

<p>Institution: Bournemouth University</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: UOA26</p>
<p>a. Context</p> <p>Globally, tourism supports 101 million jobs, and nationally it is a key growth sector employing 2.4 million people and contributing £106 billion to GDP. The World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) (2011) <i>Global Policy and Practice</i> report outlined the top ten major issues facing the global tourism industry to 2020, of which UOA26 addresses explicitly: (1) <i>Understanding and modelling the economic impact and growth effects of tourism</i>; (2) <i>The use and impact of new media to transform and enhance tourism development at national, destination and business levels</i>; (3) <i>Modelling the changing nature of consumers to assist organisations to add value and improve experiences</i>; and (4) means of increasing the <i>sustainability of tourism</i>. These relate to the core areas of research as set out in our Environment narrative (REF5a) clustered around: <i>Tourism economic and impact modelling</i>; <i>Tourism management, marketing and e-tourism</i>; <i>Transport, travel, mobilities and sustainability</i> and <i>Leisure, sport tourism and event management</i>. The beneficiaries of our research include: UNWTO, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Commonwealth Secretariat, national governments, organisations such as VisitBritain, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), VisitScotland, Scottish Government, Crown Estates, the National Trust and local bodies such as Bournemouth and Poole Borough Councils. Our work also impacts SMEs across the world, in addition to the general public.</p>
<p>b. Approach to impact</p> <p>BU2018 sets out to continue the transformation of institutional research culture started in previous strategic plans. By focusing on the integration of education-research-professional practice it creates a research-led environment in which staff can achieve a greater societal impact from their research structured around the following cross-University research themes: <i>Leisure, Recreation and Tourism</i>; <i>Health, Wellbeing and Society</i>; <i>Ageing and Dementia</i>. Our approach to impact is characterised by four key inter-related elements: 1. engaging with industry, 2. shaping policy discourse, 3. public engagement and 4. supporting researchers to realise impact.</p> <p>1. Engaging with industry. One example of this is our five Bournemouth University (BU) match-funded PhD studentships, developed to apply these methodologies to specific industry research problems. This represents an investment of £50k by BU and £22k by each industry partner to fund the research. A further five studentships in eTourism (Buhalis) have also been funded by the John Kent Institute from a £250k donation. These industry-facing studentships underpin each of our research clusters by providing support for researchers pursuing industry-funded projects. Our explicit communication strategies support the creation of serendipitous relationships that have emerged with external agencies that approach the School, due to an expertise or excellence in a methodology, or use of a specific research instrument. Such relationships have longevity such as the National Trust Impact Case Study, which yielded circa £1.5million 2008-12. In addition, Hartwell's work with Medirest, funded by a £5k grant, yielded an economic impact of between £30-100k. The business engagement events we hold annually each attract over 100 businesses varying in size from SMEs to multi-national organisations. These events have an industry focus where we share our research and listen to the needs of both business and public sector organisations.</p> <p>2. Shaping policy discourse. We excel in the application of innovative academic research methodologies which engage key end-users, by using these methodologies to influence policy changes. For example, Blake's modelling of the impact of a change in VAT to contribute to regional economic growth exemplifies this approach. Feedback from user groups (e.g. HMRC and the National Trust) enables staff to refine and adapt their methodologies from working with industry partners as an iterative process to enhance further the methodologies' wider generalizability and application (e.g. the National Trust - Calver). This is reinforced through deliberate networking with economic development agencies and individual businesses.</p> <p>3. Public engagement. Each doctoral student undertakes at least one public engagement activity in collaboration with their supervisors each year such as a workshop at the BU Festival of Learning in 2013, where we hosted 11 events with almost 1000 attendees, a quarter of the total footfall for the festival. Media coverage, the use of the University Research Blog and posts on Twitter and Facebook are all used to expand the reach of the public engagement of our hosted events, as well as our participation in key industry conferences that yield major newspaper coverage and online discussion (e.g. the <i>Guardian</i> Round Table on Sustainable Tourism, August</p>

2013). Additional tools such as the School *Annual Review 2012-13* have also assisted in the dissemination of our research outcomes to a wider audience globally, with 2000 printed copies and an extensive distribution electronically to the stakeholders we work with and the general public.

4. Supporting staff to realise impact. Strategic planning encourages staff to invest in impact and each of our research clusters has a key *impact champion* (e.g. **Alford, Blake, Calver** and **Hartwell**). We have resourced staff working on impact-rich projects with time and research assistance that would equate to £80k per annum for the UOA and plan to continue this investment over the coming REF cycle. Our impact agenda has been supported by a *team of business engagement staff* at School level, comprising a social media analyst, two business development officers and two tourism event liaison staff. The latter work specifically on our knowledge exchange ESRC/Destination Development Project (DDP). Research dissemination to enhance our external impact from the DDP project and others has been funded by a School investment of £80k per annum for three years. UOA 26 also worked with industry partners to share best practice, with these bodies specifically recruiting staff to help with the dissemination of academic research to practitioner audiences (e.g. **Long** and ESRC/DCMS Policy seminars). Staff have *developed global models* of how to distil and disseminate research knowledge to industry bodies via the creation of Tourism Intelligence Scotland (**Page** – www.tourism-intelligence.co.uk) and in England, the English Tourism Intelligence Partnership (**Blake, Fletcher, and Long**) which will now be applied to the more specialist National Coastal Tourism Academy (NCTA) model for knowledge transfer 2013-15. An innovative feature of the NCTA project is the empowerment of local businesses to share and mentor each other on our PLATO Programme to enhance eTourism business development. We have a long-standing research relationship where our School's research output is regularly shared with the Local Council and Bournemouth Tourism, along with commissioned research we undertake based on existing expertise (e.g. economic impact study of the Boscombe Artificial Surf Reef, **Fletcher**).

