

# ADOPTING HEALTHIER APPROACHES TO IMPACT



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# Session

1

Impact within the  
sector

2

Reflections from  
practice:  
*Challenges, risks  
and opportunities*

3

Towards healthy

# Impact:

Provable  
effects  
(benefits) of  
research in the  
'real world'



# Drivers for research impact

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**We must:** external and instrumentalised requirements such as funding or assessment

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**We should:** broader missions, such as Sustainable Development Goals and Civic agendas

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**We/I want to:** personal motivation, often relating to passion around the subject area, lived experience or appetite for social justice.



# Universal Declaration of Human Rights



## Article 27

1. Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.

Terminology from the *Terminologia dels drets humans*  
 UNITED NATIONS. Universal Declaration of Human Rights [online]. Geneva: OHCHR, cop. 1996-2017.

Generalitat del Catalunya  
 Departament de Cultura

termcat  
 Servei de Terminologia

With the support of: Govern d'Andorra

YORK U

@researchimpact

<https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>



If impact were a person, it would be asking you *'how can you make the world better with your research?'*

# *Reflections*

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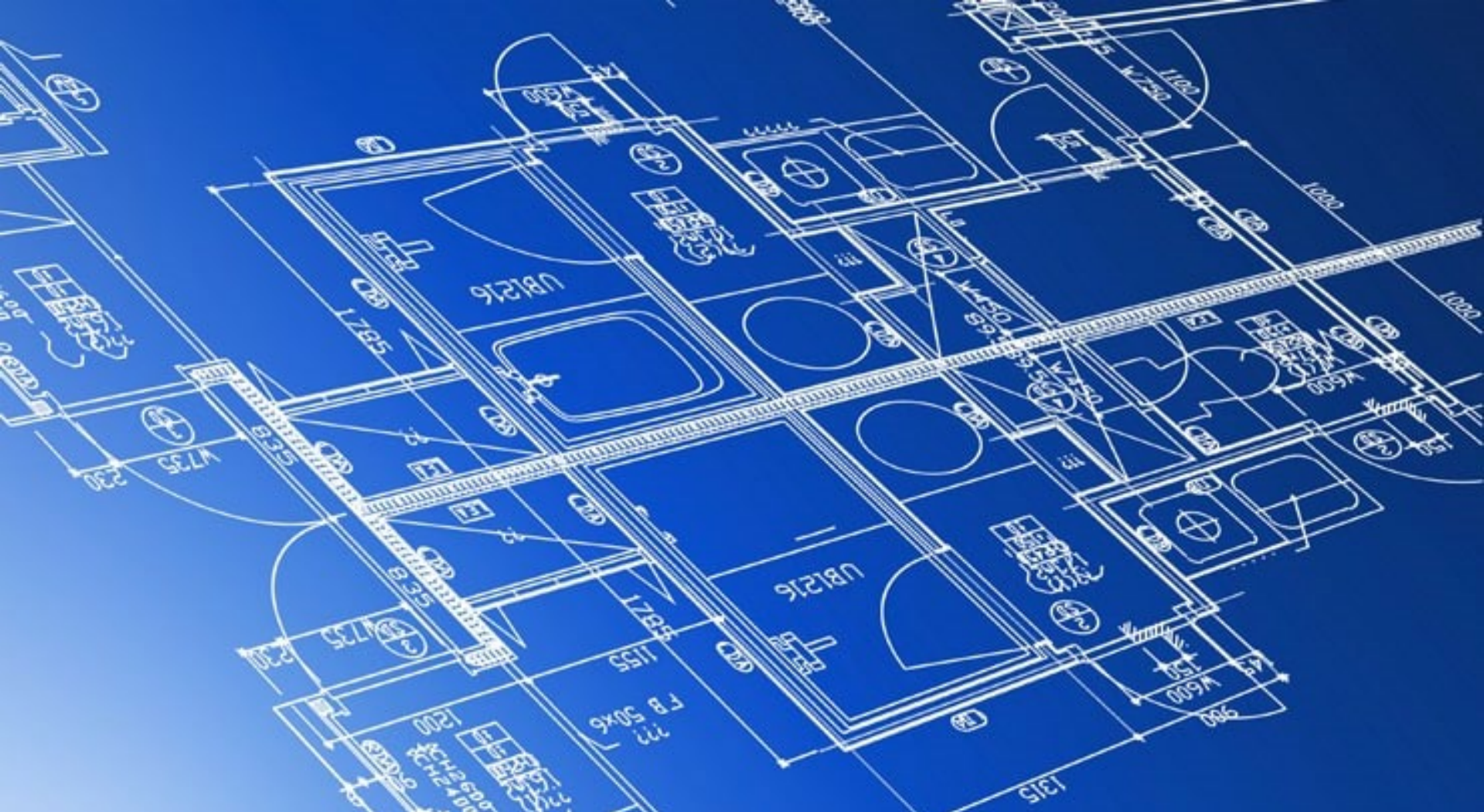
# We assess what's submitted for assessment

