



**CGCM** Centre for Government  
& Charity Management



# The Three Bridges to the Third Sector

## 2D Bridging the Gap Conference

### Panel

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# Introduction

Knowledge exchange increasingly being seen as key component in creating research that has social, economic and political impact

Impact key priority for ESRC, REF and government funding

Third sector (civil society) key impact pathway for social impact

Knowledge exchange a two way process, valuing different types of knowledge from the practitioner, policy maker and researcher

## Panel Session

Three bridges being presented here from an academic, policy maker / practitioner and knowledge exchange perspective. (25 mins)

Followed by Q & A and panel discussion on the reflections and learnings of using the different approaches in practice (35 mins)

# Third Sector Research Centre

**Aim      To make a difference in policy,  
practice & academia**

Academic Knowledge developed

Practitioner Community able to access & use  
research knowledge to enhance their work

Economic and social impact of sector  
evidenced and strengthened

Policy, funding and decision making informed  
through an accessible evidence base

# TSRC Approach

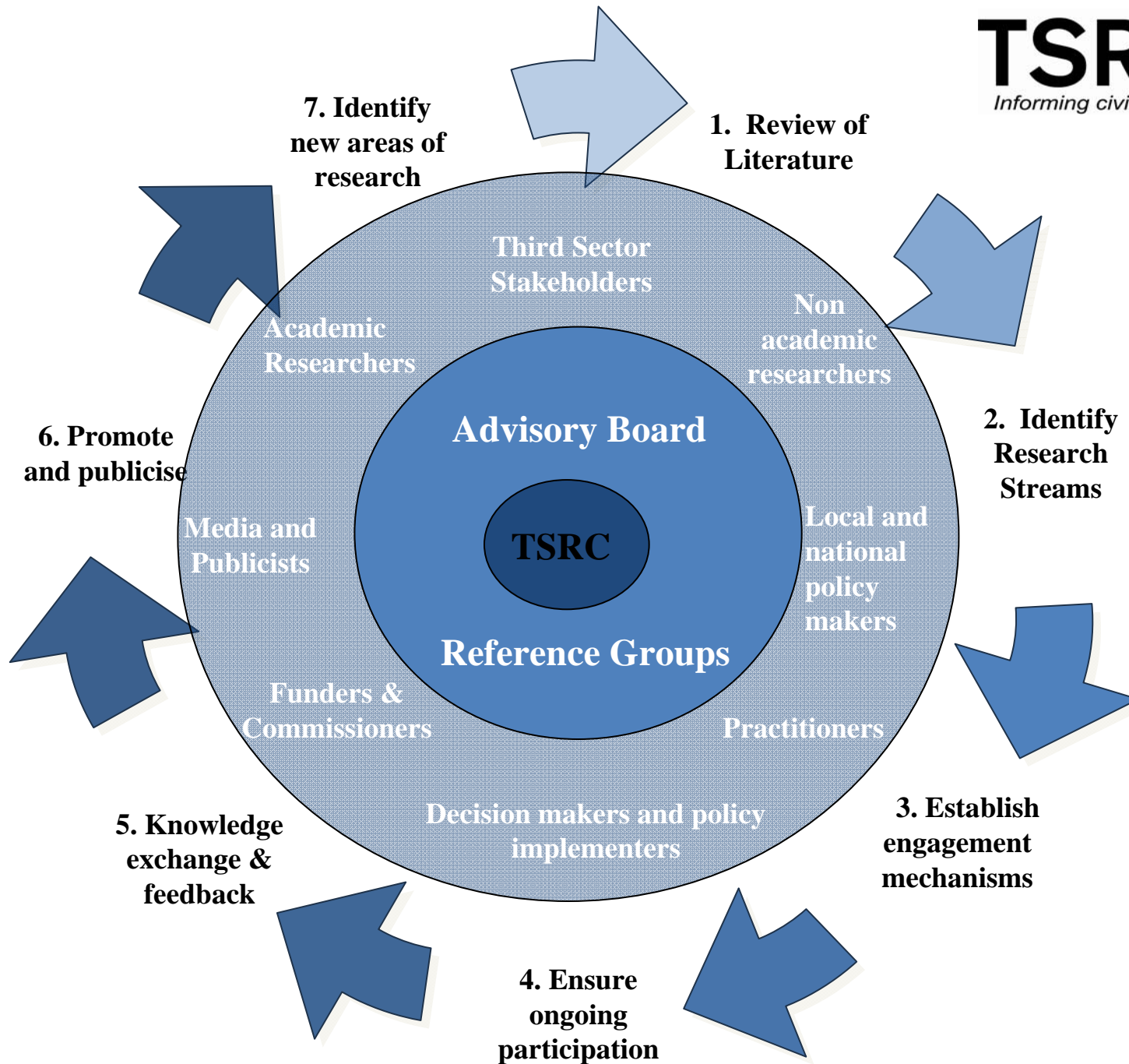


To bridge gaps and build understanding between research, decision making, policy making and practice

To ensure that the experience and knowledge of policy and decision makers, practitioners and funders informs our research

To make knowledge available in meaningful and accessible ways so that it can be used by policy and decision makers, practitioners and funders

