

## ESRC AND ITS ROLE

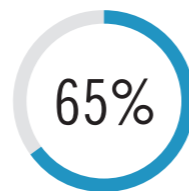


Academic stakeholders **(91%) are more likely to feel they know the ESRC well** compared

to non-academic stakeholders (79%), reflecting their generally closer relationship.



On the whole, the ESRC is well known among its stakeholders, with nine in ten **(88%) reporting that they are familiar with us.**

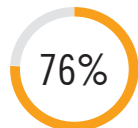


Levels of advocacy are also high: two thirds of stakeholders **(65%) would speak highly of the ESRC to other people.**



A large majority of stakeholders – four in five – have a **favourable view of the ESRC (81%).**

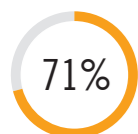
## VISION, PERFORMANCE AND IMPACT



A majority of stakeholders are positive about ESRC's overall performance as an organisation, with **76% saying the organisation is performing well.**



82% of stakeholders agreed that the ESRC plays a leadership role in the UK social science community, while 55% agreed that it is a **major player in the international social science community.**



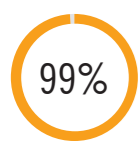
**On the whole, stakeholders are positive about ESRC's impact**, with seven in ten (71%) saying the organisation is effective at maximising impact. A quarter (24%) do not agree that it is effective.



In terms of facilitating **engagement between social scientists and other fields**, most stakeholders think that ESRC is effective in engaging with policymakers (70%) and with government (63%), civil society 53%, the public 48% while fewer think ESRC works effectively with business (26%).



There is a clear relationship between **ESRC's perceived level of engagement, and its perceived level of influence.** While seven in ten think ESRC is influential among policymakers (71%) and in government (63%), civil society 52%, while only 22% think the same is true of business.



Almost eight in ten stakeholders (78%) feel they have a good overall understanding of ESRC's vision and priorities and virtually all stakeholders **(99%) are aware of ESRC's aims.** These are also the areas which they consider to be most important (89% agree they are important).

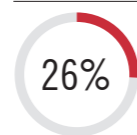


82% of stakeholders feel the **ESRC is a strong advocate for social science** and 71% feel that ESRC's goals and priorities are relevant to and will meet the needs of social science.

## RELATIONSHIPS WITH ESRC



ESRC appears to have **strong relationships with its stakeholders**, with a majority (73%) saying they are satisfied with their current relationship.



There is a sense that **relationships are improving**, with a quarter (26%) saying their satisfaction with their relationship has improved over the last two years, compared to 11% who say it has got worse.



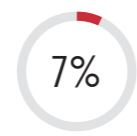
**Those closest to ESRC are most positive about their relationship:** stakeholders who are in contact with ESRC on a monthly basis are significantly more likely to be satisfied with their relationship (82%) than those in contact every 4-6 months or less often (59%).



Stakeholders appreciate open communication on the part of the ESRC. The best relationships are characterised by **open, honest communication and a willingness to discuss shared issues.**



Some academic stakeholders suggest that the **ESRC's processes contribute to the perception of it as a bureaucratic organisation.** A sizeable minority of stakeholders (44%) feel the organisation is too bureaucratic and 22% feel it does not communicate in a way that is clear and accessible.



The vast majority of stakeholders either have **the right amount of contact** with ESRC (63%) or would like more (21%). **Just seven per cent would like less frequent contact.**

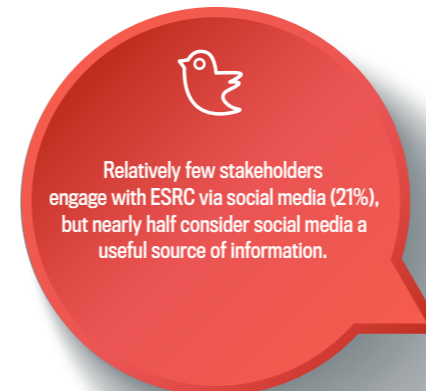


Stakeholders **appreciate open communication on the part of ESRC**, including sharing on its current thinking and activities, and working with them to identify opportunities for collaboration and building relationships.