At a BU-wide level to enhance our dissemination activity, we have a dedicated Research and Knowledge Exchange Office, which includes: a *dedicated officer to facilitate knowledge exchange activities* (including KTPs – of which there were five since 2008), another officer is responsible for the *development of impact and public engagement with research*. The regular dissemination of knowledge exchange opportunities occurs through Bournemouth University's award-winning research blog; such opportunities have been harnessed through hosting public engagement events (e.g. ESRC Festival of Social Science and BU Festival of Learning events in 2013) and reflect the institutional commitment to embedding impact through public engagement. This is evidenced through BU's signature on the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE)'s Manifesto for Public Engagement.

c. Strategy and plans

The University strategy to 2018 (BU 2018) seeks to develop a model of fusion where education, research and professional practice coalesce to create wider impacts to a range of beneficiaries. Building on this, we are implementing a future strategy which has the following goals: **(1) focus on research which is responsive to the needs of society and the economy, (2) support staff to realise impact, (3) enhance engagement through events, (4) develop appropriate methods to understand our impact, and (5) use our knowledge to shape future policy trajectory.**

1. **Responding to the needs of society.** One immediate area of development (2013-15) is to continue to nurture end-user communities (the public, third and private sectors), through our role in the £2.2 million NCTA Project. As this begins to reach fruition, it will further enhance our specialisation in destination development activity with the formation of an end-user group comprising *business champions* who can lead a Destination Innovation Group. The NCTA project's impact is expected to create 167 FTE jobs by 2015 and to enhance the visitor economy by £5.3 million as a regeneration project, of which we are a joint partner and research provider. Our research is also seeking to create commercialisation opportunities through IP developed for industry groups (e.g. the Framework for the Management of Events Project) where end-users will benefit from the expertise invested in destination development from intelligent event management systems. The commercialisation agenda has also been supported by jointly-funded PhD studentships (e.g. by VisitBritain and Delegate, in Austria) to share research expertise and knowledge with a wider set of audiences. We will also build on existing areas of expertise to enhance the reach and significance of this work, for example, via Hartwell's work through the VeggiEat programme (a €1.6 million EC funded project to explore methods of embedding healthier

eating practices).

2. **Support staff to realise impact.** At an operational level, we will enhance impact, by supporting and encouraging staff through providing time and financial support (e.g. travel and conference support) to reach non-academic audiences and to seek to apply their tacit knowledge to examples of professional practice (e.g. policy advice). This will also be enhanced through our RCUK grants which have very targeted and defined impact and end-user strategies (e.g. DDP). To support this we plan to invest in *five impact champions* at a School level to make our research further accessible to wider audiences, so the real world application is inherent in our research outputs that directly seek to improve business performance and aid employment growth. By investing up to £100k per annum we will reduce the champions' workloads and give remission of key administrative tasks to perform these impact activities.

3. **Develop appropriate methods to understand our impact.** Implementation of our strategy will require more systematic recording and evaluation of research studies, so as to document and enhance the reach and significance of individual projects and outputs using our Market Research Group as a means of assessing end user engagement. Such an approach builds on our existing activity in business and public engagement to focus on core themes of societal relevance in our core research clusters. This enables users to adapt their business processes and learn from the findings and provides us with feedback from organisations on how we can enhance our research to improve its impact.

4. **Enhancing engagement through events.** Part of the strategy to implement this includes continuing to host one major conference per annum targeting industry audiences (e.g. Association for Event Management in 2013, events in the BU Festival of Learning and hosting the Leisure Studies Association conference in 2015). This approach helps to share best practice and current thinking for a practitioner audience and wider public audiences to receive their feedback.

5. **Shaping policy discourse.** By specialising in distinct strands of research and in gaining an international recognition for our research and through dissemination via various channels, we seek to be contributors to the wider visitor economy and its development by applying novel approaches to highlight policy challenges. This research advises and provides a critical perspective for the sector as demonstrated by the ESRC Olympic Legacy seminars (**Shipway** and **Sadd**). These models have also been adopted alongside the business engagement work of the DDP, which we will be looking to extend the reach and significance of our impact to tackle societal issues which remain unexplored and yet are key areas of national government policy (e.g. developing Dementia Friendly Communities, **Page** and **Innes**, UOA3).

d. Relationship to case studies

Both case studies selected illustrate our approach to impact as researchers have received dedicated time and resources to extend the reach and significance of their work. Each submitted case study is also the application of academic research methodologies (e.g. Input-Output analysis, CGE modelling and marketing research) for strategic policy advice and use at two scales. First, at the global and national scale, the economic modelling case study exemplifies the planned development of relationships with organisations since 1996 (e.g. the government of Gibraltar and Scottish government) and serendipitous relationships with the UK government, UK Music and HMRC. Secondly, at the national scale, a long-term research relationship with one organisation – the National Trust - was purposefully developed to utilise and tailor research methodologies to inform organisational development. The approach pursued has provided a purposeful, intensive, continuous and deep approach to impact that has been cascaded from the central organisation to inform organisational performance nationally at major visitor attractions on a continuing basis. The impact of the research has been translated into policy and implementation has resulted in changing certain attraction management practices. Our impact case studies have been developed collaboratively with our clients and organisations to ensure we draw upon our academic research to underpin and inform the applied research problems we present in each case study. Such research has also led to the formulation of new methodologies (e.g. **Calver**) to understand visitor attraction service and experience. The academic methodologies and approaches employed are based upon rigour and peer review to ensure state-of-the-art thinking is disseminated to the end user.