



Beyond the Bench: Impact of Science on Industry, Policy & Society

SciLifeLab PULSE Workshop

SciLifeLab Training Hub
Kristen Schroeder, PhD



This workshop uses the following works:



What determines the impact of research?

Engagement:

1. Within academic fields
2. With policy
3. With the public

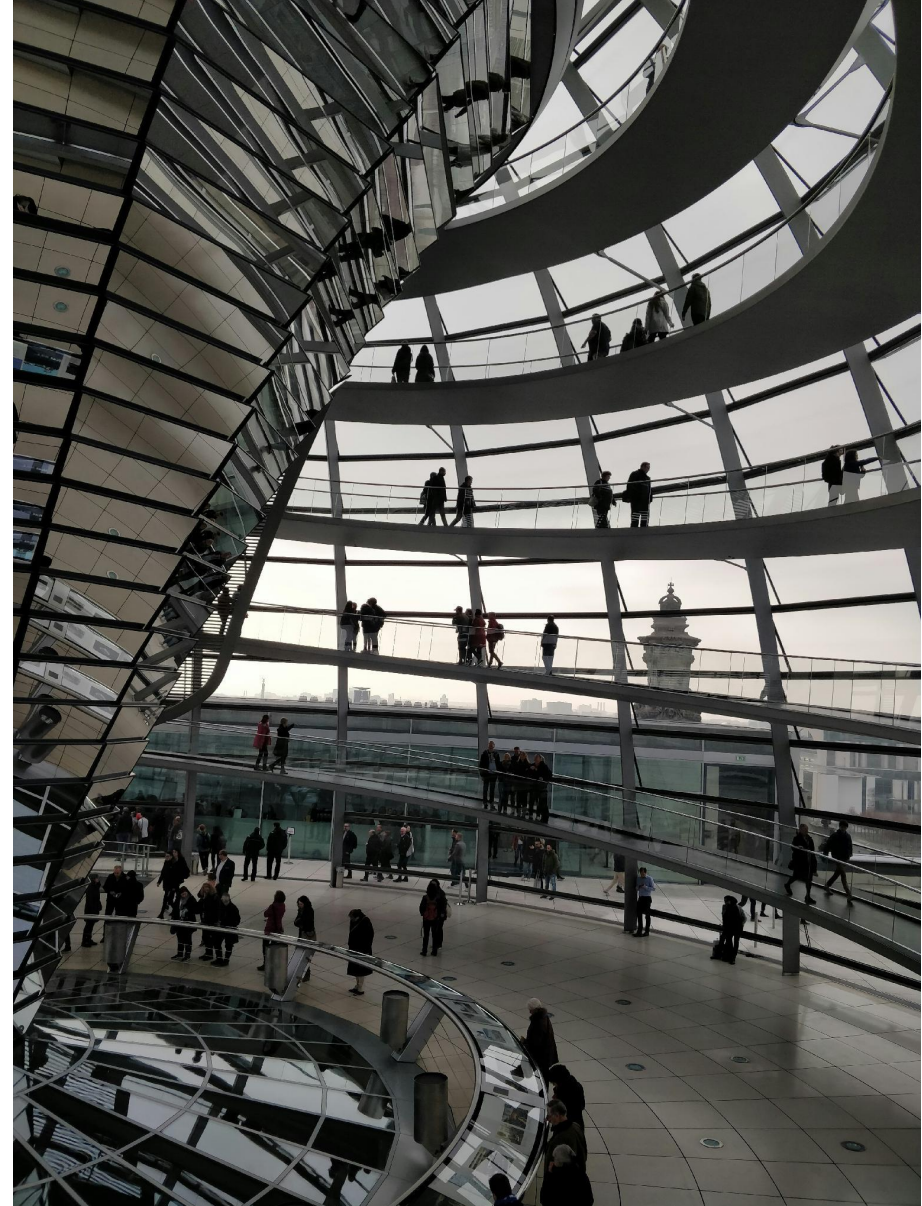
How many have interacted with policymakers?

Do you know of researchers who interact with policymakers?

Do you think there is a benefit to interacting with policymakers?

Research – reduce uncertainty through producing the best possible scientific evidence.

Policy – decisive action with available information which is valued based on its connections.