(I appreciate this isn't a surprise)



If we're to have healthy assessment of impact, we  
need healthy conditions to produce impact





We've developed a mental (and systemic) blueprint for what impact is

Who does it (*and who doesn't*)  
What counts (*and what doesn't*)  
What's good impact (*and what isn't*)

*Consequences for resource allocation, staff development and the choices over what impacts we pursue.*

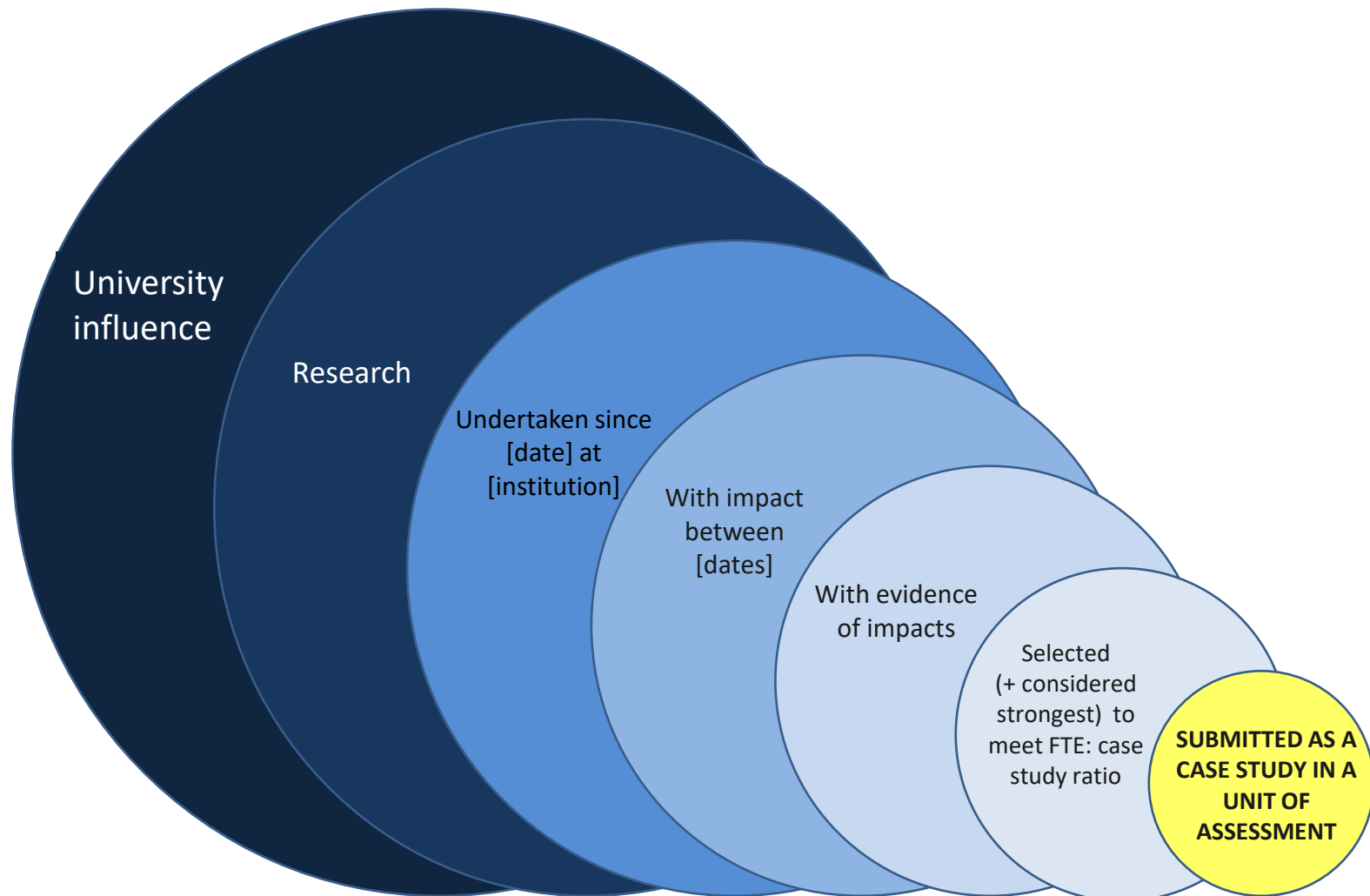
We've developed a mental (and systemic) blueprint for what impact is

