

Summary of NERC citations study 2008

Citations analysis can be used to measure the impact of research papers amongst the world-wide academic community. The NERC citations study 2008 investigated the impact of NERC-funded research, demonstrating an impact well above the world average and above the UK average for environmental sciences. This led the independent consultant performing the study to conclude that NERC-funded research is internationally significant.

The study uses papers published between 2003 and 2005, by NERC grant-holders and by NERC Research and Collaborative Centres, in one of a number of leading peer-reviewed 'ISI' journals as included in the Thomson-Reuters database. Some 5,500 papers were evaluated using standard techniques to adjust for disciplinary and other biases.

NERC research community has a strong publishing record in high impact journals like Nature and Science, whilst fewer papers are uncited than might be expected. Earth Sciences was the research field with the highest number of publications and this field achieved high impact. Overall Animal Sciences achieved the highest impact. A comparison of impact by NERC funding modes is made, but this should be interpreted with caution, since different modes have differing objectives that affect publication practices.