

Leadership in Open Science: Skills, values and culture



Open Science Summer School 2026 (Track 2)

Dr Sara Lil Middleton (she/her)

Dr Flavio Azevedo (he/him)

Tuesday 15th September 2026: Session 1

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Session goals

Identify and **describe** key effective leadership qualities to build on existing knowledge and experiences

Identify own leadership values which you can adopt in your leadership contexts

Recognize where values of effective leadership and Open Science overlap to strengthen your capacity as leaders in Open Science

Examine how social context influences leadership and open research culture



What does good leadership look and feel like?



1. Self **reflect**

2. **Write** down words, short phrases or sentences on shared **white board**:

http://scrumblr.ca/good_leadership

3. Group **discussion**

~10 minutes

Tip

Think back to a time you had a role model within or outside academia that left a positive impression on you.

Some key leadership skills and qualities

Non-exhaustive list!



Active listening



Clear communicators



Knowledgeable



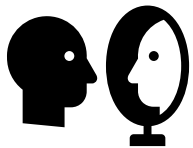
Empathy



Problem solvers



Active learning



Self-awareness



Collaborative



Flexibility

Some key leadership skills and qualities

Focus on five leadership qualities for day 2 sessions



Active listening



Clear communicators



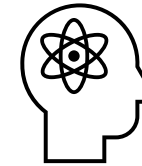
Knowledgeable



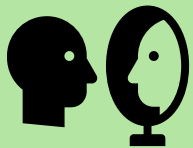
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Self-awareness



Collaborative



Flexibility

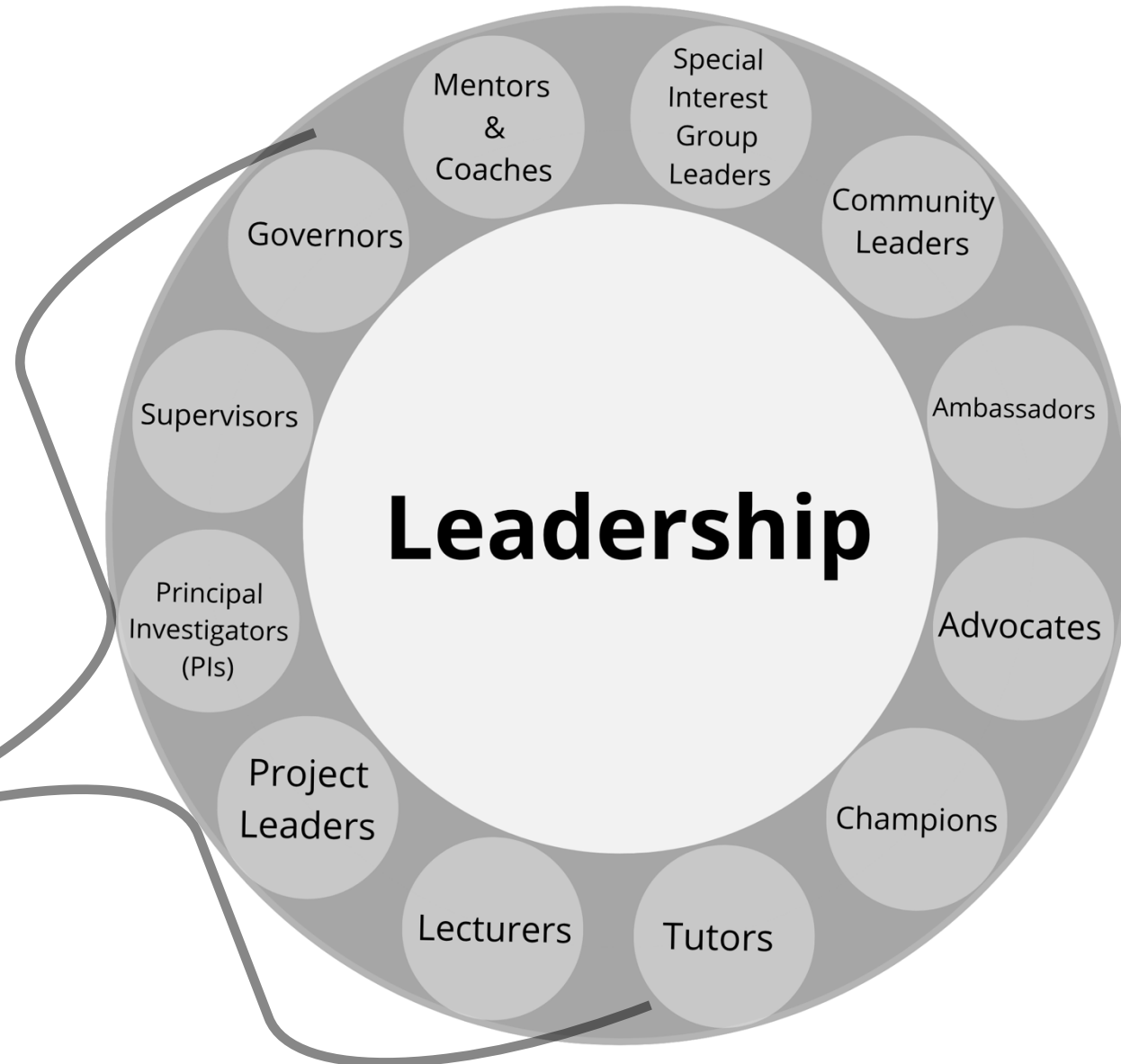
Diversity of leadership roles



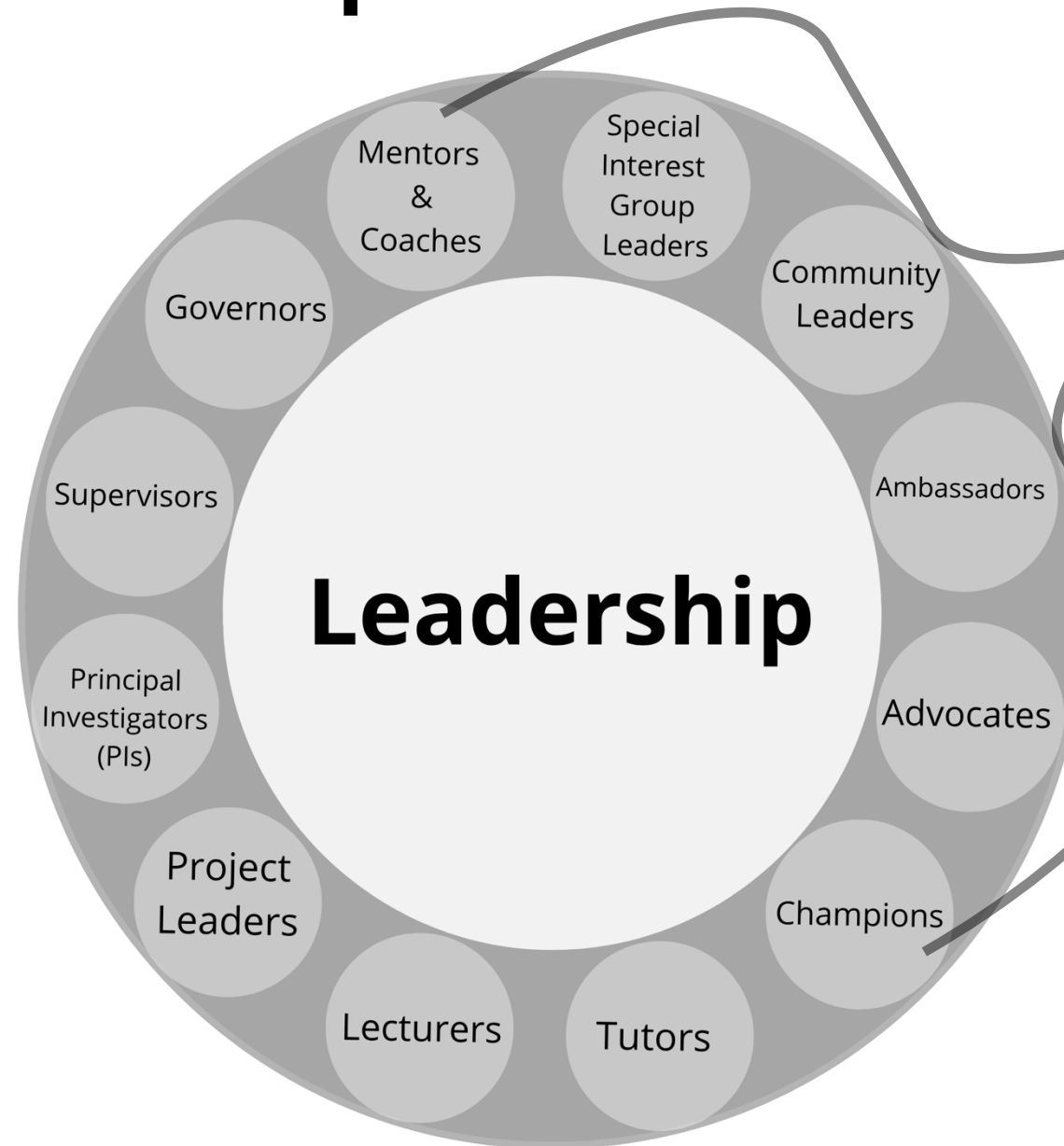
Diversity of leadership roles: formal

- Have **responsibility** and **authority** over others to achieve goals
- **Officially recognized** with position/title often appointed or elected
- Usually some training
- Feature of more hierarchal organizations

