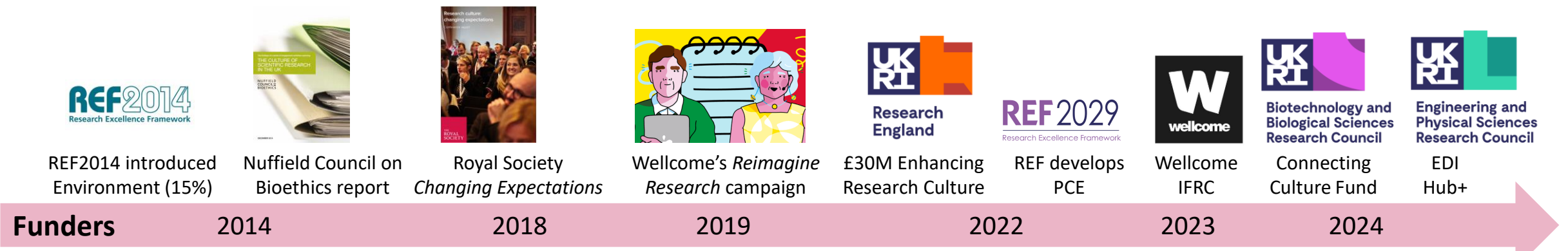




IMPROVING RESEARCH CULTURES: WHAT WORKS?

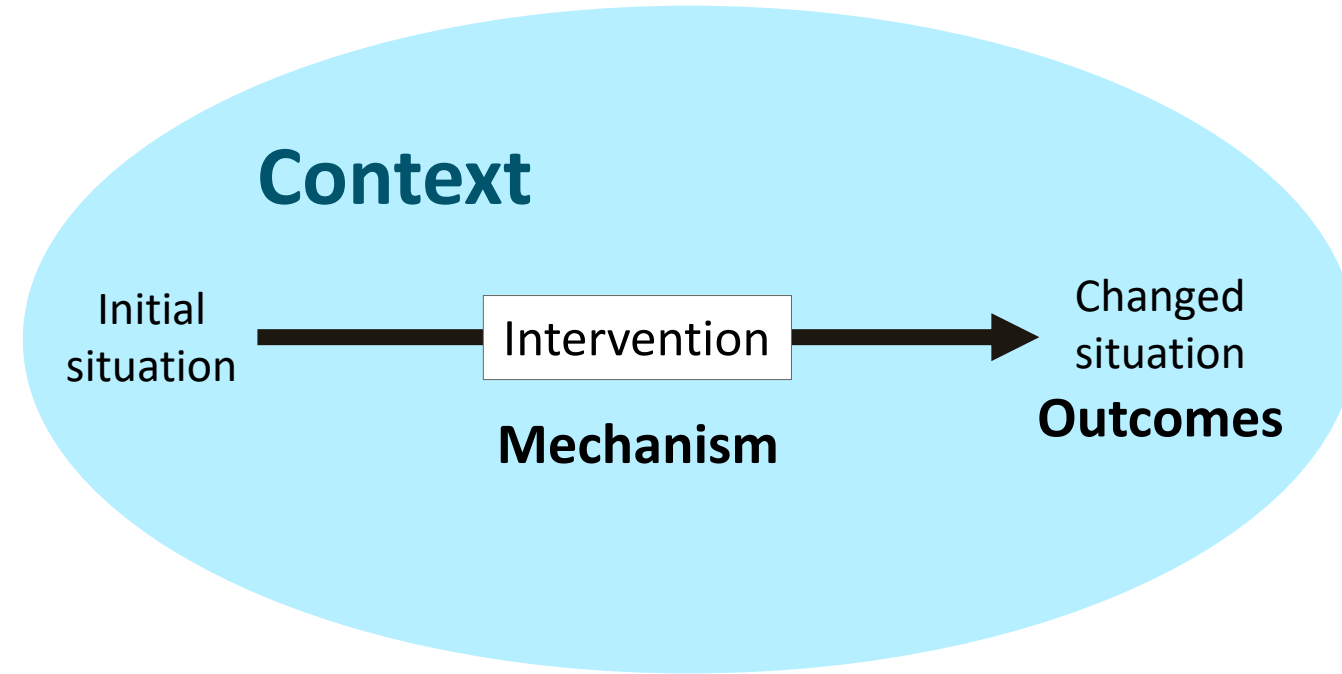


Slide inspired by Karen Stroobants and Ben Bleasdale
<https://culturebase-consulting.co.uk/>



What works??

- The same intervention won't work everywhere and for everyone.
- Instead:
 - **what works,**
 - **for whom,**
 - **under what circumstances**
 - **how?**

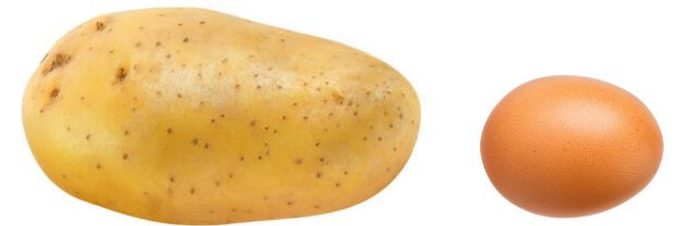


Realist model / realist evaluation (Pawson & Tilley, 1997)

Black women's progress in the spotlight

Case study

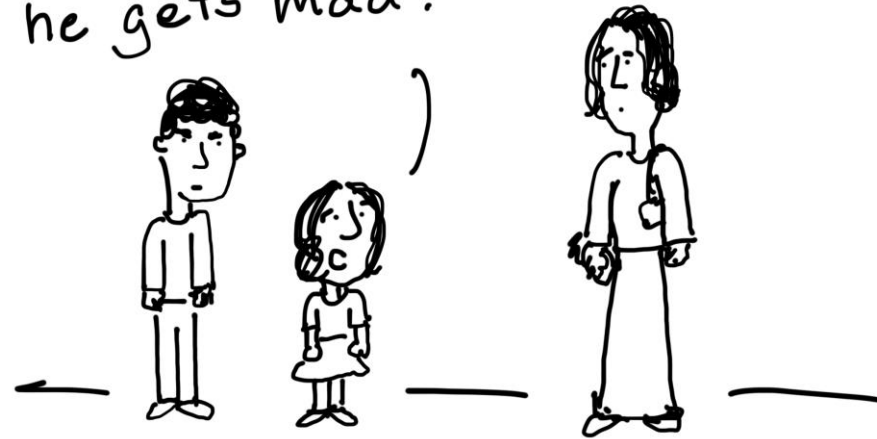
Talking about: 100 Black Women Professors Now initiative



The same boiling water that softens the potato hardens the egg

What works?

Mum. How come when you ask Henry to do something he does it? But when I ask, he gets mad?



