Promoting Research Impact



Joined up MarComms to promote the impact of research to the media, public and influencers



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Overview

- □ Why is communicating our research impact a strategic priority for the University of Birmingham?
- □ What have we done to enhance our research reputation?
 - 1) A joined up MarComms approach
 - Birmingham Heroes reputational/positional marketing campaign
 - 3) Enhancing our media relations approach (...and case study about our Invisibility Cloak)
 - 4) Engaging policy influencers

Why has communicating our research impact become a strategic priority?

- □ New 5yr strategic framework with the ambitious goal of becoming a leading global university
- Lack of focus on promoting the impact of our research, despite many internationally leading academics
- □ A stable high quality brand but 'under selling'
- □ So we considered 'what do we want people to think about us?'

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What do we want people to think about us?

- Encourages enquiry and provokes thought, debate, action and change
- □ Challenges convention, is ambitious and bold
- Creates global impact through our research
- Offers an inspirational student experience
- □ Engaged, locally, nationally and globally
- □ A leading global university

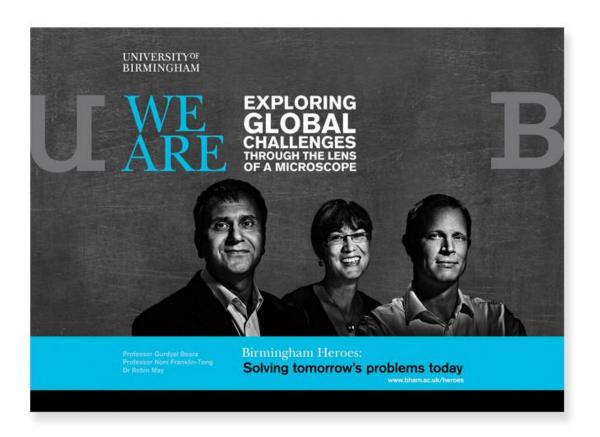
What	are we doing to enhance our research	reputation?	
	ng bolder about our research qua act to enhance our reputation	lity and	
□ Em	phasising the societal impact		
□ Pric	oritising and being more selective		
□ A jo	ined up approach for maximum ir	mpact	
Three k	ey actions:		
□ Lau	□ Launch 'Birmingham Heroes' campaign		
□ Imp	Improve the media profile of our research		
□ Dev	Develop public affairs activities to engage with		
influ	uencers	UNIVERSITYOF BIRMINGHAM	

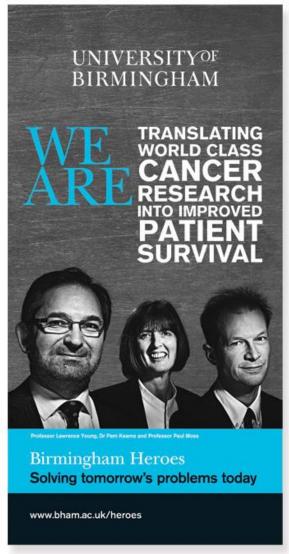
Birmingham Heroes Campaign

- ☐ To be a leading global university we have to raise our profile and enhance our <u>reputation</u> to match our ambition
- □ Major 2yr positional marketing campaign, 2010-2011
- □ Aims of the campaign:
- Enhance the profile and reputation of the University (not directly recruitment focused)
- Highlight our leading academics and research strengths
- Communicate complex research simply and accessibly
- Demonstrate how the research that takes place at
 Birmingham impacts on the lives of people in the UK and globally
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Birmingham Heroes - Key Advertising channels

- □ Outdoor
 - London Underground Stations
 - Midlands Trains Network
 - Major Train stations
 - Birmingham Outdoor Billboard Advertising
 - Birmingham Airport
- □ Press
 - Parliamentary House Magazine
 - Modern Government Magazine
 - Virgin Trains Hotline Magazine
 - Times of India
- □ Online
 - University web site and social media









More than just a marketing campaign

- Maximise the impact of the campaign by linking up with other external activities
 - Media relations to showcase Heroes
 - Heroes video for new website launch
 - Highlight Heroes to international recruitment agents
 - Heroes for schools visits for prospective applicants
 - Promoted Heroes to opinion formers through the Birmingham (policy) Brief, policy events and our research magazine - more later about this
- □ Strong link to University strategy, research impact strategy and international strategy UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

Improving the media profile of our research

- ☐ A focus on promoting research with impact
- □ Prioritising the big stories 'all hands on deck'
- Press officers focused on research areas health, social affairs, arts/culture, science and technology – and an international media specialist
- Relationship building with and between academics and journalists

Improving the media profile of our research

- □ Increasing broadcast alongside press
- □ More comment and opinion alongside news
- Emphasis on national and international
- □ Our success coverage of £30million advertising equivalent in 2010 for £300,000 outlay (on track for over £40m in 2011)
- □ An example of how this approach delivered results – The invisibility cloak

The Invisibility Cloak - the results

- Lengthy articles with images in many UK national newspapers – Telegraph, Sun, Daily Mail, Mirror, Independent and full page in Guardian
- □ Over 200 print articles
- □ Widespread international coverage
- Interviews on all major UK TV news bulletins BBC, Sky, Ch4, ITN and dozens of radio interviews
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Influencing opinion formers

- □ To be a leading global university we must be influential promoting research impact to decisions makers and influencers
- □ A programme of activities
 - Birmingham Select Dinners
 - Birmingham Policy Briefs
 - Supporting academics to engage with policy makers
 - Policy events (political conferences)
 - Great hall lectures and debates
 - Political visits

Conclusions

- □ Be confident and bold
- □ Prioritise
- □ Emphasise societal impact of research
- □ Use a mix of channels to target different audiences – media, advertising, digital, events
- □ A joined up approach for maximum impact

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