

Summary of CERIC's report on the application of the general societal impact protocol

The need for Research Infrastructures and ERICs to identify, monitor and evaluate their societal impact is continuously increasing considering its importance to the different stakeholders of the RI (including funders, policy makers, researchers and more).

Following the draft societal impact protocol developed by the ACCELERATE project partner the Rathenau Institute, which constituted a guidance document for the ACCELERATE members, project partners (CERIC-ERIC, ELI-DC, European Spallation Source-ERIC, FRM II and HZG) have developed a report on the societal impact of their organizations. Each report is shaped based on the structure, objectives and context of the individual RI.

Following this guidance, CERIC prepared its societal return report, consisting of 6 impact pathways, with the following objectives:

1. The development of a Societal Impact Strategy of CERIC. The pathways address the main objectives of CERIC and accompany them with the context, the activities, present and future ones, support these with data or indicate a relevant information to collect in the future. With periodic updates, it thus allows a systematic approach to achieving impact, from the design of the activities to monitoring of the effectiveness and impact of the activities put in place and therefore increases the likelihood of CERIC to deliver desired impacts and meet the expectations of its funders.
2. The Strategy identifies the goals, provides rationale and context as well as activities, designed to achieve desired impacts. It provides indicators which enable tracking of the impacts, which are to be submitted to the General Assembly of CERIC in order to provide a basis for the steering decisions of the Members.
3. The Strategy allows CERIC to be well prepared for the future impact assessments by providing the impact strategy and evidence in a coherent way.
4. The strategy links to two other activities of CERIC, namely performance monitoring and planning of future activities, as described in an annual Work Plan with a three-year outlook.

5. The employees of CERIC were involved in the preparation of the pathways, which contributes to the institutional awareness of the objectives, as well as to the better design of the future activities. It is also a motivational factor, as the contribution of the members of the team to the impacts of CERIC are recognized.

In order to be able to understand the pathways, the document first describes the context of CERIC, why it was set up as well as its objectives, and then addresses these through dedicated pathways.

The report developed by CERIC is structured in line with the overall strategy and objectives of the organization, consisting of 6 major pathways which incorporate its core activities, as follows:

- Impact of a science enabler
- Impact on human resources
- Impact of integration of facilities
- Impact on the research gap
- Impact of an industrial service provider
- Impact on the public image of science

Each of the pathways describes who creates the impact, and on what. It describes the goals of CERIC in a particular field, followed by the description of activities, including the assumptions, and, if possible the indicators reporting on the results. The final chapter reports on outcomes and impacts, if available, of the described activities.

The pathways also report on the opinions of the funders on the performance of CERIC, collected through a questionnaire.

In order for this document to continuously contribute to the delivery of the impact, it is integrated into CERIC's regular activity. To this end, the current document is used as a blueprint of CERIC's approach towards achieving desired impacts. All new activities will be codified and added to the document, with special attention paid to the monitoring of their results. These activities will be further elaborated in the annual Workplan of CERIC. Regular collection of the data will establish time series, which will contribute to the assessment of the performance and impact of CERIC. These periodic updates of the report will be reported to the General Assembly to support it in its strategic steering of CERIC.