Impact template (REF3a)

Institution: University of Surrey
Unit of Assessment: UOA 26 Sport and Exercise Sciences, Leisure and Tourism

a. Context

The University of Surrey has a long history and strong ethos of research impact. A priority of the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management (SHTM) strategy is to maximize our impact on local, national and international non-academic users, through addressing significant social and economic agendas via high quality research.

The main non-academic partners and users of the School's research illustrate our extensive local, national and global reach:

Private companies: management systems firm EProductive (ESRC), adventure travel experts Explore Worldwide (ESRC), the marketing and PR agency Elliot People (KTP), and the global tour operator TUI-AG. Specific examples of impact include: the design of a market penetration strategy for Elliot People, assessment of risk exposure at Duncton plc, analysis of the determinants of hotel productivity for EProductive and executive education at TUI-AG.

Governments: assessing public understanding of sustainable tourism for the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), designing the "European Tourism Indicator System" for the European Commission (EC) which is now being implemented in more than 150 destinations across UK and Europe, while the EC commissioned "EuropeFor All" project has 8,500 hotels now publishing accessibility data using criteria developed by the project.

Third Sector and Professional Bodies: the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) Education and Science Council, Food Standards Agency and Aga Khan Development Foundation.

Non-Government Organisations: the National Voice of Coastal Communities and Hampshire Wildlife Trust.

Trade Associations: SHTM has received funded chairs from the In-flight Travel Catering Association (ITCA) and the Forte Group. SHTM is a 'knowledge partner' for the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) and has conducted research and seminars for research users, including the International Olympic Committee.

Impact typically manifests itself as organisational or policy change, improving the business tools available in the tourism industry as well as influencing professional standards, guidelines and training. SHTM impact also extends to accessibility of tourism and sustainable tourism.

b. Approach to impact

Our approach to impact (2008-13) has been characterised by fostering an impact culture, building partnerships with industry and other end-users based on high quality research, agile responses to technological needs and a passion for engaging with professional bodies and companies.

Nature and evidence of staff engagement with key stakeholders:

Long-term Partnerships:

- Non-academic partners have been involved in the design, implementation, dissemination and impact stages of research projects. At a global level, our relationship with Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) has resulted in a web-based tourism demand forecasting model for Hong Kong, now utilised by PATA and available to its members across the region.

  Our long-term relationship with UNWTO has allowed SHTM to contribute to tourism education and curriculum development across the world.

  Miller has worked with World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) on the influential 'Tourism for Tomorrow' Awards since 2008 and has been appointed as a knowledge partner to advise

on sustainability.

Our relationship with the EC since 2005 on accessible tourism has led to the creation of the Europe for All website to aid travel for people with disabilities and background research to stimulate this market.

Our productive partnership with Explore Worldwide, has led to the creation of a new MSc in Sustainable Tourism sponsored by Explore.

- **Networks:**

    Two members of SHTM have co-chaired the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) Education and Science Council for two terms.

    SHTM continues to strengthen its relationship with key stakeholders such as Visit Britain through the appointment of Christopher Rodrigues as a Visiting Professor, Visit England through James Berresford's role on the SHTM advisory board and the Institute of Hospitality, through awarding Philippe Rossiter an honorary doctorate.

    SHTM's advisory board meets twice yearly to assist the Head of School in determining priority areas for research and maximizing its impact. This board is comprised of ten senior figures from industry and includes ABTA, Accor Hotels, Four Seasons, Reed Exhibitions, Visit England, WTTC and the Youth Hostels Association.

- **Research Collaborations and Studentships:**

    Our work with management systems firm EProductive has resulted in an ESRC grant to analyse labour productivity across UK hotel companies. This will allow EProductive to identify areas where productivity can be improved in more than 80 hotels.

    SHTM has worked with travel firm Explore Worldwide since 2007, leading to an ESRC First Grant which helped to develop a Responsible Tourism Policy on photography for tour guides to use. This relationship has also yielded an ESRC Doctoral Training Centre CASE studentship to research and develop further aspects of Responsible Tourism.

