



INSIGHTS FROM MAKING THE TUKFS SYNERGY PROJECT TOOLKIT

Illuminating Perspectives in Co- Produced Research: An Illustrated Conversation Starter

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Session outline

Part 1 - introduction 15 mins

Introduce the *Synergy Project Co-Production Toolkit*.

Why focus on 'community' perspectives?

Brief evolution of the *Illustrated Conversation Starter* resource.

Part 2 - group activity 55 to 60 mins

Explore elements of the resource, images, testimonials, conversation prompts.

Facilitated group discussions.

Consider the utility of the resource.

Part 3 - feedback 15 to 20 mins

Reflections and critique of the resource.

Application and utility?

Key takeaways and actions.

Background to the Illustrated Conversation Starter

The 'Dark Side'?

Evolving
[The Synergy Co-production Toolkit](#)

existing toolkit



Accounts from community perspectives may be less visible in accounts of the co-production of research. This new iteration of the Synergy Co-production Toolkit has a focus on community perspectives.

“‘Darkness’, bringing attention and increased awareness to the unknown.” (Dupret et al 2025)

**‘Hidden’ aspects within co-production and collaboration.
Suitability or acceptability of certain emotions and reactions.
Dupret et al (2025), Rose & Kalathil (2019)**

Dupret et al (2025), *Lessons from the Dark Side: Emotional Labour and Positioning in Cross Sector Collaborations*. Vol 38. No.3. April 2025, Science and Technology Studies. DOI:[10.23987/sts.130957](https://doi.org/10.23987/sts.130957)

Rose, D., Kalathil, J., (2019) *Power, Privilege and Knowledge; the untenable promise of coproduction in mental health*. Vol 4. 2019, Medical Sociology. DOI:[10.3389/fsoc.2019.00057](https://doi.org/10.3389/fsoc.2019.00057)

What might be hidden? What might be learned through supported, creative conversations?



FoodSEqual, Plymouth:
The starting point for this exploration of diverse ' experiences of co-production.



FoodSEqual works with people across the food system, from communities and food industry stakeholder, academics and policy influencers, to co-develop new food products and policies and make affordable, healthy food more accessible.

<https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/research/institutes/sustainable-earth/healthy-landscapes/foodsequal-plymouth>

Research is focused on four communities, where local residents work closely with academic researchers to co-produce research into local food systems and inform change.

<https://foodplymouth.org/project/foodsequal/>

Local teams and operations in FoodSEqual feature 'coordinators' who are based in the community context. They work to create equitable research and working environments, through skills training, mentoring, and advocating for community researchers' interests within the wider project.

Evolution of the illustrated resource - focus and four key stages

Are some experiences of co-production less likely to be articulated? How can creative approaches facilitate productive conversations?

How can other collaborators in co-produced, multi stakeholder research be supported to have such conversations, with learning outcomes?

1. Reflections and observations

2. Creative ideation and initial illustrations

3. Sense-making session & consultation

4. Reviewing illustrations, concepts, and final output

Stage 1. Reflections and observations

Coordinator role,
FoodSEqual project.
Essential 'bridging'
function, working closely
with 'CFRs' *community
food researchers.*



The FoodSEqual Project

 **MONTHLY
BREAKFAST
MEET UP** 

Join the FoodSEqual Community Research Team in 2024 for breakfast, food related guests, activities, and discussions.

**08
APRIL**  Isatta Kallon, Community Builder in the Wellbeing Hub Network and Diversity Lead in Stonehouse, will talk about her work with food.

13 MAY  Joanna Ruminska, FoodSEqual Community Food Researcher and Big Local Green Connector, will give a tour of the Big Local Allotment.

The Community Allotment is located on Kendal Place PL5 4AG

Tea, coffee and toast provided.
Sometimes we bring something homemade to share.
ALL WELCOME

 **9:30 am - 11:00 am**
Every 2nd Monday of the month

 **FoodSEqual**
Food Systems Equality

 **Four Greens
Community Trust**
Whitleigh Green PL54DD

Stage 1. Reflections and observations



Different kinds of communication and interactions within distinct spaces; emotion, feedback, voicing doubt or frustration.

What are the norms, cultures, ethics, roles, disciplines shaping distinct spaces and communication?

