

# THE ACADEMY

*Developing Liverpool*

RESEARCHING

## Report on Making an Impact 2021



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# Executive Summary

## Planning and design

The planning and design of Making an Impact 2021 began in mid December 2020, when a steering committee met to discuss potential sessions and facilitators, to ensure the overall aims and inclusivity requirements of the Series were successfully met. The committee had representation from a wide range of departments, career stages, networks, expertise and backgrounds, which included:

- Research Impact Officers from each Faculty
- Head of IP Commercialisation
- Head of Consultancy & Industrial Strategy
- Head of Research Policy
- International Development Office
- Research and Partnership Development
- Research and Impact: Strategy and Policy
- Sustainable Development Projects Officer
- Organisational developer
- Diversity & Equality Officer
- BAME network
- Disability network
- Postdocs /Research Staff Association
- Tenure Track fellow
- Development and Alumni Relations

It was important that the programme for 2021 built on the ambitious programme set out in 2020, which had been redesigned to become an entirely online event. The 2021 programme also needed to respond to feedback from participants and ensure that the Series continued to deliver high quality, innovative events which enabled researchers across all career stages and disciplines to engage with development activities focused around research impact and knowledge exchange.

Taking place over 5 weeks from 10<sup>th</sup> May -11<sup>th</sup> June 2021, all sessions would continue to be delivered online, enriched with asynchronous material and complimentary online resources. This responded to the continued restrictions of the COVID 19 pandemic and helped improve accessibility, as highlighted in the quote below and reiterated by many that attended and facilitated the event in 2020.

*“The current (2020) programme was absolutely brilliant. I would consider doing the Making an Impact online for 2021. It made it very inclusive for people living far or with caring responsibilities, who thanks to the online platform, were able to attend the workshops”*

The *Making an Impact Framework* provided the structure for events included within the Series. The Framework consists of impact clusters defined in REF2021 (Research England 2018) and a knowledge and skill axis based on the first iteration of the [Knowledge Exchange Framework](#) (Research England 2019).

In accordance with the University's HR Excellence in Research Award (Section 3.1.4 of the [University's 2020-2024 Concordat Implementation Plan](#)), Making an Impact 2021 sessions were again also mapped against the [Vitae Researcher Development Framework](#), which describes the knowledge, behaviour and attributes of successful researchers.

By embedding the Making an Impact and Researcher Development Framework into the design of the Series, regular participants and returning facilitators are now very familiar with the multi-disciplinary research-impact related knowledge, skills, attributes and competencies that will be covered across the programme. These enable researchers and research related staff to build a tailored experience based on their respective research impact needs, ambitions and interests.

## New features for Making an Impact 2021

The 2021 programme was flexible and innovative (see Figure 0-1) and built on the [resources and materials](#) generated during previous Making an Impact Series, providing a variety of rich and topical sessions for returning participants and those engaging for the first time. Learning from the experience of delivering an entirely online event in 2020, consideration was once more given to networking, caring responsibilities, accessibility needs and “Zoom” fatigue.

Making an Impact 2021 sessions were delivered by Vice Chancellors, leading academics, professional bodies, University of Liverpool alumni, research impact leaders, external and internal facilitators and consisted of a mixture of workshops, webinars, online facility tours, keynotes, panel discussions, and 1:1 career consultations.

Over **100** external and internal speakers provided **78** development sessions, **66** of which were delivered live, with over **2018** registrations from **815** individuals (further details see Section 4).

New to the 2021 programme was the “From Liverpool to Impact” series of talks that were delivered by University of Liverpool Alumni. The format of the sessions was varied and included a ‘fireside chat’, panel discussions and webinars. The background and expertise of the presenters spanned disciplines and included a Vice president of a FTSE 100 company, Executive Director of the Science and Technologies Facility Council and CEO of a highly successful spinout company. All sessions demonstrated successful career paths outside of academia and highlighted the transferability of the skills and abilities of researchers with an academic background.

Week four (1<sup>st</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> June) of the five-week series took place during school half-term holidays and consisted of 12 pre-recorded sessions which included virtual tours of Senor City, a panel discussion and Keynote sessions from previous Making an Impact Series. These sessions were timetabled into the programme but could also be accessed at any time and were linked to many of the live sessions delivered throughout the other four weeks of the Series.

**14** of the live sessions were opened out to external audiences, which is more than any previous Series. Those that attended were from **30** different institutions and made up on average **46%** of the audience. There were **439** non-University of Liverpool registrations this year compared to 153 at Making an Impact 2020.

Networking has always been an important part of the Making an Impact Series. A channel on Microsoft Teams was made available for all those that attended any of the Making an Impact sessions to continue conversations, chat informally, network and make connections. In addition, this year, all participants that registered for any Making an Impact session were also sent a link to a specific [Kumospace](#) “space”. A virtual space that has rich illustrations and interactive environments to help facilitate engagement that feels informal and closer to face-to-face interaction. A networking session every week during the Series using Kumospace was included in the programme (see Figure 1).

To promote and encourage the implementation of practices learnt during each session, the question “*What action will you take as a result of attending this session?*” was added to the evaluation survey.

## Making an Impact 2021 aims

The Series aimed to:

- Develop the practice of Liverpool researchers across all faculties, at all stages of their careers, by providing rich, varied, high-quality development opportunities.
- Develop Liverpool researchers for future roles in careers both within and outside academia.
- Stimulate conversations and encourage engagement with employers and leading industry professionals across different sectors.
- Develop an enhanced awareness of research impact and knowledge exchange and the relevant services and departments that can be accessed through the University to support engagement with different sectors.
- Deliver an inclusive and accessible programme as well as build on the [resources and materials](#) generated during previous Making an Impact Series, which will remain available beyond the Series.

- Understand and promote the importance of an inclusive, positive research culture and improved wellbeing.
- Utilise short term investment from HEIF Industrial Strategy funds for maximum return.

### **Communication and community**

Enhanced engagement with participants was achieved through weekly Twitter competitions and 'Gif' awards. Participants were encouraged to tweet about each session they attended, which not only helped continue the learning from those sessions but provided an avenue to share knowledge gained and to encourage others to engage with the event.

The Gif awards returned again this year and were very well received. These 'digital badges' generated further conversation regarding the learning and development Making an Impact had provided, as well as acknowledging and thanking the support and engagement of staff members, empowering them to continue sharing tips and insights they have gained during the event.

Three special edition episodes of the Academy's *Developing Practice Podcast* were recorded on key topics included in the programme (See Table 4.1 for more details) and released during the Series. As part of week four's pre-recorded sessions, participants were also encouraged to listen again to podcasts recorded for last year's event. This helped to provide continuity with previous Making an Impact activities and to cement the perception of Making an Impact as a continuous programme that can be accessed throughout the year.

An activity sheet designed to entertain children whilst parents/carers engaged in Making an Impact 2021 and a playlist of motivational and inspirational songs were provided and proved hugely popular throughout the event (both could be accessed via <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/researcher/making-impact/2021/competitions-awards/>).

### **Evaluation**

The impact of the Making an Impact Series is evaluated using the Kirkpatrick model of evaluation (Kirkpatrick, 2009). The evaluation outlined in this document consists of a post-6-month point evaluation of Making an Impact 2020, which fed into the planning of the 2021 programme and primary data from an evaluation survey administered weekly during Making an Impact 2021.

Participants' qualitative evaluations (n=161) of the extent to which Making an Impact 2021 achieved its stated objectives are extremely positive and indicated that the Series is incrementally influencing the development of participants practice, year on year. Key themes are summarised in the Table 0-1.

