

# Recognising Hidden Roles in Research

## (Research Adjacent Episode 80)

Sarah reports from the 2025 Festival of Hidden REF

<https://researchadjacent.com/recognising-hidden-roles-in-research-episode-80/>



[00:00:00] **Simon Hettrick:** There are so many hidden roles. There are so many roles that are vital, but unrecognized in research.

[00:00:07] **Elisa Collado:** As much as certain funders have made an effort to be more inclusive and include diversity of roles, end of the day they ask you about research outputs.

[00:00:16] **Alix Brodie-Wray:** We might be straying into a kind of tokenistic appreciation of hidden roles and actually it's a deeper change that's needed.

[00:00:23] **Sarah McLusky:** Hello there. I'm Sarah McLusky and this is Research Adjacent.

[00:00:30] **Sarah McLusky:** Each episode I talk to amazing research adjacent professionals about what they do and why it makes a difference. Keep listening to find out why we think the research adjacent space is where the real magic happens.

[00:00:46] **Sarah McLusky:** Hello and welcome along to what is the 80th episode of Research Adjacent, which I have to say does feel like a very big number. If you're new and you like what you hear, that back catalogue will keep you going for a while. So make sure you check it out after this episode.

[00:01:00] **Sarah McLusky:** For today, I've got another event report, and this time it's from The Hidden REF Festival in Birmingham. This meeting ran over two days on the 7th and 8th of

October, 2025, but I only attended on the second day. Attending on the second day involved a 5:00 AM start and seven hours on the train there and back from Newcastle. But it was fantastic to be in a room with people who, like me, are trying to broaden our concept of what it means to contribute to research and also what research excellence looks like if we think bigger than publications.

[00:01:33] **Sarah McLusky:** Through this episode, you'll hear from some of the speakers and attendees, including the organisers, Simon Hettrick and James Baker, Hidden REF Competition winners. Laura Henderson and Lorraine Van Blerk, speaker Elisa Collado, and a group of participants from the University of Leeds, including Emily Ennis, Jo Williams, Alix Brody-Wray, and previous podcast guest, Nick Sheppard.

[00:01:52] **Sarah McLusky:** In a moment, I will let Simon and James tell you a bit more about the Hidden REF, but I want to begin with a bit of jargon busting. If you work in a UK university, then you probably know exactly what REF is. However, I know that there are people listening from all over the world, so for your benefit, REF stands for Research Excellence Framework and it's a research evaluation exercise which assesses the quality of research in higher education institutions in the UK. It ran for the first time in 2014 and then again in 2021, and we are now gearing up for third round, which is gonna be, as far as we know in 2029. It's a big deal for universities because it determines what funding they receive, and also, as you can probably expect, it affects their reputation and everybody wants to come at the top of the list.

[00:02:43] **Sarah McLusky:** However, as you can also probably guess, the process has not been without criticism and the whole research culture conversation really began with REF, and it is rooted in the whole idea of what excellent research looks like.

[00:02:58] **Sarah McLusky:** Indeed, the genesis of this podcast and my drive to showcase the amazing work of people who are employed in research adjacent roles is rooted in my own experience during REF 2021 when I worked as a research project manager. At the time, I was pretty surprised to see the amount of work that went into preparing for the exercise and how much people fretted about the outcome.

[00:03:25] **Sarah McLusky:** I was also in my job responsible for writing the impact case study for the research project that I worked on. And almost everything that went into that case study was work that I had project managed or led on in some way. So it included a multi venue exhibition, it included a podcast that I had created, a website that I built and wrote, and a co-design intervention that I coordinated. And I was, if I'm being absolutely honest, insulted that although we named every researcher who had made even a glancing contribution to the research, there was nowhere on the document to acknowledge me or the other non researchers who had actually done the impact work.