ESRC is widely perceived **to add value to stakeholders' work**, with four in five (81%) stating this to be the case. There is also a clear appetite for closer working with ESRC, with three in five (59%) saying they would like to do so.

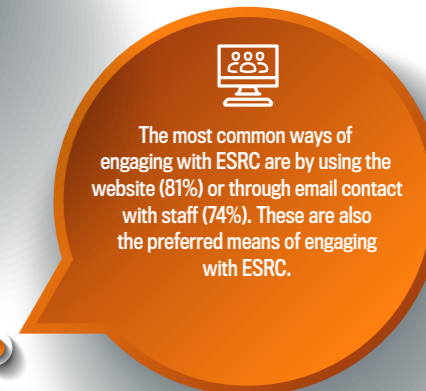
## COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT



Relatively few stakeholders engage with ESRC via social media (21%), but nearly half consider social media a useful source of information.



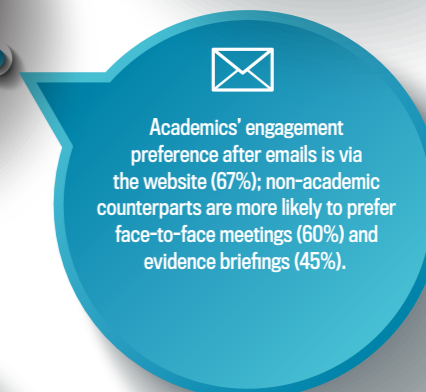
82% of stakeholders feel well informed about ESRC and its work and a similar proportion find it easy to access the information they need (80%).



The most common ways of engaging with ESRC are by using the website (81%) or through email contact with staff (74%). These are also the preferred means of engaging with ESRC.



Face-to-face meetings were rated most useful (86%) followed by contact by email/phone (86%), the website (84%), events (78%) and regular publications (65%).

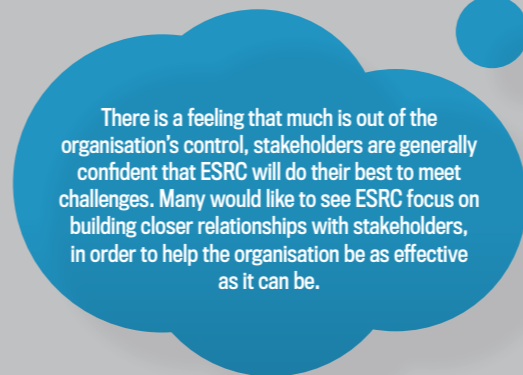


Academics' engagement preference after emails is via the website (67%); non-academic counterparts are more likely to prefer face-to-face meetings (60%) and evidence briefings (45%).

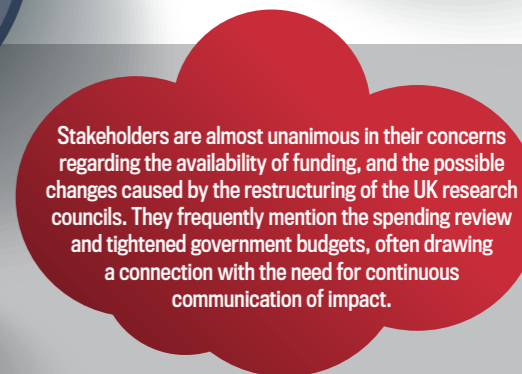


The website was rated highly in terms of quality (63%), events and workshops (60%), and publications (55%).

## FUTURE PRIORITIES



There is a feeling that much is out of the organisation's control, stakeholders are generally confident that ESRC will do their best to meet challenges. Many would like to see ESRC focus on building closer relationships with stakeholders, in order to help the organisation be as effective as it can be.



Stakeholders are almost unanimous in their concerns regarding the availability of funding, and the possible changes caused by the restructuring of the UK research councils. They frequently mention the spending review and tightened government budgets, often drawing a connection with the need for continuous communication of impact.



Some academic stakeholders are concerned the impact agenda could narrow the field of research ESRC operates in, but those outside academia were more likely to see opportunities to raise the profile of social science research.