

# **Influencing policy**

Outline and agenda

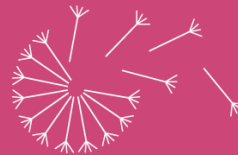
Full-day (6-hour) course:

Virtual delivery - split over two days

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Delivered from 2025 by the Institute for Methods Innovation,  
a registered non-profit organisation.

## Course description

This course will help you navigate the complex and ethical challenges of working with policy to make a meaningful and far-reaching impact. Learn informing and influencing strategies and the different roles you can play in policy networks to give voice to those rarely heard in the corridors of power. You will have the opportunity to debate and consider your ethical boundaries so you can gain the confidence you need to engage with policy safely, responsibly and effectively. As part of the session, you will receive a discount code for [The Researcher's Guide to Influencing Policy](#).

### Key benefits:

- Learn how to get your research into policy, wherever you work in the world.
- Discover time-saving tools to identify who to engage with, so you can plan policy impacts more effectively and efficiently.
- Discuss how to design an effective policy brief, infographic or policy slide deck and create your own policy product for feedback.
- Learn how to co-produce and use policy products effectively to drive impact.
- Learn how to pitch evidence in presentations to influence policy.
- Learn how to evidence policy impacts.
- Be inspired and challenged by case studies and thought-provoking discussion points.

At the end of the workshop:

- You receive slides and links to free resources to help you embed impact in your research.
- You have the option to make a commitment to an action based on the course and receive a follow-up email from Prof Jensen to check in and help as necessary after a month.
- Prof Jensen and Prof Reed continue to answer all questions from participants via email after the course, guaranteeing a response to all questions within one week.

### Preparation for the day

Please choose (only) one policy product to read and critique before the training. You can choose a policy brief, an infographic or a presentation (note that presentations consist of both a PowerPoint file and a notes file in Word with the same title, and one has a video of the slides being presented). You will be asked to discuss the product you chose in small groups, explaining what you liked or disliked about it and why.

Choose the policy product you want to review from one of the three folders via [this link](#).

# Indicative agenda

## Day 1: Policy impact essentials

*Start: 09:30 am (20-minute break included)*

### Part 1: Informing versus influencing policy

- Discussion: What is policy impact?
- Evidencing policy impacts
- Discuss: “There is no such thing as (purely) evidence-based policy”
- Discuss: How to overcome imposter syndrome to engage with policy
- Small group discussion: Are you ready to engage with policy yet?
- Small group discussion: Do you want to inform or influence?
- Small group discussion: What role will you play?
- Adapting your engagement to what you’ve learned

### Part 2: Practical tools

- Identifying relevant policy contacts
- Time-saving tools to plan for policy impact

### Part 3: Writing policy products that have a real impact

- Presentation: different policy products and when can they be useful
- Small group exercise: pick and critique a policy brief, infographic or presentation
- Content, design and structure tips
- Co-producing policy products
- Personal exercise: where do you draw your red line?

*Close: 12:30 pm*

## Day 2: Developing policy products

Start: 09:30 am (20-minute break included)

### Part 1: Create your own policy product

- Read the abstract and conclusion of the paper supplied, and extract key messages in plain English
- Identify relevant audience and their likely interests using your 3i analysis tool (Day 1)
- Frame options/actions and share with the group via chat for discussion

### Part 2: Using your policy product in meetings and seminars

- Co-producing policy products
- Seminars: single issue/presenter versus curating a programme, joining a seminar series versus stand-alone events
- One-to-one meetings: using your stakeholder analysis to tailor a pitch for a meeting versus working with intermediaries
- Chat and break out room exercise:
  - What is the difference between influence and manipulation?
  - How might researchers inadvertently cross their own red lines?
- Personal exercise: where do you draw your red line?

### Part 3: Pitching research in meetings and seminars

- Learn what you need to do in the first 30 seconds of any talk to grab your audience's attention and trust:
  - Connect more deeply with your audience to drive deeper engagement with your message
  - Convey passion and authority by ensuring the strength of your evidence-based message is matched by your posture and intonation
  - Simplify your message to make it memorable and powerful and practice to look effortless.

Close: 12:30 pm

## About Fast Track Impact

[Fast Track Impact](#) is an international training platform delivered by the [Institute for Methods Innovation](#), a non-profit organisation. Its mission is to change the way busy researchers generate and share knowledge so that their ideas can change the world and they can get their thinking time back.

Fast Track Impact runs training for researchers from every discipline, from PhD students to Professors, from departmental away days to cross-institution training days. It has trained 15,000+ researchers from more than 200 institutions in 55 countries.

## About the trainer



### Professor Eric A. Jensen

Prof Jensen is a social scientist with a PhD from the University of Cambridge in sociology. He is part-time professor at the University of Warwick, where he has led courses on public engagement with science, science policy, audience research and social research methods (including surveys and statistics). He is also a doctoral research supervisor for the University of Oxford. As a visiting research scientist at the National Center for Supercomputing

Applications at the University of Illinois, Jensen works on a Sloan Foundation-funded project on research software policy.

Prof Jensen has 20+ years of research and practice experience in social research, evaluation, public and policy engagement and science communication. He has delivered hundreds of training workshops on evaluation methods and evidence-based science communication, as well as leading and consulting on projects large and small on public engagement with research, impact evaluation, socially responsible research, and environmental communication. Prof Jensen also serves as an Independent Ethics Mentor for European Commission-funded projects, reviewing data management and ethics planning. He has extensive experience in ethical approval processes in higher education.