To ensure we reach those isolated from existing research knowledge flows



# Tools, Methods and Skills

Producing accessible published research

Building contacts and expanding reach

Managing a website and developing links

Designing publicity materials and marketing

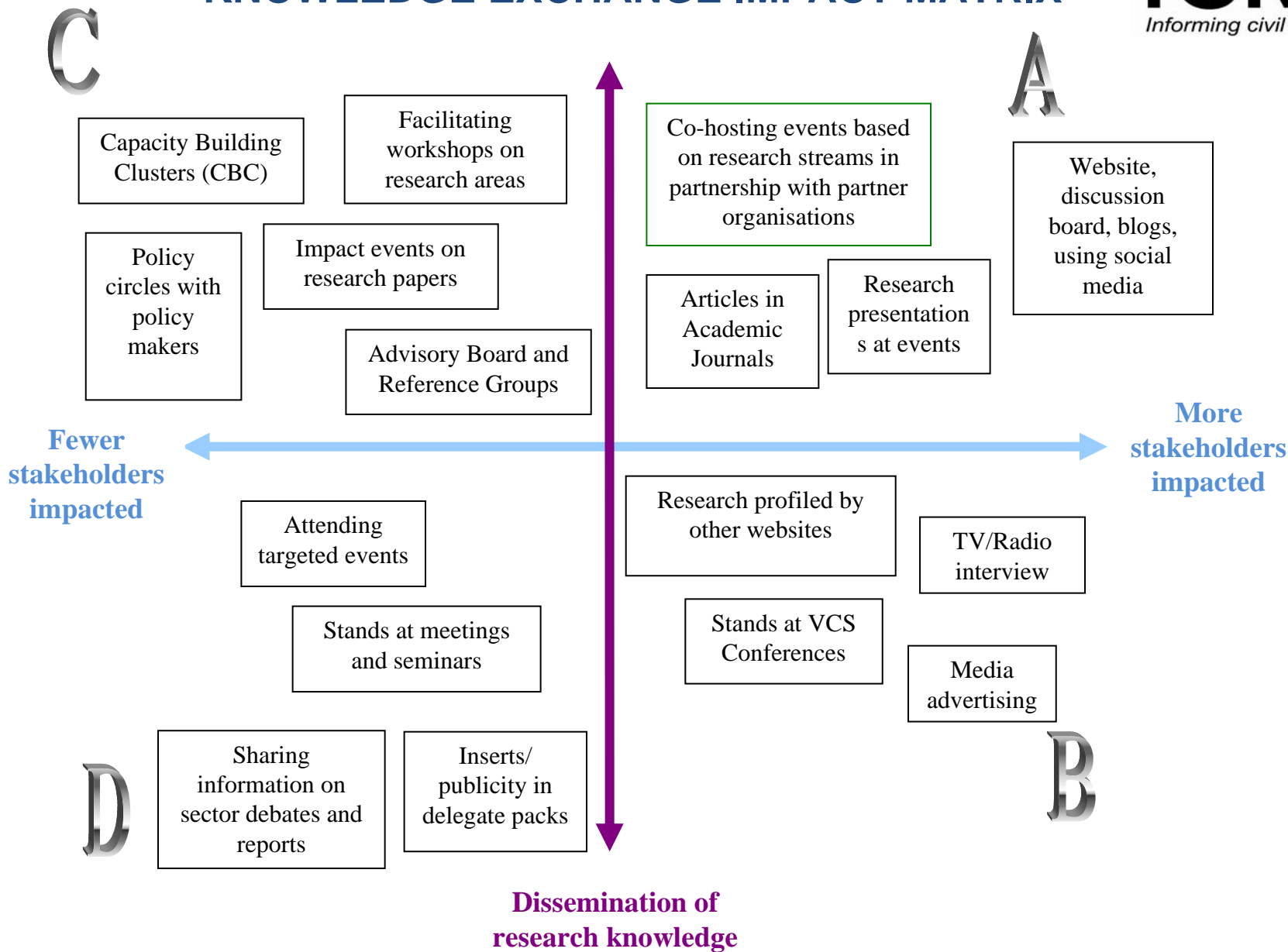
Media relations and press work

Events management and workshop facilitation

Monitoring, evaluating and refining approach to ensure cover the diversity and depth of the sector

Developing strong, trusting and long term relationships with key stakeholders

# KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE IMPACT MATRIX



# Live Examples

## Policy Circles

SROI paper

CLG & OCS officers

“we found the meeting very useful and timely in terms of our thinking on the next steps for SROI and how it can fit into the government’s priorities, such as evaluating OCS programmes.”

## Partnership Events

Beyond the Radar

60 participants at  
participatory Impact Event

Online debates with Guardian  
VS Network, Natcan, Big  
Lottery Fund, Globelnet21

Online platform for discussion  
, debate with videos etc

Join in

<http://btr11.civiccrowd.com>.

# Reflections

Knowledge Exchange should not be an add on or supplementary after research has been undertaken but integrated into the research process

Need to consider resource implications of ongoing interactions and implementing research findings

Need to establish building blocks by raising research profile and creating strong relationships

Cumulative effect of more meaningful intense knowledge exchange more likely to have a long term impact

## WHAT IS KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

“the transfer or imparting of knowledge from one source to another such that the recipient benefits”. (Burns and Paton 2005:50).