The background of the slide is a light blue color with a faint, repeating pattern of architectural blueprints. The blueprints show various lines, circles, and text, representing a technical drawing of a building or structure.

# Redraw the blueprint

We've developed a mental (and systemic)  
blueprint for what impact is

# Selectivity produces a narrow snapshot



Selectivity produces a narrow snapshot

# Impact unitised as Impact Case Studies

*Consequences for rewards, recognition, progression, resources, and acknowledgement of impact outside of ICS*

Selectivity produces a narrow  
snapshot

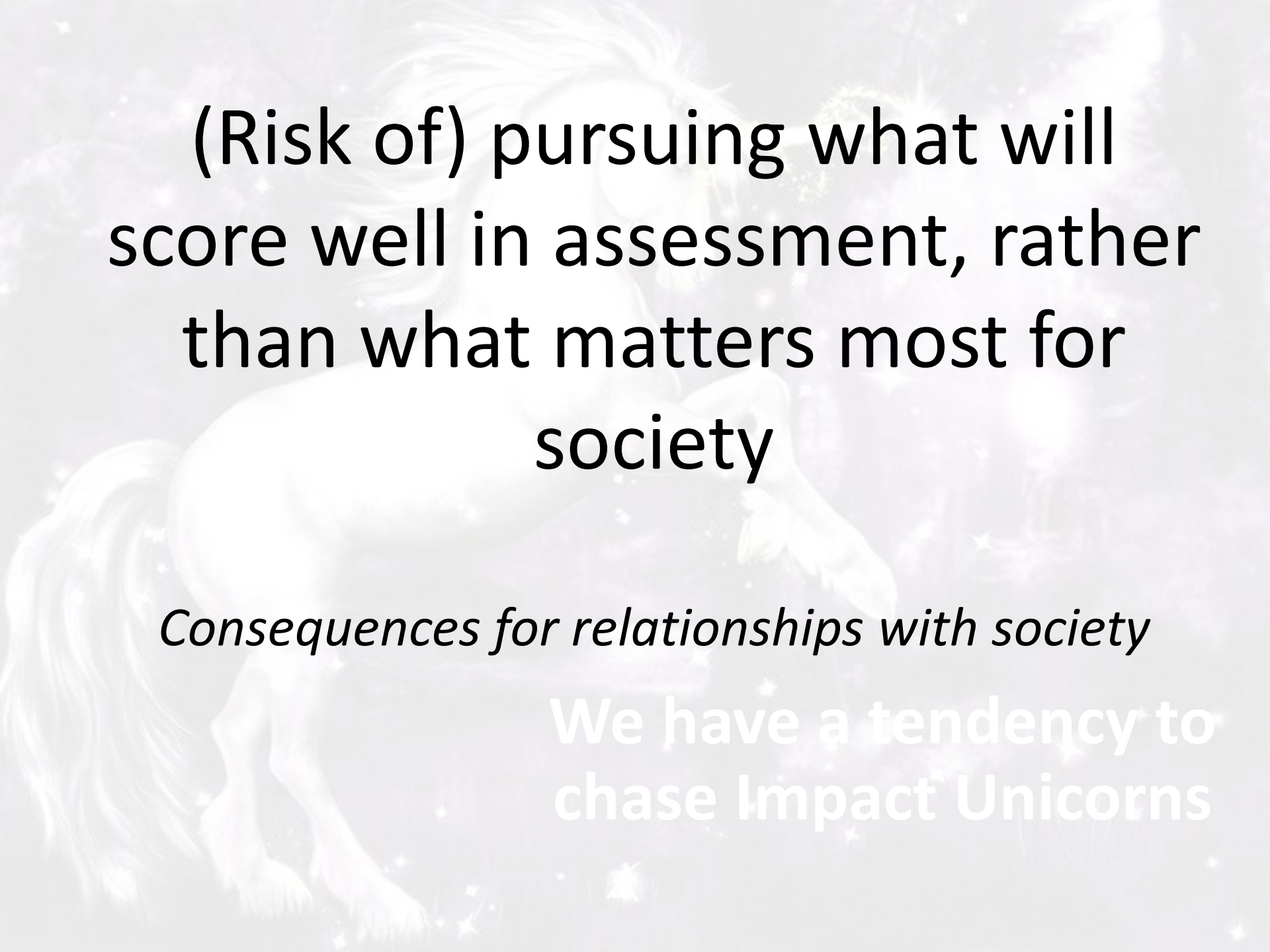
Recognise selectivity  
and widen what we  
acknowledge