RAMESESPROJECT.ORG

Context

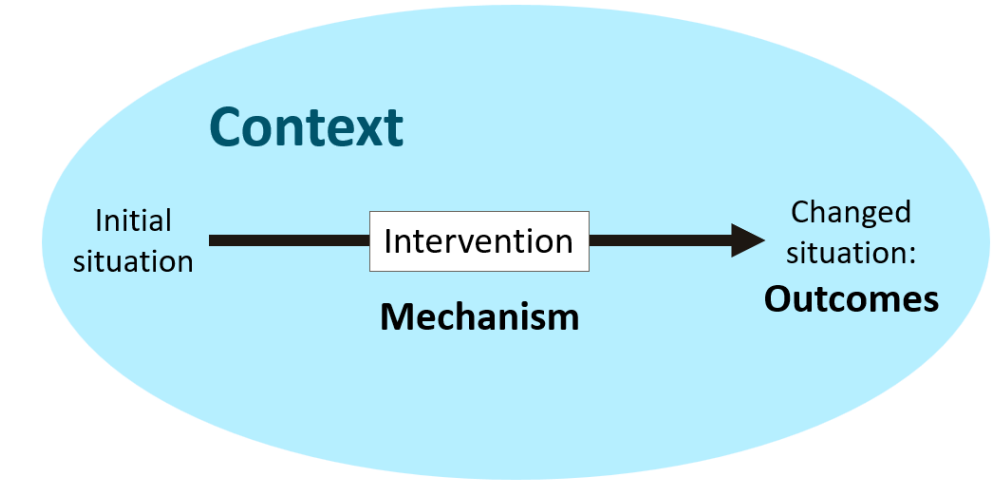


Context

- ✓ Palpably problematic
- ✓ Senior leadership buy-in, action, and modelling
- ✓ Community allies
- ✓ Adequate resourcing
- Incentives for good practice

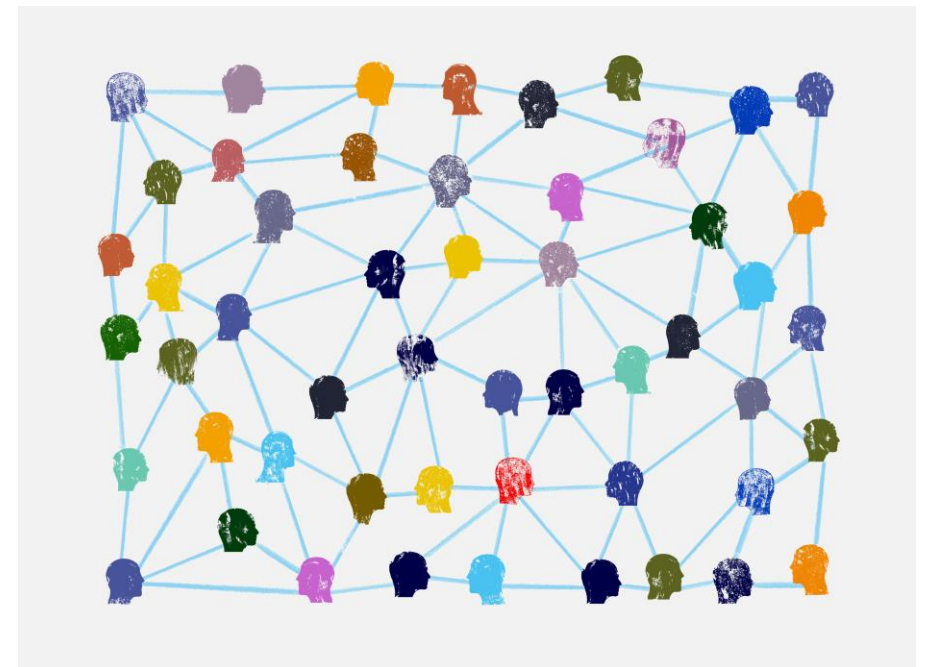
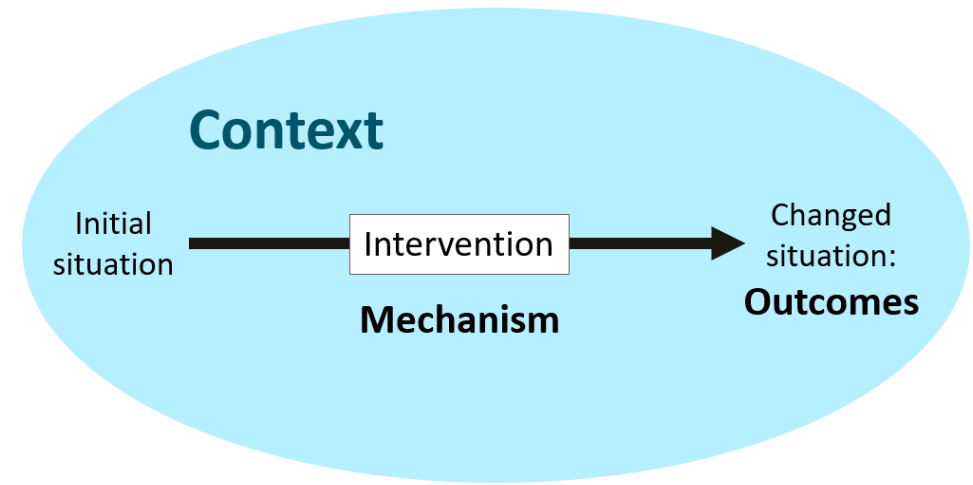


REF2029
Research Excellence Framework

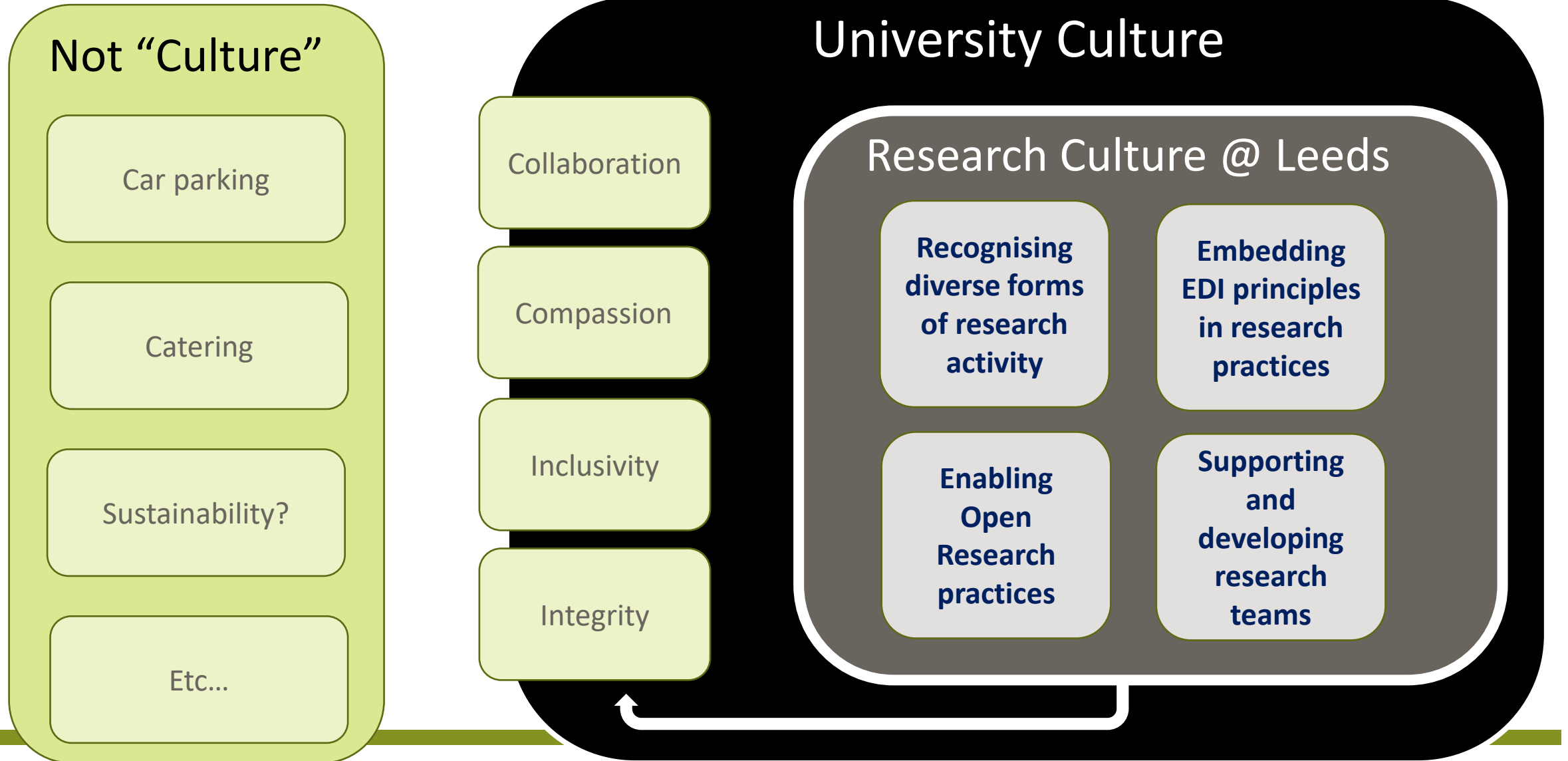


Interventions (groundwork)

