

A community of practice for open research trainers

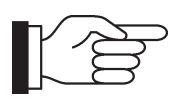
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Background

The **UK Reproducibility Network (UKRN)** is running a five-year funded programme across 20+ collaborating member institutions, which aims to Grow and Embed Open Research in Institutional Practice and Culture. A key methodology for this is a **train-the-trainer (T3)** model. Circa 180 attendees from across the network will go on to deliver training (**T1**) in open research methods at their home institutions.

 We are creating a Community of Practice for T3 attendees, to support interactions that go beyond the formal train-the-trainer sessions.



Communities of Practice (CoP)

“Communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly.” — Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner (2015)

Findings

Sign-up to the CoP is optional; so far, over **90% of attendees in our T3 pilots have signed up.**

According to our preliminary evaluation of (cf. **Methods**):

Attendees were quite confident about the topics covered in the T3 training, but marginally less confident about teaching those topics to others. They observed that changing their behaviour to actually deliver the training was not something they would do automatically (i.e., they may need some support to actually carry out the T1 training). They expected that T1 attendees would face obstacles putting the new behaviours that are being disseminated into practice, and attested to their willingness to adapt their practices depending on the perceived efficacy of the training that they deliver.

Methods

T3 participants are invited (on an opt-in basis) to fill in an anonymous, strictly quantitative survey with questions based on the **COM-B Model** and **Normalisation Process Theory**. T3 participants receive similar questionnaires to pass along to their T1 trainees. We also plan to run short opt-in co-design sessions and more extensive focus groups with CoP members, to gain a qualitative impression of participants experiences.

Data will show how T3’s are taking to their new role and how how the methods being disseminated in the programme are being taken up. Aggregate analysis will be communicated transparently to the Community of Practice. Co-design will inform what else happens in the community.

Related Work

The framework of “Visitors and Residents” from White and Le Cornu (2011) characterises likely roles in the community. Shadbolt et al. (2019) provide insights into the design of social machines for research.

Bibliography

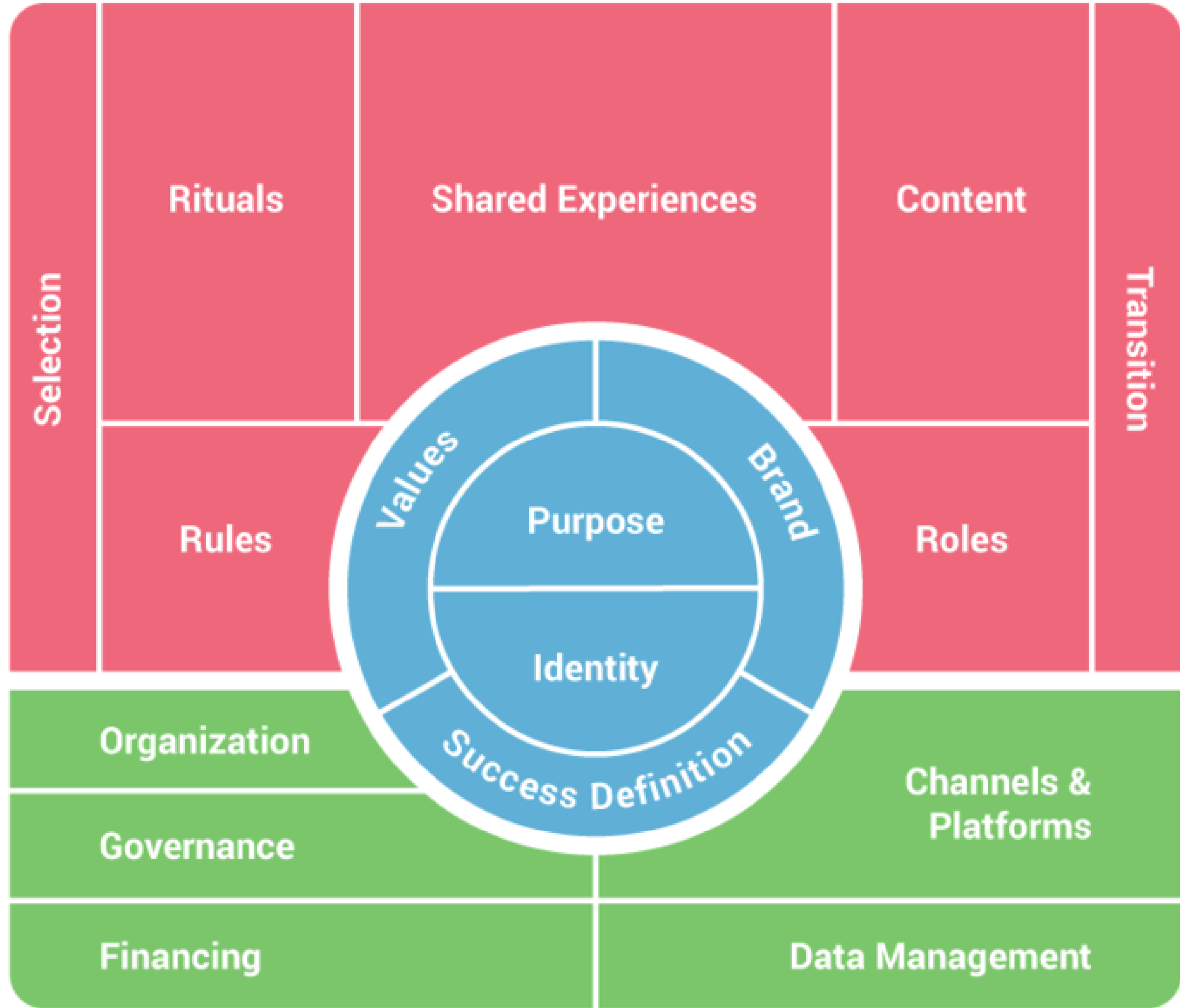
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Shadbolt, N., O’Hara, K., De Roure, D., and Hall, W. (2019). *The theory and practice of social machines*. Springer.