<https://hidden-ref.org/>



**We have a tendency to  
chase Impact Unicorns**



(Risk of) pursuing what will  
score well in assessment, rather  
than what matters most for  
society

*Consequences for relationships with society*

We have a tendency to  
chase Impact Unicorns





# Chase meaning

We have a tendency to  
chase Impact Unicorns



**Impact case studies show the  
sausages, not the sausage  
factory**

# Extensive impact

◆  
Neat and successful pathways

◆  
Absent of challenges, dead ends or  
altered paths

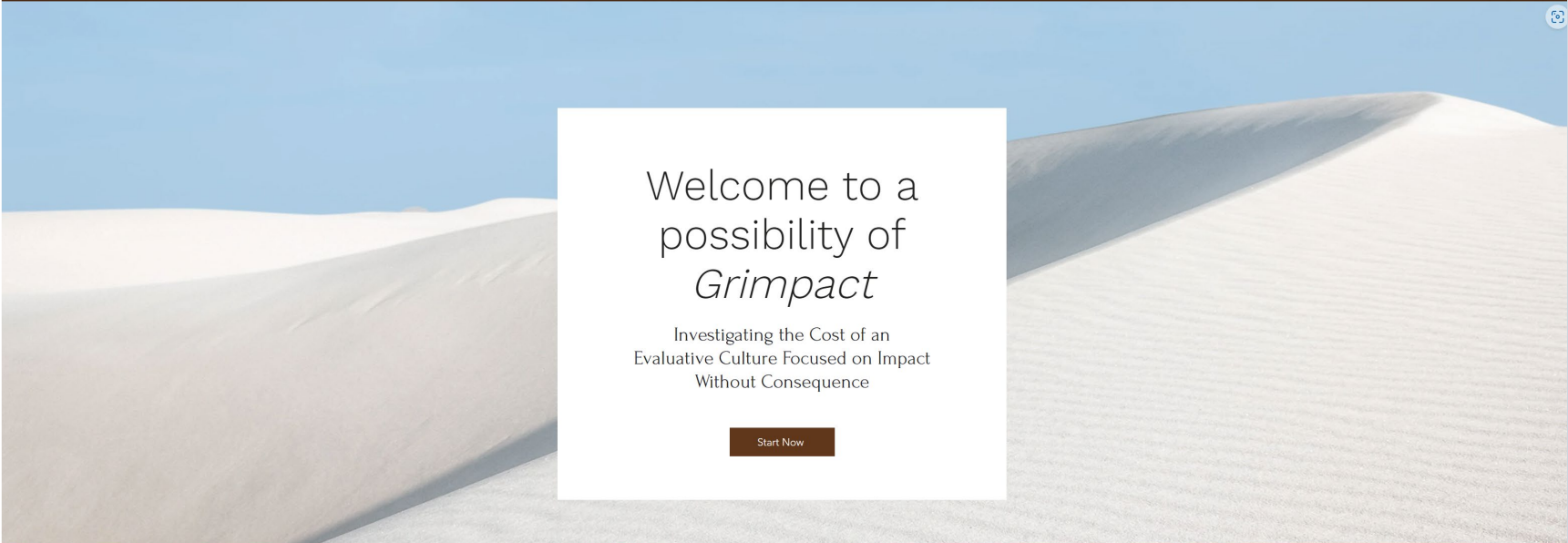
*Consequences for realistic planning, fairness of expectations,  
acknowledgement of competing pressures and personal sense of  
failure*

