

David Budtz Pedersen

“Valorisation has to do with ‘Value’ and values are not context independent: they’re context dependent. Therefore, there can be no valorisation concept that is independent of context.”

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

With a background in Philosophy of science and Science policy studies, David Budtz Pedersen has been involved in developing new frameworks and indicators to capture the broader social impact of research for a significant amount of time.

Since 2012, Budtz Pedersen has been the co-director and later director of the Humanomics Research Centre, which is an interdisciplinary research unit overseeing 15 faculty members from Aalborg University, University of Copenhagen, Aarhus University, Copenhagen Business School and University of Southern Denmark.

With his co-lead, Prof. Frederik Stjernfelt, Budtz Pedersen has published several books on the impact and dynamics of humanities.

Research on Research: Understanding the Impact of SSH Research

David Budtz Pedersen has been involved in developing new frameworks and indicators to capture the broader social impact of research for a significant amount of time. He is often considered a key individual within initiating the Humanomics Programme in 2012, funded by the Velux Foundation. The programme is an interdisciplinary research unit that simply researches the impact of research.

“I came into this area more than 12 years ago, and I was encouraged by a private research foundation in Denmark, the Velux Foundation, to take upon myself and colleagues forming a new research group that were to look into mapping and creating a better understanding of how the humanities are working.”

The key driver behind the creation of the Humanomics Programme was based on the observation that up until then, around 10 years ago, when you were to investigate how science and scholarship were organised, incentivised, how they produce research results, and knowledge translation into practical settings. Most of these studies, however, were driven by and based on natural sciences, technical sciences, health sciences, etc.

The research foundation produced the suggestion to construct a new research area, which could be labelled as humanities studies, as a supplement to the label of Science and Technology studies.

Today, this area could be defined as ‘meta-science’ or ‘research on research’.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

& ADVICE

Understand who it is you're creating value for:

Time allocation to specific tasks needs to be altered e.g., spending more of your time translating, mobilising your research into practice. This may not be practice in the sense that you are going to teach consultancy classes for companies or that you're going to create your own company, but you're taking a detour in writing your research in ways that are understandable and accessible to non-scientific audiences.

Be open to the alternative route:

This is often a difficult message to convey to academia and academics, because of the belief that there is a unilateral career path that leads from PhD to professorship. However, in the world today, there is no harm done in trying to get ones' research across, as one could only get inspired on the way.

If researchers want to be more ambitious and take a stance, then it would never damage ones' career, but it may be a contribution to changing the culture of research. Researchers might meet a professor at a conference who tells them that their research questions are inferior and that they should be specialising. But to help them with that, a researcher needs to believe in their own research.

"You need to be prepared and willing to explain yourself, of which you may be going out on a limb and taking a stance where you're saying, my research is too important to only be written up in books and standing on the library shelf.

It needs to become practical; it needs to become impactful."