



LIVERPOOL  
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Est. 1844

SEARCH

Socio-Economic and Applied Research for Change

## Making an Impact

# Valuing the Social and Economic worth of the Voluntary and Community Sector

6<sup>th</sup> June 2018

### Conference - Call for Papers

The Third Sector is increasingly being asked to show impact in tangible and increasingly simplistic ways.

Continued reduction in public service funding has seen the growth of alternative provision through the voluntary and community sector. Needs-based *ad hoc* approaches have, in some cases, materialised into well developed and professionally managed organisational structures. Coalitions, collaborations and partnerships have emerged involving different community organisations, local or national government departments and private companies. Increasing competition and unequal development has meant some have prospered whilst many have fallen by the wayside.

Reasons for success and failure are many and varied but much may have to do with an increasing need to monitor and evaluate the impact of their work. This interdisciplinary conference aims to bring together academics and practitioners to discuss the ways in which voluntary and community organisations have an impact on their beneficiaries and stakeholders and how such an impact is defined, demonstrated and disseminated.

The conference is being hosted by SEARCH – a research centre dedicated to Socio-Economic and Applied Research for Change. As such, the centre is currently focused on working in three distinct but connected areas which are reflected in the themes of the conference:



#### Strand 1. Community Sport Development

Since the turn of the Millennium, sporting organisations, and football clubs in particular, have been increasingly involved in the delivery of social cohesion and community development initiatives. This strand will bring together emerging themes around the impact of sport as a tool for such programmes. Are football clubs, for example, appropriate brands for tackling the social cohesion agenda? Does sport still rely on uncritical assumptions about its social impact rooted in the rational recreation movement? Are we 'skilling-up' delivery organisations to measure impact appropriately? What is the international context of sport for community development?

## Strand 2. Developing People's Lives

As austerity continues to impact on local services, the support networks of the country's most vulnerable are continuously changing. Young people and adults live in precarious worlds, often blamed for the social dynamic they are situated in, despite living in worlds dominated by surveillance and insecurity. This strand will draw together scholarly concerns on the social construction of need and the practicalities of engaging people in the research process in helping us understand their relationships with Third Sector organisations that have an effect on and are affected by various different concerns. What is the impact of contemporary living on young people's mental wellbeing? How do we empower the next generation? Does every child still matter? What is the relationship between Millennials and the State? What next for adults in need? What are the best ways to explore the intersectionality of insecurity?

## Strand 3. Social and Physical Environments

Quasi-public space, environmental politics, corporate governance, the challenge to and (re)enforcement of the nation state, a refugee 'crisis', Brexit, (social) media scandals, fake news, identity politics. These are global concerns that have local impacts on the physical world around us and the social spaces through which we live our daily lives. This strand will explore the challenges of measuring impact at the nexus of global and local politics. How can we benefit from networked societies? How do we know and show which actions are making a difference? What are the changing dynamics of local and global activism? What are the impacts, hard or soft, on everyday life?

Within these strands we would like to invite papers that have a focus on assessing impact in relation, but not limited, to the following topics:

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Partnership Working                              | Environmental Action                            |
| Sport and Social Inclusion                       | Social Movements                                |
| Professionalisation of Community Sport           | Neighbourhood Activism                          |
| Football Club Community Foundations              | Impact and Social Media                         |
| Youth Unemployment                               | Social Capital, Social Trust and Social Quality |
| Economics of Youth Transitions                   | Measurement and Neo-Liberalism                  |
| Managing Crisis                                  | Stakeholder Participatory Approaches            |
| Risk and Resilience                              | Corporate Social Responsibility and             |
| Third Sector Organisations and Identity Politics | Community Relations                             |
| Volunteerism and the Life Course                 | Methods and Ethical Concerns                    |

We would be interested in a variety of presentations that include case studies of positive or negative impact, methods of monitoring and evaluation, challenges around reporting and promoting impact, organisational capacity and theoretical debates around methodologies. We welcome contributions in the form of poster and oral presentations as well as panel discussions that combine academic and practitioner input. We would also encourage post-graduate students to attend and present their work in a supportive and nurturing environment.

Further information about [Liverpool Hope University](#), [SEARCH](#) and the [conference](#) available online.

### Conference Fees:

|                      |   |                     |     |
|----------------------|---|---------------------|-----|
| Full price delegate: | £95   | VCO representative: | £25 |
| Early bird:          | £65 (register before 18 <sup>th</sup> April 2018) | Student:            | £15 |

Oral presentations will be 20 minutes in length. Please submit abstracts of 200-300 words to [SEARCHconference2018@hope.ac.uk](mailto:SEARCHconference2018@hope.ac.uk) by 16<sup>th</sup> March 2018, indicating for which strand you would like your paper to be considered.