



The impact of research (infrastructures) starts at the end
Bologna – 24 January 2018

Rathenau Instituut



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The impact starts at the end

- Rathenau Institute & ACCELERATE
- Impact and societal impact of RIs and ERICs
- Societal impacts are not evident
- Each ERIC / RI can be held accountable for some processes preceding certain impacts





30 jaar Rathenau Instituut



Maatschappelijke impact van wetenschap vraagt om systematische aanpak



Recalibrating Excellence: #AcademicVarieties



Shaping socio-technical innovation through policy



Public Knowledge Organisations in the Netherlands



Science, Journalism and Media Logic

ACCELERATE project



- ACCELERATE supports the long-term sustainability of large-scale research infrastructures (RIs)
 - CERIC-ERIC – IT
 - European Spallation Source – SE
 - Extreme Light Infrastructure – BE
 - Helmholtz-Zentrum Geesthacht - DE
 - Research Neutron Source Heinz Maier-Leibnitz – DE
- Rathenau Institute leads the task dedicated to the development of a protocol suitable for monitoring and assessing socio-economic impact of Ris

ACCELERATE is funded by Horizon 2020, under grant agreement 731112

Societal impact of RIs: the issue?



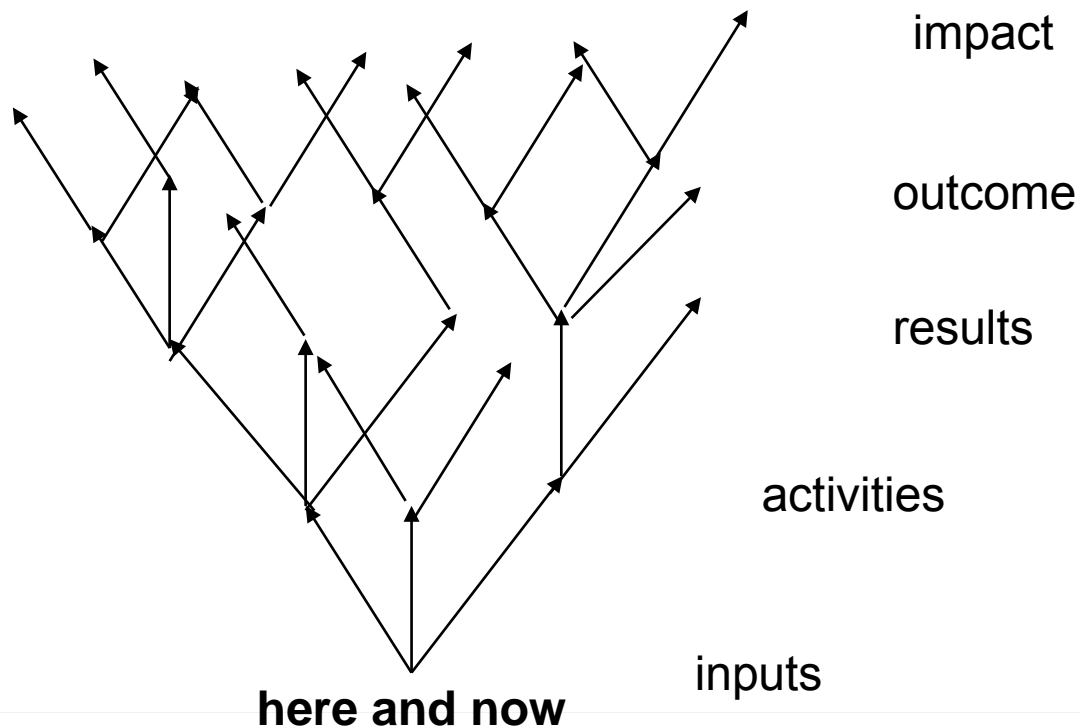
- ESFRI report “Long-Term Sustainability of RIs”:
 - The definition of socio-economic impact presents difficulties: impact may be manifested in many diverse ways
 - There are many different ways to measure impacts (measure?)
 - Causality is an issue
 - The heterogeneity of RIs (and ERICs) defies a “one size fits all” approach
 - Yet it is important to establish a set of standardized measures

Impact

- Impacts often become manifest in the future
- An ERIC/RI is only partially responsible for an impact
- There are many uncertainties regarding the process that leads towards an impact
- An impact is a change and a result of processes
- It is generally accepted that a model or theory is useful
 - For the actors involved to agree or discuss
 - For monitoring purposes
- Impacts – and thus monitoring, evaluation and the choice of indications - should relate to goals