[00:04:07] **Sarah McLusky:** I was not alone in this frustration, it has to be said and Hidden REF's origin story is similar. Hidden REF began in 2020 with the goal of celebrating all research outputs and everyone who is involved in their creation. Their focus is on two particular areas, hidden roles and non-traditional outputs. Hidden roles is their term for what I call research adjacent, all the skilled and experienced, but often unrecognized people who are crucial to research happening and getting out into the world. And non-traditional outputs, which I should say is still a debated term, but it includes things like the exhibition, podcast and website that I talked about earlier, as well as things like software, data, and even chemical reagents, which make a

valuable contribution to knowledge but can't be cited or quantified as easily as traditional publications.

[00:04:59] **Sarah McLusky:** So hopefully that's helped you understand why the Hidden REF movement is so important to anybody interested in research adjacent roles, and why I was willing to get up at 5:00 AM and traipse all the way to Birmingham just to be in a room with other people who care as much as about this stuff as I do.

[00:05:17] **Sarah McLusky:** On the day I managed to get a few people to be willing to talk to me for this podcast, and two people I was super keen to talk to were the organisers, Simon Hettrick and James Baker. They're both academics, but don't hold that against them, at the University of Southampton and members of the Hidden REF Committee, with Simon being the chair. I asked them to tell me a bit more about Hidden REF and what they hope to get out of the event.

[00:05:41] **Simon Hettrick:** I'm Simon Hettrick

[00:05:42] **James Baker:** And I'm James Baker.

[00:05:44] **Sarah McLusky:** And so you are both involved in running the Hidden REF which is the event that we're at today. I wonder if one of you would like to tell me a bit about what is Hidden REF? Simon, do you want to take that one?

[00:05:55] **Simon Hettrick:** I can take that one. So yeah, so The Hidden REF came about because we're really interested in research adjacent careers, and my past was running a campaign to support one of those careers. We took it right through, from its inception with the title right through to being a very significant international community spanning 14 different countries and the impact of supporting that, that new career path. So this is for research software engineers in UK academia largely.

[00:06:24] **Simon Hettrick:** The impact of that was that we saw that the skills that were reintroduced into the research community really drove research forward. And we were interested in how can we do this for other research adjacent careers, not just the research software engineers. And that led to the Hidden REF.

[00:06:39] **Sarah McLusky:** Yeah. And maybe tell us a bit about, you describe these roles as hidden roles. What kind of roles are you including in that? What sorts of conversations you've been having?

[00:06:49] **Simon Hettrick:** The most exciting thing is we don't know. So it's, there are so many hidden roles. There are so many roles that are vital, but unrecognized in research.

[00:06:57] **Simon Hettrick:** So we started off with, a selection of people that I knew about and then people just started coming to us cause they saw the work that we were doing and the thing I've always found really interesting about these research adjacent roles and these hidden roles.

[00:07:09] **Simon Hettrick:** Was that people would come and say, oh I'm not actually listed on the website. So are we allowed to take part and be Yeah, absolutely. That's the whole point of this is to get recognition for all these people without whom research could not be conducted. So it's a huge range. I think there's about 20 different titles now and they're all up our website if anybody's interested in what they are.

[00:07:27] **Sarah McLusky:** Oh, fantastic. I'll definitely get a link and put that on. I think I found the same with research adjacent. It's just the number of people who are kind of like, me too me too. Yeah. I feel the same way, which is great. So we're here at the Hidden REF event today.

[00:07:41] **Sarah McLusky:** James, I wonder if you could tell us a bit about what's happening.

[00:07:44] **James Baker:** So we're here in Birmingham for two days for an event that is focused in part on those hidden roles. And in part on thinking about the kind of non-traditional outputs or non-traditionally submitted outputs that come out of research, particularly in relation to things like research exercises like the REF.