Formal



Diversity of leadership roles: informal



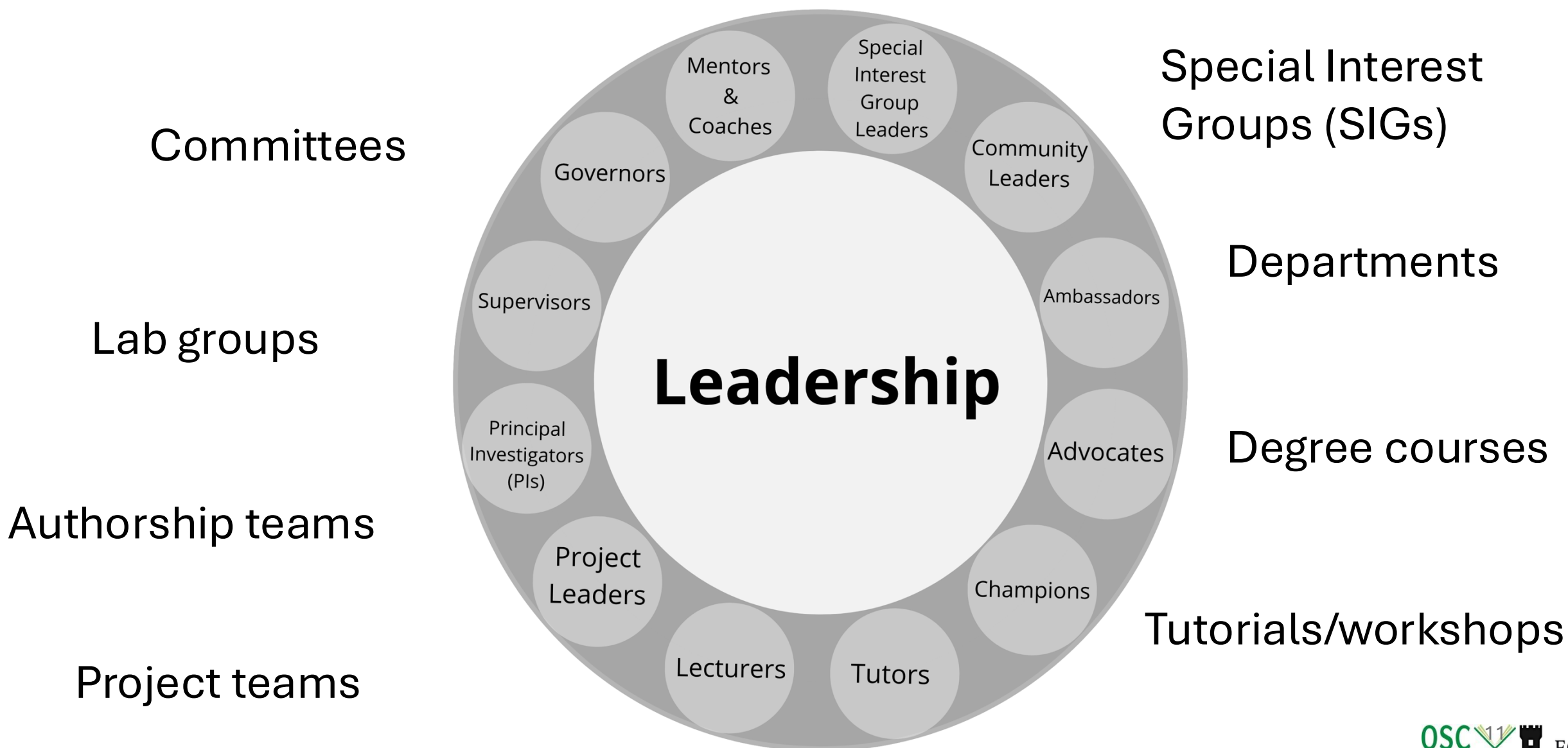
Informal

- Takes **initiative**, **influence** and **inspire** others towards achieving shared goals
- **Doesn't** have **formal** leadership **position/title**
- Not usually trained
- Emerges organically in times of change

- Have responsibility and authority over others to achieve goals
- Officially recognized with position/title often appointed or elected
- Usually some training
- Feature of more hierarchal organizations

Formal

Diversity of leadership contexts



What does leadership in Open Science/Scholarship mean to you?



Dr. Elisabeth M. Bik

Independent researcher / science
integrity consultant

“Leadership in Open Science means **helping others** do better science through **transparency, accountability, and openness** to correct the scientific record.

You do not need a leadership position to lead; every researcher can make a difference by setting a positive example.”

Leadership is about people!



- Leadership doesn't exist in a vacuum as the **social context** of **leaders** and **followers** matters.
- Followers (e.g. learners, graduate students, employees, etc.) play an **active role** in **co-constructing** leadership.

(DeRue and Ashford, 2010)

Leadership styles



Coaching

“Try this”

Develops others via mentorship and support



Visionary

“Come with me”

Mobilizes others toward a clear vision



Democratic

“What do you think?”

Involves others in shared decision-making



Transformational

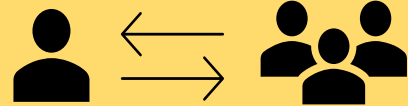
“Let’s work towards...”

Inspires and empowers others to reach their potential

A relational view of leadership

Leadership is:

Relational

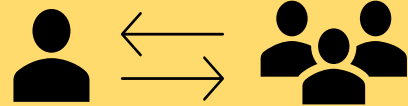


Social process between
leaders and followers

A relational view of leadership

Leadership is:

Relational



Social process between
leaders and followers

Dynamic

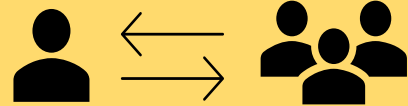


Evolving process, adapting

A relational view of leadership

Leadership is:

Relational



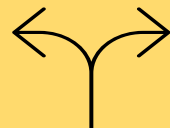
Social process between
leaders and followers

Dynamic



Evolving process, adapting

Multi-directional



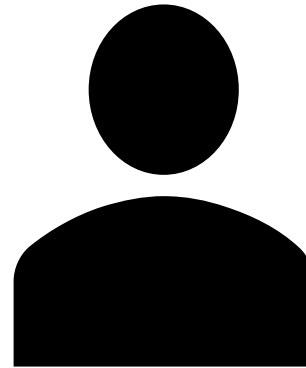
Beyond formal roles and
organizational hierarchy

Multi-directional leadership: downwards



*Leading
downwards*

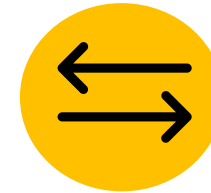
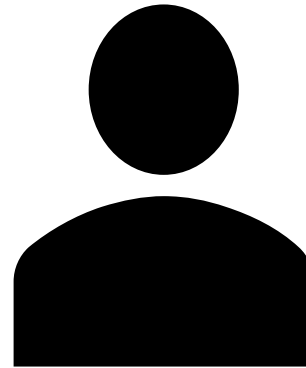
- Beyond downward dominance in organizational hierarchy
- Attuning and adapting to the needs of people in your team