Wenger-Trayner, E. and Wenger-Trayner, B. (2015). Introduction to communities of practice: a brief overview of the concept and its uses. <https://www.wenger-trayner.com/introduction-to-communities-of-practice/>.

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Community Canvas

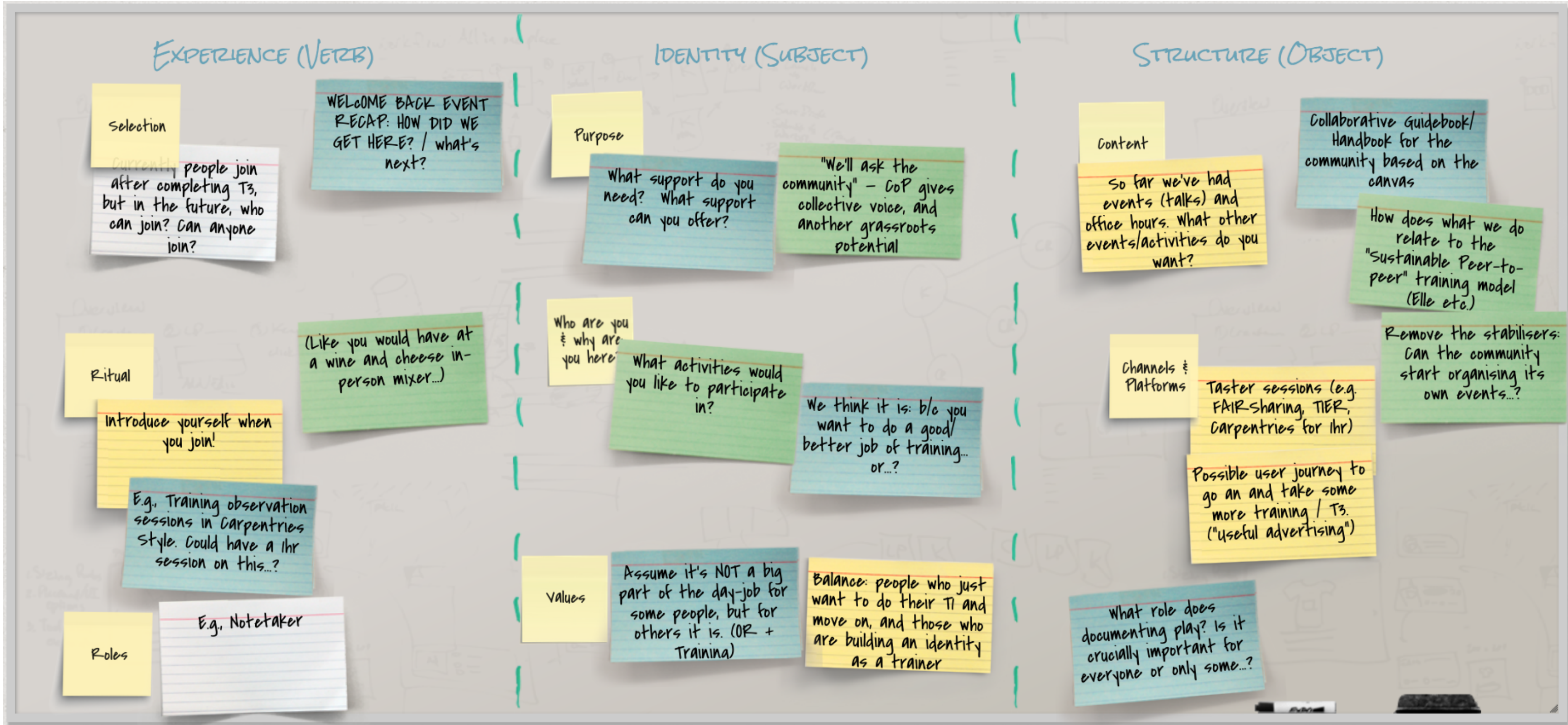


The Community Canvas (Pförtmüller et al., 2017) gives us a starting point for co-design, covering aspects of the community’s **Experience, Identity, and Structure**. As a document, this sits mostly “behind the scenes”. Some of the facets suggest key questions to discuss with CoP members in co-design sessions; these are flagged below.

- Purpose** To support each other in delivering high-quality open research training at our home institutions. (**What support do you need ? What support can you offer ?**)
- Content** So far, events like “How to create visibility for open and reproducible research”, “Help participants make the most of your training”, and one-off office hours. (**What next ?**)
- Data Management** Consider documenting events/activities (depositing information on OSF and OER Commons); (**Would you participate ?**)