[00:07:58] **James Baker:** But really it's a community event. It's an opportunity to get a lot of different people together. Simon mentioned before all the possible people who contribute to making research happen. And what we are learning is that some of the kind of the role specifications that came out of the early competitions that we had, where people came to us and said, these are the roles we think need recognizing. There's just more of them. And so people are here. So we opened this out as an open event for two days to come along and just help us as a group who are trying to, campaign in this area to improve our work through that kind of bottom up community emphasis. And that's been something we had from the beginning, right?

[00:08:31] **James Baker:** It's always been about bottom up working. So it's been a learning experience, I think, for us as organizers because we are getting people coming along and saying how are we going to work in this particular context with these particular kinds of people? Which is what you want, right?

[00:08:45] **Sarah McLusky:** Yeah. And do you have a goal, an aim for something you're hoping will come out of the event today?

[00:08:49] **James Baker:** So one of the things we've been doing is collecting information. Not in a kind of an extractive way from the community, but collecting bits of information about how they think different types of work might be assessed, which are in some cases connected to those hidden roles. We've also spent some time today just working on like how people think individual types of output that come out of different types of work might be evaluated as well.

[00:09:11] **James Baker:** So we're doing lots of work in that area. And we are hoping we can then spend the next few months looking at that information, feeding it back to the community, and then also importantly feeding it into the next Hidden REF competition where we know lots of people in those research adjacent roles will be applying to be recognized.

[00:09:26] **Sarah McLusky:** And is there news of that next Hidden REF competition? Do you know when it's gonna be?

[00:09:31] **James Baker:** It'll be in 2026. We will be, we'll be launching the kind of call in the new year effectively and making the kind of details of the competition open. One of the things I think we're gonna need to spend some time on just reflecting on the evaluation criteria for all the different roles and all the different types of output that might come through the competition.

[00:09:49] **James Baker:** But again, we might just find that there are output types or role types we didn't expect.

[00:09:54] **Simon Hettrick:** The thing I think is gonna be really exciting about this competition was in the past we held the competition really just to put a spotlight on the vital work that's been going on and the vital people that make that work happen.

[00:10:04] **Simon Hettrick:** This time we're actually starting to be more stringent on the assessment because the information that we're gathering through running the competition is gonna be fed back, fed to the conventional REF or the mainstream REF or whatever you want, you wanna call that? So because the idea is we're giving them that guidance so they will be able to start like including things that aren't usually included in the REF and that means representing people who aren't usually included in the REF as well. So that's really exciting.

[00:10:27] **Sarah McLusky:** Yeah, look forward to that and certainly we'll share the details once we know.

[00:10:30]

[00:10:31] **Sarah McLusky:** As you heard, the Hidden REF competition is where the campaign began, and it's an important part of their work still as part of the day, we heard from some of the winners of the 2024 Hidden REF competition. And after the talks, I was able to chat with hidden rules winners, Laura Henderson and Lorraine Van Blerk.

[00:10:48] **Sarah McLusky:** First up, here's Laura sharing the work that she was nominated for and what winning has meant to her.

[00:10:53] **Laura Henderson:** I'm Laura Henderson. I work as a research development manager at Royal Brompton and Harfield Hospitals, which is part of Guys and St Thomas's NHS Foundation Trust. And my role is primarily to support researchers at our hospitals in submitting grants and fellowships to external research funders. And that was what my nomination was based on, was the support that I give our researchers with their fellowship applications.

[00:11:18] **Sarah McLusky:** So I think what's really interesting about your role, and I'm sure what caught the attention of the judges, is that people don't think about research as something that happens in hospitals. So it tells us about some of the research that you've got going on and who's doing it.

[00:11:32] **Laura Henderson:** We do so much research in our NHS Foundation Trust. We do regulated drug studies, device studies feasibility studies everything and anything is on the cards and staff across our hospitals, including nurses, midwives, allied health professionals, healthcare scientists, pharmacists, physiologists, the whole shebang, obviously along with doctors, they all get involved. They all run their own research and develop their own clinical academic careers.