Multi-directional leadership: sideways



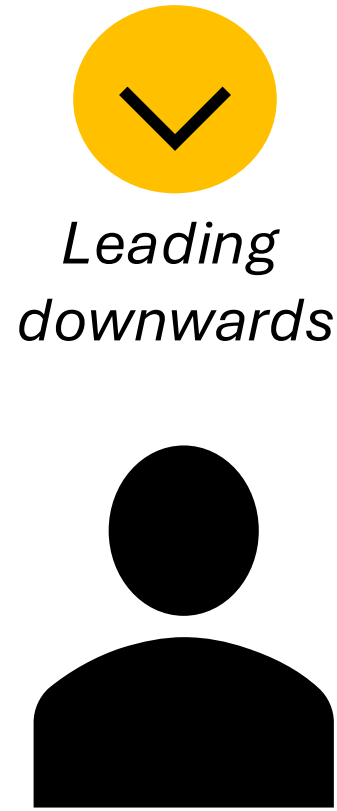
*Leading
downwards*



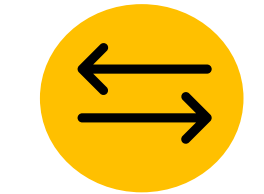
*Leading
sideways*

- Influencing your peers during discussions in meetings

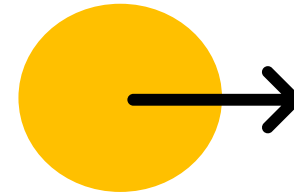
Multi-directional leadership: outwards



*Leading
downwards*



*Leading
sideways*

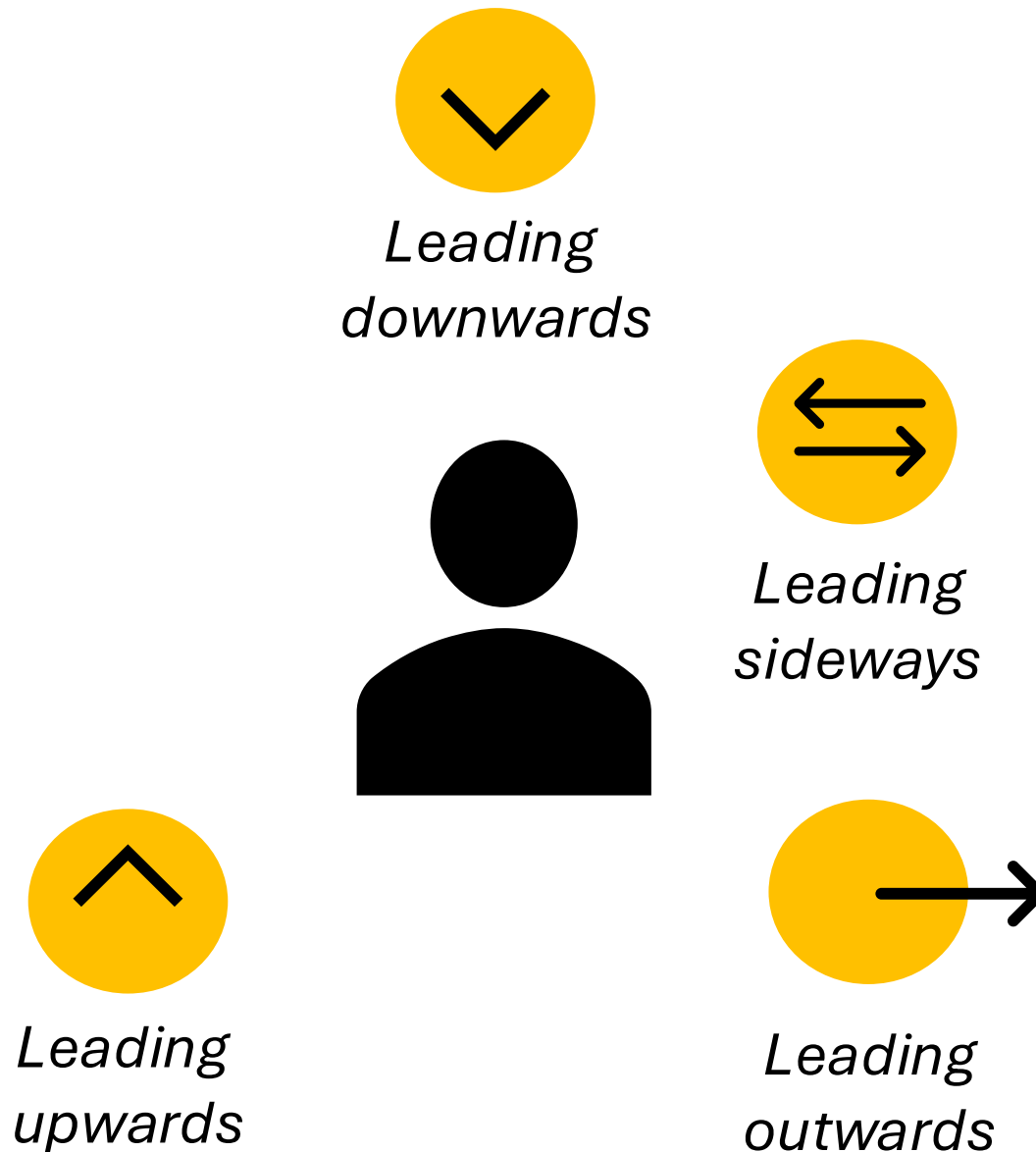


*Leading
outwards*

- Representing the team/organization
- Building connections with others (e.g. policymakers, funders, community groups)

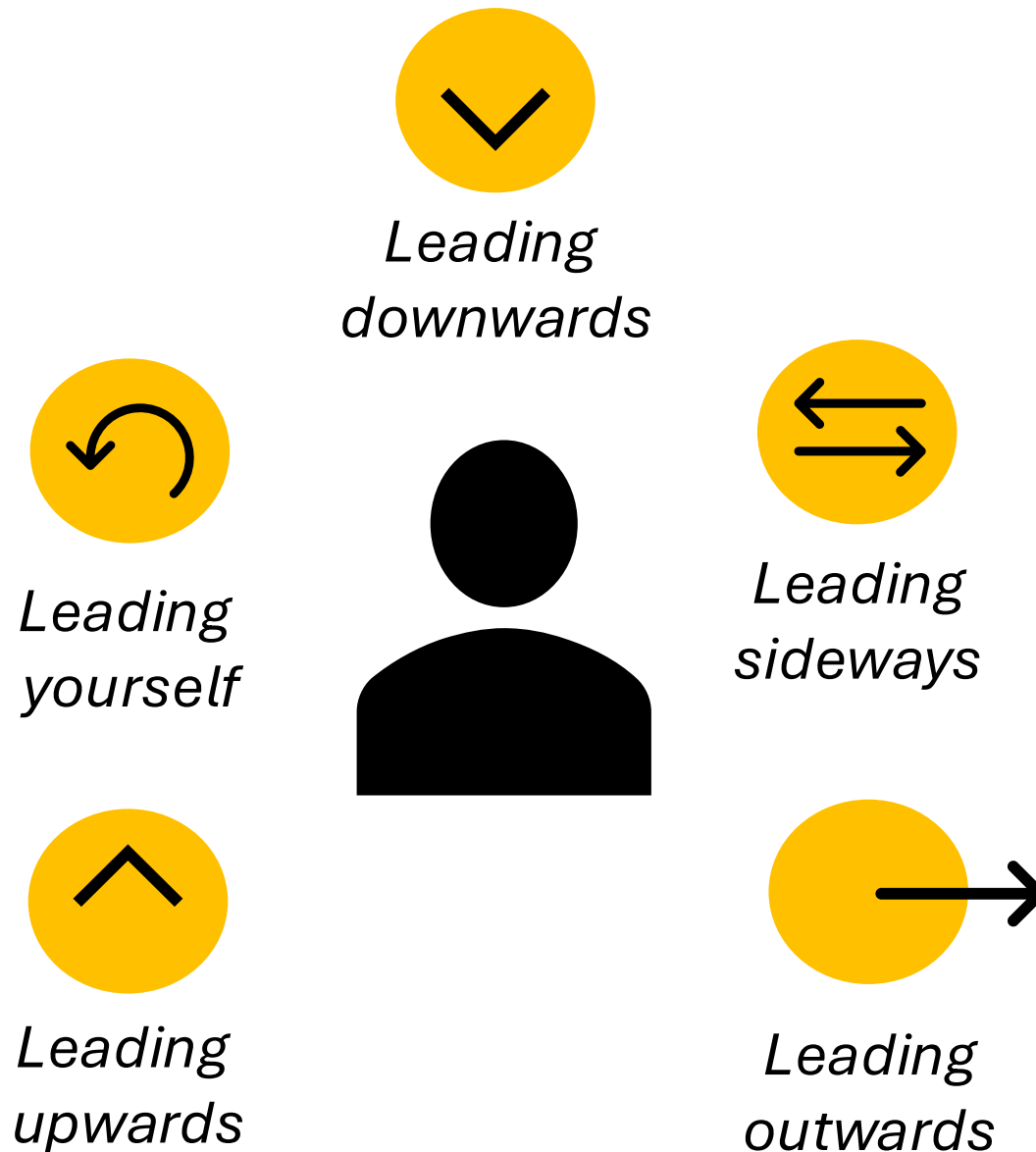
Multi-directional leadership: upwards

- Sharing own knowledge and expertise with your own leaders and managers

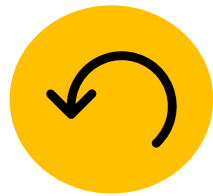


Multi-directional leadership: inwards

- Self-aware of skills, values, identity and power
- Self-management (time, priorities, etc.)