**Table 0-1:** Making an Impact 2021 objectives and key themes taken from participants evaluation feedback

Making an Impact 2021 Objective	Key themes arising from participants' evaluation feedback
Develop the practice of Liverpool researchers across all faculties at all stages of their careers by providing rich, varied, high-quality development opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flexible genuine investment in development tailored upon current needs.</li> <li>• Opportunities that promoted reflection on where individuals, are up to and where future possibilities lie and how to turn possibilities into realities.</li> <li>• Enabled learning of new skills and engagement with staff across the University.</li> </ul>
Develop Liverpool researchers for future roles in careers both within and outside academia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstration of successful career paths outside of academia.</li> <li>• Provided opportunity to reflect on the transferability of the skills and abilities of researchers that can be used beyond academia.</li> </ul>
Stimulate conversations and encourage engagement with employers and leading industry professionals across different sectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rich content and diverse topics provided a fresh perspective about the impact of research within society.</li> <li>• Encouraged creative thinking and provided opportunities to engage with professionals from different sectors.</li> </ul>
Develop an enhanced awareness of research impact and knowledge exchange and the relevant services and departments that can be accessed through the University to support engagement with different sectors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased confidence in performing role due to enhanced awareness of services available and general understanding of terms and previously unknown concepts.</li> <li>• Understanding of different roles in the University and the people to contact to support research impact.</li> </ul>
Deliver an Inclusive and accessible programme as well and build on the <a href="#">resources and materials</a> generated during previous Making an Impact Series which will continue to remain available beyond the Series.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Combination of timetabled interactive online live sessions, with pre-recorded sessions that can be engaged with at any time.</li> <li>• Flexible, short sessions were more accessible in terms of managing work-life balance.</li> </ul>
Understand and promote the importance of an inclusive, positive research culture and improved wellbeing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proactive discussions on topics that are relevant to the working environment of researchers.</li> <li>• Panel discussions and keynote sessions facilitated by people from different backgrounds and cultures.</li> </ul>
Utilise short term investment from HEIF Industrial Strategy funds for maximum return	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building on the understanding of Knowledge Exchange and the role researchers play.</li> <li>• Providing case studies and advice from those already engaged and successful in knowledge exchange activities.</li> <li>• Encouraging participants to engage in policy and consultancy.</li> </ul>

**Figure 0-1:** Making an Impact 2021 programme of activity (Week 1, Week 4 & the back page)

This figure shows Week 1(A) Week 4 (B) and the final page (C) of the programme. Each live session is linked to its specific Eventbrite page for registrations and stated not only the time and length of the session but also any breaks that would take place. As well as a description of the format of the session (webinar, workshop etc), each session had coloured square(s) and letters which represented the different impact clusters and knowledge skills and axis covered in this session. Week 4 (B) was made up of 12 pre-recorded sessions, they were timetabled into the programme but could also be accessed at any time by clicking the link. This page was a different colour to the other four weeks of the programme to visually emphasize that the format of this week was different to the others. Any online resources or podcasts could also be linked to from each individual session as well as linking through to any timetabled pre-recorded sessions that were complimentary to a particular live session.

Each page covered a full week of the programme, the final page (C) provided a brief description and links to the playlist, further resources, podcasts, framework, a searchable programme and the Teams social space. Where possible, mid-session breaks were also indicated on the programme for relevant sessions.



(A)

# Making an Impact 2021


#unillvimpact21 10 May – 11 June

**WEEK 1**  
**10 – 14**  
**MAY**

MONDAY 10 MAY			
<b>1:1 Career consultations</b> (2 individual sessions for 2 people) 9:30-11:00 	<b>Keynote: Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF) and Future KE strategy</b> 11:30-12:30 	<b>How to develop and strengthen international partnerships in a virtual world?</b> <i>(Case studies and panel discussion)</i> 13:30-14:30 	<b>The Power of Visualisation</b> <i>(Interactive workshop)</i> 15:00-16:00 
TUESDAY 11 MAY			
<b>From Liverpool to Impact: A career in Science and Technology in Industry and the public sector</b> <i>(Alumni webinar)</i> 10:00-11:00 	<b>1:1 Career consultations</b> (2 individual sessions for 2 people) 11:30-13:00 	<b>How to engage Alumni? A global network that advocate for the University</b> <i>(Seminar)</i> 14:00-15:00 	<b>Writing as Practice: Exploring the potential of writing differently</b> <i>(Interactive webinar)</i> 15:30-16:30 
WEDNESDAY 12 MAY			
<b>Creative tools you can use every day</b> <i>(Interactive workshop)</i> 9:30-11:00 10 min break after 45 mins 	<b>Research Professional: Finding ECR funding opportunities</b> <i>(Workshop)</i> 11:30-12:30 	<b>Research Professional: Funding opportunities aimed at all research staff</b> <i>(Workshop)</i> 13:30-14:30 	<b>1:1 Career consultations</b> (2 individual sessions for 2 people) 15:00-16:30 
THURSDAY 13 MAY			
<b>From Liverpool to Impact: Moving from Research to a FTSE 100</b> <i>(Alumni fireside chat)</i> 10:00-11:00 	<b>Impact of Words</b> <i>(Interactive workshop)</i> 11:30-12:30 	<b>Help! My research is not going to make an impact</b> <i>(Workshop)</i> 13:30-14:30 	<b>1:1 Career consultations</b> (2 individual sessions for 2 people) 15:00-16:30 
FRIDAY 14 MAY			
<b>Interactive Keynote: Making University-Company partnerships pay off</b> 9:30-10:30 (Chat further with facilitators 10:30-11:30) 	<b>Rhyme Your Research: Discover the joys of turning research into poetry</b> <i>(Interactive workshop)</i> 11:30-12:30 10 min break after 45 mins 	<b>Yes, No, Maybe: Boundary Setting workshop</b> <i>(Interactive workshop)</i> 13:00-15:00 15 min break after 45 mins 	<b>Online Networking session: Chance to meet and chat informally in a virtual space</b> 15:30-16:00 

KEY	<b>KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS ELEMENTS</b> A Research partnerships B Working with business C Working with the public and third sector	D Skills, enterprise and entrepreneurship E Local growth and regeneration F IP and commercialisation G Public and community engagement	Resources Podcast	Link to event Link to week 4
	<b>IMPACT CLUSTERS</b> DIGITAL AGENDA ENVIRONMENT CULTURE SOCIETY OR QUALITY OF LIFE PUBLIC POLICY OR SERVICES THE ECONOMY BEYOND ACADEMIA			

Figure 0-1 cont. (B)



# Making an Impact 2021

#unilivimpact21 | 10 May – 11 June

WEEK 4  
1 – 4  
JUNE

The sessions in this week are pre-recorded. They are timetabled into the programme but can also be accessed at anytime by clicking on the link.

TUESDAY 1 JUNE		
<p><b>Keynote: The Knowledge Exchange Concordat: why, what, and when and next steps for KEF</b> presented by Professor Trevor McMillan &amp; Dr Hamish McAlpine <i>(Recorded Keynote)</i> 10:00-11:00</p> <p style="text-align: right;">➔</p> <p style="font-size: small;">A B C D E F G</p>	<p><b>Virtual tour of Sensor City</b> <i>(Virtual tour)</i> 13:00-13:30</p> <p style="text-align: right;">➔</p> <p style="font-size: small;">A B D E F</p>	<p><b>Prosper Project Podcast</b> <i>(Podcast)</i> 14:00-14:45</p> <p style="text-align: right;">➔</p> <p style="font-size: small;">B D</p>
WEDNESDAY 2 JUNE		
<p><b>Keynote: The Impact journey: have we reached the end?</b> presented by Melanie Knetsch <i>(Recorded Keynote)</i> 10:00-11:00</p> <p style="text-align: right;">➔</p> <p style="font-size: small;">A B C D E F G</p>	<p><b>Knowledge Quarter 2025 Vision</b> <i>(Website)</i> 11:30-12:00</p> <p style="text-align: right;">➔</p> <p style="font-size: small;">A B D E F</p>	<p><b>Research Communities Podcast</b> <i>(Podcast)</i> 14:00-14:45</p> <p style="text-align: right;">➔</p> <p style="font-size: small;">A</p>
THURSDAY 3 JUNE		
<p><b>Keynote: Research Culture: From lab to lobbying</b> presented by Beth Thompson <i>(Recorded Keynote)</i> 10:00-11:00</p> <p style="text-align: right;">➔</p> <p style="font-size: small;">A B C D E F G</p>	<p><b>Reimagine Research podcast</b> <i>(Podcast)</i> 11:30-12:30</p> <p style="text-align: right;">➔</p> <p style="font-size: small;">A D</p>	<p><b>Making an Impact on Culture</b> presented by Professor Dinah Birch <i>(Recorded Talk)</i> 14:00-15:00</p> <p style="text-align: right;">➔</p> <p style="font-size: small;">A C G</p>
FRIDAY 4 JUNE		
<p><b>Talk by our Vice-Chancellor Professor Dame Janet Beer: The UN's Sustainable Development Goals, COVID-19 and Our Research</b> <i>(Recorded Talk)</i> 10:00-11:00</p> <p style="text-align: right;">➔</p> <p style="font-size: small;">A B C D E F G</p>	<p><b>Sustainable Development podcast</b> <i>(Podcast)</i> 12:30-13:30</p> <p style="text-align: right;">➔</p> <p style="font-size: small;">A B C D E F G</p>	<p><b>Demonstrating Impact using the UN Sustainable Development Goals</b> presented by Fiona Brannigan and Professor Mark Boyle <i>(Recorded panel discussion)</i> 14:30-15:30</p> <p style="text-align: right;">➔</p> <p style="font-size: small;">A B C D E F G</p>

