

## **CALL FOR PAPERS**

*BRITISH JOURNAL OF MANAGEMENT SPECIAL ISSUE*

# **Exploring Impact: Theory and Practice in Research that Makes a Difference**

**Paper submission deadline: 1 December 2015**

### **Guest Editors:**

Jean Bartunek, Carroll School of Management, Boston College, USA

Nic Beech, College of Arts and Social Sciences University of Dundee, UK

Bill Cooke, The York Management School, University of York, UK

David Denyer, Cranfield School of Management, Cranfield University, UK

Robert MacIntosh, School of Management and Languages, Heriot-Watt University, UK

Katy Mason, Lancaster University Management School, Lancaster University, UK

Denise Rousseau Tepper School of Business, Carnegie Mellon University, USA

This call for papers extends earlier discussions of the so-called 'relevance gap' first raised in *BJM* in 2001 (Hodgkinson, Herriot and Anderson, 2001), and subsequently discussed in special issues of *Management Learning*, *Organization Studies*, and the *Academy of Management Journal*. The relationship between research and practice continues to challenge, generating new lines of inquiry and international debate relating to the nature of theory-generation, co-production of knowledge, enhancing the rigour of research and, not least, the related role of business schools in universities and society. In a potentially controversial line of argument, business schools are being told the effect that they *do* have on practice is socially harmful (e.g. Mintzberg 2015).

*BJM* drew attention to the 'Mode 2 debate' (Tranfield and Starkey, 1998), and other analyses of the research/practice/impact relationship have addressed practice-oriented research (Rousseau, 2012), engaged scholarship (Van de Ven, 2007), management as a design science (Van Aken and Romme, 2009), management as an applied science (Jarzabkowski et. al., 2010), evidence-based management (Briner, Denyer and Rousseau, 2009), collaborative enquiry (Bartunek, 2007), action research (Eden and Huxham, 2006), reflexivity in research (Cunliffe, 2011); practice-based research (Nicolini, 2009); active knowing (Beech et. al., 2012); performativity of theory (Mason et al., 2014) and the practicality of Critical Management Studies (King and Learmonth 2015). These strands of debate within intellectual sub-communities now require a meta-dialogue between them, about what we have learned, or should learn about engaged and impactful research. Most importantly, there is a need to theorize how and why impact occurs. This Special Issue therefore seeks theoretically informed, empirical practice-oriented submissions, investigating how research influences what practitioners actually do, why some research reaches a wide audience and how managerial practice might be changed. We are also

interested in pieces which may challenge the idea that knowledge flows from research towards impact on practice and conceptualisations of the various roles and processes involved.

Potential submissions might address, amongst other things:

- Types and categories of engagement and forms of evidence that can be claimed as impact in its various guises
- The research, organizational, and institutional processes enabling and hindering the achievement of impact
- The underlying concepts of 'impact' and of 'relevance' - the discourses, the inclusions and exclusions (for example why teaching is excluded from impact)
- The micro-processes of research teams, and how different interests, perspectives and modes of governance help or hinder impact
- The genesis of research questions and processes in relation to eventual impact
- Impact over time in the context of co-production, dissemination, commercialisation or translation processes
- The relationships between construction, production and consumption of impactful research and the impact agenda
- The impact of practice and practitioners on research
- Theories of academic impact

Potential contributors are encouraged to contact any one of the guest editors with enquiries via [p.n.h.beech@dundee.ac.uk](mailto:p.n.h.beech@dundee.ac.uk).

## Paper Submission

Authors should ensure they adhere to the journal guidelines which are available at: [http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/\(ISSN\)1467-8551/homepage/ForAuthors.html](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/(ISSN)1467-8551/homepage/ForAuthors.html)

Submissions should be uploaded to the *BJM* ScholarOne Manuscripts site at <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/bjm> by **1st December 2015** (midnight UK time).

Authors should select 'special issue paper' as the paper type, ensure they answer 'yes' to the question 'Is this submission for a special issue' and enter the title of the special issue in the box provided.

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