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**Abstract**

Because of the gross difficulties in measuring the societal impact of academic research, qualitative approaches have been developed in the last decade mostly based on forms of interaction between university and other societal stakeholders. In this paper, we suggest a framework for qualitative analysis based on the distinction between three dimensions of societal impact: epistemological, artefactual and interactive-institutional. The epistemological dimension addresses what new research results and understanding of relevant phenomena have contributed to solving of technological and societal problems. The artefactual dimension comprises analysis of the artefacts, methods, tools and services through the use of which societal impact is realized. Finally, in the interactional–institutional dimension the forms and forums of collaboration between university and other societal actors are explored. The model is elaborated by analyzing the work of three university research groups in different disciplines. The framework may be used in articulating formative and dialogical peer evaluation of research to foster learning and social improvement as well as in evaluation of research

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