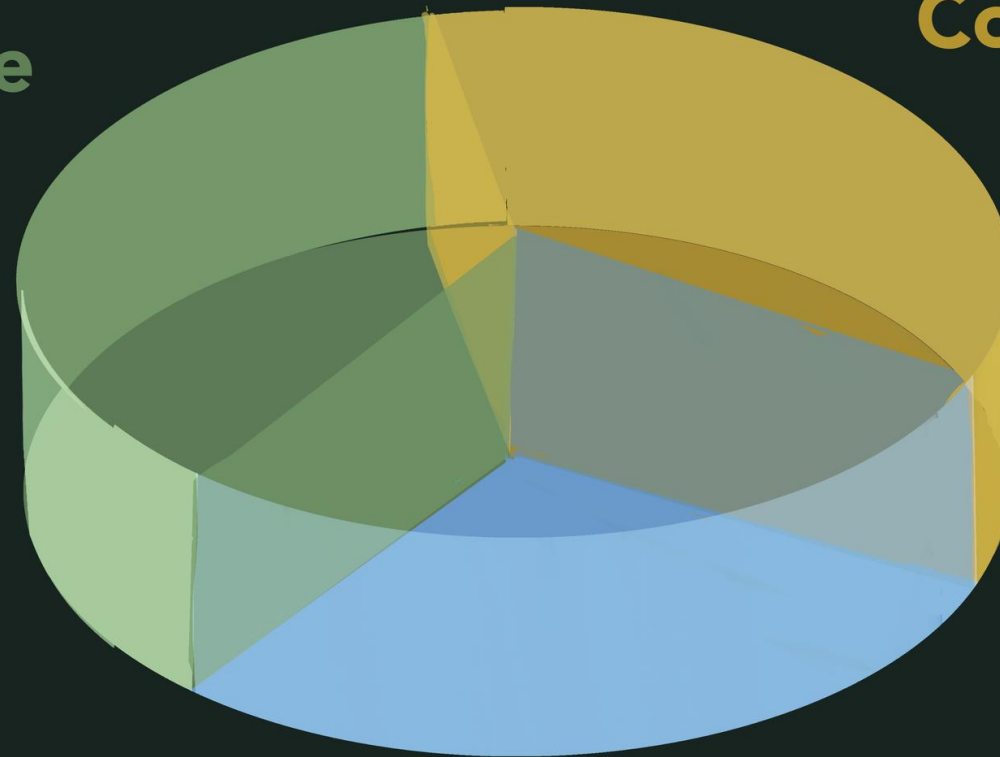
Stage 2. Creative ideation and initial illustrations

Creative Process

Home

Community

Representing the 3
spaces of the research
project with connecting
walls



University

Stage 2. Creative ideation and initial illustrations

Creative Process

What are the different parts of this project, where there are distinct boundaries?

What arises in the spaces/parts, what passes across the boundaries, and what is not allowed to pass through?

How do we visually represent these spaces and boundaries?

How can we use images to facilitate conversations about these things?

Stage 3. Sense checking and consultation

Online, interactive session with five community partners on TUKFS and local research projects.

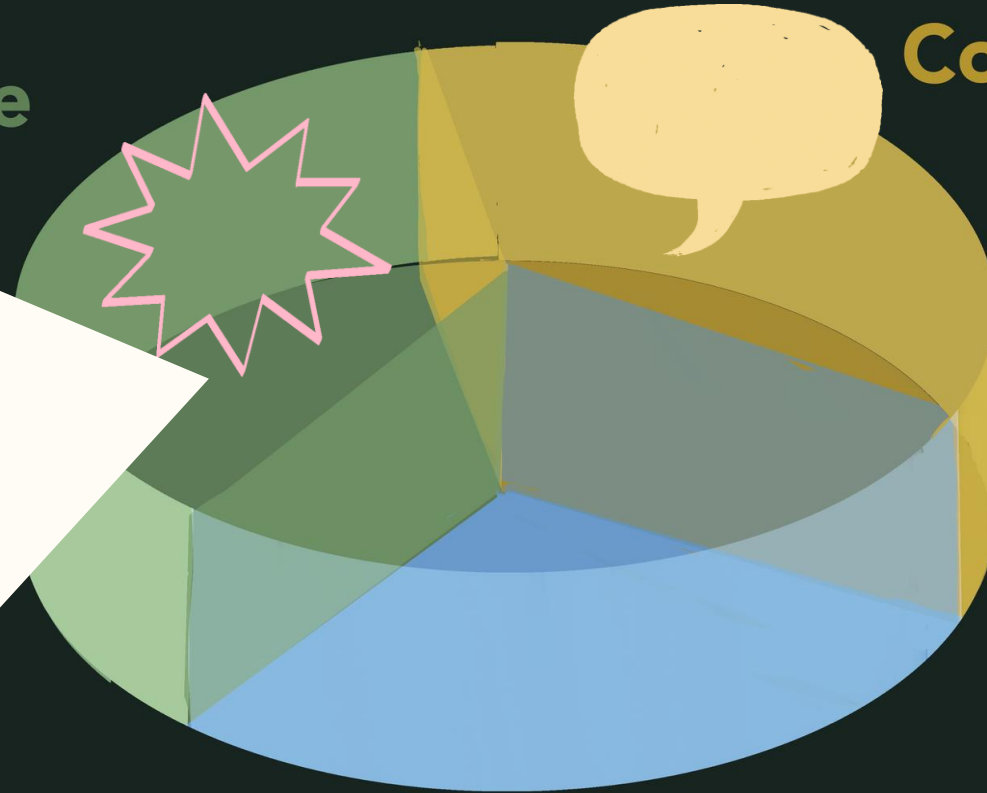
Sense-checking themes and visual concepts.

