

Institution: Newcastle University

Unit of Assessment: UoA 17b Geography

a. Context

The main impacts we generate have (i) introduced new processes and standards that have improved both outcomes and decision making processes; (ii) extended public discourse and enhanced understanding and capacity with partners and collaborators; (iii) improved policy makers' understandings of geographical unevenness of various physical, social, political, cultural and economic processes; (iv) influenced practitioners and professional service providers in a wide variety of physical, economic, political and social issues; and (v) shaped policy networks and development by working with actors at local, regional, national and supranational scales. The beneficiaries of our research can be divided into five, often overlapping, categories that we interact with in a variety of ways:

1. Supra-national policy, regulatory and scientific bodies. We have strong and longstanding input into the European Commission, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the United Nations (UN) and the International Labour Office (ILO), most notably through the reach and significance of work in the Centre for Urban and Regional Development Studies (see section b). Nakagawa's research is central to the workings of INTCAL, the international consortia responsible for updating and authorising the state of the art in radiocarbon calibration models.
2. National and sub-national government departments. Our research has been used extensively by diverse users including: the Department of Business Innovation and Skills, the Department for International Development, the Office of National Statistics, the Environment Agency, the Forestry Commission, HM Treasury, the Department of Education, the Ministry of Defence, the three armed forces, the NHS, the Welsh Government Agency and the Scottish Government. Beyond the UK, users of our reports, seminars, workshops, and software include the Norwegian Research Council, Regional Development Agencies in Korea, China and Russia and the US Geological Survey. We have extensive and longstanding links with regional users including Local Enterprise Partnerships, the former Regional Development Agencies and the North East Homes and Communities Agency.
3. Third sector organisations. Active links include those with various museums, (e.g. Beamish, Hatton Gallery, Wakasa-Johmon (Japan)), various Housing Associations (including the UK Cohousing Network, the North East Homes and Communities Agency), the Ouseburn Trust, SUSTRANS, English Heritage, VSO, the Scottish Refugee Council, GHK Consulting and Shakti Samuha (Nepal). Jarvis has been a Researcher in Residence in the Free Town of Christiania, Denmark, and maintains strong links with scholars and political activists there and in Lund, Roskilde and Gothenburg, as well as the Tyneside Housing Cooperative, the Elders Council of Newcastle and Planning Aid.
4. Media and Broadcasters. We routinely disseminate research and contribute to public debate (e.g. Pike (BBC2 Newsnight), Jarvis (BBC Radio 4), Nakagawa (NHK Japan), Nayak (CCTC China)). We also enhance the publishing sector by working as authors/editors as well as working with them to extend public understandings of Geography (e.g. Bonnett's *What is Geography* with Sage).
5. Business: We advise, consult and disseminate our findings for private entities, e.g. financial and construction firms (Pike's ESRC-EPSC i-BUILD on infrastructure finance) and small firms (e.g. Champion's 'Business Breakfasts' and Pollard's ESRC sponsored SME workshops).

b. Approach to impact

Geographers at Newcastle have a distinctive reputation: they led the development and institutionalisation of Newcastle University's commitment to being a 'Civic' University that fosters research with a purpose that benefits society. In 1977, Goddard founded the Centre for Urban and Regional Development Studies (CURDS) in order to shape policy and practice and he established engagement and impact at the heart of Newcastle University's mission statement. Our history of impact work has shaped Faculty and University initiatives designed to support impact. For example, CURDS persuaded the University to modify its promotion criteria to develop career

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pathways for contract researchers; Coombes (case study 1) was the first such researcher appointed to a Chair at Newcastle (1998). The University has since formally recognized CURDS (and other Centres) by appointing Directors, providing space and organising regular Institutional Reviews and other support in kind.

Our history of impact work is diverse, non-linear and recognises and values different pathways to impact through collaboration with selected partners. One pathway emerges from our success in winning competitive grant income that has supported theoretically-oriented projects that have then generated impact. For example, Hughes' Leverhulme-funded work on the South African wildflower industry was extended (ESRC Knowledge Exchange grant) to develop and promote best practice in sustainable harvesting, melding conservation and empowerment agendas with the sustainability of UK corporations' global supply chains. Another pathway is oriented around the co-production of knowledge and is organised through collaborative, participative projects that have learned from earlier experimentation (e.g. the Developing Areas Research Network supported research on gender and development). The types of impacts we produce can be grouped under 4 principal headings, set out here with an indicative sample of significant interactions:

1: Introducing new processes/protocols that improve both outcomes and decision making processes. Examples of impact include Coombes' research on Travel to Work Areas (case study 1) and Juggins diatom research (case study 3). In addition, from 2013 on, all users of radiocarbon dating – the most commonly used age determination method – will rely on the accuracy of Nakagawa's unique Suigetsu radiocarbon dataset which forms the major part of IntCal's (the international consortia responsible for updating and authorising radiocarbon calibration models) next radiocarbon calibration model.

2: Extending public discourse and enhancing understanding and capacity with partners and collaborators. Examples include Nayak's work with national media and politicians to promote informed discussion of the white working class and Bonnett's work with anti-racism campaigners. Champion's invited membership of the Office for National Statistics Census Advisory Group has enabled him to submit evidence to governmental inquiries (e.g. Foresight) on land use, population, environment, the future of the census and quality of migration statistics.