Knowledge Transfer in the UK academic context has been around since 1975 in the form of Teaching Company Schemes which subsequently came to be labelled as Knowledge Transfer Partnerships in 2003 (Brown and Chisholm, 2008)

## Importance of tacit knowledge

“that which is non-verbalized or even non-verbalisable, intuitive, and/or unarticulated.

the knowledge inside the head of the university researcher including such things as skills related to using the knowledge, know-how related to adapting the knowledge, understanding of variations from ‘official’ processes, unwritten rules of thumb for implementing or troubleshooting and how to look at data or unstated theoretical connections”

(Sherwood and Butts 2004:6)

## Knowledge Transfer Partnership

- Very well established
  - Tripartite relationship –  
organisation/university/government
  - Organisation can be from any sector ( ie Health and  
Local Government as well as SME or Third Sector
  - Requires detailed project planning
  - Application assessed by business case methodology
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## KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER PARTNERSHIPS IN SE

Knowledge Transfer Partnerships involve collaborative research where typically smaller social enterprises put in one third and the Government (ESRC/OCS) will pay two thirds.

This can allow a social enterprise to triple any research funding it has. The annual cost for an organisation of a 2 year KTP is about £20,000- £35,000 depending on the size of the organisation.

The work undertaken needs to show a monetarised return on the investment ( The application has to make a justified business case)

## .....on KTPs

During the 2008-9 year there were 964 Partnerships and 1021 Associate places in the KTP portfolio with an aspiration to increase numbers further .