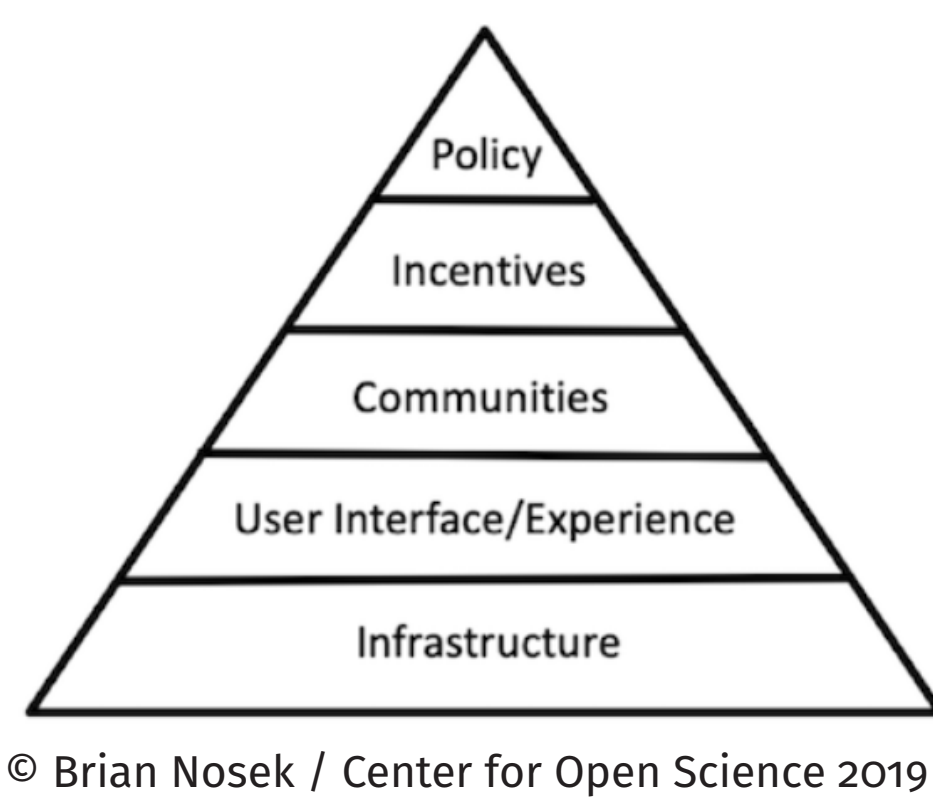
Co-design activities

We plan to explore the questions above using a mix of synchronous and asynchronous activities for co-design. **What do you think needs to happen in this community?**



— Reflections from an early internal pilot

Part of a broader theory of change



- (**Control:**) A core assumption is that Open Research practices have benefits which T3 participants *share a concern or passion* for realising. Working together as a community **makes sharing open research practices the “normal” thing to do.**
- (**Influence:**) In turn, we can influence behaviour of T3 and T1 participants and the way their work is received in institutions.
- (**Interest:**) This can generate impacts that engage wider stakeholders including policy makers.

Conclusions

- This work enhances Research Culture in several ways:**
- By contributing to improved dissemination of high-quality open research practices across UK institutions.
 - By itself employing a transparent open research practice, whereby ongoing evaluation is feed back to the community.
 - By responding to what community members want!