[00:12:01] **Laura Henderson:** So I would not have turned down the offer to come and speak here today. There was an offer to submit a video. But I wanted to use this platform to showcase my role and hope that it does become more mainstream across NHSs and the opportunity that the hidden role has given me which I spoke about today. I've got a bigger team because of it. I've got a secondment opportunity because of it. It's just been fantastic. It's definitely been something that I would regard as the pinnacle of my career.

[00:12:31] **Sarah McLusky:** I then spoke to Lorraine Van Blerk, who's a professor of Human Geography at the University of Dundee. Now, I should say, before we come on, Lorraine was

actually the nominator rather than the winner, and she nominated a group of peer researchers that she worked with. Let's hear more.

[00:12:47] **Sarah McLusky:** So you were here today talking about your award from the Hidden REF Competition, which was all about, I say your award. Maybe we should reframe it, but all about hidden roles in research. Tell us about the hidden roles that you were centring today.

[00:13:01] **Lorraine van Blerk:** So I nominated a group of 18 young researchers who took part in a project called Growing Up on the Streets that we ran from 2012 to 2020.

[00:13:14] **Lorraine van Blerk:** And they were homeless young people who lived on the streets in three African cities, in Accra in Ghana, Bukavu in the DRC and Harare in Zimbabwe. And they undertook ethnographic research with their peers over a period of three years producing a large scale qualitative data set that amounted to almost two and half thousand narratives about street life.

[00:13:38] **Sarah McLusky:** That's an incredible achievement for young people who I'm presuming that this was their first experience of doing something like this.

[00:13:46] **Lorraine van Blerk:** Yes. And many of them hadn't really been to school. They had maybe been to one or two grades in school and they were, as I said, homeless, living on the streets, living in informal areas, and making a living on a day-to-day survival basis.

[00:14:03] **Sarah McLusky:** And so what difference do you think it made to them to be part of the research?

[00:14:08] **Lorraine van Blerk:** I think it made a significant difference in many different ways. So just to be asked to undertake research or to be partnering in a research project was both confidence building, we did a lot of training so that they could then become partners, both not in the re not just in the research, but also in the knowledge exchange and dissemination, talking to stakeholders and coming up with their own ideas of how to disseminate.

[00:14:35] **Lorraine van Blerk:** The work that they've done, but for others, it has led on to other opportunities. So travel opportunities to give talks or some were employed as street workers in an organization based on the work that they've done. They've been involved in meetings around influencing government policy and strategy, and so for them it's about recognizing their skills and abilities and that they can do whatever they set their mind to do.

[00:15:06] **Sarah McLusky:** I have to say that the full story of the street children was very moving, especially hearing what they've gone on to do since some of them, I have to say, have had happier endings than others, but it is in particular a fantastic example of these roles that could be really easily neglected if we just look at the standard hierarchy of research and who does research.

[00:15:29] **Sarah McLusky:** Another part of the day, including lightning talks from a variety of topics covering things like the emotional labour of academic housekeeping, various non-traditional types of outputs, neurodiversity, and the importance of technicians. I managed to catch up with one speaker, Elisa Collado, to ask her about the talk that she gave on the role of PRISMs.

[00:15:50] **Sarah McLusky:** You've been talking today about the role of PRISMs and the challenges that they face. First of all, for any of who doesn't know the term, can you tell us what a PRISM is?

[00:15:58] **Elisa Collado:** Yes. Professional research, investment and strategy managers. And it basically means a lot of the communities, research development managers, so people that are related to getting funding for research projects. But it's not only including those, so I was a knowledge exchange officer, so I'm not involved directly with getting money, but I was still part of the PRISMs team.

[00:16:22] **Sarah McLusky:** Yeah, it's a really big and varied role. So you were talking today about some of the challenges that PRISMs face as being part of the research community. Can you tell us more about that?

[00:16:32] **Elisa Collado:** Yeah, I mean, as, as you probably heard, one of the things is that our work is not very well recognized within the university and research environment.