**KEY**

<p><b>KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS ELEMENTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Research partnerships</li> <li>B Working with business</li> <li>C Working with the public and third sector</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>D Skills, enterprise and entrepreneurship</li> <li>E Local growth and regeneration</li> <li>F IP and commercialisation</li> <li>G Public and community engagement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☰ Resources</li> <li>📻 Podcast</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ Link to event</li> <li>📅 W4 Link to week 4</li> </ul>
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IMPACT CLUSTERS

DIGITAL AGENDA

ENVIRONMENT

CULTURE

SOCIETY OR QUALITY OF LIFE

PUBLIC POLICY OR SERVICES

THE ECONOMY

BEYOND ACADEMIA



Figure 0-1 cont. (C)



# Making an Impact 2021

#unlivimpact21 | 10 May – 11 June

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**Playlist**  
A special Making an Impact 2021 playlist of motivational songs has been created which can be accessed here.  
[➔](#)

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**Development resources**  
Additional Making an Impact 2021 development resources that can be explored at any time outside of normal session times can be found here.  
[➔](#)

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**Podcasts**  
Making an Impact 2021 Podcasts will be available here.  
[➔](#)

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**Framework**  
Elements of the Making an Impact 2021 Framework that are relevant to each activity are indicated within the programme. From this you can build a tailored experience of Making an Impact 2021 based on your own research impact needs, ambitions and interests.  
[➔](#)

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**Programme and networking**  
Further details regarding the Making an Impact programme and networking opportunities is available here  
[➔](#)

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**Competitions, Recognition and Value opportunities**  
Information about Making an Impact 2021 Competitions, Recognition and Value opportunities are available here:  
[➔](#)

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**Researcher Development RoadMap**  
The Researcher Development Roadmap has been designed to help researchers navigate the wealth of online content now available to support career development and progression. It is intended to simplify access to topics, materials and resources linked to key development themes and available in a range of accessible formats.  
[➔](#)

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**The Academy**  
The Academy promotes and enables every researcher to access high-quality development opportunities in leadership and management, research, education and professional practice. We work with partners across the University of Liverpool and beyond to achieve the highest standards of excellence. Find out more here.  
[➔](#)

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**Teams Channel**  
A Teams channel has been set up as a social space for you to network and chat informally throughout the whole of Making an Impact 2021 and will be available here.  
[➔](#)

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**Register for sessions on The Academy's website:**  
[www.liverpool.ac.uk/researcher/making-impact/impact-2021](http://www.liverpool.ac.uk/researcher/making-impact/impact-2021)

 **@LivResearcher and @LivUniAcademy**



# 1. Context

As outlined in previous Making an Impact reports in [2018](#), [2019](#), and [2020](#), the annual Making an Impact programme of events led by The Academy was developed to provide researchers and research related staff across all career stages and disciplines access to development activities focused around research impact and knowledge exchange.

It was designed as a series of connected activities on topics around the Industrial Strategy priorities to support University of Liverpool staff, post docs and ECRs in particular, to develop their multi-disciplinary research-impact related knowledge, skills, attributes and competencies. The Series focuses on four of the five foundations of the Industrial Strategy (DEBIS 2017):

- Ideas: encouraging University of Liverpool staff to explore innovative ideas and solutions in relation to the impact of their research.
- Skills: ensuring participants develop and reflect on skills that will enable their greater contribution to the impact agenda.
- Business environment: supporting participants' ideas around IP and commercialising their research.
- Communities: enhancing the capabilities and impact of multi-disciplinary researchers who advance the communities within which they are based, and the wider UK populace.

In the four years since the strategy was published, much has changed in the UK's business and economic environment. The Industrial strategy has transitioned into the Plan for Growth (Policy paper published March 2021) which focuses on three pillars: Infrastructure, Skills and Innovation (Build back better, March 2021 p.10).

The design and delivery of Making an Impact 2021 and the topics included in the programme focus on all of the three pillars, in particular Skills and Innovation, where developing high quality skills and encouraging lifelong learning as well as supporting the development of creative ideas and technologies to drive international collaboration and competitiveness are central to the main objectives of Making an Impact 2021.

The University of Liverpool is also fully committed to the implementation of the principles of the [Concordat to support the career development of researchers](#), these principles set out clear standards that research staff can expect from the University, as well as their responsibilities as researchers, working in a supportive and stimulating environment.

Key elements include an increased emphasis on the personal and career development of researchers, and includes specific individual, institutional and funder obligations to "provide opportunities, structured support, encouragement and time for researchers to engage in a minimum of 10 days professional development pro rata per year, recognising that researchers will pursue careers across a wide range of employment sectors" (Vitae, 2019, p.6).

Since it began in 2018 the Series has involved over 300 external and internal colleagues providing over 120 sessions that 1600+ individuals have engaged with. The annual Series of development activities is seen as an important event in the University of Liverpool's calendar of activities and has evolved each year to respond to the current climate and need of researchers and consist of diverse sessions which address contemporary topics within the research and impact landscape. Sessions enable staff to think about their research impact, how it can be conceptualised, enriched, supported and sustained.

Making an Impact 2021 aimed to build on the success of the previous events and to continue to consider and improve accessibility. Much was learnt during the delivery of Making an Impact 2020 as an online event to ensure that in 2021 colleagues would be supported to develop effective ways of fostering research impact skills and efficiently engage in knowledge exchange that would not only be beneficial for the individual participants but the University as a whole.

## 2. Aims and Objectives of Making an Impact 2021

The [Knowledge Exchange Framework \(KEF\)](#), led by [Research England](#), provides information about the achievements of English Universities in serving the economy and society for the benefit of the public, business and communities. The KEF clusters include Research partnerships, Working with business, Working with the public and third sector, Skills, enterprise and entrepreneurship, Local growth and regeneration, IP and commercialisation and Public and community engagement.

The results of the first KEF were [announced](#) in March 2021, with the University of Liverpool attaining a top 20% position in Working with Business, Research Partnerships, and Public and community engagement. The aim of the KEF is to increase efficiency and effectiveness in the use of public funding for knowledge exchange, as well as providing businesses and other users with the information to help them access the world-class knowledge and expertise in English Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

Being able to demonstrate the academic, economic, environmental or societal impact of research has become an integral factor in securing funding from the Government and Research Councils. To build on the promising KEF results received by the University of Liverpool and to help develop areas that the University didn't score as highly on, a key consideration in the planning of Making an Impact 2021 events (as with previous years) was to align development activities with the KEF clusters as can be seen in the Making an Impact Framework outlined in section 3.

The aims and objectives of the Series was not only to stimulate innovative thought, encourage engagement with sectors outside of academia, build confidence and entrepreneurial skills but also to increase awareness of the services and department that participants have access to within the University to support their research impact.

The objectives of Making an Impact 2021 were therefore defined as follows:

- Develop Liverpool researchers for future roles in careers both within and outside academia.
- Stimulate conversations and encourage engagement with employers and leading industry professionals across different sectors.
- Develop an enhanced awareness of research impact and knowledge exchange and the relevant services and departments that can be accessed through the University to support engagement with different sectors.
- Deliver an Inclusive and accessible programme as well and build on the [resources and materials](#) generated during previous Making an Impact Series which will continue to remain available beyond the Series.
- Understand and promote the importance of an inclusive, positive research culture and improved wellbeing
- Utilise short term investment from HEIF Industrial Strategy funds for maximum return.

## 3. Making an Impact 2021 Framework

The Making an Impact Series has been designed around a framework of knowledge exchange 'lenses', on impact in cultural, health science, public policy, economic, industrial, digital, environmental and third sectors (see Figure 3.1). All sessions are mapped against these lenses which are indicated on the programme so that participants can tailor their own engagement dependant on the areas in which they wish to focus. As most sessions map against multiple lenses, researchers are not limited to or focused on one area but can branch out and observe that development activities of interest to them could provide impact in a broader setting.

The seven KEF clusters are also incorporated in to the Framework (Research England, 2019 p8).