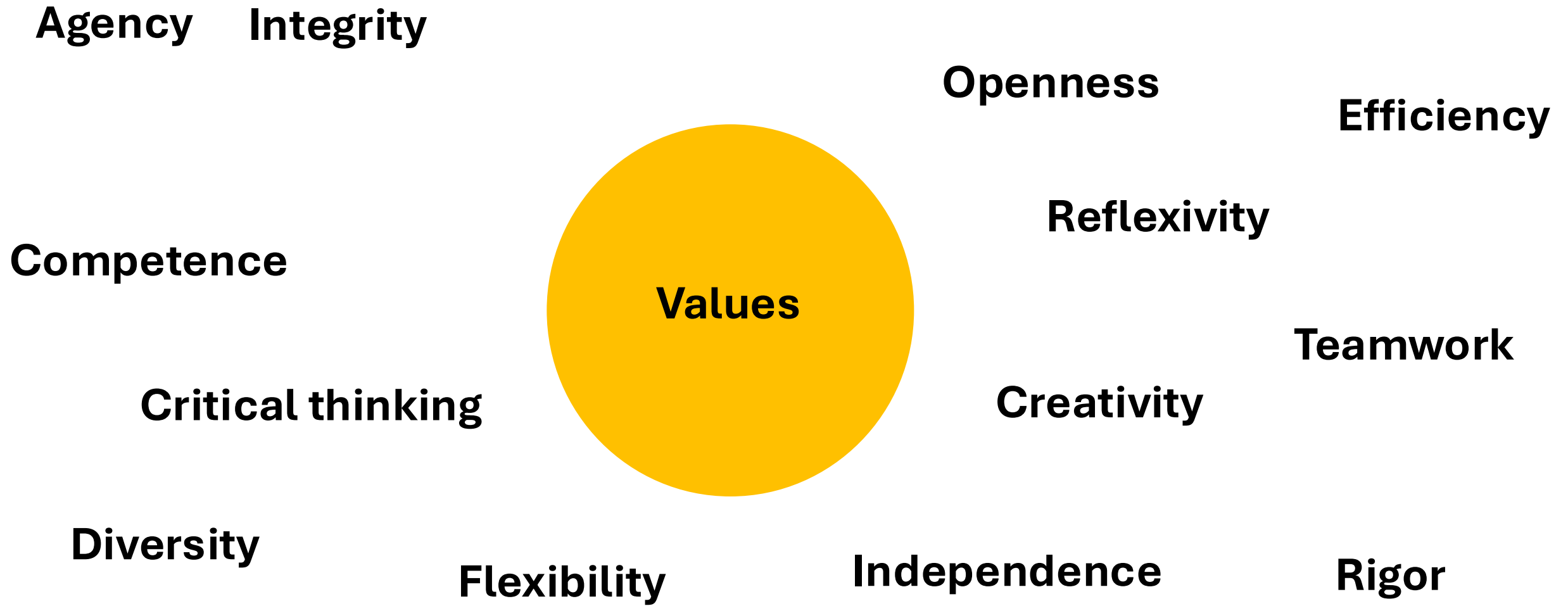
Self-leadership as a crucial part of leading others



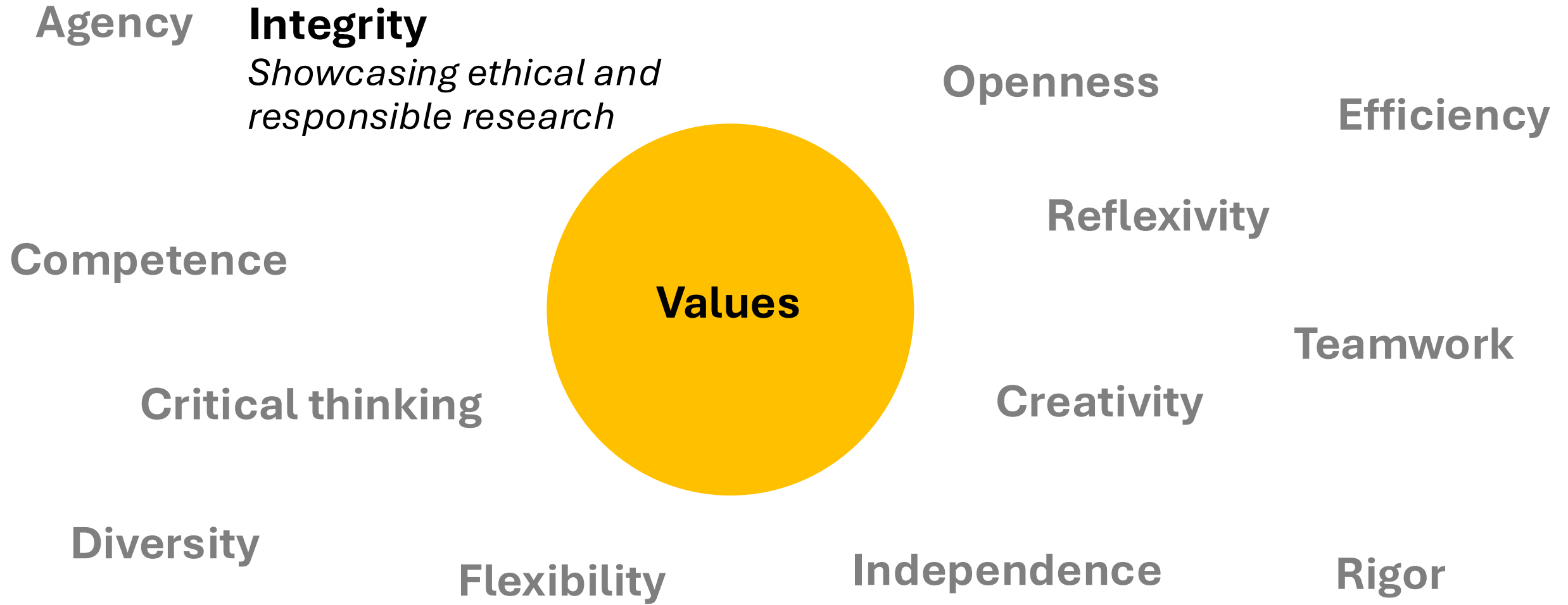
*Leading
yourself*

- What values matter to me?
- Where are my knowledge gaps?
- How do my experiences shape how I lead?

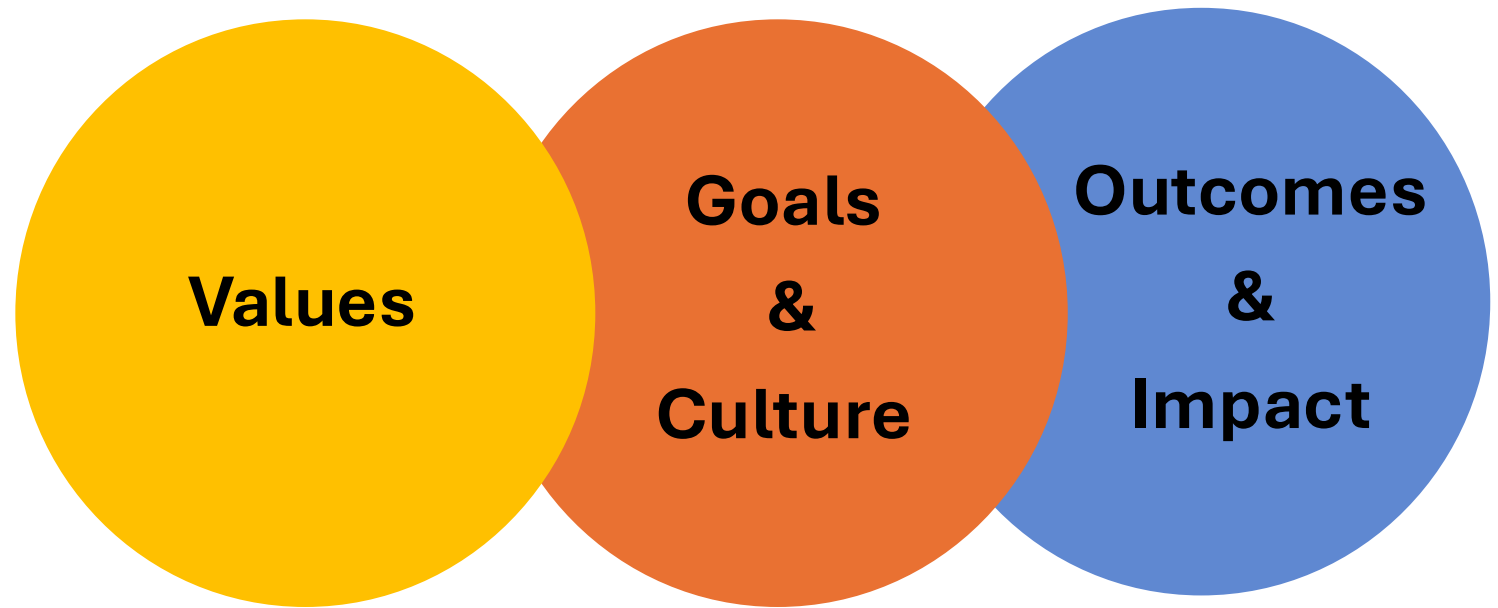
Start inwards: What matters to me?



