

Who could benefit from your research?

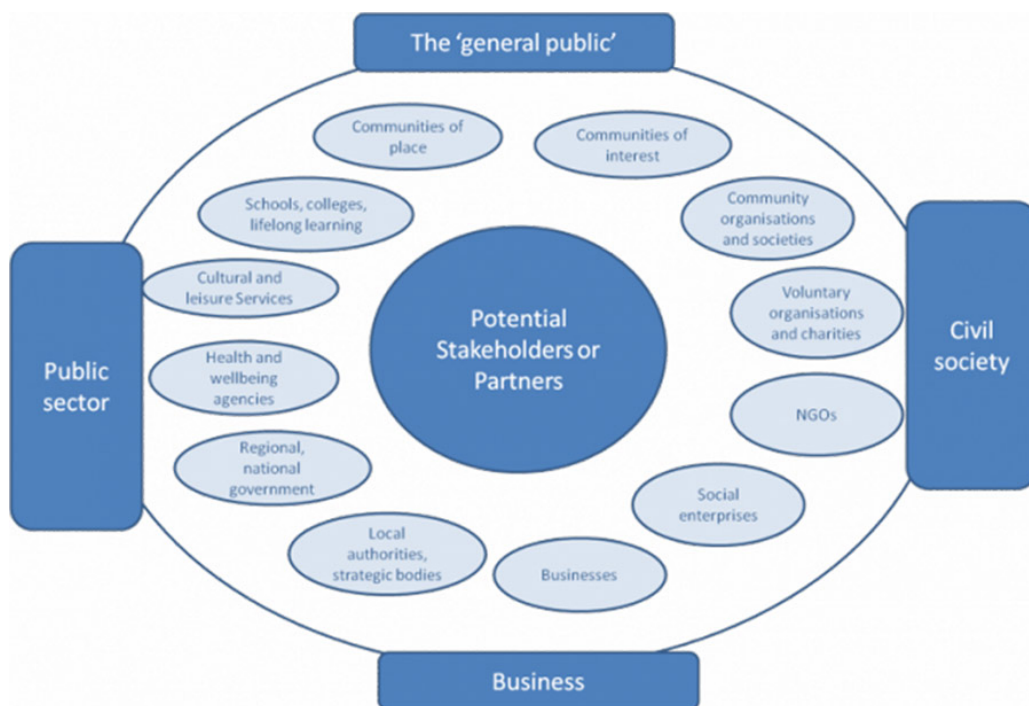
Who will use your research?

Once you've considered the big picture – i.e. what the eventual impact of your research could be - start to think about who will use your research (your beneficiaries). Start to map out how those beneficiaries interact with you and how they interact with each other. Don't forget to consider beneficiaries who may influence others, beneficiaries you may need to work with or get input from and your ultimate beneficiary.

Note: Your research project may not involve all the beneficiaries, but you will be demonstrating your understanding of how the ultimate aim could be achieved.

If you are having trouble listing your users, this diagram in Figure 1, of the Potential Beneficiaries may help.

Figure 1: Identifying your beneficiaries



Once you have determined your beneficiaries, provide details of particular sectors and organisations. This will show that you have done some research and made contacts already and if you can't name organisations then consider how you will find them (you could include this as one of your impact activities). **Note:** Funding may be available from your University to meet with organisations.

If you are still struggling find more help to identify your beneficiaries see Box 2.

Box 2. Identifying your potential beneficiaries

Identifying your beneficiaries

Ask yourself the following questions:

- Who has an interest in your research?
- Who is the target, will benefit and/or will be affected by your research?
- Who can influence your research or other beneficiaries?
- Who will devise, pass and enforce laws and regulations to fulfil the goals of your research?
- How do the different beneficiaries interact?

Or change it around:

- What do you want the effect of your research to be?
- Who has an interest in the outcome of your research?
- Who can help you to realise these outcomes?

Things that can help:

- Brainstorm.
- Ask people you know (e.g. your colleagues, your friends)
- Use internet search engines.
- Use social media.
- Hold a focus group.
- Ask your initial beneficiaries to nominate other beneficiaries who could potentially contribute to your study (snowball sampling).
- Explore a framework of themes around your research in an interview (semi-structured interview).
- If appropriate, advertise.

Who will exert the most influence?

Once you have determined who your beneficiaries are you need to determine how critical they are to helping you on your pathway to impact. This will help you control where to focus your resources ensuring you maximise the impact of your project.

Consider whether each of your beneficiaries are of primary, secondary or tertiary importance using the following information:

1. **primary** - beneficiaries, who are critical to either the success of the project or in moving the project forward, for example project partners (short-term)
2. **secondary** - beneficiaries are not critical to the project but in order to gain impact in the medium term it would be useful if they were aware of any progress
3. **tertiary** - beneficiaries who are not involved in the project but have the potential for more long-term impacts, by for example using the outputs from the secondary users (like new products).

Box 3. Stakeholder Influence Interest Matrix

Understanding your beneficiaries

In order to prioritise your resources you need to understand the interests of your beneficiaries. This information can be gathered from:

- talking to your beneficiaries
- attending professional conferences
- reading professional journals
- following individuals on social media.
- Prioritising your beneficiaries

Influence Interest Matrix

To help you prioritise your beneficiaries the influence/power-interest matrix may help. For each beneficiary decide how interested they are in your research and the level of their influence/power. Then map them onto your grid. According to the beneficiaries position on your grid you can start to select the appropriate actions.

Top Right - Key Players (Primary)

- Beneficiaries with the highest interest and influence in what you are doing.
- Should be a key focus of your time and effort (and resources).
- Manage closely.
- Listen to them.

Top Left (Primary/Secondary)

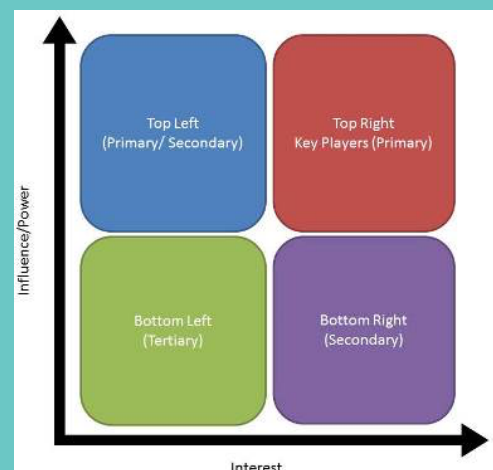
- Beneficiaries with high influence/power but less interest in what you are doing.
- Keep satisfied.
- Potentially problematic.

Bottom Right (Secondary)

- Beneficiaries with high level of interest in what you are doing but relatively low power.
- Keep informed.

Bottom Left (Tertiary)

- Beneficiaries with low power/influence and low interest in what you are doing.
- Minimal effort (and resources) required.



Note: All methods for prioritising beneficiaries only provide a snapshot in time as interest and influence may change. So remember to review these during your project.

For examples of submitted Pathways to Impact written by University of Bath staff please log into this [wiki](#).