[00:16:42] **Elisa Collado:** We face a lot of things like short term contracts which means carrying work is sometimes difficult because you have to change roles and you have uncertainty. And also the professional development side, the as, as much as certain funders have made an effort to be more inclusive and include diversity of roles. End of the day they ask you about research outputs, the traditional research outputs that we've been discussing about in this conference. And you don't, you can't really prove any of that with these type of roles because you're in a supportive type of role, which means you are helping other people to enhance their research outputs. But that in itself is not a research output. So you can't really justify, and access all these funding that could help you to do, even more interesting stuff.

[00:17:30] **Sarah McLusky:** Yeah. And there's also a kind of equality and diversity dimension to this, isn't there?

[00:17:35] **Elisa Collado:** Absolutely. Yeah. I mean I presented briefly the stats about, basically it's a, it is a community that is predominantly female led, more than 90% women. And a lot of us are trained with masters, even PhD, how almost half of the community's got PhD. So we have a good grasp of what research is and how to produce it. And we also have the availability. cause a lot of these things and how research is being produced doesn't kind of call PIs.

[00:18:07] **Elisa Collado:** They're so overwhelmed with all the stuff that they actually don't get involved. So it's us who get involved in these things. We know about it. We get involved, but then we don't get given the opportunities to do more with our knowledge.

[00:18:19] **Sarah McLusky:** Previous podcast guests, David Wright and Nick Sheppard were also attending and it was lovely to catch up with them. And Nick kindly introduced me to a number of his colleagues from the University of Leeds and they agreed to share their thoughts on the festival. So that you get to know their voices and let them all introduce themselves first.

[00:18:36] **Nick Sheppard:** Hello, I'm Nick Sheppard, Open Research Advisor at the, basically the library at the University of Leeds.

[00:18:41] **Alix Brodie-Wray:** I'm Alix Brodie-Wray, the Faculty Impact Development Manager for Arts, Humanities, and Cultures at Leeds.

[00:18:46] **Emily Ennis:** I'm Emily Ennis. I'm the Research Culture Manager for the University of Leeds.

[00:18:49] **Jo Williams:** I'm Jo Williams and I'm a Research Manager at the University of Leeds and a faculty level coordinator for research excellence.

[00:18:56] **Sarah McLusky:** So we're at the Hidden REF Festival today, and I'm just interested to hear about the conversations you've been having today, what it's got you thinking about.

[00:19:05] **Sarah McLusky:** Who wants to go first?

[00:19:07] **Jo Williams:** I think it's been really interesting today talking about the non-traditional outputs first of all, from like a technical, operational perspective on how we support our academics. But for me it's been really interesting connecting with other people actually in my institution who I wouldn't normally necessarily come across.

[00:19:21] **Jo Williams:** And understand like where our shared concerns are and what we can do to go away back to our institution and put into practice some of the things or maybe like surface more of the problems in a way that we'll look at them collectively. Whereas we might not have done that before simply because it's a huge institution and sometimes it's really hard to come across people who are doing the same thing as you when everyone's super busy in their everyday to day lives.

[00:19:40] **Nick Sheppard:** Although we are all colleagues at Leeds and we do all work together it's such a big institution we didn't actually know that the others were going to be at this event today. Gives you an indication. We were just, I was just saying to Emily a moment ago that we'll, have to have a debrief and get together and this has been really valuable just for our networking, let alone with other colleagues here from other universities.

[00:19:58] **Emily Ennis:** One of the things that we as a research culture team have looked at is how we recognize and celebrate diverse outputs and diverse research contributions at the University of Leeds. And that's always been thinking about once the output is produced, or once the research contributions have been made, how do we talk about them?

[00:20:15] **Emily Ennis:** But the problem that we have time and time again at the University of Leeds, and which has come up time and time again here today, and theREFore is clearly not just a Leeds problem, is how do we encourage those diverse research contributions in first place? How do we encourage those diverse research outputs?

