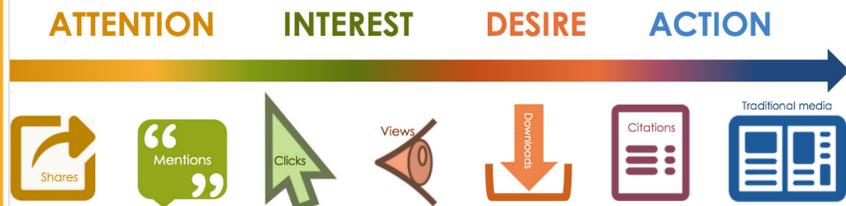


# How can we help researchers increase the reach and impact of their work?

## INTRODUCTION

Researchers and scholars are increasingly encouraged or eager to increase the visibility, reach and impact of their work. Researchers aren't satisfied with the exposure their work is getting and believe more could be done to increase post-publication visibility. They have limited support from their institutions and that support is generally highly distributed. They want to be free to share information about their articles with peers and others, but copyright can be restrictive and they lack intelligence on what activities and platforms are effective for outreach.

Researchers – and the organizations that support them – need tools to help them disseminate information about their work and evaluate the impact this has had on the metrics that matter to them. In particular, they need assistance with understanding the drivers that convert attention for their work into readership, citations and applications:



## HYPOTHESIS

With publication metrics having traditionally existed quite separately to communication tools and networks, it has been difficult to know what will be the most efficient and effective way to increase visibility, reach and impact.

The Kudos project was started in 2013 to try and build an independent dataset that would connect academics' efforts to explain and share their work with data about the performance of their publications (views, downloads, citations and altmetrics). We wanted to test the hypothesis that explaining and sharing work increases the performance of related publications, and explore whether any particular actions or channels were more effective than others.

## METHOD

We built a free service for academics to add plain language explanations to their work, link it to related resources, and manage their sharing - the platform generates trackable links for them to use, across their preferred communication channels (see "Background", above right).

The platform can be used to explain and share any work with a Crossref DOI. A subset of publishers provide usage data against which we have measured the effect of explaining and sharing work.

## DATASET

- 830,565 publications claimed in Kudos
- 22,170 publications with actions (either explain or share), of which:
  - 20,775 publications have explanations
  - 2,394 publications that were shared
  - 4,867 publications have download data

## CONTACT

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## BACKGROUND: THE KUDOS TOOLKIT

**Researchers** use Kudos to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of communications around their work:

- Explaining work in plain language, making it easier for non-specialists or speakers of other languages to understand, and quicker for other specialists to scan and filter. Links to related resources that further help to explain the work or set it in context can also be added.
- Generating trackable links so that when work is shared – via email, social media, academic networks, etc – these activities can be directly mapped to publication metrics and their effect easily determined.
- Measuring results against a range of metrics to learn which tools and networks are most effective for building visibility, usage and impact

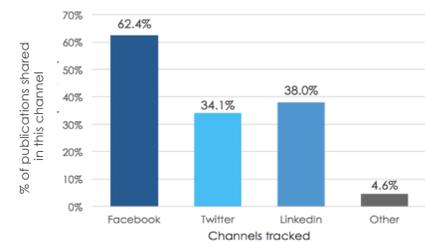


**Libraries, research offices, communications teams, publishers, funders and societies** use Kudos to centralize and surface researchers' efforts to build impact, in order to amplify and learn from their efforts, and thereby collaborate more efficiently with them:

- Learning which researchers are actively communicating around their work, and when / where (even in closed channels such as email)
- Acknowledging and amplifying researchers' efforts, to maximize results
- Understanding the effectiveness of different tools and networks, to shape organizational communications and provide more tailored guidance to researchers
- Leveraging the knowledge and networks of researchers to build visibility, usage and impact

## KEY FINDINGS

**Facebook** is more commonly used for sharing academic work than you might expect



2,394 publications have been shared in Kudos. At this stage of the project, publications have been logged as being shared either by Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, or "other". More granular analysis is planned in future. Publications can be shared by more than one channel. This chart shows the percentage distributions of the different social media channels via which Kudos users have shared their publications.

But shares via **LinkedIn** are more likely to be clicked



We applied the Pearson's correlation to determine the relationship between links shared on each of the different social media channels, and the likelihood of those links being clicked. Large statistically significant correlations ( $r > .5$ ) were measured for shares via LinkedIn and Facebook, and a medium statistically significant correlation ( $r > .3$ ) for shares via Twitter.

Using Kudos to **explain and share** work correlates to a:



We analyzed full text downloads on the publisher site for publications where the authors had used the Kudos toolkit to explain and share their work, and compared this to downloads on the publisher site for a control group for which the Kudos tools had not been actively used. We found that downloads of the full text, on the publisher site, were 23% higher for those publications where authors had used Kudos to explain and share their work.

**23%**  
increase in downloads

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

It is the start of evidence that will help researchers have the confidence to share their work more actively. Many researchers feel that their supervisors frown upon efforts to communicate, particularly via social media. Our ability to correlate those activities with the more meaningful metric of full text downloads can help justify time spent on such endeavours. Downloads do not, by themselves, represent impact. But they are the best proxy we currently have for readership, which in turn is the foundation upon which impact – of the academic kind, or more broadly – is built. Efforts to increase readership should therefore not be undervalued, and it is important that institutions, publishers, funders and societies understand these efforts and their results in order to strengthen the support they provide to researchers.