As well as the Making an Impact Framework outlined above, all sessions are also mapped against the Vitae Researcher Development Framework ([Appendix 1](#)) to enable research staff, in particular, the talent pipeline of ECRs to explore all aspects of being a researcher, identify their strengths, prioritise areas for professional development and have productive career development discussions with their managers and/or mentors.



**Figure 3-1.** The Making an Impact 2021 Framework

Illustrated on Figure 3-1 above are the impact clusters identified for REF2021 (outer coloured diamonds) and the seven knowledge and skill perspectives of the KEF (blue core) to help participants understand and frame their engagement in the Making an Impact 2021 programme. Elements of the Making an Impact 2021 Framework that are relevant to each activity were indicated within the programme to enable participants to build a tailored experience based on research impact needs, ambitions and interests.



## 4. Key Numbers

Making an Impact is open to all researchers and research related staff at all stages in their career and across all faculties. A breakdown of both the faculties and roles of those that attended sessions across the 25 days of development highlighted engagement was achieved in all faculties. Compared to Making an Impact 2020, there was an increase in the % of participants from Humanities and Social Sciences (25%) and Science & Engineering (34%) and Professional services (13%; See Figure 4.1).



### Registrations

**2018** total registrations

UoL = 1579 non UoL= 439

**816** individual registrations

UoL = 537 non UoL= 282

### Facilitators

**40** external and **72** internal



### Programme

**66** live sessions

**12** timetabled pre recorded sessions

### Resources

**44** recorded sessions

**3** podcasts

**50** linked online resources



### Faculties

**25%** participants from HSS

**34%** participants from SE

**13%** participants from professional services

**28%** participants from HLS



### Role of participants

**20%** Academic, Teaching and Research

**9%** Early Career Researcher

**1%** Mid Career Researcher

**15%** Post Graduate Researcher

**4%** Principal Investigator

**21%** Professional services

**26%** Postdoctoral Researcher

**1%** Clinical Research Staff

**3%** Other

**Figure 4-1** Key numbers from Making an Impact 2021

The figure above highlights key numbers from Making an Impact 2021. It includes the number of registrations (total 2018 and individual 815), sessions (66 live & 12 pre-recorded), facilitators (112), resources (244 recorded sessions, 3 podcasts, 50 linked online resources) breakdown of faculties (25% Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS), 13% Professional services, 34% Science & Engineering (S&E) and 28% Health and Life Sciences (HLS)) and role (20% Academic Teaching and Research, 9% Early Career Researcher, 1% Mid-Career Researcher, 15% Post Graduate Researcher, 4% Principal Investigator, 21% Professional service, 26% Postdoc, 1% Clinical Research Staff and 3% Other). The breakdown of participation by Faculty and role for each session is indicated in Table 4.2. Further information about Schools and Institutes can be found in [Appendix 2](#)

The [Making an Impact podcasts](#) are specials recorded as part of the [Developing practice podcast series](#). The title, topic and number of plays per podcast is stated in the table below.

**Table 4-1** *Making an Impact podcasts*

Title of Podcast	Topic	Number of plays
<a href="#">How to develop and strengthen international partnerships in a world with less travel?</a>	In this podcast Helen Carlin, Dr Billy Mitchell, Prof Claire Taylor chat about how to keep global connections in a world with less travel and how virtual and hybrid techniques can support international collaboration.	63
<a href="#">The Ins and outs of research blogging</a>	In this podcast Alys Kay and Dr Sarah Arrowsmith chat about how research blogging can be a powerful communication tool.	56
<a href="#">Engaging with policy makers</a>	In this podcast Dr Tom Arnold, James Coe & Sabina Frediani chat about how, as colleagues working in higher education, we can engage with policy makers.	83

### Recording of live sessions

44 of the live sessions were recorded and made available on the [Researcher hub](#), a week after they were delivered for those that couldn't attend the live session or wanted to revisit the session. In just over 11 weeks, the recordings have been accessed in total 166 times. The number of times each individual session has been accessed can be found in [Appendix 3](#)

**Table 4-2: Making an Impact participation by Faculty and Role**

**List of Abbreviations:**

- UoL – University of Liverpool
- HLS – Health and Life Sciences
- SE – Science and Engineering
- HSS – Humanities and Social Sciences.
- PGR – Postgraduate Researcher
- ECR- Early career researcher
- ATR – Academic, Teaching and Research Staff
- MCR- Mid-Career Researcher
- PI – Principal Investigator
- PS- Professional Services Staff
- CRS – Clinical Research Staff

Session (all are hyperlinked to the respective eventbrite pages)	Ticket type		Faculty/Service					ROLE								
	UoL Participant	non UoL participant	HLS	SE	HSS	Central Services	Other	PGR	Post-Doc	ECR	ATR	MCR	PI	PS	Other	CRS
<a href="#">1:1 career consultations (2 individual sessions)</a>	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<a href="#">Keynote: KEF and future KE strategy</a>	64	45	4	16	14	16	40	5	9	5	25	1	6	50	8	0
<a href="#">How to develop and strengthen international partnerships in a virtual world?</a>	25	0	8	6	6	3	0	2	2	2	9	0	3	7	0	0
<a href="#">The Power of Visualisation</a>	36	0	11	4	6	6	4	6	5	3	4	1	1	14	1	1
<a href="#">From Liverpool to Impact: A career in science and technology in industry and the public sector</a>	21	20	3	9	0	2	5	3	29	2	0	0	1	5	0	0
<a href="#">1:1 career consultations (2 individual sessions)</a>	2	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
<a href="#">How to engage Alumni? A global network that advocate for the University</a>	11	0	2	1	3	2	1	2	1	2	4	0	0	2	0	0

Session (all are hyperlinked to the respective eventbrite pages)	Ticket type		Faculty/Service					ROLE								
	UoL Participant	non UoL participant	HLS	SE	HSS	Central Services	Other	PGR	Post-Doc	ECR	ATR	MCR	PI	PS	Other	CRS
<a href="#">Writing as Practice: Exploring the potential of writing differently</a>	27	0	11	4	7	1	1	5	5	5	5	1	1	4	1	0
<a href="#">Creative tools you can use every day</a>	37	0	12	7	8	4	4	7	7	2	6	1	1	12	1	0
<a href="#">Research professional Finding ECR Funding opportunities</a>	29	0	9	6	9	1	1	5	9	7	5	0	0	3	0	0
<a href="#">Research Professional Funding opportunities aimed at all research staff.</a>	17	0	4	5	4	2	0	2	3	1	3	1	0	7	0	0
<a href="#">1:1 career consultations (2 individual sessions)</a>	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
<a href="#">From Liverpool to Impact: Moving from Research to a FTSE 100</a>	9	16	0	4	3	1	6	4	8	2	3	0	1	5	2	0
<a href="#">Impact of Words</a>	26	0	8	8	4	2	1	1	7	2	6	0	1	8	0	1
<a href="#">Help! My research is not going to make an impact!</a>	28	0	8	6	10	3	0	2	4	4	10	1	1	5	1	0
<a href="#">1:1 career consultations (2 individual sessions)</a>	2	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
<a href="#">Interactive Keynote Making University - Company partnerships pay off</a>	32	24	5	12	2	7	20	5	4	5	9	0	6	24	3	0
<a href="#">Rhyme Your Research – Discover the joys of turning research into poetry.</a>	11	0	2	2	5	1	1	2	3	1	2	1	0	2	0	0
<a href="#">Yes, No, Maybe: Boundary Setting Workshop</a>	29	0	8	6	7	1	2	3	5	5	6	0	1	8	1	0