- Continuous consultation and co-creation
- Meaningful focus
- Guided by a clear, actionable strategy
- Capacity via central expert team + committee membership



Meaningful focus = Feasibility



Guided by a clear, actionable strategy



SO1 Valuing diverse forms of research activity

e.g., Championing non-standard outputs through research communications, news and marketing

SO2 Embedding EDI principles in research practices

e.g., Allocating promotion support for researchers with protected characteristics underrepresented at senior grades

SO3 Enabling Open Research practices

e.g., Developing the Open Research Hub to share good practice and signpost support across disciplines

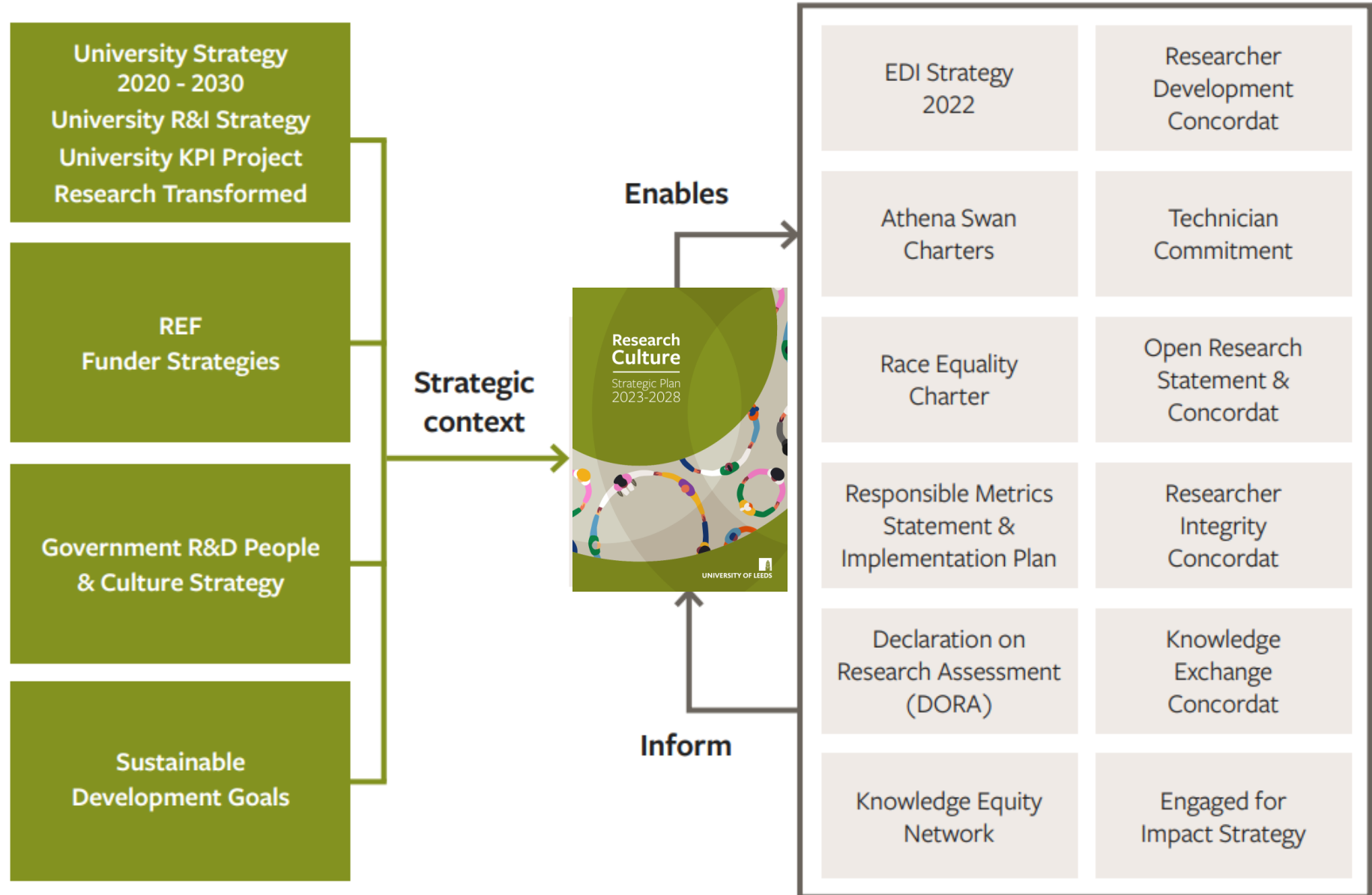
SO4 Mutually supporting and developing research teams

e.g., Developing and disseminating guidance on the responsible use of redeployment and short-term contracts

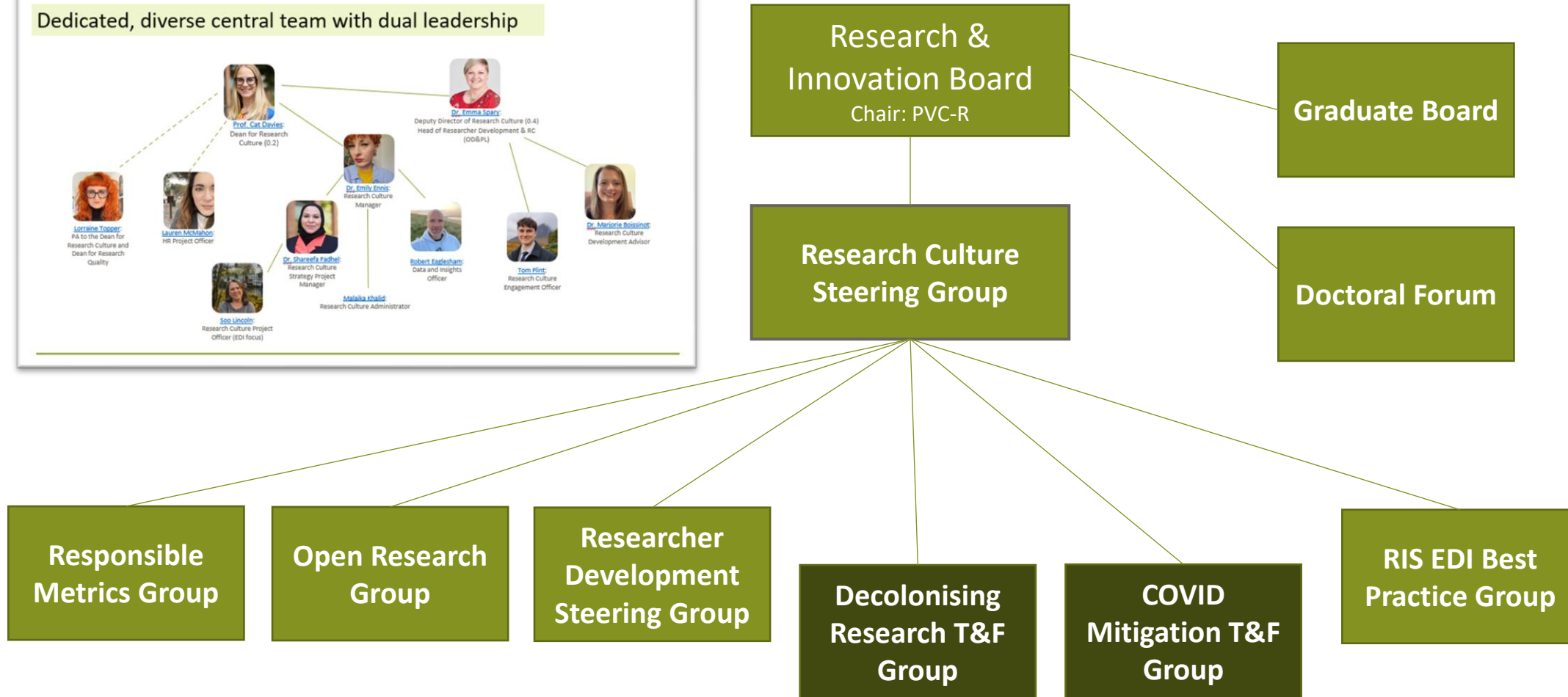
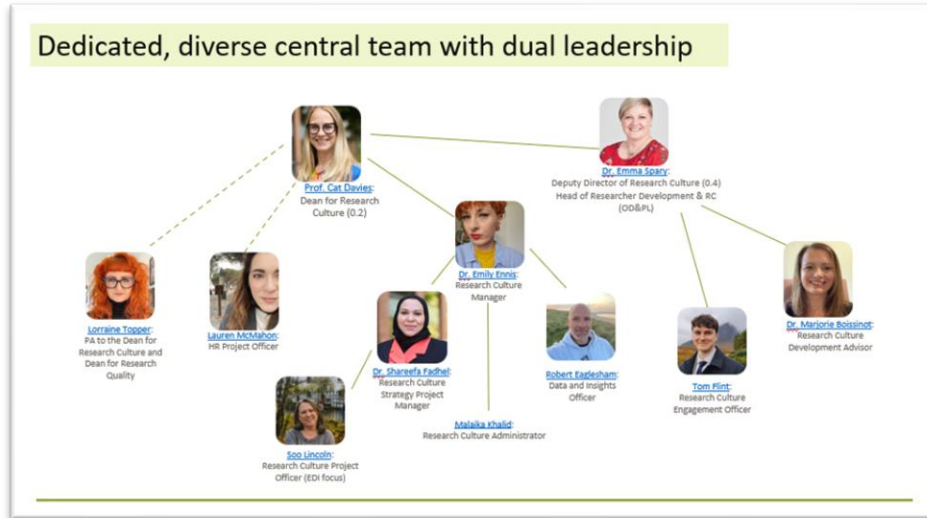
To enable more UoL colleagues to produce leading research inclusively, equitably, openly and supportively

