

LEARN THE PARTS OF AN IMPACT STORY.

Some impact reports or forms use different terms than the ones listed here, but the intent of all impact statements is the same; the basic principles outlined here still apply.

WHAT IS the ISSUE, WHY WAS IT an ISSUE & FOR WHOM IS IT an ISSUE?

- Connect to **hot topics**.
- Make people **care**.

WHAT WAS DONE?

- Describe **major** activities.
- Tell **who** was involved.
- Be **brief** and **clear**.
- **Don't** go on and on about theory.
- **No jargon**.
- Highlight **innovation**.

WHAT WAS LEARNED or PRODUCED?

- Share **major** findings.
- **Don't** list tons of data.
- Share **important** tools, products, workshops, and other outputs.

WHAT WERE the IMPACTS?

- **Why** do the results and outputs matter?
- **Who** was impacted?
- **Where** did the impact occur?
- **How big** was the impact?



IMPACT = CHANGE IN

- Knowledge
- Behavior
- Economic, environmental, or social condition

PUBLIC VALUE

- Go beyond program participants or a specific study site.
- How does the project or program affect the general public or a broader area?

CAN'T IDENTIFY IMPACTS?

- Think about **potential** impacts.
- Explain how your work creates a foundation for **future** impacts.
- Describe the **ripple effect**.
- Show how your work **played a part** in certain impacts.
- Share **anecdotes** as examples.
- Remember: at the start of a project, **plan** how you will **measure** impacts.

IDENTIFY THE PARTS OF YOUR IMPACT STORY.

Jot down notes and key words to answer the following questions and start building your impact statement.

- What issue is being addressed?
- Who cares about this issue?
- Why do they care about the issue?
- What did the project/program do to address the issue?
- Who was involved?
- Did the project/program use any unique or innovative methods or tools?
- What were the major results or outputs?
- What impacts did the project/program have or could it have?
- Who was impacted?
- Where did this impact occur?
- How big was this impact?

USE YOUR NOTES TO WRITE AN IMPACT STATEMENT.

DID YOU REMEMBER TO:

- NOT run on about **methods/theory**?
- NOT use **jargon**?
- Write with an **active** voice?
- Be **clear** and **concise**?
- Use numbers to show **magnitude**?
- Include a **link** or **contact** for more information?

FINESSE YOUR IMPACT STATEMENT.

FORMATTING TIPS:

When you are not given a form to structure your impact statement, you have to decide how to best present your work.

- Keep it **organized** (e.g., group your impacts by type of impact or by objective).
- Use **formatting** (e.g., headings, bullets, font styles) to break up and draw attention to information.
- Focus on the **highlights**.
- Include **links** or **attachments** to supplemental materials.
- Include **visual aids/photos**.

Sometimes, you will be asked to use a form to report impacts.

- Follow the **instructions**.
- Fill out **all** sections.
- Submit **on time**.

WRITING FOR A SPECIFIC AUDIENCE?

GENERAL PUBLIC

- Big “so what” **hook** at the beginning
- Make it *relatable* (use **visuals** or **analogies**)
- Be *straightforward* and *transparent*
- Share **anecdotal impacts**

MEDIA

- Start with the impact—the “**big news**”
- Show how your work is *unique/innovative*
- Use **keywords** and connect to **timely topics**
- Share supporting **data** in supplemental materials

LEGISLATORS/POLICYMAKERS

- Relate your work to **national issues** or **topics/communities** the representative cares about
- Focus on *measured* impacts and **ROI**
- Show the *public value*
- **Include an ask**: what is still needed; what’s next

FUNDERS/PARTNERS

- Relate your work to **topics/communities** the organization cares about
- Connect your impacts to your original **objectives**
- Focus on *measured* impacts and **ROI**

UNIVERSITIES

- Emphasize the role of any **special tools, labs, expertise** at your institution
- Show how your university is *making a difference*

SOCIAL MEDIA

- Keep it **super short** and to the point
- Use **hashtags** to connect to conversations
- **Tag** the accounts of people/institutions involved
- Use *high-quality, simple visuals*
- **Engage** with followers

GOOD TIMING

- Share your impacts when people are primed to **pay attention**.
- Have impact statements *on hand* in case of unexpected requests or opportunities.
- Know when conversations related to your work are taking place so you can **join**.

FOR ALL AUDIENCES:

- Build **relationships** (familiarity, trust)
- Identify **who did the work** and **funding sources**.
- Provide a way to **get in touch** and **learn more**.