What are the communications/emotions/feelings arising in the spaces? What is coming up? What is passing between people?

Home

Community

University

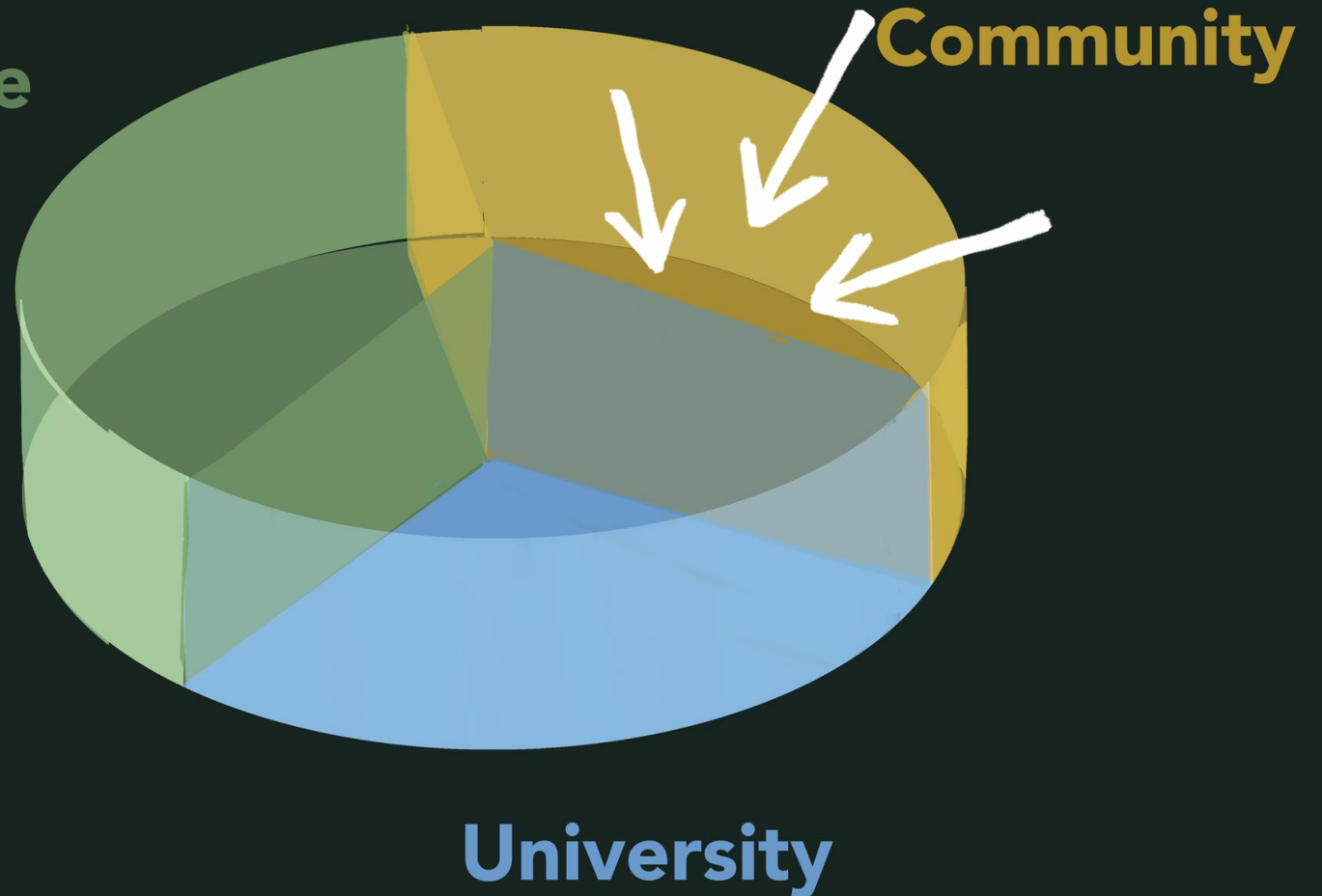


Stage 3. Sense making and consultation

Home

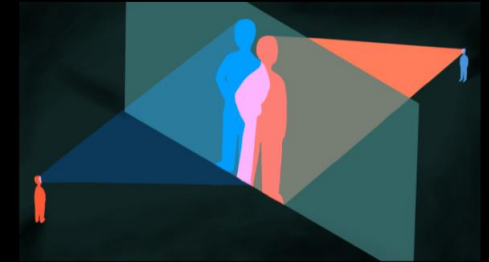
Session yielded detailed insights and perspectives regarding themes and visual concepts and community-based research practice.

Leading to revision of visual concepts and structure of resource.

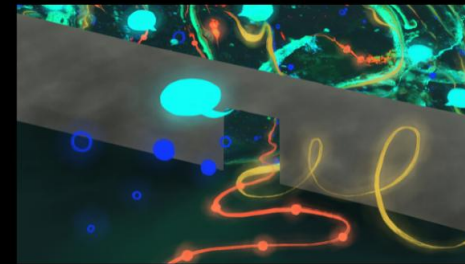


Stage 4. Constructing the visual resource

- Six themes, each with an illustration, quotes and questions to open up conversation and reflection.
- Illustrations are central to the function of the resource
- Elicits a range of insights
- Shareable, accessible tool for collaborative learning



Illuminating perspectives in co-produced research:
an illustrated conversation starter



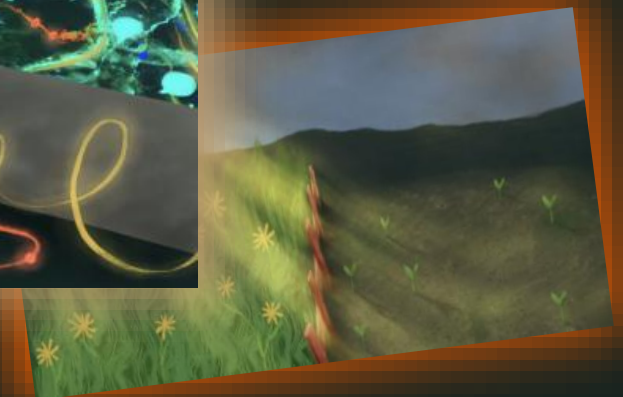
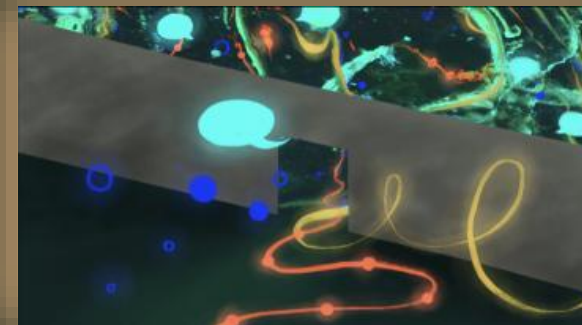
Facilitated group activity using the Illustrated resource