[00:20:31] **Emily Ennis:** And so much of the time, it feels like additional work, and it really is particularly for academics, but the problem is a lot of that work is already being done by those people who have those hidden roles. But that's still not being celebrated and it's still not being encouraged. So I don't know how we move from the celebration model, which is actually focused on outcome versus the enabling aspect because all of the work is invisible. And yes, we can make it visible again by celebrating it, but we're all really tired and, to keep going and hope that someone recognizes the work, that's the thing that academics are vocalizing really loudly is why should I keep going?

[00:21:11] **Emily Ennis:** Why should I do a journal article and a podcast? Yeah. I just wanna do the journal article, whereas we are going, why do I have to just keep doing the job for someone to actually recognize what I'm doing? No, I think we're starting to come to maybe some practical next steps for outputs. But I think we really need to think about those practical next steps for people and those hidden roles.

[00:21:30] **Alix Brodie-Wray:** I think something that really, it's reminded me of my experiences in the past, especially in a school, the last REF and like all of that work that went into it.



[00:21:39] **Alix Brodie-Wray:** You know, case studies that, we wrote ourselves, but then, obviously we didn't do the research but that that, not being lauded and noticed. And we've seen like a culture change recently where there's there's a lot of kind of dropping in of good intentions around including non-academic staff in funding opportunities.

[00:21:58] **Alix Brodie-Wray:** But what was really interesting was one of those lightning talks where they talked about the actual barriers that still exist and there's a bit of a, we might be straying into a kind of tokenistic appreciation of hidden roles and like actually it's a deeper change that's needed in the whole way we organize workload or buyout or all of these sort of pragmatic things that will hopefully lead one day to that work being more surfaced really.

[00:22:23] **Nick Sheppard:** In terms of our roles as well I just wanted to say, believe it or not, given the fact that we didn't each know that we were going to be here, we are really good at connecting colleagues at the University of Leeds. That's our superpower if you like. I know that you like to talk about superpower don't you and we do connect colleagues.

[00:22:37] **Nick Sheppard:** I'm based in the library, Emily's central as well. We've got colleagues in the faculty as well. But we have a unique sort of perspective over the whole university, and we can connect people in totally different disciplines, totally different parts of the university.

[00:22:49] **Emily Ennis:** But connections aren't outputs. And I think that's the challenge here. And I've got, and my brain, my annual appraisal hat on coming up at the moment, and I'm thinking, what have I done? What have I done in the last year? The answer is put people in the right places, improve things that are already there. And I and so I think that when you look at outputs, that's the thing. Here's the thing, I did it. Woo amazing. And maybe that output is a research grant. Maybe it is a nontraditional output or an output or whatever. But the work that we're all doing for that is a real ecosystem. We're putting people in the right places. We're having conversations with negotiating, influencing, embedding.

[00:23:26] **Emily Ennis:** That stuff's just not visible because there isn't an output, because there isn't a thing that you can look at and go there it is. But the thing is, it's the thing that's keeping us at emails on our desks every day. And also that if we stopped doing, everything else would fall down. Yeah. And I dunno how you make that visible other than, making academics shadow me all day every day, which I wouldn't want and they definitely wouldn't want. So I don't know how we do that.

[00:23:49] **Sarah McLusky:** I was struck that both Elisa and Emily mentioned how important it's to highlight the vital and time consuming, but utterly invisible work that goes into coordinating and supporting research. This work doesn't lead to any outputs, whether traditional or otherwise, but without it, the entire system would completely collapse, and that leads to the recurring challenge as well that was mentioned of defining exactly what we mean by excellent research. I think we all know it when we see it, when we experience it, when we feel it, but it's almost like great art and it can be really hard to define and actually pinpoint what it is that makes it great.