Session (all are hyperlinked to the respective eventbrite pages)	Ticket type		Faculty/Service					ROLE								
	UoL Participant	non UoL participant	HLS	SE	HSS	Central Services	Other	PGR	Post-Doc	ECR	ATR	MCR	PI	PS	Other	CRS
<a href="#">Keynote: How to create meaningful Social Impact</a>	39	47	3	6	15	7	22	18	9	10	19	1	3	20	5	0
<a href="#">Roadmap to make your Science Communication more engaging</a>	26	0	9	9	1	0	0	6	4	2	8	0	0	6	0	0
<a href="#">Has business finally woken up to climate change?</a>	0	0	2	15	4	3	3	7	3	1	6	0	0	8	2	0
<a href="#">Career consultations</a>	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<a href="#">Presenting Yourself in a Digital Age</a>	27	0	8	6	4	4	1	4	4	3	6	1	0	9	0	0
<a href="#">From Liverpool to Impact - Spinning out your research into a business</a>	18	19	3	10	0	2	8	8	6	3	8	0	1	10	1	0
<a href="#">But I thought I owned that? A beginners guide to IP for collaboration</a>	19	0	5	5	3	2	1	2	1	3	3	1	2	7	0	0
<a href="#">1:1 career consultations (2 individual sessions)</a>	2	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
<a href="#">Turbo charge your writing</a>	64	0	21	25	11	1	2	17	17	6	16	1	0	5	2	0
<a href="#">1:1 career consultations (2 individual sessions)</a>	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
<a href="#">Impact Support Specialists - tips for creating, compiling &amp; showcasing impact</a>	37	0	11	16	9	0	0	6	3	5	12	0	3	7	1	0
<a href="#">1:1 career consultations (2 individual sessions)</a>	2	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
<a href="#">Key strategies for performance through positive leadership</a>	33	0	7	9	5	5	4	3	3	4	8	0	2	13	0	0
<a href="#">Global Research Collaboration &amp; Innovation: Future Opportunities/Challenges</a>	104	28	22	28	21	15	20	9	10	2	46	1	18	41	4	1

Session (all are hyperlinked to the respective eventbrite pages)	Ticket type		Faculty/Service					ROLE								
	UoL Participant	non UoL participant	HLS	SE	HSS	Central Services	Other	PGR	Post-Doc	ECR	ATR	MCR	PI	PS	Other	CRS
<a href="#">KEF: Where are we now and what next for the University of Liverpool</a>	35	0	7	7	7	12	1	2	2	1	5	0	0	20	5	0
<a href="#">How to be a little more Confident in Uncertain Times</a>	19	0	10	5	3	1	0	3	6	3	3	1	0	3	0	0
<a href="#">Masterclass Better Blogging: The Ins and Outs of Personal Essay Writing</a>	22	0	8	3	4	2	2	3	2	4	3	1	0	7	2	0
<a href="#">Engaging with Peer Review – opportunities for Early Career Researchers</a>	31	0	9	10	11	0	0	6	7	5	8	1	0	4	0	0
<a href="#">Positive Researcher Leadership: Making a Difference</a>	22	0	7	6	4	2	0	3	4	3	4	0	3	3	2	0
<a href="#">From Liverpool to Impact: Working with industry to get your research into the world</a>	17	16	1	8	3	3	6	7	11	1	2	1	2	9	0	0
<a href="#">Taking (a)part participation - defining the role you want your public to play</a>	9	0	4	1	3	1	0	1	2	2	1	0	0	3	0	0
<a href="#">Future Founders -Part 1</a>	22	0	3	9	3	0	0	2	3	4	9	0	1	3	0	0
<a href="#">Presenting your idea in a Digital Age!</a>	22	0	3	9	3	0	0	2	3	4	9	0	1	3	0	0
<a href="#">Keynote : Change! Rebuilding Liverpool City Region after Covid 19</a>	44	21	3	8	13	10	19	12	3	0	8	0	1	25	16	0
<a href="#">Future Founders -Part 2</a>	21	0	3	8	3	0	0	3	3	3	7	1	1	3	0	0
<a href="#">Is your CV ready for the outside world?</a>	38	0	9	10	9	2	2	6	16	4	4	0	1	4	3	0

Session (all are hyperlinked to the respective eventbrite pages)	Ticket type		Faculty/Service					ROLE									
	UoL Participant	non UoL participant	HLS	SE	HSS	Central Services	Other	PGR	Post-Doc	ECR	ATR	MCR	PI	PS	Other	CRS	
<a href="#">Leveraging the research base for commercial benefit</a>	15	0	1	4	4	4	1	4	2	2	1	0	0	5	1	0	
<a href="#">Connecting research with the Sustainable Development Goal's</a>	30	0	8	7	9	6	0	3	1	2	13	0	1	9	0	1	
<a href="#">Q&amp;A panel: Knowledge Transfer Partnership benefits for academics</a>	11	0	0	8	0	1	1	0	1	0	5	0	2	2	1	0	
<a href="#">Launching Business Transformation through Digital Innovation</a>	18	0	1	8	5	3	1	2	2	1	5	0	0	6	2	0	
<a href="#">Pitch Perfect – Plan, Prepare and Perform</a>	28	0	8	7	6	5	0	4	7	3	4	2	1	6	0	1	
<a href="#">Collaborations – The Rights, Wrongs and Rules of the Game</a>	15	0	8	3	3	0	0	5	4	1	3	0	0	2	0	0	
<a href="#">I'm a researcher get me outta here!</a>	28	0	10	12	4	0	0	8	13	4	0	1	0	2	0	0	
<a href="#">Research in Verse Workshop – Further developing your research poetry ability</a>	7	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	3	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	
<a href="#">Top ten fellowship application mistakes (and how to fix them)</a>	41	0	7	12	16	1	1	8	14	5	8	1	0	4	1	0	
<a href="#">Developing a Commercial Proposal</a>	13	0	2	9	1	0	0	1	3	2	4	0	2	1	0	0	
<a href="#">The Prosper portal: Unlocking postdocs' potential in multiple career paths.</a>	24	47	3	7	3	0	52	5	60	1	2	0	1	2	0	0	
<a href="#">Engaging with Policy Makers: Changing the World with Great Ideas</a>	6	0	6	2	7	1	1	3	2	3	4	2	1	2	1	0	

Session (all are hyperlinked to the respective eventbrite pages)	Ticket type		Faculty/Service					ROLE									
	UoL Participant	non UoL participant	HLS	SE	HSS	Central Services	Other	PGR	Post-Doc	ECR	ATR	MCR	PI	PS	Other	CRS	
<a href="#">Keynote : Collective Knowledge Economy</a>	31	44	4	6	5	12	30	10	9	7	9	1	4	23	12	0	
<a href="#">Where can your postdoc take you? A careers panel session</a>	42	91	5	9	9	2	40	14	107	2	0	0	1	6	2	1	
<a href="#">Maximising Your Data Impact</a>	29	0	14	7	3	3	0	5	9	2	6	0	1	5	1	0	
<a href="#">Masterclass: Entrepreneurial thinking for researchers: startups, innovation &amp; impact</a>	17	0	4	6	4	1	0	5	6	1	3	0	0	1	1	0	
<a href="#">Master Class: Your online professional profile &amp; networking</a>	16	0	8	5	3	0	0	3	9	1	2	0	0	0	1	0	
<a href="#">Making a civic impact in innovation, culture, and the economy</a>	27	21	0	6	10	8	8	7	2	2	8	1	1	17	10	0	
<a href="#">Where can my research take me?</a>	0	0	13	7	5	1	1	9	15	2	3	0	0	1	0	1	
<a href="#">Managing project delivery</a>	14	0	7	2	4	0	1	2	2	2	3	0	1	4	0	0	
<a href="#">1:1 career consultations (2 individual sessions)</a>	2	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	
<a href="#">Consultancy: Apply your expertise to generate impact &amp; raise your profile</a>	21	0	5	7	6	1	0	4	5	2	8	0	0	1	1	0	
<a href="#">Civic engagement in the Faculty of Science &amp; Engineering</a>	19	0	1	16	0	2	0	2	1	0	9	0	2	3	2	0	
<a href="#">Great grants and how to write them</a>	38	0	10	10	8	3	1	5	11	4	8	0	0	8	2	0	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1579</b>	<b>439</b>	<b>386</b>	<b>471</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>515</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>403</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>482</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>7</b>	



## 5. Planning, Design and Delivery

The table below outlines the timeline of key actions during the planning and delivery of Making an Impact 2021. Feedback and lessons learnt during the delivery of Making an Impact 2020 as an entirely online event fed into the design of the Making an Impact 2021 programme.

Understanding the importance of networking but also the challenges in recreating the traditional coffee break / end of session chats in an online event led to the incorporation of informal “get togethers” being timetabled into the programme. Different online platforms were researched and the “space” ([www.kumospace.com](http://www.kumospace.com)) chosen was in part due to its interactive environments that feels informal and close to what you would experience when sharing the same physical space and helped facilitate engagement. As well as the timetabled session, all facilitators and participants had access to the virtual rooms throughout the 5-week programme.