Aims:

- Use the illustrations as a starting point to have conversations about the dynamics of co-produced research.
- Reflect on how the resource might be useful.

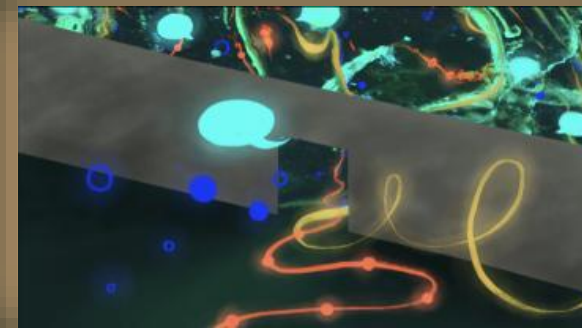
Timings:

Up to 60 minutes group discussions in the activity, then reflective feedback together as a large group.



Facilitated group activity using the Illustrated resource

- 1. Spend a couple of minutes looking at the image. See what you notice:** for example, find two features that stand out to you. Go around your group: everyone can say what features they noticed.
- 2. Have a look at the quotes - ask someone in the group to read them out.** Discuss as a group - does anything in the quotes sound familiar or remind you of experiences you have had in your work/practice?
- 3. Look at the questions and discuss them in order.** Try to make space for every person to answer each one.



**Final reflections,
takeaways and actions**

THANK YOU FOR TAKING PART



Transforming UK Food Systems Conference, 23-24 March 2026



#TUKFS26