The policy cycle:
Issue identification & policy analysis: recognizing the problem

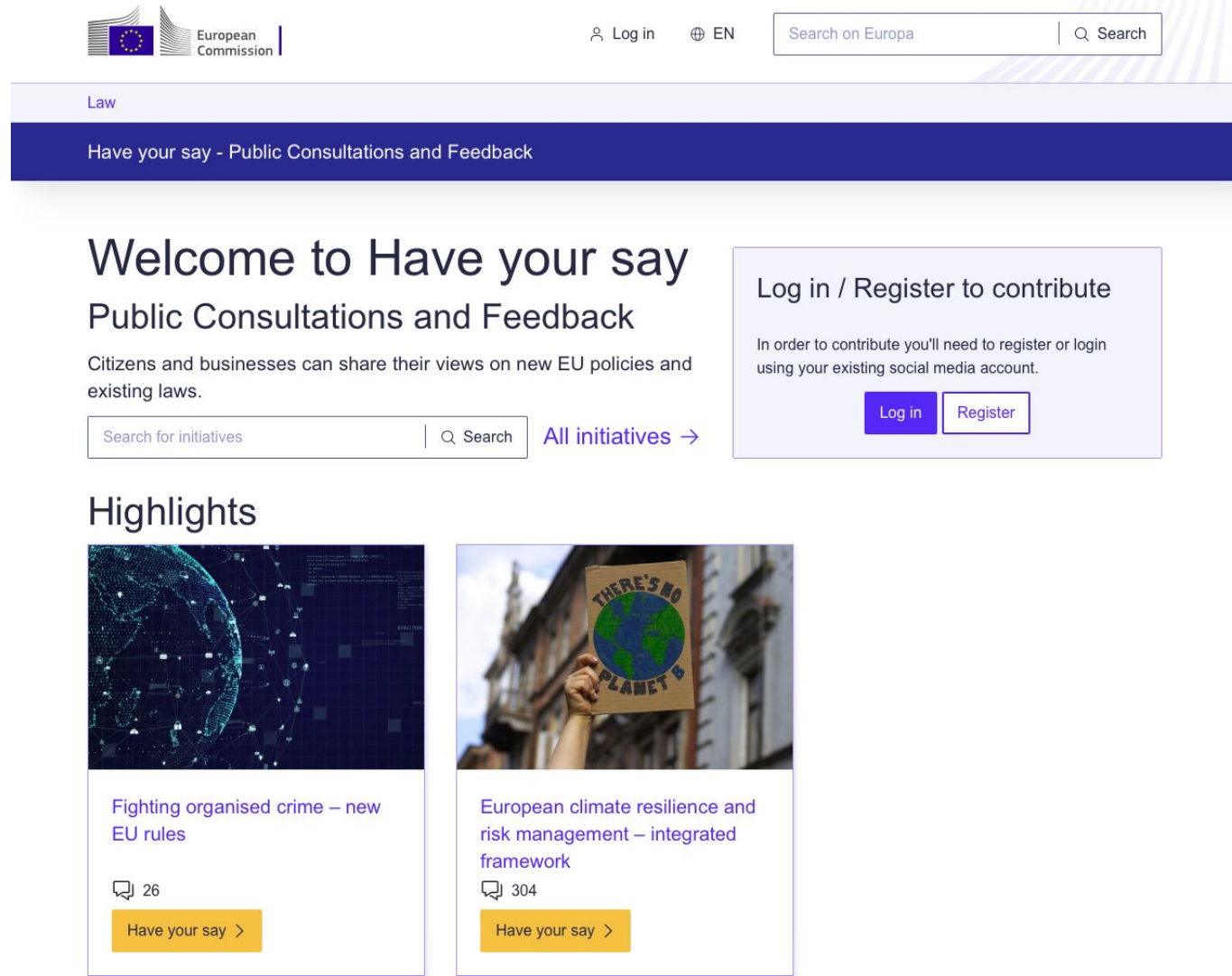
Consultation & development: exploring options, solutions, data, research, and identifying concrete actions

Building coordination & coalitions: strengthening resources, aligning, and advocating

Decision-making: Deciding on the course of action.

Implementation: The decision is put into practice

Evaluation: Examining impact and outcomes.



The screenshot shows the 'Have your say' public consultation portal of the European Commission. At the top, there's a navigation bar with the European Commission logo, a search bar labeled 'Search on Europa', and links for 'Log in' and 'EN'. Below the navigation bar, a dark blue banner reads 'Have your say - Public Consultations and Feedback'. The main heading is 'Welcome to Have your say Public Consultations and Feedback'. A subtext states: 'Citizens and businesses can share their views on new EU policies and existing laws.' To the right, a box prompts users to 'Log in / Register to contribute' with the instruction: 'In order to contribute you'll need to register or login using your existing social media account.' Below this are 'Log in' and 'Register' buttons. A search bar labeled 'Search for initiatives' is followed by a 'Search' button and a link to 'All initiatives →'. The 'Highlights' section features two cards. The first card, titled 'Fighting organised crime – new EU rules', shows a globe with network lines and has 26 comments. The second card, titled 'European climate resilience and risk management – integrated framework', shows a person holding a sign that says 'THERE'S NO PLANET B' and has 304 comments. Both cards have a 'Have your say >' button.