From activities towards impacts

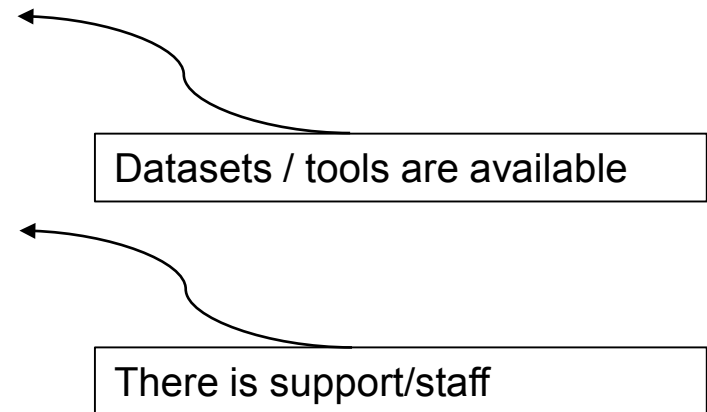
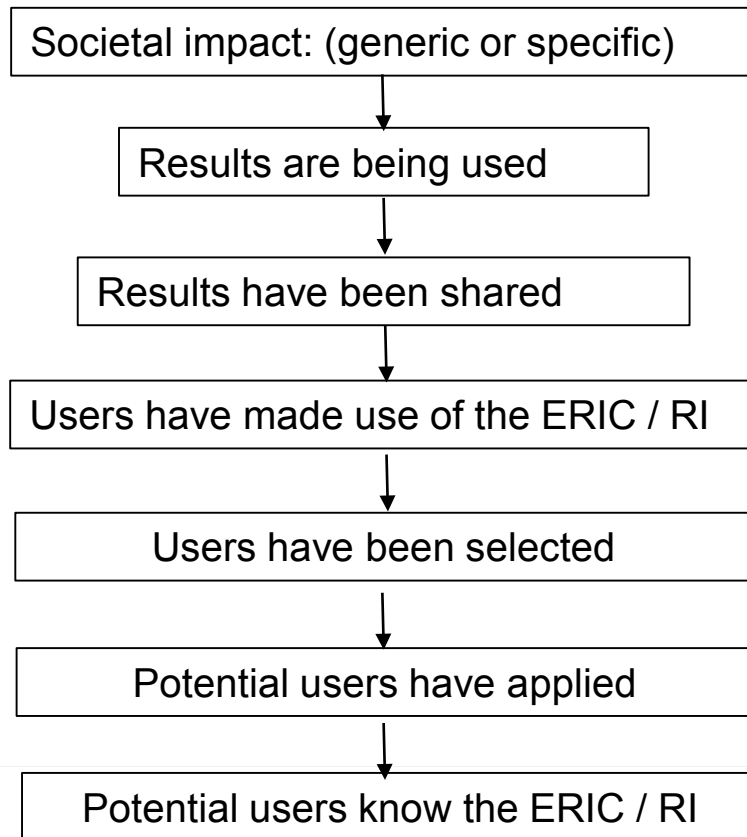


Societal impact



- RIs and ERICs can potentially contribute to a variety of societal impacts
- It is not evident or given what societal impact to expect
- Societal \approx everything but scientific
- Societal relates to ERA priorities, human capital, innovation, economy, policy, democracy, society, culture,.....
- For each RI / ERIC: some impacts are more relevant than others
- Statutes, contracts, intentions, expectations
- Societal impact is here and it is here to stay

From the impact onwards



Impacts expected of and intended by



	Intended	Unintended
Expected	<i>Straight run</i>	<i>Collateral</i>
Unexpected	<i>Long shot</i>	<i>Accidental</i>

EURECIA (2012) Understanding and Assessing the Impact and Outcomes of the ERC and its Funding Schemes - Final Synthesis Report

Impact and governance

- Impact is what RIs statutory need to achieve, what is agreed upon with funders, what stakeholders expect...
- Impact is more than unintended consequences
- Impact is a result of governance: of vision + choices + organisational aspects + activities
- The organisation can be held accountable for the above
- Monitoring is analysing and interpreting information in relation to the theory of change
- Information = evidence = indications





Our approach: theories of change

- Develop theories of change with the RIs and some of their stakeholders concerning each of the impacts
- Identify the promise / goal / mission / impact (“improved policies”)
- Understand and unpack the impact journey that leads towards these promises (what are preconditions? What assumptions?)
- Identify who and what contributes to the realisation of the goal, and decide on whether this is within the influence of the RI
- Shed light on how impact can be (or is!) organised and embedded in the RI

Our approach: indicators are indications



Identify relevant indications of progress

- Understand what serves as evidence, as an indication of progress toward the goal or promise or of understanding
- Select a number of indications, quantitative as well as qualitative for monitoring purposes
- And collect other evidence as well: decisions, cases, policies, practices
- Indicators of progress – can be used to monitor, as well as to evaluate

Thank you!

Leonie van Drooge

l.vandrooge@rathenau.nl

www.rathenau.nl/en

<http://www.accelerate2020.eu/>

van Drooge, L. & Spaapen (2017): “Evaluation and monitoring of transdisciplinary collaborations” *J. J Technol Transf*

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10961-017-9607-7>