Compared to other subfields of linguistics, sociolinguistics has been relatively outward facing since its inception. In one sense, this follows naturally when collecting data from people in everyday situations. Yet few can accuse sociolinguistics of being particularly meddlesome in the political process. Nor has the discipline as a whole been overly occupied with improving people’s lives. In fact, despite significantly furthering our academic understanding of linguistic variation and change, language policy and planning, language and identity, language and gender and so on, very few people outside academia have ever heard of sociolinguistics -- let alone its influence beyond the groves of academe.

Meanwhile, ‘impact’ has become a significant funding criterion in the humanities and social sciences, as funding bodies increasingly turn their attention to the real-world effects of research. The weighting of impact as a percentage of research quality is also set to grow. How does sociolinguistics adapt to this? What steps could make sociolinguistics more relevant outside academia? How can public engagement with sociolinguistic research be facilitated? Sociolinguistics: Application and Impact aims to address these questions by showcasing contemporary sociolinguistic research which demonstrates practical applications beyond an academic audience.

Submissions are welcomed from established and emerging sociolinguists, whose research contributes to broader discourses of language in society, and evinces the value of sociolinguistic research to society.

Areas for consideration include (but are not limited to):

-- Sociolinguistics and education
-- Sociolinguistics and policy-making (not only language policy)
-- Sociolinguistics, the media and the Internet
-- Sociolinguistics in the community
-- Sociolinguistics and industry

Other relevant contributions will be considered.
Submissions should include an abstract of up to 500 words (excluding references), accompanied by a description (up to 1500 words) considering the questions listed below. These do not all need to be answered, but as a guide, your submission should cover at least two of them.

How have you...

1. ...identified a real-world problem of human well-being as a motivation for your research?
2. ...significantly involved your participants in the research design, the research itself, and the dissemination process?
3. ...used your research to influence institutional and/or government policy?
4. ...helped your participants use the research findings to pursue their own goals, or improve their lives more generally, beyond the life of the research project?
5. ...both ensured wide accessibility and raised awareness of your findings?

Cambridge University Press have expressed interest in the volume, and it will be formally submitted to them by the editors once the contributors are confirmed.

Deadline for abstract submissions: Friday 4th May 2012
Editorial decisions on abstracts: Friday 8th June 2012
Proposal submitted to Cambridge University Press: Monday 2nd July
Deadline for completed chapters: Friday 3rd May 2013
Editorial and peer review comments given to authors: Friday 19th July 2013
Deadline for returning final chapters to editors: Friday 23rd August 2013

Please consider carefully whether you could meet these deadlines.

Submissions, and any queries, should be directed to sociolx.impact@gmail.com.

*Sociolinguistics: Application and Impact* co-editors:

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