Global Researchers Attitudes to Societal Impact: “SDG14: LIFE BELOW WATER”

The majorities of researchers believe that the funding of research should be more strongly linked to demonstrable societal impact.

Which of the following types of impact do you believe that your most recent publication will have?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Impact</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Societal</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media</td>
<td>11%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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While societal impact might not always be direct or immediately apparent, there should be some tangible link. There are too many existential or 'grand challenges' that characterize our future, and they require solutions that are likely to be located in the sciences. Some of these issues are already at the heart of the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and are likely to occupy the minds of many scientists. It could be argued that society expects the sciences to address these issues, and this is a fair expectation, since the sciences are the mind that directs the body of the society. There is also evidence that research has a societal impact on other research, or as Dr. Science puts it: "It's a virtuous cycle, you get money, then you do more research, and your research gets more funding because it's good for society." This is a positive, virtuous cycle that should be encouraged, as it strengthens the connection between academia and society.

The importance of societal impact to researchers

74% of researchers who identify SDGs as relevant to their research are aware of societal impact on other research, or as Dr. Science puts it: "It's a virtuous cycle, you get money, then you do more research, and your research gets more funding because it's good for society." This is a positive, virtuous cycle that should be encouraged, as it strengthens the connection between academia and society.

The future of research funding

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Measuring academic vs. societal impact

Academic Impact

- Scientific networking sites (e.g. ResearchGate, Mendeley)
- Open access/oa journals (that allow research to be freely available)
- Social media
- Conference attendance
- Patent filings
- Media coverage
- Website visitors
- Copyright transfers
- Trademark transfers
- Commercial business

Societal Impact

- Media coverage provides the information
- Patients
- Policymakers
- Practitioners
- Public
- Professionals

To learn more about our new strategic partnership to accelerate progress on global societal challenges through open research, visit: springernature.com/SDGImpact