Alignment with other strategies

Figure 2. Internal and external strategic context for research culture.

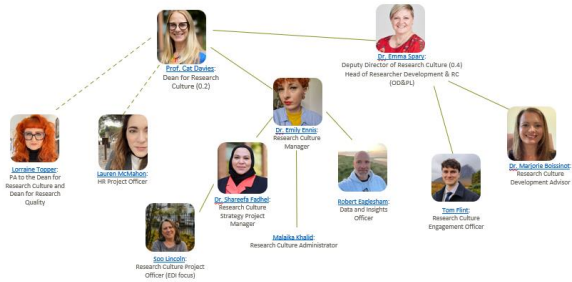


Capacity via expert team + committee membership



Responsive, evolving approach

Dedicated, diverse central team with dual leadership



2020 - 2022

0. FOUNDATIONS

- Senior buy-in, team-building, goal-setting
- Community consultation
- Identification of success measures

2022 - 2025

1. STRATEGY AND STRUCTURES

- Strategy development, launch, implementation
- Centralised projects and internal funding management
- Internal and external engagement

2025 - 2026

2. ENGAGEMENT, INFLUENCE, CONSULTANCY

- Mapping, linking, championing and tracking community RC projects
- Communicating RC progress
- Facilitating Faculty and School structures for RC
- Advising on RC elements of funding bids

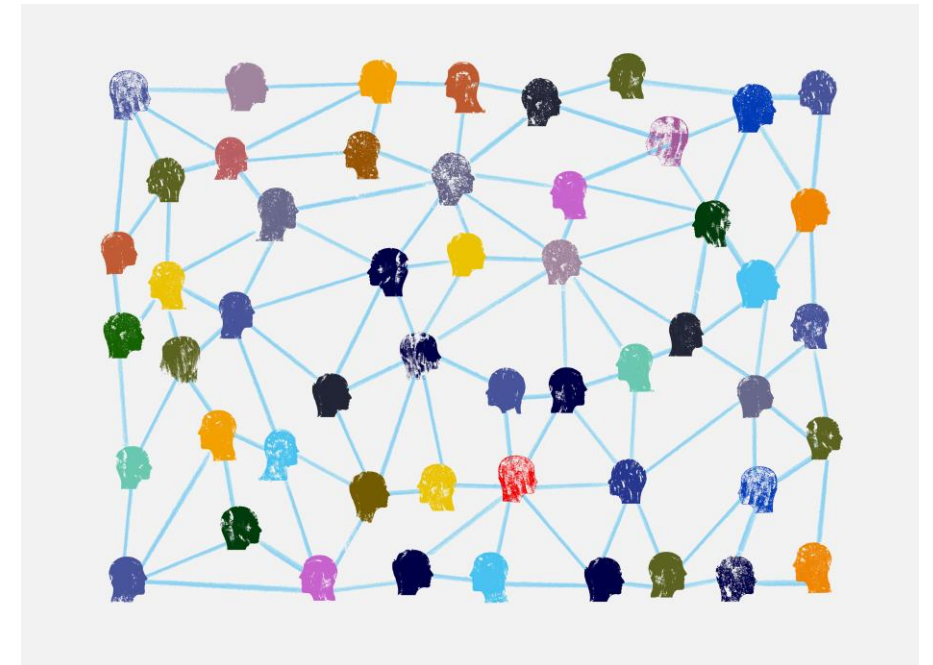
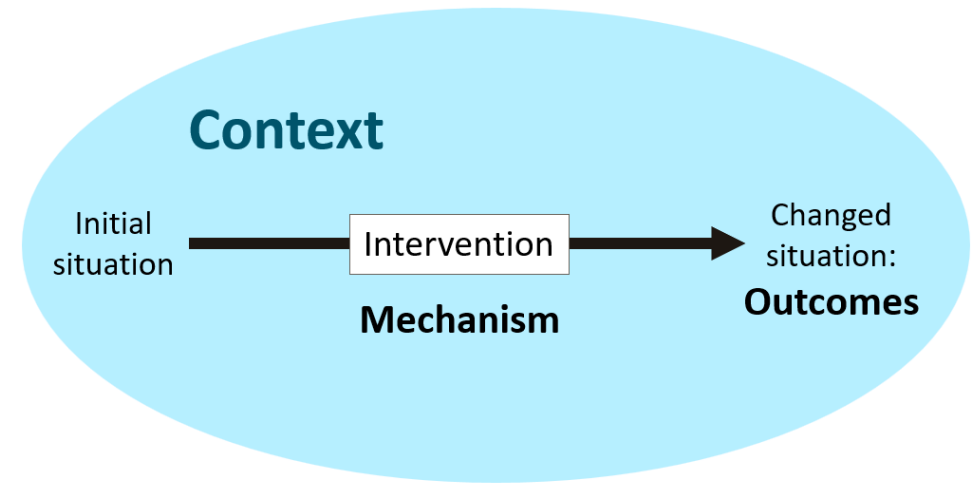
2026 - 2028

3. EVALUATION

Providing data, evidence, and review for (and not for!) REF2029

Interventions

- Continuous consultation and co-creation
- Meaningful focus
- Guided by a clear, actionable strategy
- Capacity via central expert team + committee membership
- Providing time and £££ for RC work
- Sharing good practice
- Clear (but flexible) measures of success



Enhancing Research Culture: Open Call 2024-25

The Research England Enhancing Research Culture Fund 2024-25 is open for applications from Friday 17 May 2024. Applications close on Friday 28 June at 17.00.

