use of tools, etc.
Valuation	Assigning a monetary value on outcomes, for example to enable a comparison to be made.

Glossary Sources

- <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/0/6BB427AB9696C225CA2574180004463E>
- Adapted from OECD Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management
- Adapted from Statistics Canada
- Adapted from Social Research Methods: <http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/evaluation.php>
- http://www.cahs-acss.ca/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/ROI_FullReport.pdf
- Adapted from CSIRO and Springer-Heinze et al. 2003
- Adapted from UK Research Excellence Framework
- Adapted from Excellence in Research for Australia Indicator Principles
- <http://www.innovation.gov.au/Innovation/Policy/AustralianInnovationSystemReport/AISR2011/introduction/what-is-innovation/index.html>
- Adapted from OECD (2002), Frascati Manual: Proposed Standard Practice for Surveys on Research and Experimental Development, Paris (Page 30)
- Adapted from CSIRO Science and Impact Planning and Review Glossary
- Adapted from CSIRO Impact 2020 Project Toolkit