2019:

**Systematic review of advice to academics on influencing policy
(Oliver & Cairney)**

- Identified 8 themes in advice for academics on interacting with or influencing policy
- Analyzed these themes with empirical literature on impact and engagement



Identified themes in advice:

1. Create high-quality evidence
2. Make your research accessible
3. Understand policy process
4. Be available to policymakers
5. Decide on being an issue advocate or honest broker
6. Build relationships with policymakers
7. Be an entrepreneur
8. Reflect continuously on how you are engaging

Empirical evidence:

What counts as evidence in policy?

- A range of knowledge types are used and valued through sources they arrive from
- Storytelling, champions, and coproduction assist evidence use
- Policy problem framing determines what evidence will be considered

How to gain the skills needed to be effective?

- There are many venues of government with individual cultures
- Long-term engagement and relationship building are needed for a chance at impact

What is engagement for? How far should researchers go to be influential?

- Full immersion in policy has time and reputational consequences

Dilemma 1: Should academics engage in policymaking?

Jim is a new PI in eco-toxicology at SLU!

Duty to engage with
policy – his expertise
and research is paid for
by taxes

Responsibility
to protect the
independence
of science

Potential to provide
rational,
evidence-based
advice to lawmakers

Potential to end
his career with
involvement in
political conflict



Dilemma 2: How should academics engage in policy?

Positives

Produce research and make it available to policy

- Safe

Negatives

- Not effective

Use emotional appeal and storytelling to shape policy options

- Can frame knowledge in a way understood by policymakers

- Requires mastery of storytelling, ability to be seen as persuasive, even-handed, credible, authoritative, straightforward, humble, and authentic

Co-production through multidisciplinary teams

- Most likely way for research evidence to have an impact on policy

- Requires giving up control over research process and interpretation
- Greatest potential for conflict and reputational damage

Dilemma 3: Why should academics engage in policy?

A need to demonstrate impact.

Transactional, or tokenistic relationships with policymakers can damage the view of researchers to policymakers.

Genuine interest for the process.

“[good engagement in policy] involves a fundamentally different way of doing public engagement: one with no clear aim in mind other than to listen and learn, with the potential to transform research practices and outputs.”

In reality...

Oliver & Cairney describe policy engagement as a researcher more like a career choice, requiring:

- Long term investment in relationships
- A commitment to understanding political process, listening, and learning
- Continuous evaluation of the role and influence of researchers in policy
- Understanding the risks of becoming politically involved – time and potential reputation penalties

“Gaining knowledge of the complex policy context can be extremely challenging, yet the implications are profoundly important. In that context, theory-informed studies recommend investing your time over the long term, to build up alliances, trust in the messenger, knowledge of the system, and exploit ‘windows of opportunity’ for policy change (Cairney, 2016, p.124). However, they also suggest that this investment of time may pay off only after years or decades—or not at all”.

Recommended:

- a cautious, learning approach to co-production and engagement, recognizing there is no one path or widely applicable advice
- maximize the use of panels, groups, and forums created to bridge research and policy



OECD > Events > Policies for research software in the age of ai

Policies for research software in the age of artificial intelligence

Hybrid Workshop

Date

6 March 2026

Time

9:00-17:15 CEST

Location

OECD Conference Centre (Paris)
and online

At this hybrid workshop, hosted by the OECD in partnership with EOSC/EVERSE and the Research Software Alliance, stakeholders from academia, government and the private sector will explore policy options to strengthen access to research software as a key enabler of open science. The event will bring together delegates and experts from across the open science ecosystem to review progress, exchange insights, and identify concrete actions.

Dialogaktiviteter

Almedalen

CitizAir – synliggöra luftdata

COALESCE – Europeiskt resurscenter för forskningskommunikation

Energiantologi

EPiCS – ENGAGE PEOPLE in CITIZEN SCIENCE

Frihamnsdagarna – Vetenskap & Allmänhets scen

Folk och Forskning – dialog för en evidensbaserad politik

Forskardialog

► Science Café – fika med forskare

ForskarFredag

► Låna en forskare

► Massexperiment

Forskar Grand Prix

Forum för forskningskommunikation

Resurscenter för kurser i forskningskommunikation

► Kommunikationskurser för forskare

LOESS – För ökad kunskap om jordhälsa

Medieseminarier för forskare

Re:fish – fiskar efter plastföroreningar och spökfiske

RE-MEND – ny kunskap för att förebygga psykisk ohälsa

Rock Your Research! – konst och vetenskap för alla

Tea Tales – ett verktyg och världskarta över jordens nedbrytningsförmåga

Vad är vetenskap?

VA-dagen

Vetenskap i TV4

MENTI – What kind of policies might your research interact with?