3: Improving understanding of the geographical unevenness of various physical, social, political, cultural and economic processes. The Regional Development Agency commissioned CURDS to develop and host a series of international policy workshops – attracting over 600 delegates from the North East's policy making community – helping to build the evidence base for the North East Regional Economic Strategy, *Regional Insights*, 2009-11. Pike's report on decentralisation informed the Coalition Government's Localism agenda and Jarvis advises the NE Homes and Communities Agency, the Tyneside Housing Cooperative and others on the regional possibilities for community-led redevelopment.

4: Extending public discourse on the value and nature of geographical inquiry. We use a range of media and venues to extend public understandings of geographical issues. Examples include Russell's work in local schools explaining floods, Jarvis' talks to community centres, residents associations and others on community-led development, Megoran's work on geographies of peace with faith-based communities/institutions and our prestigious annual Tyneside Geographical Society Lecture Series (since 1947) which provides a public forum for speakers and debate. Nakagawa's Lake Suigetsu project was the subject of a 30 minute TV programme by NHK (Japan, aired February 2013) and has a new permanent exhibit dedicated to it in Japan's Wakasa-Johmon Museum. Jarvis was an invited contributor to *Cohabitat Gathering 2012* (Łódź), the largest ever crowd-funded public event in Poland, while Bonnett – building from his ESRC work on nostalgia – worked with an art designer on objects that evoke urban memory (*Interventions*, displayed in the Hatton Gallery, Newcastle).

c. Strategy and plans

Our future plans formalise many practices that have long been a part of our culture and also introduce new elements of impact-related practice. The University's civic agenda and its three societal challenge themes – *Ageing and Health*, *Sustainability* and *Social Renewal* along with the associated institutes – will provide a strong framework for our impact policies beyond 2013. We are extending and deepening our input as these Institutes develop: for *Ageing and Health*, Jarvis is part of a consortium awarded £1.6m EPSRC/ESRC/AHRC funding for the MyPLACE (Mobility and

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Place for the Age-friendly City Environment) ageing research programme. For *Sustainability*, Pike is Deputy Director of the £3.5 million EPSRC/ESRC i-BUILD Research Centre exploring sustainable financing of urban infrastructure and Lin (EPSRC) is part of a new Sustainable Society network. For *Social Renewal*, Megoran heads Northumbria and Newcastle Universities' Martin Luther King Peace Committee (established 2012). In addition to these new initiatives, the Faculty supports impact activities through (i) a Rapid Networking Fund designed to connect staff and stakeholders; (ii) a *Faculty Futures* Development Programme for early career researchers which can fund impact work (e.g. Williams' involvement with <http://www.interventions.org.uk/>); (iii) a conference funding programme (up to £2k) and individual research funding (up to £4k) for impact work; (iv) a dedicated Development Manager who advises on pathways to impact; and (v) a Business Development team who support knowledge exchange activities. We will continue to review and develop our impact support systems throughout the next REF period. Thus far, we have identified five areas where we intend to enhance our impact activity.

(1) Planning and tracking impact and engagement activities: (a) we have revised our annual monitoring of staff research income and publications to include impact statements and all staff are asked to consider pathways to impact for all (funded and unfunded) research; (b) all contacts with non-academic audiences are being recorded through the research mentoring process to enable staff to benefit from shared contacts and to ensure effective record-keeping.

(2) Training, mentoring and sharing best practice: (a) all staff have examples of high quality 'pathways to impact' statements for funded research applications; (b) the research director is working with individual staff to identify academic/non-academic mentors for staff seeking to improve the effectiveness of their engagement and impact activities.

(3) Resources: (a) In addition to existing funding, we have introduced (in March 2013) a new Engaged Research Fund, which provides £500 per staff member per annum for networking that builds new relationships with research users; (b) our workload model now takes engagement and impact activities into account (and such work has long been recognised in our promotion criteria).

(4) Identifying opportunities and building new relationships: (a) we will extend our use of end-user seminars (common in CURDS) to all areas of the Geography UoA; (b) embed non-academic advisors on the CURDS and GPS advisory boards to provide guidance from perspectives in the public, private and voluntary sectors; (c) encourage the uptake of training (developed through the University Engagement Directorate), including media training, 'Bright Club' (research dissemination by stand-up performance), film-making and use of social media.

(5) Research profile and public/media engagement: (a) we will further review and develop our media and communications activities. CURDS host blogs and can be followed on Twitter and we will continue our strategic recruitment of Visiting Fellows (33 in this review period, e.g. *The Guardian* newspaper's Peter Hetherington); (b) Geography staff are championing an 'Impact Partners' scheme across the University that formally acknowledges the contributions of our research partners.

d. Relationship to case studies

Our impact case studies demonstrate impact from different clusters, styles of research and pathways to impact. The Travel to Work (1) and diatoms and water quality (DARLEQ, 3) case studies demonstrate our ability to develop robust, cost effective and practical methodologies and tools for national and international agencies. Our research has allowed policy makers to be able to identify appropriate spatial units for their statistical, policy and funding purposes (travel to work areas) and to know that they are fulfilling their statutory duties with regards to water quality and, if not, to estimate the scale and cost of remedial work required. The universities and regional growth case study (2) exemplifies an iterative, non-linear pathway to impact; this research produced an understanding of universities' roles in regional development that has moved from its roots in the North East of England to shape policy across the OECD and beyond and has led to a modification of European Structural funding policy. Our case study (4) on livelihoods of post-trafficked women in Nepal draws on 20 years of work on gender and development and demonstrates a style of research engaged with the co-production of knowledge, centred around capacity building, that improves the lives of post-trafficked women.