[MORE ON OUR FUNDED PROJECTS >](#)

Providing time and £££ for RC work /
Action focus via funded projects

[HOME](#) / [OPPORTUNITIES](#) / [ENHANCING RESEARCH CULTURE: OPEN CALL 2024-25](#)

Enhancing Research Culture: Open Call 2024-25

We are seeking proposals for projects that address research culture challenges or enhance existing practice. Projects can be undertaken by researchers, academic, technical, or professional services colleagues, or teams comprised of diverse profiles. By investing in innovative solutions to shared challenges, we will inspire genuine, lasting organisational change.

Proposals are invited for projects in the region of £10k - £30k (including directly incurred costs). Funds must be spent and goods received by 31 July 2025.

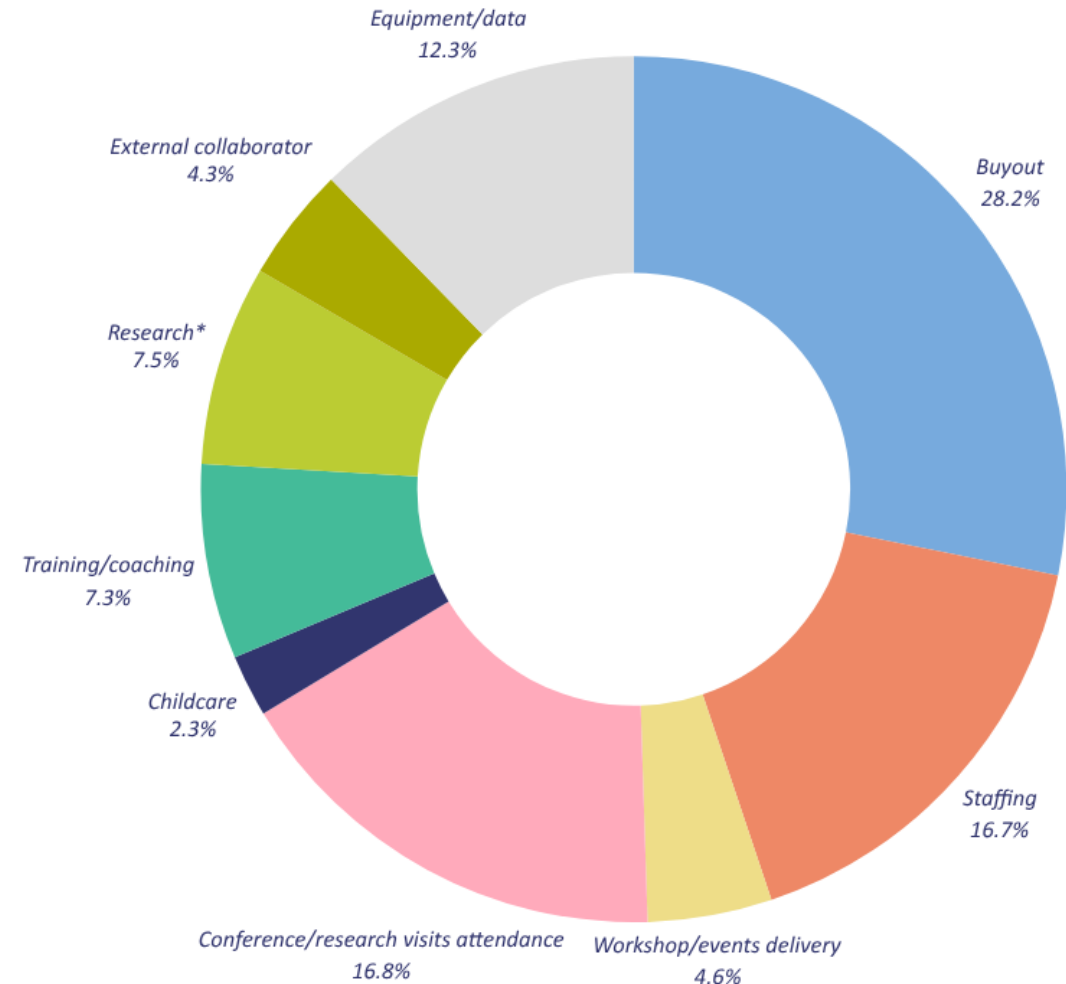
The deadline for applications is Friday 28 June 2024 at 17:00. The application form can be found at the bottom of this web page.

<https://researchculture.leeds.ac.uk/enhancing-research-culture-projects>

SO2. REDI fund

- Targeted career development intervention focusing on disability, ethnicity, and gender (+ EDI work) for academic staff at G8 & G9
- IRCC25 presentation:
 - Soo Lincoln: *Reflections on a positive action funding initiative in the era of anti-DEI*

Providing time and £££ for RC work /
Action focus via funded projects



Sharing good practice



Case Study: A new approach to interviews, can we improve the experience?

The Challenge:

Interviews are stressful no matter what side you are sitting on. Candidates will spend a lot of time and emotional energy on preparing their application and interview and

A decent external website


researchculture@leeds.ac.uk



researchculture.leeds.ac.uk


Remote Desktop W... Welcome to your ne... MS Office 365 Google Scholar Forstaff Research and innov... MyFirst1000Days ICKLE Project ICKLE OneDrive Babylab - Social Dis...

Find out more




Research Culture Statement

Details of our original Research Culture Statement




Opportunities

How you can get involved: Open funding calls, Awards, Prizes, Projects




Research Culture Pulse Surveys

Help us measure and evaluate our progress by completing our pulse surveys, ensure your feedback makes a difference.




How to....

Examples of case studies, initiatives, projects and best practice for enhancing Research Culture. Access reports, guides and resources supporting our work.






Open Research Hub

Supporting open research practice for collaborative working, sharing and openness throughout the entire research cycle, ensuring research is "as open as possible, as closed as necessary".



Responsible Metrics

Learn about the supporting role that quantitative metrics can play in research assessment.



Sharing and celebrating practice



Research Culture Uncovered podcast team with award at Vitae conference



Research Culture team at Warwick University's International Research Culture Conference 2024



Award winners at Research Culture Awards 2024



Using SCOPE to select metrics to track improvements in Research Culture



Fiona McClement and Cat Davies presenting at the Warwick International Research Culture Conference 2024



REF 2029
Research Excellence Framework



N8 RESEARCH PARTNERSHIP

Uni Leeds Staff @UniLeedsStaff · Jul 20
 🏆 Winners of our inaugural Research Culture and Engaged for Impact Awards have been announced.

🌍 Find out who won, and discover how we're showcasing the achievements of those helping transform lives and make a real difference across the globe. 📺

forstaff.leeds.ac.uk/news/article/7...



The Bragg Centre at
 Not to #BraggAbout!
 Research Culture Aw
 We're nominated for

Mathew Tata
 @maj_tata

Everything is right about this:

Rewarding efforts to enhance #researchculture with the same pomp and acclaim expected for research outputs and accolades. And opened by the Chancellor too!

Kudos @ResCultureLeeds @UniversityLeeds



Alistair Quaille @aliquaille · Jul 20
 Humbled to be recognised in the inaugural @UniversityLeeds #ResearchCulture awards. Massive thank you to Mark Mon-Williams for his mentorship, and to @amk762 and @thompa101 for the nomination and trust in supporting our impact vision

ResearcherDevelopment@Leeds @ResDevLeeds · Jul 19

Paul Taylor @PaulfrYorkshire · Jul 19
 Proud to collect a runner up certificate for Culture Awards 2022 with @Asante (couldn't come) on behalf of all in the Research Group



LIDA Leeds Institute for Data Analytics @LIDA_UK · Jul 19
 🏆 We won an award! 🏆
 Our Data Scientist Development Programme won first prize for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Research.
 Find out more about our award-winning programme here lida.leeds.ac.uk/study-training...

ResearcherDevelopment@Leeds @ResDevLeeds · Jul 19

Sally Dalton @SallyDalton18 · Jul 19
 Our responsible metrics group won an award! @cgknowles @BarbaraLancho 🥰

ResearcherDevelopment@Leeds @ResDevLeeds · Jul 19
 First prize in the category Responsible Research and Innovation:
 Project: Leading change in the responsible use of research metrics.
 Team members: Claire Knowles, Liz Neilly, Alistair Knock, Simon Ball, Sally Dalton, Rebecca Fleming, Barbara Lancho-Barrantes...

