

TASA 2014 Conference, University of South Australia**Abstract Template****TITLE:**

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Abstract (*no more than 300 words with no figures or tables*):

Title: Institutions and identities in international development research in the UK, Australia and US

This paper seeks to address the question: How do development researchers respond to current funding patterns in universities and other institutions? In recent years, many governments have indicated an increased commitment to international development objectives. Development research is an important area that has yet to receive a great deal of academic attention. In light of the changing funding patterns of universities and other development agencies and institutes, a crucial question to consider is how researchers respond to these changes and the intellectual and cognitive pressures that may result. I analyse the results of 65 semi-structured interviews with researchers from a range of development institutions in Australia, the UK and the US. The study included three contexts: universities, quasi-academic institutes and multilateral organisations. The study demonstrates how researchers in diverse development institutions position themselves in relation to institutional patterns and disciplinary boundaries in the field. Several differences between the institutional contexts can be observed. Research context affected how researchers described the varying expectations, intentions, and incentives that come from different disciplinary backgrounds, with academic centres more strongly oriented towards formal disciplines. Research and funding context also affected the way researchers described the impact of their work, being variously oriented towards university evaluation systems, policy and on-the-ground impact. Approaches to development research also varied according to context, falling along a spectrum of technocratic, critical or participatory work. This study investigates development research as a particular form of intellectual production, one that is uniquely practical as well as academic, and examines the processes through

which the field is constituted in universities, institutes and agencies. The study seeks to contribute an analysis of the nature of development research to the growing body of literature that focuses on the sociology of particular intellectual fields and disciplines.