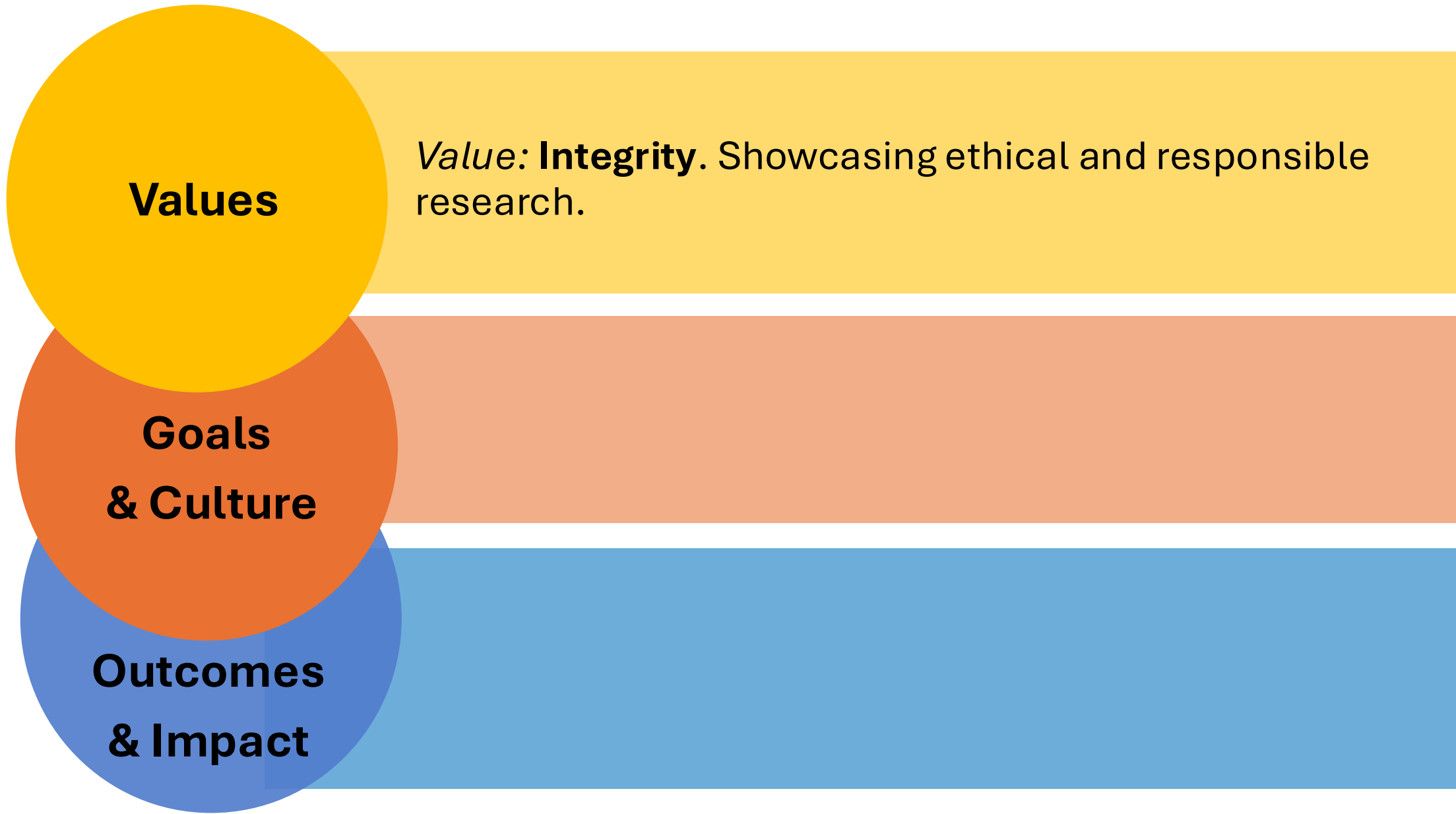
Start inwards: What matters to me?



Values shape actions



Values shape actions



Values shape goals and culture

Values

Value: **Integrity**. Showcasing ethical and responsible research.

Goals & Culture

Goal: Learners **engage deeply** on the topic of AI usage in the research cycle.

Culture: Set expectations that **integrity matters** for high-quality credible research and for public trust in science.

Outcomes & Impact

Values shape outcomes and impact

Values

Value: **Integrity**. Showcasing ethical and responsible research.

Goals & Culture

Goal: Learners **engage deeply** on the topic of AI usage in the research cycle.

Culture: Set expectations that **integrity matters** for high-quality credible research and for public trust in science.

Outcomes & Impact

Outcomes: Learners **critically examine** a case study on AI usage for data analysis from an ethical perspective.

Impact: Learners have **increased ethical awareness** of AI usage in their research and beyond.

Start inwards: What matters to me?



1. **Scan** through values table in workbook
2. **Self reflect** which leadership values **resonate** with you
3. **Write** down **three values** in your workbook section 7.1

~5 mins

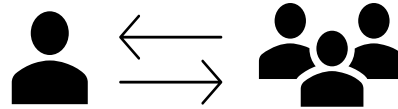
Tip

Take a look at the values table and guiding questions to help you.

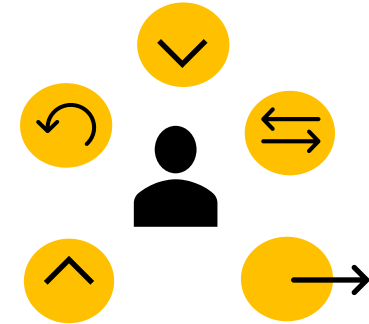
Interim summary



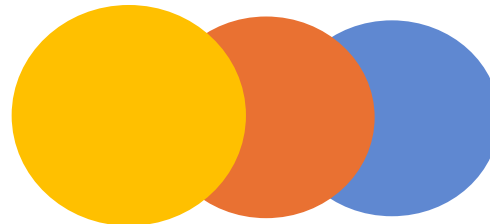
Leadership can be **formal** (e.g. supervisor) or **informal** (e.g. community champion)



Leadership is a **co-constructive process** between leaders and followers



Leadership is **multi-directional**



Values shape actions

What does leadership in Open Science/Scholarship mean to you?



Fotis Mystakopoulos

Open Scholarly Communication Officer at
OPERAS Research Infrastructure

PhD Candidate in Archival, Library and
Information Studies at the University of
Western Attica (UniWA)

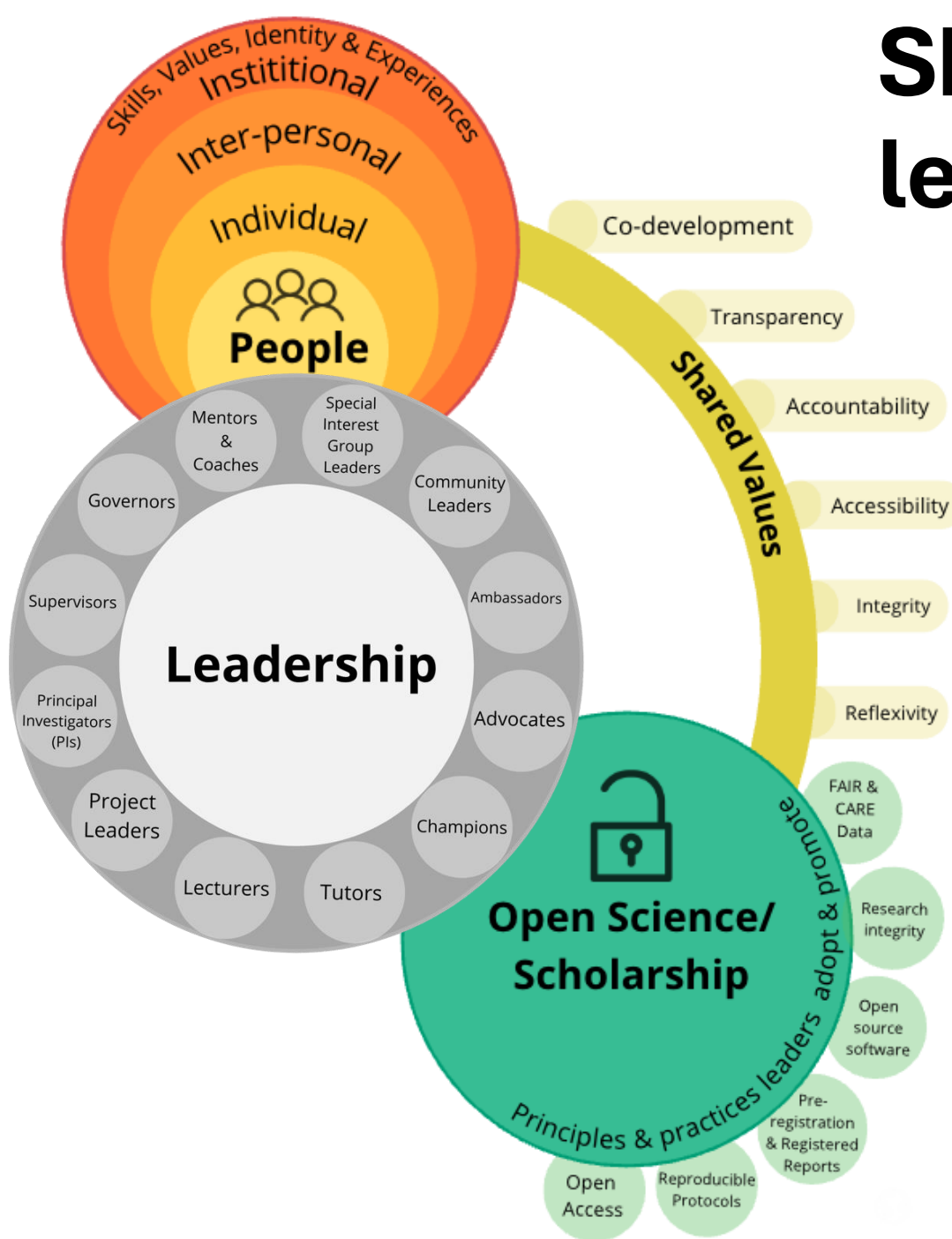
“A few years ago I'd have answered this differently, because of how open science is changing and **evolving**, but my current view has two components: the **scientific** and the **human**.

