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### **AUTHORS**

Finch, David
Falkenberg, Loren
McLaren, Patricia Genoe
Rondeau, Kent V.
O'Reilly, Norm

# THE RIGOUR-RELEVANCE GAP IN PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMMES: BRIDGING THE "UNBRIDGEABLE' BETWEEN HIGHER EDUCATION AND PRACTICE

## **ABSTRACT**

The tension between the rigour and the relevance of higher education research remains an important and hotly contested topic among scholars, administrators, practitioners and policymakers. This debate is most evident in professional programmes in which scholars are challenged to pursue new knowledge independent of its immediate relevance to practice while simultaneously contributing actionable knowledge to their profession. This two-part study explores whether the resulting pressure has an impact on the scholarly output and recruitment practices of different professional programmes. The results show that the context of the profession has a significant influence on the level of integration between academia and industry.

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