

# TSRF 'Collaborating for impact' conference 2019

## Report

9th October 2019

### Participants

82

Attended

This is one of the best conferences I've attended

Great day! Really interesting and useful with takeaways and things to do. Lovely atmosphere and format of day really good.

We got the funder of our project in our workshop (much to our surprise!) and it was great to see their Twitter feedback later in the day - 'happy funder' never goes amiss on social media

**Conference aims:** to support cross-sector networking and knowledge exchange by exploring the impact of research collaboration between the third sector and universities and providing an opportunity for third sector, academic and other interested parties (such as public sector and funders) to engage together in learning about collaborative research and its impact.

### Programme content

8

Workshops

4

Short talks

6

Stands/ Posters

5

Panel members  
Plus chair

For more information about workshops and talks see programme [here](#)

I liked the opportunity to put out a call for a research partner, and [...] from the Forum gave me a really useful suggestion in relation to mine.

I really liked the focus on impact as I often find that at research conferences / events I find it a wee bit difficult to work out how I might practically apply the info / approaches.

## Impact of conference

Know more about different types of research impact

Yes

69%  
(27)

Mostly  
18% (7)

Know more about importance of research impact

Yes

62%  
(24)

Mostly  
26% (10)

Made connections or gained ideas

Yes

72%  
(28)

Mostly  
21% (8)

### Participants are going to:

Follow up or make contact to explore collaborative research opportunity

Reflect on learning

Find out more

Pass on learning to colleagues/influence organisation

Take specific action e.g. organise a workshop for own organisation

Comments

17

10

6

3

4

“Use an academic collaboration to help us with things they know about e.g. research ethics.”

“When I next apply for funding for research, I’m going to approach a third sector or public sector organisation to partner with first to ensure their needs are incorporated from start and all the way through”

“Note and formulate ideas for a more participatory approach to research after completing my current research”

“Reflect on collaborations that are ongoing and how these can be improved upon”



## Learning from the conference

### Research impact means ...

Participants were asked to order list of statements which resonated with their view of what research impact means and to ask their own statement if it was different.

### Research impact means (in order of preference)

People's lives are changed  
Research used to improve policy  
Research used to improve practice  
Research participants feel listened to and valued  
Research used to change public perceptions  
Participants build skills and confidence  
Researchers build skills and knowledge to improve future research  
University teaching improves

Research is meaningless if it doesn't change people's lives

### Suggested other statements

Making an actual difference  
Research to secure funding to do the work  
Real life, real observations, real solutions

### Hear what the panel thought about research impact

Setting the theme of the conference panel members spoke about what research impact meant from their perspective. At the end of the conference the panel summed up what they had gained from the day. Listen to what they said [here](#).



### Benefits of collaborative research to ...

#### Researchers involving peer researchers

- ◆ Hearing from people with lived experience increases understanding of issues
- ◆ May reduce potential for bias in research question
- ◆ Participants more likely to trust peer researcher and be more open and honest (Mungo Foundation research cited)
- ◆ Helps transfer power to participants

However, peer researchers may be influenced by their personal experiences and strong emotional links to the subject.

#### Benefits to peer researchers

- ◆ Gain sense of belonging, being valued, sense of satisfaction, and saw the benefit to others
- ◆ Gain skills and knowledge
- ◆ Can improve confidence and mental wellbeing

#### Benefits to third sector or public sector organisation

- ◆ Development of training and resources
- ◆ Shared learning with staff
- ◆ May lead to more work or research
- ◆ Development of prevention approaches
- ◆ Learn new research methods

## What next?

Feedback based on 34 comments

### Themes from comments about what should happen next were:

- Better understanding of collaborative research and its value
- Communication and dissemination opportunities
- More funding
- More networking and collaborative research opportunities
- Exploring ethics
- Support from Scottish Government

"Public sector commissioner, partners and funders and policy makers need to value third sector collaborative research."

"Include due funding to properly support collaboration so that third sector/peer researchers/participants are not simply mined for resources and data."

"More funding specifically for peer research; a greater focus on impact in funding criteria for research"

"Closing the feedback loop and ensuring new research fills a gap. There is a lot already out there and we don't want to overburden participants."

"Considering ethics for researchers and participants is also essential!"

"More discussion bringing on collaboration/participation and ethics together"

"Support from scot.gov. - can we register our collaborative projects? Will they showcase them?"

### Ethics was a prevailing theme through the conference

Ethics was raised in several sessions. For example, involving teens as peer researchers was discussed in Growing up a Reader) session and The Absent Voice session talked about issues of ethics, in particular, the lack of ethics committee/board for third sector as well as need for capacity building about ethics committees.



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# What went well and what could have been better

### What went well – Feedback from participants and speakers

The comments were overwhelmingly positive comments about the format and content of the conference. Participants liked the lightening talks, workshops, presenters, and the mix of formats on the programme. They thought the conference was well organised and appreciated it kept to time. Presenters thought the conference was well organised and appreciated the clear pre-event information and the support by TSRF members at the event i.e. room chaperons.

“A great day! Really informative, learned a lot of things that featured: participatory research, peer research, lived experience, eval/stories; not just numbers!”

“All aspects of the conference could be applied in some way to the work of most people - nothing was so specific that it excluded people”

“It was fantastic - food great, venue great. Lightning talks excellent! Day went so fast! I loved it.”

“I really enjoyed taking part in the conference. It was a fantastic event, I heard a lot of people saying how much they enjoyed it. As one of only two researchers in my organisation, it’s always great to have an opportunity to meet with other researchers from academia and other third sector organisations. It was a great opportunity to make connections, share practice and get some new, creative ideas!”

“From a presenter’s perspective, I had absolutely no issues. All the information prior to the event was made available in a suitable time scale, any information or directions were managed promptly and efficiently. My room was great, positive space, excellent staff support and technical assistance whenever it was needed. Excellent work with our room mentor, accessible and engaged with all technical equipment functioning properly. I had been to the event for the past few years, this year was bright and open with additional options to access information throughout the day and workshops. I was also happy to see more advancement in the use of video’s/documentaries/training tools to help in assisting with and making research widely more accessible.”

### What could have been better

There were individual comments about the programme notes could have been clearer for one session, and the stand holders commented that they didn’t get much interest in their stands where they were placed.

The following quotes suggest improvements for the next TSRF conference:

“It would be good if TSRF would consider how the third sector can work with private and independent research companies as these are often more readily available, cost-effective, flexible, shared values etc.”

“It would be interesting to pinpoint some of the technical/financial factors that make collaborations work.”

“A future event could get into some of the specifics of how collaborations have worked - or not worked.”

Third Sector Research Forum @TSRFScot

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