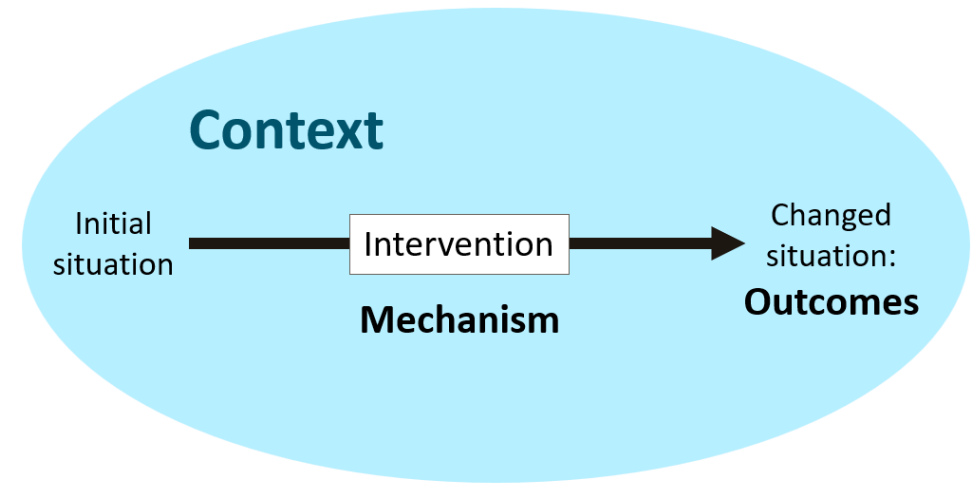


MO1 · Jul 19
 Water Woman Award with my e it recognised like this is a Women that make it possible
 @SRILeeds @SEELeeds @UniLeedsCulture @YorkshireiCASP

er@leeds @wateratleeds · Jul 19
 g to @ResDevLeeds
 Water Woman initiative won the First Prize in the category Personal ment, Reward, and Recognition @ the Research and Culture UoL Congratulations to the team @ProfJuliaMO1 @Belicosa @annieartpower @clarewouds @Hopson1S

Outcomes

- Clear measures of success
- Frequent updates and comms
- Evaluation framework
- Report null or unexpected results (PRA)
- X Predetermined, medium-term action plans



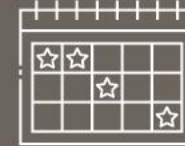
7 scaled-up pilot
ERC projects



5 role changes
or promotions



31 events



2 new products
or processes

20 new
resources



e.g., a guidebook on
developing PGR communities
(FMH),



a roadmap for developing a
research funding proposal
(LUBS),



and an ongoing library of
schools' data outreach event
resources (LIDA).

24 new partnerships /
partners engaged
with

e.g., other Universities,
external researchers,
local schools and
Councils, charities and
arts organisations.



e.g., school outreach events,
a PGR Away Day, conferences
and consultations with
external partners.

7 publications

e.g., case studies,
reports, journal
articles and planned
book chapters.



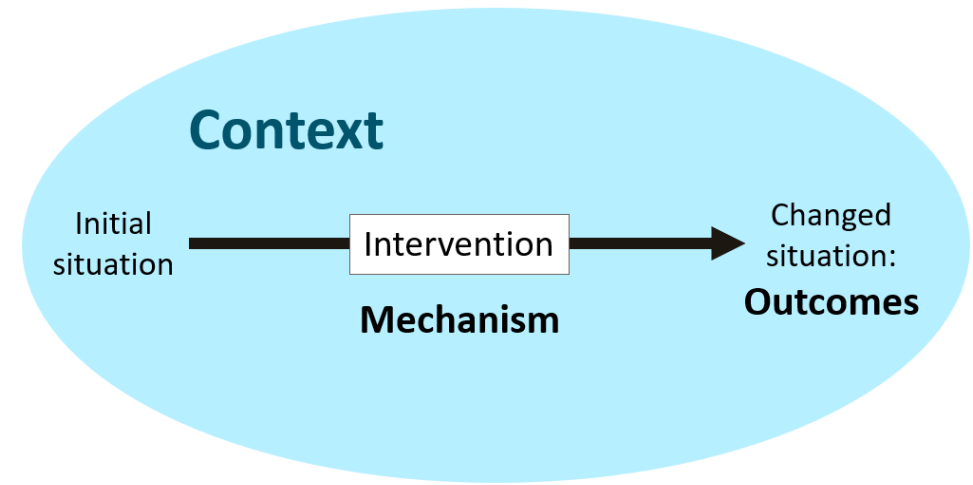
4 policy or practice
changes initiated

e.g., enhanced
support for
community building
provided for PGRs
(LIHS).



What does 'worked' mean?

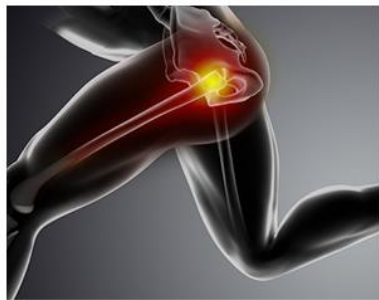
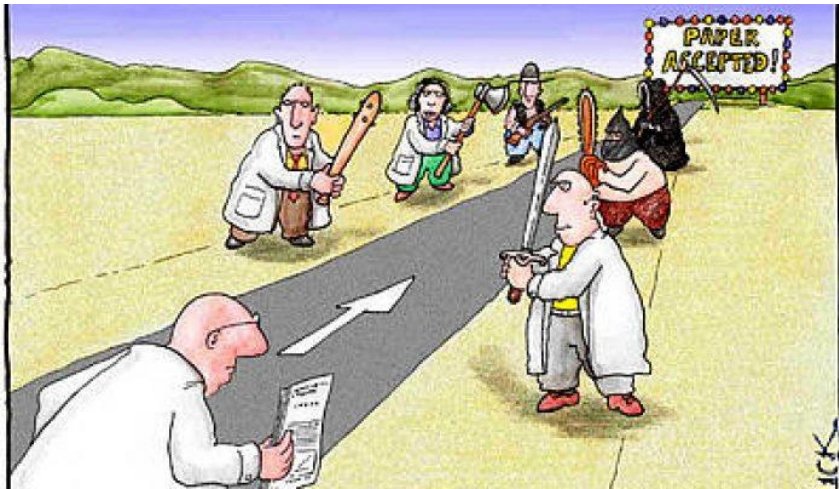
1. Raising awareness of research culture; converging definitions?
 - *We're not really sure what research culture means. It's kind of a fuzzy, what-does-that-mean word.*
2. Adoption / adaptation of initiatives?
3. Hitting institutional KPIs? Quant metrics..
4. Palpable improvements in positive research practices and culture?
5. Raising everyone to the basic standards of good RC? Or pockets of excellent practice?
6. Strong REF2029 PCE submission?



So this is our realist evaluator. She is not going to tell us whether our program works or not.



What's been *challenging*?



- Increasing opposition in the sector
- Additional burden
- Meaningful uptake (e.g. decol)
- Rich uncle?
- Uncertain funding
- Survey fatigue
- Scope of RC

What's helped?

Essential

- Institution that takes RC seriously
 - Consulting the community early, continuously, judiciously
 - Honest conversations
 - Senior buy-in
- Being in the room(s)
- Time and £££ for RC work
- Community allies
- Action focus (via funded projects?)
- Comms and transparency
- Alignment with other strategies
- Grit!

Desirable / what's worked for us

- Expert central team (cf. distributed experts) with dual leadership, a clear offer, and a responsive, evolving approach
- A guiding strategy
- Systems thinking; Recognition of shared responsibility
- Metascientific approach
- Grassroots working groups
- External networks



What's helped elsewhere

- Laser focus on hiring right
- Incentivising within grants
- ...