Impact case studies show the  
sausages, not the sausage  
factory



Share what  
works AND what  
doesn't

Impact case studies show the  
sausages, not the sausage  
factory



Welcome to a  
possibility of  
*Grimpect*

Investigating the Cost of an  
Evaluative Culture Focused on Impact  
Without Consequence

[Start Now](#)



**Grimpect  
Research Lab**

Home of the Grimpect repository

**GRIMPACT (grimpect.org)**

# What do we mean by assessment integrity?

**Trust that the process is conducted fairly?**



NO “undue” or “unfair” influence from the applicants

**Trust in the expertise of the evaluators**



**Trust that the outcomes are the right ones**



**Trust that the process of developing impact is fair**

**Societal trust in the intentions of academics**

**Trust that the outcomes are meaningful**

*Learning and restructure of evaluation based on experience*

# Positive evolutions



Responsible research assessment



Research strategies *with* then *for* impact



Engagement and Coproduction



Responsible approaches

**HARNESSING THE METRIC TIDE**



Recognising wider contributions



Impact literacy\*



Impact environment

Supported  
Connected  
Meaningful  
Healthier

\*See <https://lili.blogs.lincoln.ac.uk/> and Bayley, J.E. and Phipps, D., 2019. Building the concept of research impact literacy. *Evidence & Policy*, 15(4), pp.597-606. <https://doi.org/10.1332/174426417X15034894876108>

# 5 Cs of Institutional Health (Bayley and Phipps, 2019)



Not valued, no space  
created, no strategic  
vision

## Commitment

Impact valued and  
acknowledged  
(strategy, process & effort)

No skills development

## Competencies

Skills developed  
Impact literate staff

Unclear or unconfident

## Clarity

Everyone clear on what  
impact is and their role in it

Disconnected or  
singular responsibility

## Connectivity

Teams and resources  
coordinated

Few or superficial links

## Coproduction

Strong & meaningful links





If impact were a person, it would be asking you *'how can you make the world better with your research?'*

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We need to ask ourselves, as a sector, how we can do that in a healthy way for all involved

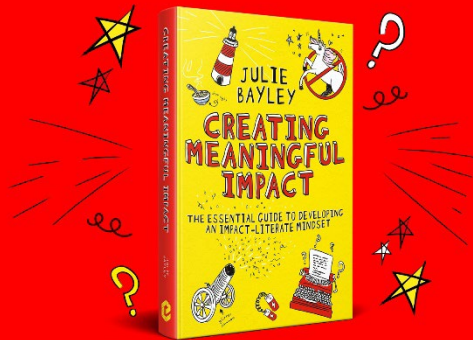
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# THANK YOU



## CREATING MEANINGFUL IMPACT:



**THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO DEVELOPING  
AN IMPACT-LITERATE MINDSET**

**JULIE BAYLEY, UNIVERSITY OF LINCOLN**



**AVAILABLE NOW IN PAPERBACK & EBOOK**

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