A carefully considered steering committee was assembled in mid-December 2020 to ensure representation from a wide range of departments, career stages, networks, expertise and backgrounds, that could feed into the initial programme design to enable the overall aims of the Series to be successfully met as well as providing input and insight of different minority groups so that any considerations could be made early on in the planning process. The steering committee included:

- Research Impact Officers from each faculty
- Head of IP Commercialisation
- Head of Consultancy & Industrial Strategy
- Head of Research Policy
- International Development Office
- Research and Partnership Development
- Research and Impact: Strategy and Policy
- Sustainable Development Projects Officer
- Organisational developer
- Diversity & Equality Officer
- BAME network
- Disability network
- Postdocs /Research Staff Association
- Tenure Track fellow
- Development and Alumni Relations

As is standard practice for sessions organised by the Researcher development team in the Academy, facilitators were made aware that accessibility adjustment requests had been offered during registration and that these would be provided 1 week before the session was to take place to ensure the facilitator could respond positively to any requests. It was also made clear at every session that questions and comments could be made both in the chat and/or by requesting to verbally ask a question, whichever was more comfortable for the participant.

	Key Actions	Timeline
Planning Stage	Steering committee meeting	December 2020
	Keynote speakers and the ethos of the Series confirmed, including the Making an Impact 2021 framework.	February 2021
	Prospective speakers and facilitators contacted (sample email included in <a href="#">Appendix 4</a> ) and dates confirmed in diaries of senior staff.	February 2021
	Sessions finalised (using an updated booking form for an online event, See <a href="#">Appendix 5</a> ) and mapped according to the Framework. Concurrent liaising with the web team and discussions with the designers of the branding and programme.	Beginning March 2021

	Key Actions	Timeline
Comms and Marketing	Rollout of the Making an Impact 2021 comms strategy ( <a href="#">Appendix 6</a> ), targeted mail shots, and series of tweets that were developed specifically for the purpose of promoting individual and general sessions – including those opened up to the wider public ( <a href="#">Appendix 7</a> )	Middle of March 2021
	Signing off Making an Impact 2021 PDF programme (Figure 0-1 of this report) and marketing imagery to include children’s activity sheet ( <a href="#">Appendix 8</a> )	Late March 2021
	Development of the <a href="#">Making an Impact 2021 webpages</a> , and programme broken down by week, including specific keys for which participant groups would benefit the most from individual sessions.	Early April 2021
	A series of staff news articles were published and included in the weekly all-staff newsletters. Some examples are below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Open for registration</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Details on the programme</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Facilitating cutting edge research impact</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Flexible and bespoke engagement</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Rich bank of resources</a></li> </ul>	April 2021- June 2021
Before and During the Series	Podcasts were recorded	April 2021
	All hosts and facilitators sent personalised pre-information emails ( <a href="#">Appendices 9 &amp;10</a> ). Permission sought from keynote speakers to record their sessions.	Late April and May 2021
	Staff news articles published highlighting the event itself and any sessions that were low in registrations.	May-June 2021
	Sessions recorded throughout the Series were uploaded and made available on the Researcher hub.	May-June 2021
	Evaluation survey ( <a href="#">Appendix 11</a> ) was emailed weekly to those that had attended any sessions	May-June 2021
	Personalised emails ( <a href="#">Appendix 12</a> ) via Eventbrite to all participants registered for Making an Impact 2021 sessions 2 days and 2 hours before each session.	May-June 2021

**Figure 5-1:** A chronology of key actions led by the Academy

The final Making an Impact 2021 programme consisted of a mixture of workshops, webinars, 6 keynotes, five From Liverpool to Impact sessions, panel discussions and 1:1 career consultations.

## 5.1 New Elements of the 2021 Series

Since its conception in 2018, the Making an Impact Series has continued to grow and evolve each year to respond to the ever-changing research landscape and working environment.

New to the 2021 programme was the “From Liverpool to Impact” series of talks that were delivered by University of Liverpool Alumni. To enhance engagement, the format of the sessions was varied and included a ‘fireside chat’, panel discussions and webinars. All sessions demonstrated successful career paths outside of academia and highlighted the transferability of the skills and abilities of researchers with an academic background.

Zoom webinar was also used as a platform to deliver the keynotes and the majority of the panel sessions and any externally opened sessions that did not require audience interaction beyond asking questions. Zoom webinar performs better than Zoom meeting when presenting to a large audience and allows the host to have more control over the experience of the attendee by focusing the attention on the presenters and /or panels.

Week four (1<sup>st</sup> -4<sup>th</sup> June) of the five-week series took place during school half term holidays and therefore the programme consisted of 12 pre-recorded sessions which included virtual tours of Senor City, a panel discussion and keynote sessions from previous Making an Impact Series. These sessions were timetabled into the programme but could also be accessed at any time and were linked to many of the live sessions throughout the other four weeks.

Fourteen of the live sessions were opened out to external audiences, which is more than any previous Series. Those that attended were from 30 different institutions and made up on average 46% of the audience. There were 439 non UoL registrations this year compared to 153 at Making an Impact 2020. Opening out more sessions externally increased the reach of the Series and provided an opportunity for further connections and collaborations to be made.

Recognition of engagement was supported through a poetry competition included for the first time as one of the Making an Impact 2021 competitions. [The Literature and Science Hub](#) teamed up with the [Sciku Project](#) and science-poetry expert [Sam Illingworth](#) to facilitate two sessions as part of the Making an Impact programme on the benefits of writing poetry about research. The second session helped participants to develop research poems and receive feedback from friendly experts. The learning from these sessions could be actioned by submitting a poem about research in any subject occurring at the University of Liverpool as part of the [Rhyme your Research competition](#).

## 6. Participants and Facilitators Feedback

During Making an Impact 2021, a mix of 112 external and internal speakers and facilitators engaged colleagues from the University in thinking about research impact across 66 individual live sessions. The feedback reported in this document consists of primary data based on one post-Making an Impact 2020 survey, and a survey that were administered weekly during Making an Impact 2021 and at the end of the Series.

### 6.1 Making an Impact 2020 post-6-month point feedback

Feedback from Making an Impact 2020 at the 6-month point (n=23 responses) contributed to informing the design of Making an Impact 2021. A breakdown of responses is indicated in [Appendix 14](#) of this report.

#### **Positive outcomes of Making an Impact 2020**

- A deeper understanding of my future plans.
- Space to reflect on working practices.
- More mindful about KEF.

#### **Notable actions arising from Making an Impact 2020**

- Understand more about how to plan projects more effectively.
- Increased awareness of activities at Liverpool that can be accessed to enhance professional development.
- Improvement of leadership and management skills.

With regards to future Making an Impact activities, notable participants' responses are outlined below, with key themes including identifying and developing transferrable skills and presenting/pitching online.

- Writing a C.V for positions outside of academia.
- Innovative ways of measuring impact. Opportunities to learn about a wider range of external funding to develop research impact.
- Positive leadership.
- Identifying and developing transferable skills that can be utilised outside of academia.
- Presenting online.
- How to pitch academic research to potential impact partners.

The feedback above contributed to the planning and design of Making an Impact 2021, which shall be further explained in the sections to follow.

## 6.2 Making an Impact Series long-term outcomes

Long term outcomes for Making an Impact 2018, 2019 and 2020 were also evaluated in the current 2021 survey asking “*How engaging with previous Making an Impact Series have changed your practice?*” The responses to this question provided insight into how engaging with development activities as part of Making an Impact have been implemented to enhance practice and drive the participants research impacts needs and ambitions.

Participants that responded to this question had either attended the Series in 2018 (n=28), 2019 (n=44) or 2020 (n=64).

### **Feedback about the longer-term outcomes on their practice from those who participated in previous Making an Impact Week events:**

*“Attending Making an Impact is incrementally beginning to reflect more on my work”*

*“Broadened my horizons. Thinking outside of my role. What can I do to help myself?”*

*“An opportunity to look at things you have only heard the name of. Rather than being an “unknown” factor come out of these sessions with some good general understanding and names of people to contact should I need to carry out my role”*

*“Made me reflect on what I do and how I communicate this to others”*

*“Absolutely changed my practice, improving my skills and the way I consider and work.”*

*“Opened the mind to alternative careers and helps with the requirements to get there (CV, LinkedIn...)”*

*“It provided me and my practice with a robust framework that has crystalised what I learnt organically but couldn't articulate so clearly. This enables me to evaluate industry partnerships and bridge the cultural gaps better. I have shared my learning with colleagues.”*

## 6.3 Methodology for Evaluating Making an Impact 2021

For Making an Impact 2021, there were 161 respondents to the participant survey ([Appendix 11](#)) and 21 respondents to the facilitator's survey ([Appendix 13](#)).

