

Third Fuse International Conference on Knowledge Exchange in Public Health & Wellbeing

Pre-conference session for Early Career Researchers and PhD students



*“Participatory/co-produced research and the
‘impact agenda’: an invitation to discuss
opportunities and challenges”*

26 April 2016, 4.30- 6.00pm (free event),
Gateshead Civic Centre (followed by dinner in
Newcastle City Centre at own expense)

This session will offer opportunities to discuss the issue of impact when engaged in more collaborative forms of research and about conceptualising forms of impact that do not necessarily sit easily within current frameworks for articulation.

The session will be led by Dr Tina Cook, Reader in Inclusive Methodologies at Northumbria University. For more information, please see overleaf.

*“the attempt to measure
‘impact’ as a concrete, visible
phenomenon that is fixed in
time and space, that one
party does to another party...*

whereas

*deep co-production is a
process often involving a
gradual, porous and diffuse
series of changes undertaken
collaboratively”*

(Pain et al 2015:4)

Registration: Please email Peter van der Graaf to register your interest: p.van.der.graaf@tees.ac.uk

Participatory/co-produced research and the ‘impact agenda’

An invitation to discuss opportunities and challenges

In the UK the notion of research with ‘impact’ has gained considerable currency in recent years, so much so that we now hear it referred to as the ‘impact agenda’. Research funding schemes overtly require prospective impact to be articulated and universities and researchers required, as part of the Research Excellence Framework (2014), to demonstrate how their research had an impact beyond the academy.

For those of us who engage in research designed to have an impact - such as action research, participatory or collaborative health research and more participatory forms of evaluation - this would appear to be an opportunity to demonstrate our strengths in this area, as the idea that our work will make a difference is integral to our research practice.

The issue has been though that:

“The press for more ‘useful’ research has been accompanied by the elevation of particular research approaches [where] first there is the research and then the findings are applied.” (Thomson 2015:309)

The impact agenda thus creates both a considerable challenge for researchers who engage in more participatory forms of research and evaluation and opportunities for us to argue for the recognition of different forms of impact that are likely to be developed through different research approaches. There is certainly considerable interest both nationally and internationally for taking up this challenge.

This session will offer opportunities to discuss the issue of impact when engaged in more collaborative forms of research and about conceptualising forms of impact that do not necessarily sit easily within current frameworks for articulation.

The session will draw upon:

1. ‘Mapping Alternative Impact: Alternative approaches to impact from co-produced research’ (Report by Rachel Pain (Durham University) and colleagues) <https://www.dur.ac.uk/resources/beacon/MappingAlternativeImpactssummaryfinal.pdf>
2. The developing ‘Position Paper on the Impact of Participatory Health Research’ (International Collaboration on Participatory Health Research) www.icphr.org
3. The forthcoming special issue ‘The conceptualisation and articulation of impact: hopes, expectations and challenges for the participatory paradigm’ (Journal Educational Action Research) <http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/reac20/current>