[00:24:29] **Sarah McLusky:** There is an ongoing debate about how much the REF assessment should focus on research outputs and how much it should focus on the environments, people, and processes. It might be no surprise to hear that I am firmly in favor of process over output, but then I completely acknowledge that I am not a researcher and my career doesn't depend on me having a string of highly cited publications on my CV.

[00:24:52] **Sarah McLusky:** It's a complex subject and frankly, I am glad that I am not the one having to make these decisions. If you want a much more nuanced discussion about what is going on with REF, then I can highly recommend the What The REF Podcast. It's created by the Hidden REF Team and hosted by Simon and James, along with their colleague Gemma Derrick

[00:25:13] **Sarah McLusky:** I asked them to tell me a little bit more about it.

[00:25:16] **Sarah McLusky:** And so the other reason I wanted to talk to you today is to talk a little bit about your new podcast as well. It's called What the REF. And who would like to tell us a bit about that?

[00:25:26] **James Baker:** I guess I can start. I mean, it's, it's an attempt to demystify that's really what it's about. And some of it is a kind of week by week, blow by blow, these things have happened, how do we understand them? But really it's a, it's an opportunity we think to like just step back from the kind of the kind of the office politics I guess, of the REF and just try and talk around the subject area in a slightly more accessible way.

[00:25:47] **James Baker:** And also to bring in experts and people we want to interview who we think have really interesting perspectives they can offer whether things that are coming out of particular institutions we can shine a light on, or frameworks that we can draw upon as a wider sector. And it's not meant to be too serious, which I think is nice as well.

[00:26:04] **James Baker:** Yeah. And we are complimenting it as well now with some more sort of shorts we're doing for YouTube as well. Some of which will come out after the festival with, contributions and people who've been here.

[00:26:13] **Simon Hettrick:** So I think the thing with the podcast is, that certainly if you want to have a really popular podcast that draws in millions of viewers, you should definitely choose a bureaucratic process that's conducted only within the UK, no.

[00:26:27] **Simon Hettrick:** So, the, the thing is, it's quite a dry subject. The REF is quite when we see presentations on the REF you'll generally get somebody stand up, say runs every seven years. There are 20 categories, there are three different, and then you get all that sort of information. But the politics and the cultural changes around the REF are incredibly vibrant and that never really gets the spotlight.

[00:26:45] **Simon Hettrick:** So what we are doing in What the REF as well is talking about all of that and talking about the effect of the REF and how it changes culture and the sort of the things that are happening within universities. Some behind closed doors. And we get to talk about all of the, the the rumor mill that's going on.

[00:26:58] **Simon Hettrick:** And it's really exciting as a broader subject area, but very dull as a process in itself.

[00:27:04] **Sarah McLusky:** Yeah, definitely, there's lots of politics going on at the moment yeah, that's something for people to listen to as well, if they're interested. We'll get the link and put it in the show notes.

[00:27:12] **Sarah McLusky:** So do make sure that you check out What the REF, wherever you get your podcasts, and stay tuned for details of the next Hidden REF Competition. As Simon and James said, it's coming up next year. If you want to find out more about Hidden REF or connect with any of the guests featured in this episode, you'll find links in the show notes.

[00:27:30] **Sarah McLusky:** As for me, I will continue doing what I can to highlight the hidden roles that underpin research because trust me, you can't have excellent research or good REF outcomes without research adjacent folks like you and me. So keep on fighting the good fight and I'll see you soon. Bye for now.

[00:27:50] **Sarah McLusky:** Thanks for listening to Research Adjacent. If you're listening in a podcast app, please check your subscribed and then use the links in the episode description to find full show notes and to follow the podcast on LinkedIn or Instagram. You can also find all the links and other episodes at [www.researchadjacent.com](http://www.researchadjacent.com).

[00:28:07] **Sarah McLusky:** Research Adjacent is presented and produced by Sarah McLusky, and the theme music is by Lemon Music Studios on Pixabay and you, yes you, get a big gold star for listening right to the end. See you next time.