    SHTM has secured Knowledge Transfer Partnerships with Elliot People to design a market penetration strategy, with Duncton plc to assess their risk exposure and the Institute of Hospitality to design an e-learning platform.

- **Training:**

    SHTM provides executive education, based on EU-funded research for middle level managers within TUI-AG as part of their 'Horizons' management training programme.

Departmental Support

To support these approaches, an Associate Dean (Entrepreneurship and Innovation) was appointed in 2013, along with a Director of Research for SHTM and they are tasked with promoting research to external stakeholders and establishing collaborative relationships. This role is supported by an External Relations Manager.

SHTM funding for staff supports data collection, attendance at industry events and conferences, training in specific research techniques, hosting workshops and rewarding performance. Annual appraisals encourage staff to secure external funding and target effective impacts, but also offer the chance to request specific support in pursuit of those targets.

University Support

The school is supported in its approach to impact by the University's Research and Enterprise Support (RES) team. As well as providing KTP expertise and support for consultancy, RES provides project management for the key partnerships and requisite commercial, legal and IP expertise to help enable the creation of impact.

Direct financial support is also available through schemes such as The Impact Accelerator Account, which provides funding for effective and rapid 'technology step-up', supporting the transfer of new technology to markets. Colleagues in SHTM received £70,000 in 2013 for the project, 'Beyond the Visual: Augmented Reality in Spaces of Exhibition'.

c. Strategy and plans

Informed by a review of the impact activity since 2008, highlights of which are included in section (b), our strategy will be spear-headed by our Associate Dean (Entrepreneurship and Innovation) and Director of Research and be supported at all levels within the Faculty.

The successes in the period, particularly our longstanding tradition of close and sustained relationships with end-users has informed SHTM's future strategy for achieving impact. The strategy has four main elements:

- **To conduct high quality research as the basis for addressing societal challenges**. Developing a culture that is more focused on impact requires all new appointments to be in areas where we can undertake theoretically innovative and methodologically rigorous research. Recruitment is targeted at our research clusters (see RA5), so as to build the critical mass necessary to make a sustained impact on policy and practice.

- **To maximise the extent and reach of impact by working closely with existing long-term partners and creating new industry partners**. The development of networks, the work of the advisory board, hosting workshops and conferences and awarding honorary degrees are all important ways in which stakeholders are encouraged to work with SHTM. Having staff engaged externally as advisors for organisations such as UNWTO, WTTC, The Aga Khan Development Foundation and the Institute of Hospitality offers key opportunities for impact.

- **To target significant societal themes for research**. This is done by consolidating our existing areas of strength through the creation of research clusters, while recruiting new staff able to address emerging research agendas in, for example, innovation, social media and migrant workers. These clusters, Applied Philosophy and Society; Economic Modeling and Innovation; Marketing and Branding; People, Places and Mobility; Policy and Governance fit purposely with the research agenda of our key research stakeholders.

- **To systematically monitor and review our impact strategy and outcomes.**
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d. Relationship to case studies

The two case studies exemplify the approaches to realising impact in section b.

Case Study 1: "Reducing social exclusion through participation in tourism "

The first case study relates to our accumulated expertise in reducing **social exclusion through tourism**. The initial research proposal to the EC came from discussions with long-term partners at an international conference. Workshops and continual engagement with user-groups through this first funded project led to a series of successful subsequent funding applications to the EC and the mobilisation of organisations such as Tourism Flanders who were keen to implement the research findings. This research has had significant policy and practice impacts across Europe.

Case Study 2: "Modelling and forecasting international tourism demand: Methodological advancements and innovations"

The second impact case study on **economic forecasting** demonstrates the value of long-term commitment to high quality research over two decades and the deployment of networks to maximise impact. The expertise of Surrey staff, developed through long-term mentorship (Dr Li by former member of staff Prof. Haiyan Song, and now Chen by Li) along with our contacts in PATA ensured Surrey were able to develop the forecasting tool now adopted by PATA.