The Kirkpatrick model of evaluation (Kirkpatrick, 2009) is being applied to evaluate the development impact of Making an Impact 2021 and to evidence value for money. The model constitutes “four levels” of evaluation for measuring the effectiveness of development activity. These four levels of evaluation – Reaction (Level 1), Learning (Level 2), Behaviour (Level 3), and Results: Organisational Performance (Level 4) – consist of building ‘a chain of evidence’.

All Making an Impact 2021 participants will be contacted again in November 2021 for the 6-month post-evaluation survey which will feed into Making an Impact 2022 planning. The post session evaluation will also continue to assess long term outcomes by again asking how engagement with previous Series have changed research practice.

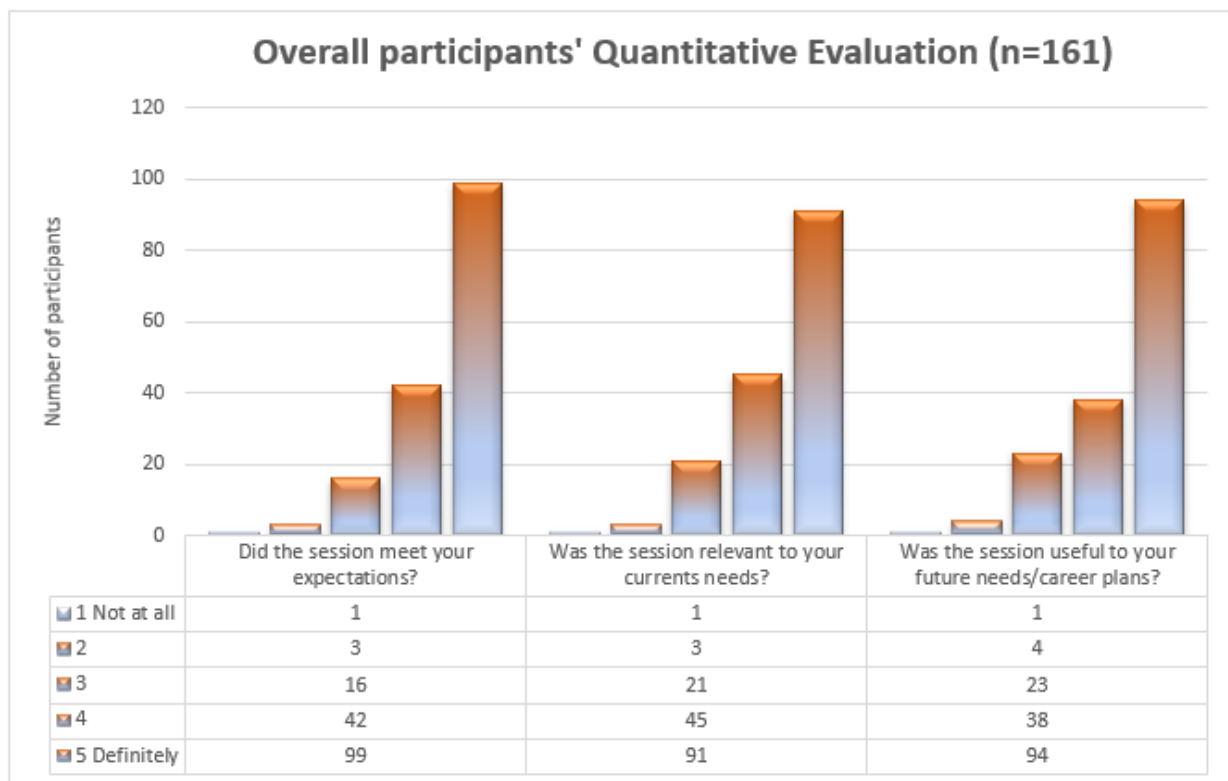
## 6.4 Participants' Feedback: Reaction and Learning

This section shall document participant feedback focusing on their expectations, needs and learning and is indicated in Figure 6-1. The themes are supported with a representative selection of participants' testimonies.

Although feedback via the survey was received from each faculty (Health and Life Sciences, n=59, Science and Engineering n=27, Humanities and Social Sciences, n=19 and professional services n=28). The number of participants that responded to the evaluation survey overall this year is significantly lower than last year. This year the evaluation survey was sent out at the end of each week to those that had attended sessions that week, rather than at the end of each session. This was to reduce the number of times participants were contacted over a short period of time, in particularly those that had attended multiple sessions over a few days.

A QR code that linked to the evaluation survey was provided at the end of each session which did result in engagement with the survey which may suggest that participants preferred to evaluate the session straight away.

A more detailed view of participants engagement and learning is achieved when feedback is received across the whole spectrum of those that attended, with numbers from each group being high enough to be representative and reflect the views of those that attended. Therefore, how the evaluation survey is distributed at future Making an Impact events is likely to be at the end of each session rather than at the end of the week.



**Figure 6-1** Participants' Quantitative Evaluation of Making an Impact 2021.

The figure above illustrates the answers to the three quantitative questions in the evaluation survey which asked, Did the session meet your expectations? Was the session relevant to your current needs? Was the session useful to your future needs/career plans? For each question over 80% participants answered extremely positive, scoring either 4 or 5 on a scale of 1-5 where 1 was not at all and 5 was definitely.



## **A selection of participant testimonies.**

*"Making an impact was a breath of fresh air from the rut of research practice I'd gotten into. It helped me think creatively about my research again, feel energised to engage with new audiences, and to work differently"*

*"Making an Impact was an opportunity for me to reflect on my everyday research practices and to engage with new and creative means of achieving my goals. I'd encourage everyone to take part"*

*"Wonderfully organised sessions, with rich content to help researchers develop and strive to make a real impact in the world".*

*"Will feel more confident in carrying out my role at the University as discussions really useful and informative. Don't get the opportunity often to think about these issues - and definitely don't have the opportunity to hear some of the amazing guests you have invited along. Some of the more creative tools in terms of approaches to work have been wonderful."*

## **In response to the question *What action will you take as a result of attending this session?*"**

The testimonies below not only demonstrate that the aims and objectives of the Series have been met but also the personal growth achieved through attending Making an Impact sessions and how participants have also been inspired to share good practice with their colleagues.

*"I will be keeping all the evidence of any impact work I do going forward! Worry about the amount of impact later!!"*

*"Feel I can more confidently support academics generally with their queries about partnerships whilst at the same time encouraging them to get specialist support from RPI"*

*"Will certainly take some of the information discussed into improving my work performance and advice I can offer researchers."*

*"I will share this practice with colleagues and students who are struggling with motivation and I will use it myself to complete research and teaching".*

*"I have applied for a job, having been more clear (and inspired) about the role of developing practice in HE."*

