

Brief #4:
Why We Need Matchmaking

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Background: Although many researchers and practitioners would like to connect with and learn from each other, they face severe time constraints and are part of very different social networks.

These considerations motivated research4impact's creation of its LinkedIn-style online platform r4impact.org. Launched in March 2017, the platform allowed members to create profiles and easily reach out to others.

Then, in 2018, research4impact began offering hands-on matchmaking in which we offered to connect practitioners and researchers.

Main Finding: Matchmaking is needed. Here I compare how many practitioners contacted researchers directly through the site versus the number who requested matchmaking. As of December 1, 2018, the platform had been available for 21 months. We had actively advertised the hands-on matchmaking for 3 of those 21 months.

These experiences underscore how building successful working relationships between practitioners and researchers often requires a human touch in addition to new technology.

Why Matchmaking is Needed

Number of practitioners reaching out directly to researchers (via r4impact.org) over a 21-month period	2
Number per month	0.1
Number of practitioners requesting hands-on matchmaking over a 3-month period	37
Number per month	12.3

Check out www.r4impact.org/how-it-works for more on what we're learning about researcher-practitioner relationships!