Thank you

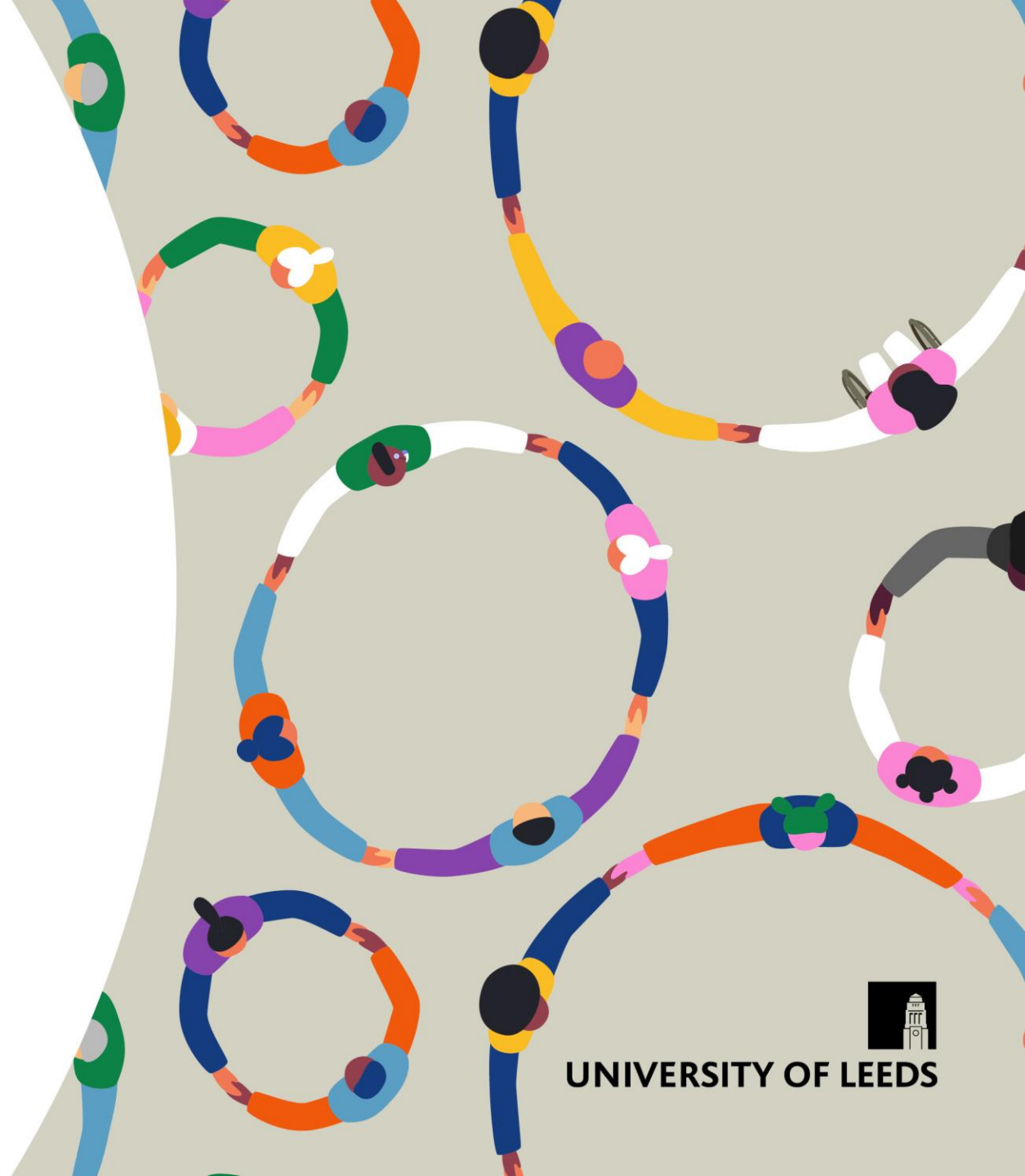
Further detail on our research culture activities, funding, governance, and a range of resources can be found at researchculture.leeds.ac.uk