The scientific part means applying the principles of open science, doing research with **integrity, transparency, and quality**.

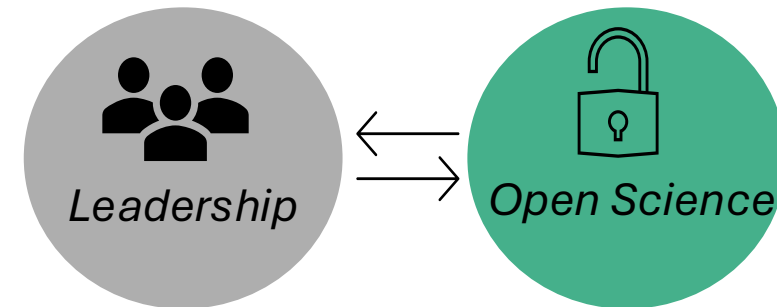
The human part means being **compassionate, supportive, and collaborative**. Research can be deeply isolating, often carried out in demanding environments, and for me **people come first**.

My hope is that through open science we also learn to be **kinder**, more **reflective**, and more understanding, because doing science the right way ultimately depends on **people** being able to **thrive** within a **research culture**.”

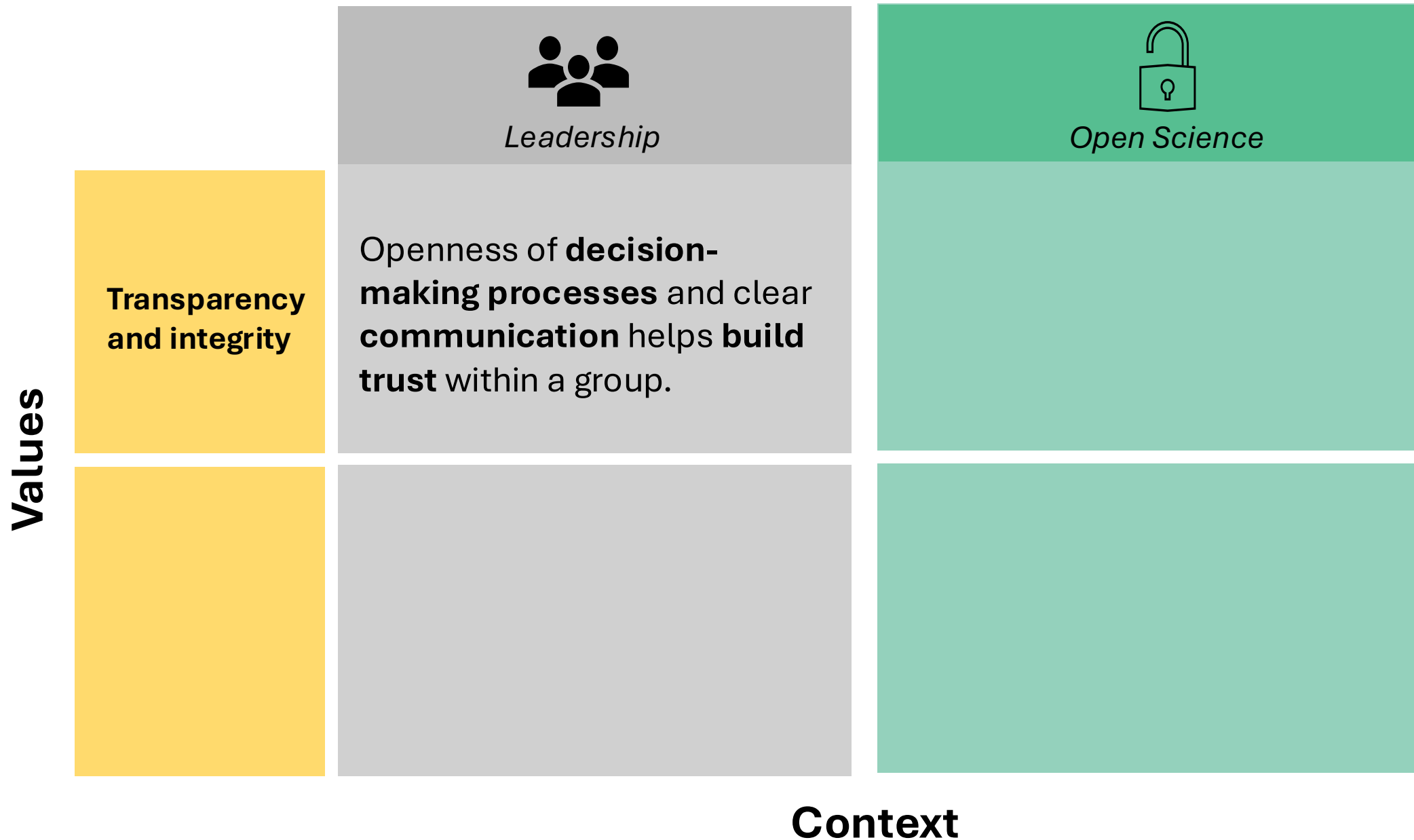
Shared values of effective leadership and Open Science



There are lots of values of effective leadership that overlap with values we strive for in Open Science!



Example of shared values: transparency and integrity



Example of shared values: transparency and integrity



Example of shared values: co-development

Values

	 <i>Leadership</i>	 <i>Open Science</i>
<i>Transparency and integrity</i>	Openness of decision-making processes and clear communication helps build trust within a group.	Thoughtful planning and transparently documenting study design, data collection and analysis in a preregistration improves credibility of research.
Co-development	Relational leadership, collective role in decision-making process, empowering everyone to contribute , ability to balance multiple (sometimes conflicting) ideas.	

