



## Top Ten Tips for working with policymakers from **SHAPE-ID** partner, [Professor Catherine Lyall](#)

1

It is generally recognised that the impact of academic research on policy is often long-term and indirect.

2

Getting knowledge into policy requires a willingness to engage with different audiences who may have quite different agendas and timescales from those of the academic researcher. It also requires research outputs in a different format and language from traditional academic publications.

3

Policy-relevant evidence is contestable and open to interpretation – policy is necessarily political.

4

Policymakers work with multiple and shifting political agendas, often with short timeframes for action, factors which have a significant influence on their engagement with research findings.

5

Policymakers may need short, sharp, timely pieces of work; a good policy message which comes along after a decision has been taken will rarely have influence.

6

Increasing the impact of research on policy and practice demands more than just post-hoc dissemination. It should aim to achieve dialogue with potential research users at the earliest possible stage, potentially involving them in agenda-setting and in the design process.

7

Many people and organisations are involved in translating evidence for policy. Identify key “knowledge intermediaries” who may help to get your message across. These may be other societal actors who are partners in your transdisciplinary research.

8

The key elements of an effective policy brief are:

- A summary and a list of key points up front
- A clear structure with well signposted sections
- Use of boxes for figures, case-studies, glossaries and other contextual materials
- Accessible jargon free language

9

Publicise your policy briefing through social media channels, research and professional networks, etc.

10

Consider professional media training to improve your communication skills.

## Further Resources

➔ SHAPE-ID toolkit: [Disseminate Research Findings](#)

## About the Author

**Catherine Lyall** is author of [Being an Interdisciplinary Academic. How Institutions Shape University Careers](#) and co-author of [Interdisciplinary Research Journeys. Practical Strategies for Capturing Creativity](#)