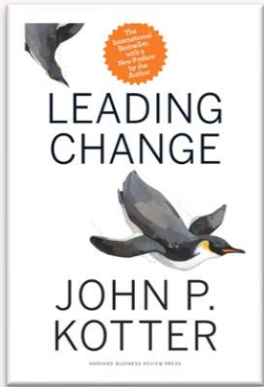
www.linkedin.com/in/profcatdavies



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS



Kotter's 8-Step Change Model



1
Create a sense of urgency



2
Build a guiding coalition



3
Form a strategic vision



4
Enlist a volunteer army



5
Enable action by removing barriers



6
Generate easy wins



7
Increase the pace



8
Institute change

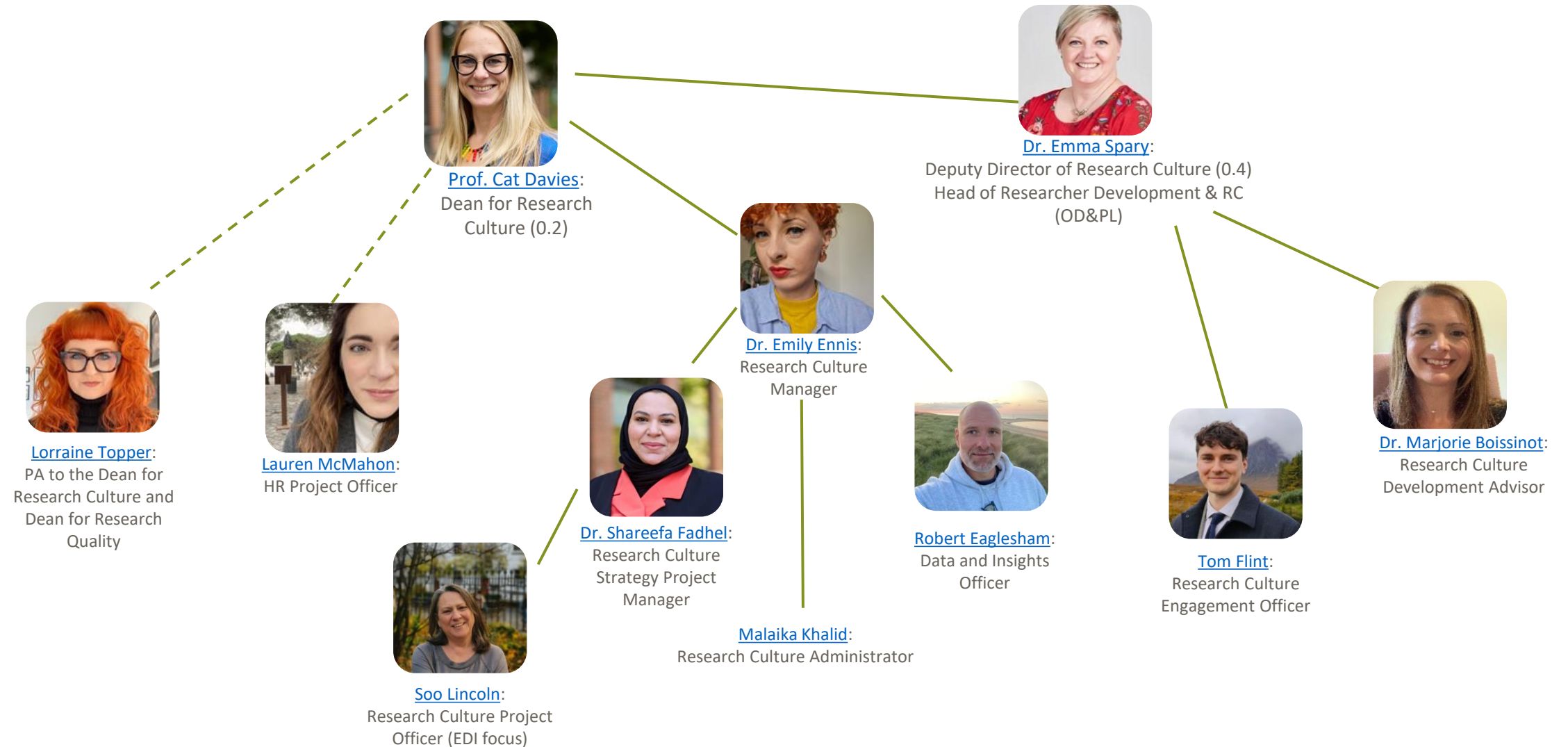


Create the right climate

Engage & enable others

Implement & sustain

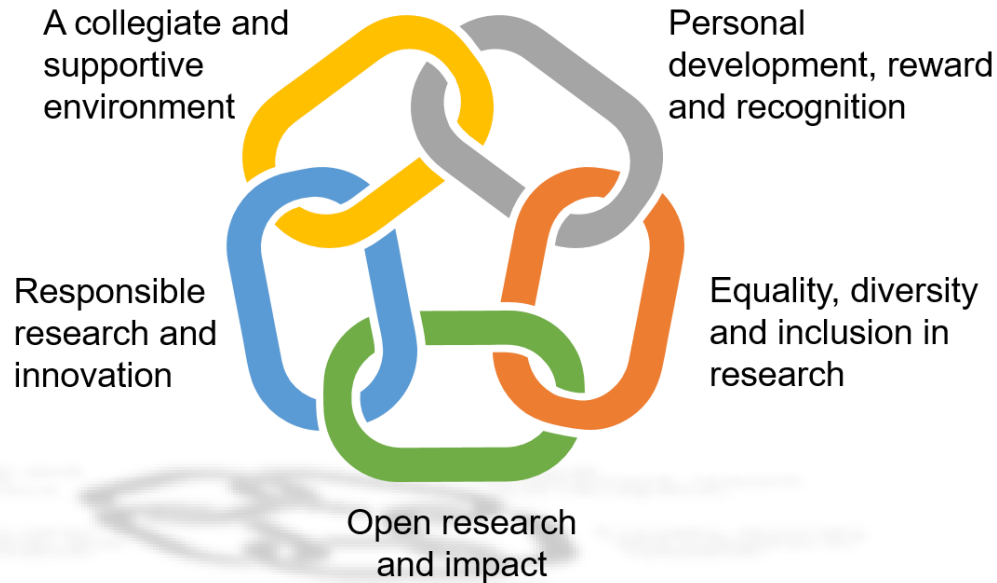
Dedicated, diverse central team with dual leadership



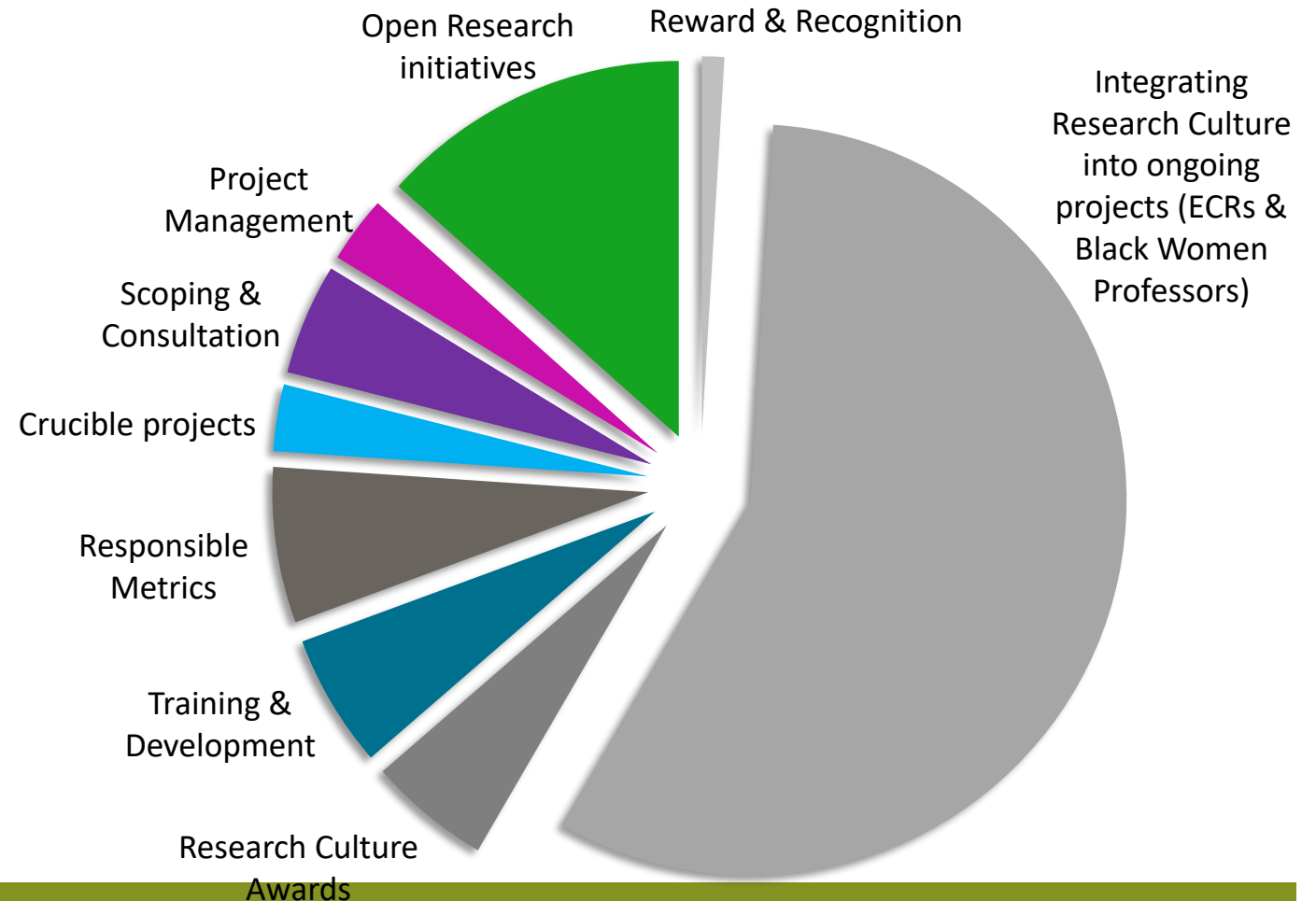
Enhancing Research Culture Programme

Jan-July 2022

UoL Research Culture themes



Enhancing RC funded strands



Research culture team services

... and a clear offer

Strategy and Operations

1. **Delivery of the Research Culture Strategic Plan 2023 - 2028**, including project management, implementation, and evaluation
2. Embedding RC strategic plan in research operations
3. **Delivering data insights to guide, implement, and evaluate** research culture initiatives
4. Providing **expertise for PCE** element of REF2029
5. Reporting of KPI 6c (increased staff experience of a positive research culture)
6. **Liaison** between related units on research culture matters, e.g. HR, OD&PL, Library, EIU, Doctoral College
7. Working across University functions to ensure operational support is provided at School and Faculty level
8. Scoping and support for **researcher development**
9. **Advising on research in EDI** at School, Faculty, and University levels

Advocacy

1. Internal and external engagement of RC stakeholders, **representing UoL in national and international forums**
2. Advising Faculties, Schools, Services on **research culture best practice**
3. **Role modelling** of best practice, e.g. inclusive recruitment, open resources, equitable funding policy
4. **Oversight of surveys** for gauging research culture perspectives and behaviours
5. Coordination of **central RC comms**
6. **RC event** planning and delivery

Funding

1. Funding, support, and evaluation of **Enhancing RC projects**
2. Producing **external funding applications and publications** relating to research culture / metaresearch
3. **Horizon scanning** through engagement with funders and networks
4. Building collaborations for future **cross-institutional bids**
5. Advising on research culture aspects of grant applications.