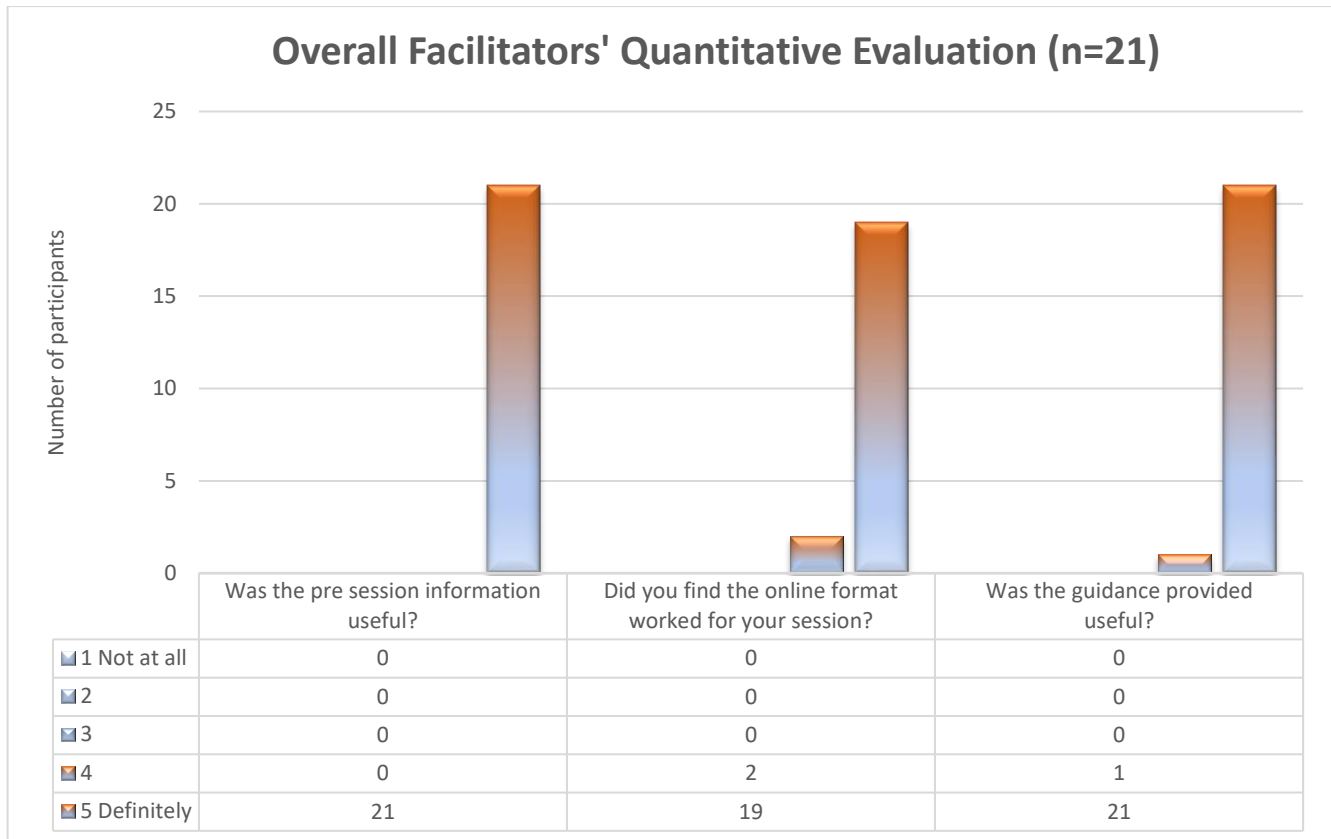
*"Seeing the cultural differences between HEIs and companies will help me to communicate more effectively with industry partners in future."*

## **6.5 Facilitators' Feedback and Evaluation**

This section will focus on the feedback from the facilitators both internal and external. The number of responses was again lower than last year with only approximately 20% of all those that ran a session providing feedback.

Extremely positive feedback was received at the end of each session and the Series as a whole via email and through positive social media posts (<https://twitter.com/researchercoach/status/1403294647418593281> and <https://twitter.com/DeniseChilton/status/1403247858086723586> ) from the majority of facilitators.

The quantitative evaluation based on Questions 1-3 of [Appendix 13](#), are indicated in Figure 6-2 on the next page:



**Figure 6-2:** Facilitators' Quantitative Evaluation of Making an Impact 2021

The figure above illustrates the answers to the three quantitative questions in the evaluation survey which asked, Was the pre-session information useful? Did you find the online format worked for you session? Was the guidance provided useful? For each question 100% of the responses were positive, scoring either 4 or 5 on a scale of 1-5 where 1 was not at all and 5 was definitely.

#### **A selection of facilitator testimonies**

*“The pre-event organisation and the support during the event were extremely efficient. This gave me the opportunity to focus directly on presenting and less worried about the technical aspects. I have thoroughly enjoyed working with the University during the Making an Impact 2021.”*

*“Make an impact gets better every year. It's a highlight to my summer term calendar and something I hope to be invited to join again in 2022. Thank you to all those working behind the scenes to make this programme work”.*

*“A pleasure to work with researchers at the University of Liverpool through the Making an Impact 2021 program. Making an Impact is a terrific opportunity to experiment with how we can deliver sessions in innovative ways. The organisational framework provided by the Academy is always excellent and supportive”.*

*“The modern academic world requires researchers to have lots of strings to their bow. The Making an Impact Series of events is a fantastic way to increase your skills, knowledge, connections and potential prospects. I wish I'd had these development chances”.*

*“The University of Liverpool are at the forefront in terms of providing diverse and innovative learning and development opportunities for their researchers, and nothing has demonstrated this better than their Making an Impact 2021 event – a month-long feast of training sessions, networking and professional opportunities”.*

## 7. Overall Reflections

Recognising that knowledge exchange doesn't occur by osmosis and that individuals need to recognise and reflect on the impact of their work; Making an Impact 2021 continued its focus on helping to develop effective ways of fostering research impact skills and knowledge and build on the resources and materials generated during previous series.

It supported over 800 individuals across all career stages from 30 institutions on 'personalised' learning pathways, enhancing their competencies across the cultural, health science, public policy, economic, industrial, digital, environmental and third sectors.

Central to the programme was the Knowledge Exchange Framework and the Making an Impact programme provided activities that can help support the development of skills, knowledge and connections to enable the University to successfully demonstrate the academic, economic, environmental or societal impact of research that takes place within the University of Liverpool.

Every stage of the planning, design and delivery process of the Series required careful consideration to enable transformative change to occur. The involvement of different stakeholders both within the University and external partners resulted in the successful delivery of an entirely online event that would encourage connections and enhance practice- evident in section 6.3 and 6.4 of this report.

Opening out more sessions externally also increased the reach of the Series and demonstrated both nationally and internationally that the University of Liverpool is innovative and proactive in providing development opportunities to researchers. It also provided an opportunity for further connections and collaborations to be made.

Wellbeing and Research culture continued to be strong themes in this year's programme, enabling the positive conversations over the last 12 months to continue and positively influence the ability and drive for researchers to embrace developing their practice and feeling confident to broaden their skills, knowledge and ambition. Equity, accessibility and inclusivity are central to the design of the Series. Its inclusive design was informed by a Steering Group representing a variety of networks, as well as the University's Inclusion and Diversity officers.

Industrial action took place during the last three weeks of the Series, contingency planning and the rich bank of resources available enabled the delivery and engagement of all sessions to be considerate of all parties irrespective of their response to the strike to ensure that there was no disruption in the development opportunities on offer.

The Series was transformational for those who engaged, evidenced by the overwhelmingly positive feedback. Over 100 internal champions and external experts across 78 sessions over 5 weeks contributed to the development of the micro-communities of practice that were formed, wherein participants continue – post-MAI – to discuss topics included in the programme.

The Making an Impact Series has resulted in a step-change in the way the University engages with external stakeholders and makes collaborative decisions in relation to knowledge exchange and researcher career development. The Series plays a significant role in creating a fertile environment for new connections, new business, creative ideas, impactful collaboration and a culture of innovation.

The importance, demand and financial viability of the Series is consistently demonstrated through the following measures: participant testimony about quality of sessions, participant overall evaluations, and the development of a rich and diverse bank of resources that facilitate knowledge and skill development in relation to research impact.

## 7.1 Moving forward plans for Making an Impact 2022

Making an Impact 2022 will further build on the increased understanding of the Knowledge Exchange Framework generated during the past two series and to use this to demonstrate and further develop the contribution of the University to the wider society. Being able to demonstrate the academic, economic, environmental or societal impact of research has become an integral factor in securing funding from the Government and Research Councils. The transition of the Industrial strategy into the Plan for Growth which focuses on developing high quality skills and encouraging lifelong learning as well as supporting the development of creative ideas and technologies to drive international collaboration and competitiveness, will feed into the focus of Making an Impact 2022.

The focus on managing and monitoring success to demonstrate evidence, additionality and value for money for Spending Review purposes will continue through the use of the Kirkpatrick model of evaluation which seeks to capture participants outcomes both immediately after and at 6 month and 1-year intervals post-event. Their testimonies will enable the continuous improvement of mechanisms to support the University of Liverpool's knowledge exchange development activities via the Making an Impact Series.

As we move into a world where a hybrid working environment will be commonplace, Making an Impact 2022 will also be delivered using a hybrid model of face to face activities (adhering to all relevant social distancing requirements) as well as online sessions. Sessions will continue to be recorded and where possible technology will be used to enable face to face sessions to include online participants to provide an innovative accessible tailored programme enabling researchers to engage in an activity at the same time as their colleagues in a format that works best for them.

The Making an Impact Series will continue to evolve and respond to the current research landscape to provide a programme each year that feels fresh and ambitious, ensuring a variety of rich and topical sessions for returning participants and those engaging for the first time. However by also building on the [resources and materials](#) generated and providing continuity with previous Making an Impact activities, Making an Impact 2022 will also help strengthen and enhance knowledge already gained and cement the preception that Making an Impact is not a one off event but a continuous programme that can be accessed throughout the year.

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For more information contact:  
[researcher@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:researcher@liverpool.ac.uk)