Context

Example of shared values: co-development

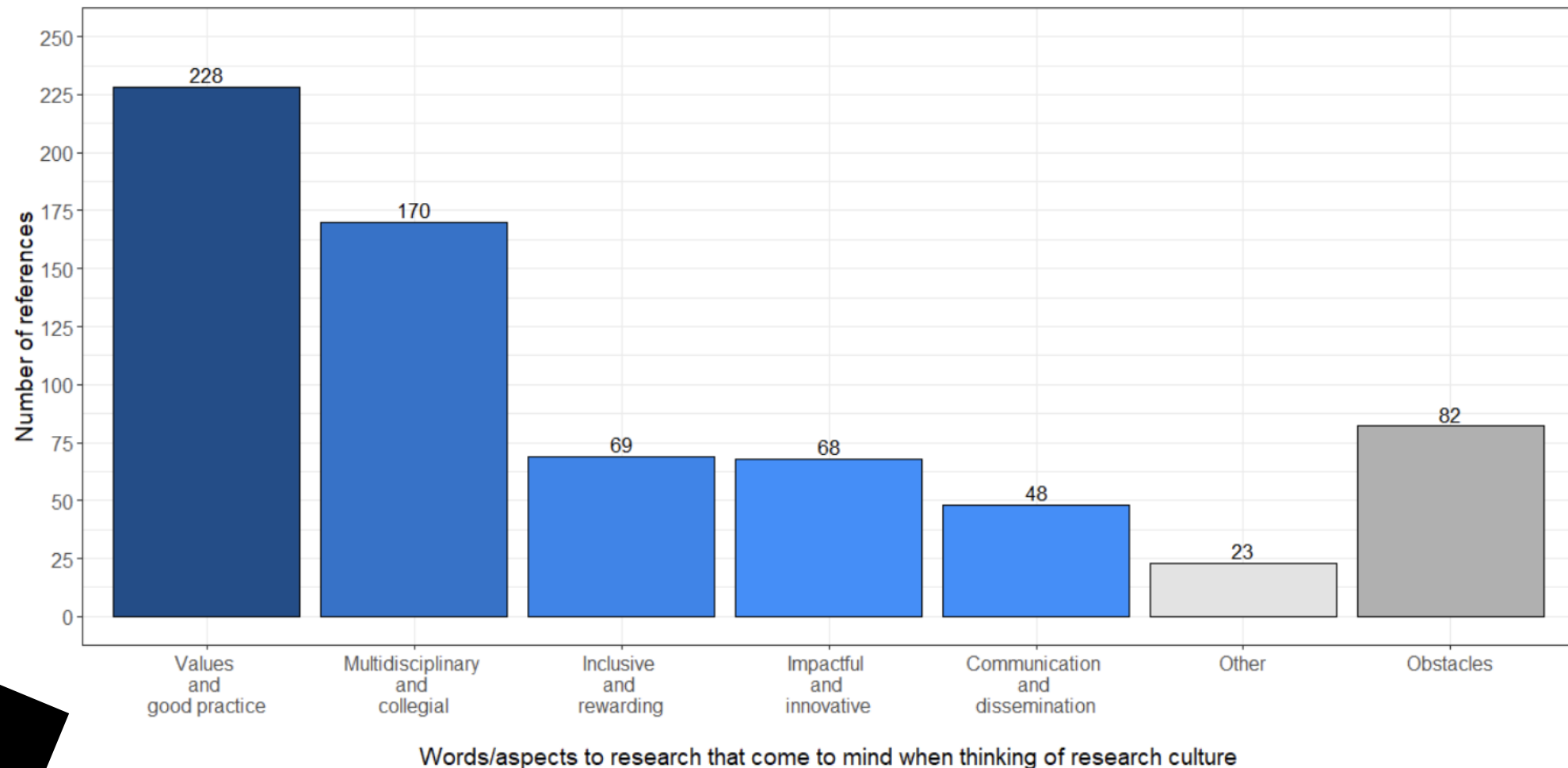
Values

	 <i>Leadership</i>	 <i>Open Science</i>
<i>Transparency and integrity</i>	Openness of decision-making processes and clear communication helps build trust within a group.	Thoughtful planning and transparently documenting study design, data collection and analysis in a preregistration improves credibility of research.
Co-development	Relational leadership, collective role in decision-making process, empowering everyone to contribute , ability to balance multiple (sometimes conflicting) ideas.	Embedding CARE principles into research, co-producing data governance policies with communities, minimizing harm and improving quality of research (Carroll et al. 2021).

Context

Shared values towards an open research culture

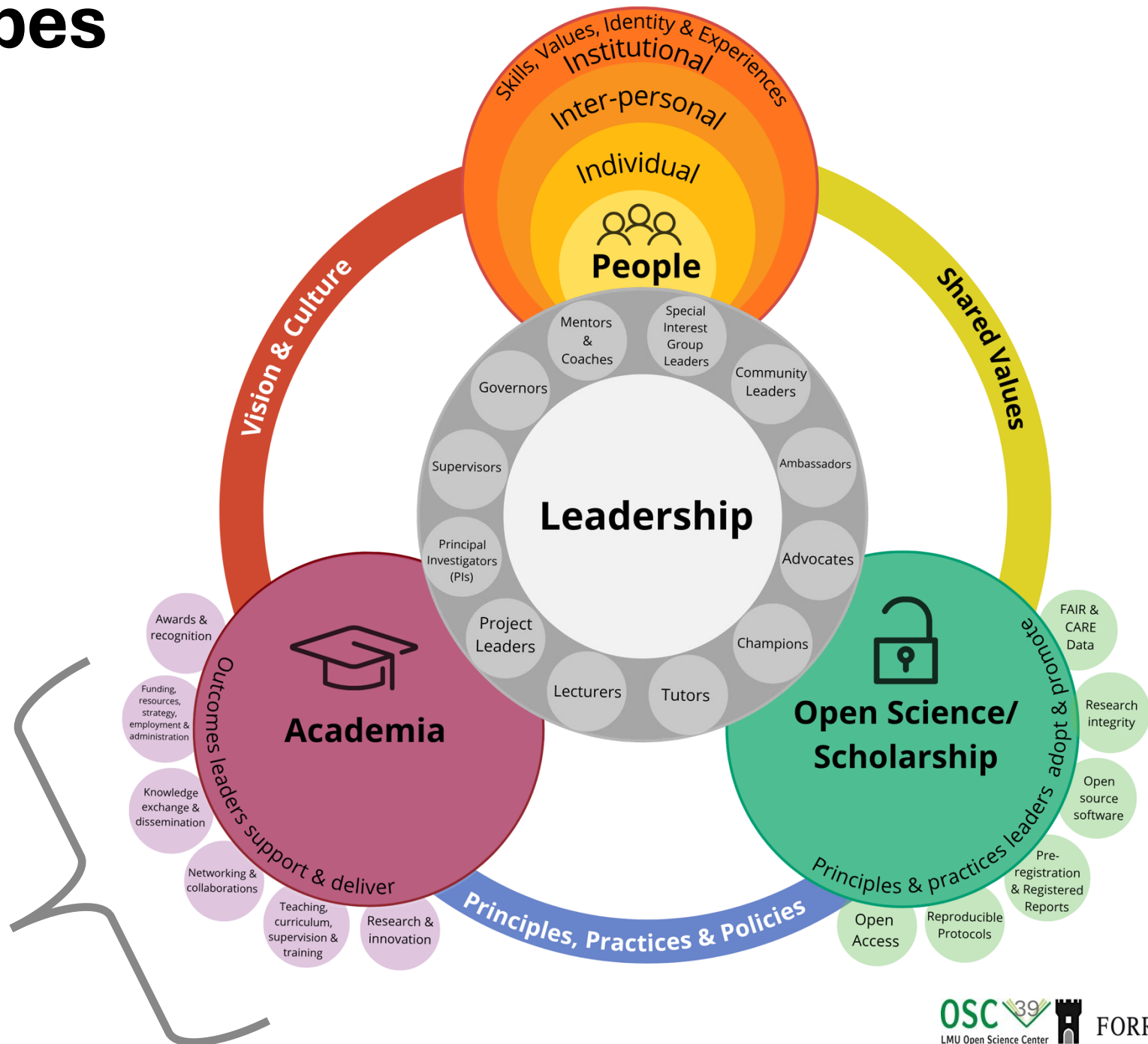
“What words or aspects to research come to mind when you think of research culture?”



Adapted from Lacey et al. (2026)

Current context shapes research culture

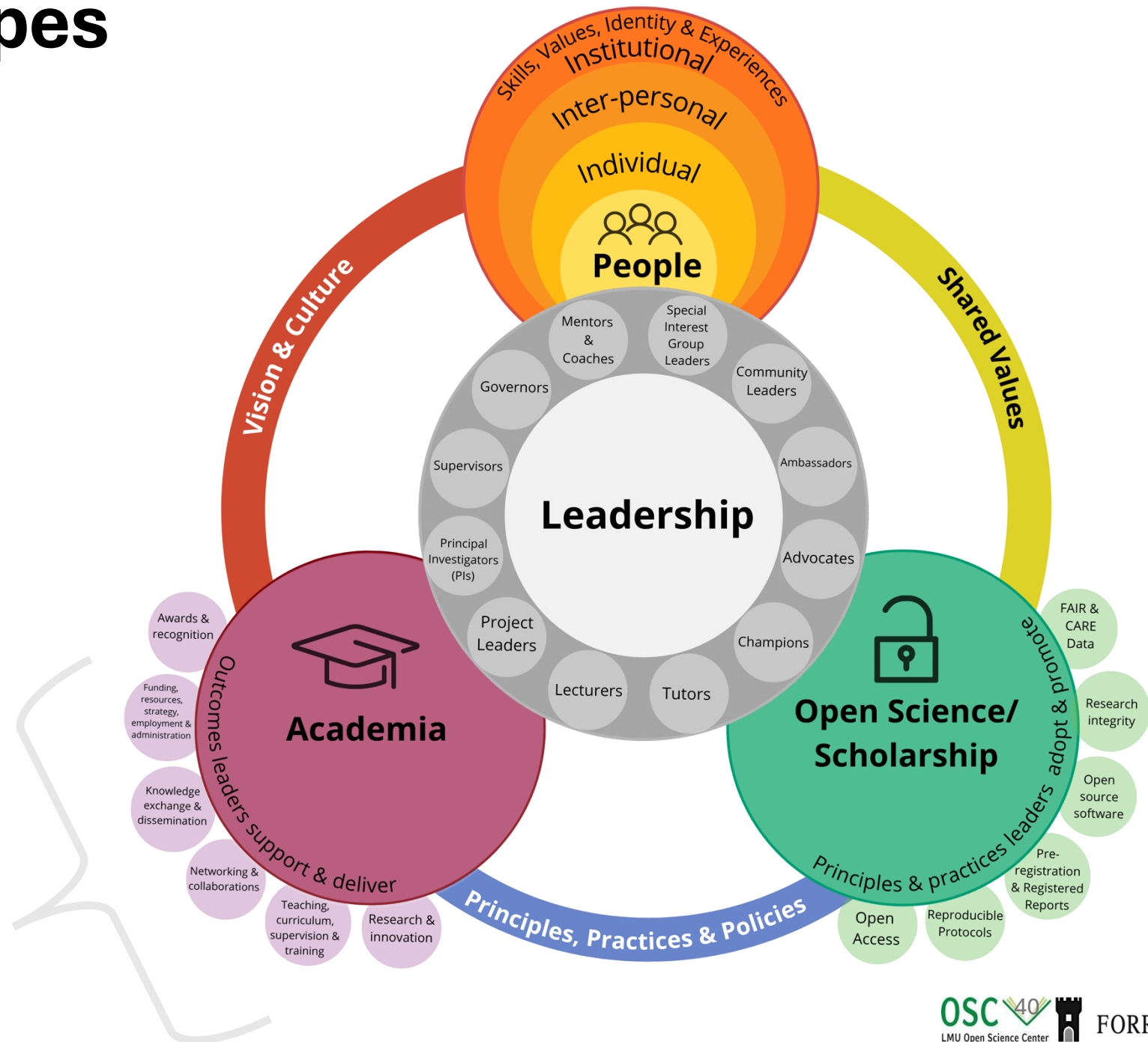
The environment in which research happens is **not** a **neutral** backdrop.