Over the years and decades it has been in operation, the KTP model has gained an enviable reputation for delivering high-quality innovation to UK companies through its three-way knowledge-transfer interactions between firms, universities and skilled graduates.’ (Howlett 2010:5)

# KTP's in Third Sector

**Table 1 Completed KTPs**

| Total Number of KTPs   | 5220 | Percentage of total |
|------------------------|------|---------------------|
| Health and Social Work | 108  | 2.07%               |
| Education              | 44   | 0.84%               |
| Recreation             | 54   | 1.03%               |
| Membership             | 24   | 0.46%               |
| Recycling              | 22   | 0.42%               |

## Nature of Knowledge Transfer Partnerships

- Though the majority are in Health and Social Care they are found across a range of categories
- These include architecture, technology and engineering
- They are un or underreported in academic literature
- The findings and content etc. are not usually embargoed ( unlike some private company KTP's)
- There is an accessible database:-

[www.ktponline.org.uk](http://www.ktponline.org.uk)

## KTP Project with RNIB

- Two year project from 2010 to 2012
- Project
  - Conducted primary social impact research on RNIB Social Firms
  - Developed an RNIB-employment specific social impact framework to gather evidence
  - Identified best practice in Social Firms
  - Informed RNIB strategy in Social Firm development
  - Created a business case for further RNIB Social Firm development



## Voucher: Short scoping project with South Bank Mosaics

- An organisation with a good product and excellent record of social impact
  - However a lack of awareness of market and no current marketing plan
  - Academic addressed the need to market awareness and developed marketing plan
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# Placement with Brent Homeless User Group

## Academic going out

- Learned about the operation of a social enterprise
- Carried out a project to assess relevance of personalisation
- Influenced development of organisational strategy

## Practitioner coming in

- Joined with third sector students and academics
- Developed knowledge and competence in marketing for nfp sector
- Was able to bring these skills back to organisation

## Other projects using lateral thinking to get win - win research at a fraction of the 'commercial cost

### **Emmaus International**

- Global social enterprise requiring evaluation across 5 continents and in three languages
- Use of Skype and multi-lingual students
- Cost 14 K Euro
- Estimate of full commercial cost £ 60 K

### **Cook Inlet Tribal Council (Alaska)**

- Evaluation of social enterprise development with Native Alaskans
- Client 'spare' Air Miles for travel
- Academic time not charged
- 2 weeks basic hotel accommodation paid by client
- Estimate of full commercial cost about £8-10 K

# **Should policy makers and practitioners engage with academic researchers?**

**A VCS perspective**

# What is 'distinctive' about the VCS?



- Large number of small entities
- Multiple industries, interests
- Researches the social agenda, not just R&D
- Poor coverage in official statistics
- Research poorly resourced?

# The sector's research capacity is (in general) weak

- Few evidence reviews
- Limited time-series data
- Theoretical development poor
- Ltd centralised knowledge-base
- (Non-) Professional development
- Evidence > Policy > Campaigns
- Networks & brokerage

# KT challenges

- **Research funder, user, consumer, abuser**
- **Fairly weak links with academia, professional institutes**
- **Dispersed sole-traders**
- **Dispersed evidence base**

# VCS perspectives I hear...



## Academic research is...

- Jargon-laden/badly written
- Inaccessible
- Inevitably after the event
- Irrelevant
  
- VCOs are used as bid candy
- Academics 'helicopter in'

**I think these are wrong.**

# Opportunities

(In no particular order)



- **Never assume everyone knows everything**
- **Understand the web changes everything: format, content, engagement, speed...**
- **Emerging trends: infographics, narratives**
- **Assume nobody reads anything**
- **Reporting: perpetual beta**

# Implications for KT practice



- **Understand your/our USP in the market of ideas and how we collaborate**
- **Help each other to understand (challenge?) the policy environment**
- **Recognise policy windows**
- **Don't be hierarchical about knowledge**

# Implications for KT practice



- **Understand – and accept – that simplicity is not a corruption of your work**
- **Work together on media work to build relationships with key journalists**
- **Different team roles: researchers, writers, reporters**
- **Seminars: engagement before and after, but maybe think about structure/length**
- **Think about what partnership & engagement really means and act on this.**



## Panel Q & A

What are the benefits and opportunities of each approach?

What are the disadvantages to overcome/challenges ?



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