Current context shapes research culture

Social, cultural, educational background, **economic** factors influences how we lead and respond to challenges.

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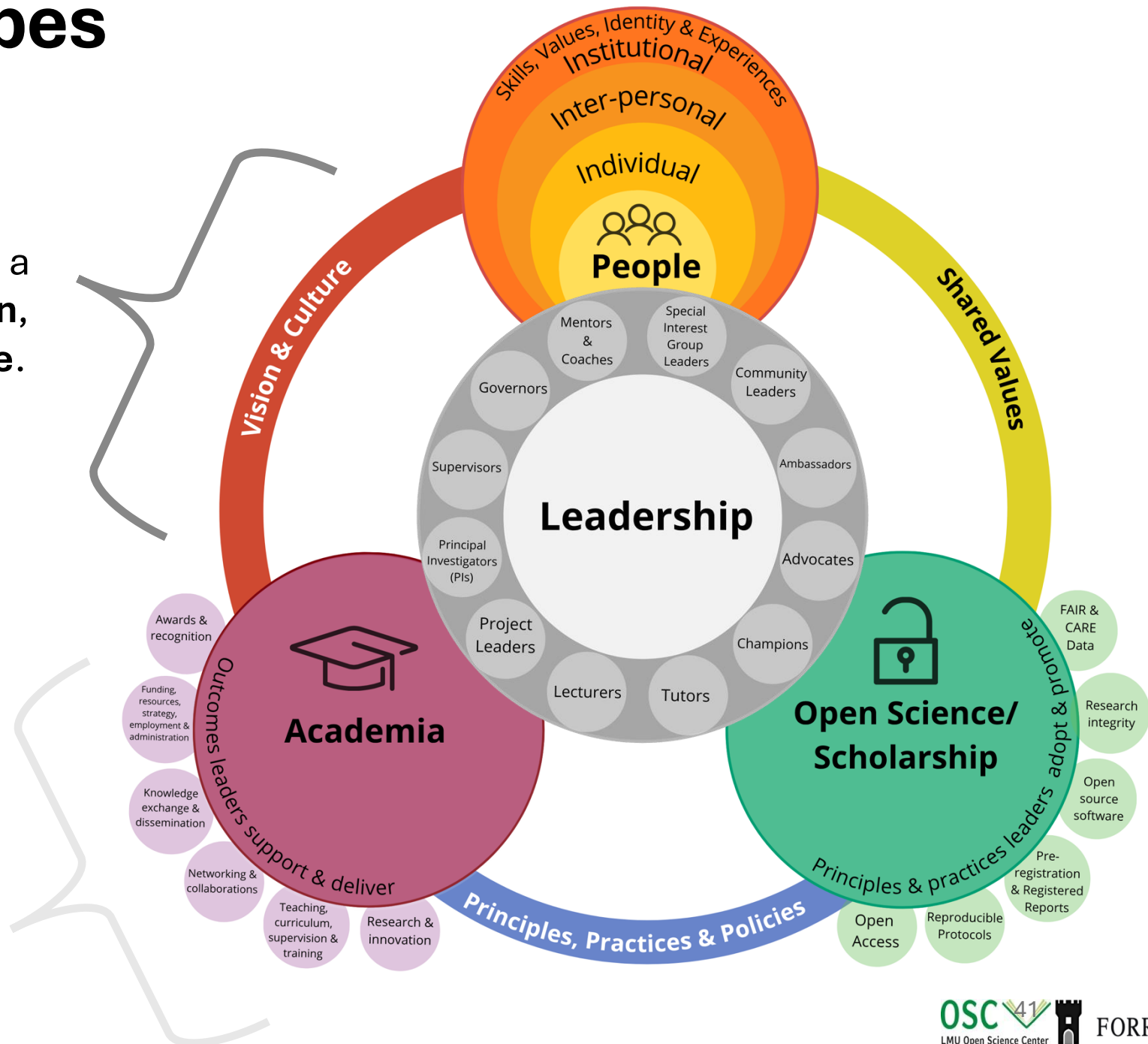


Current context shapes research culture

Leadership is a **critical** mediating factor in fostering a research culture that is **open**, **equitable** and **collaborative**.

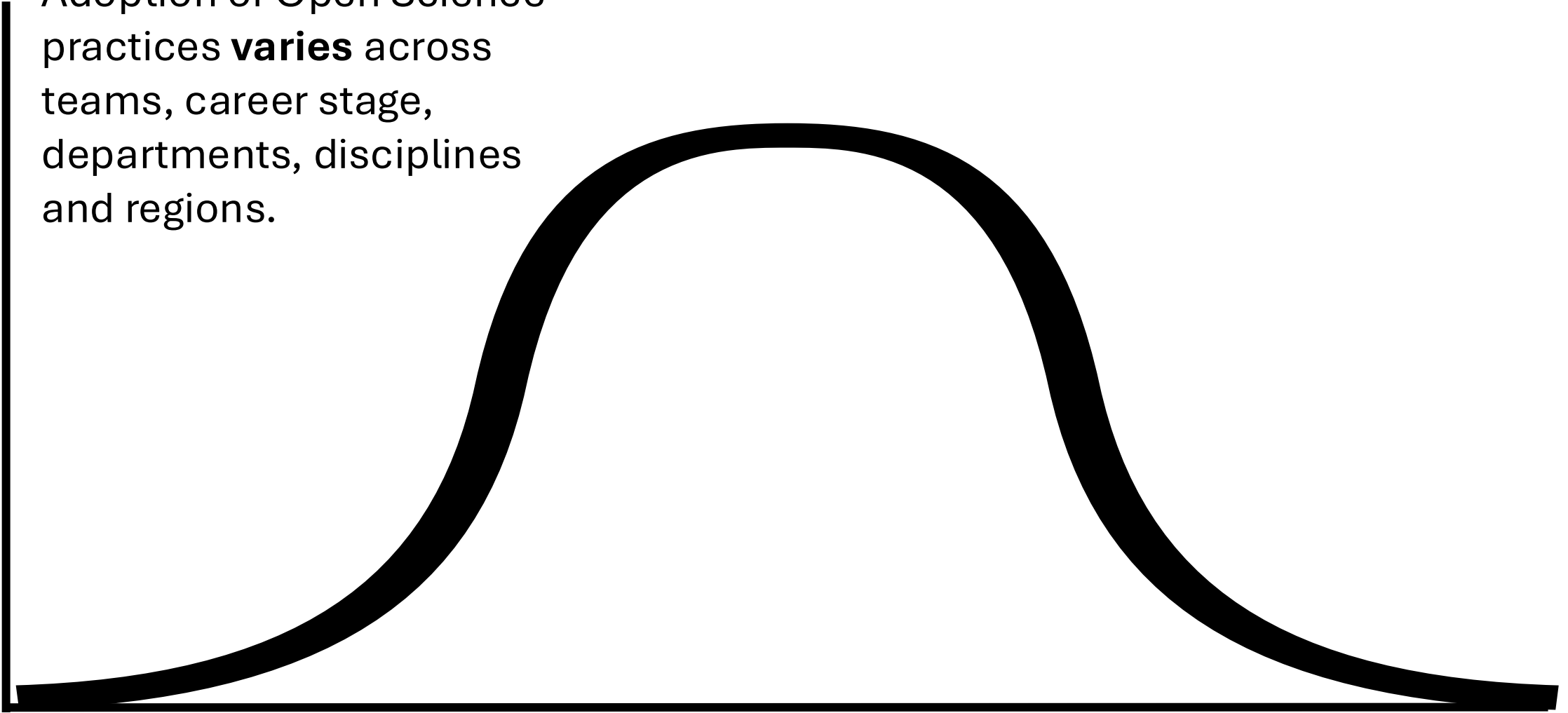
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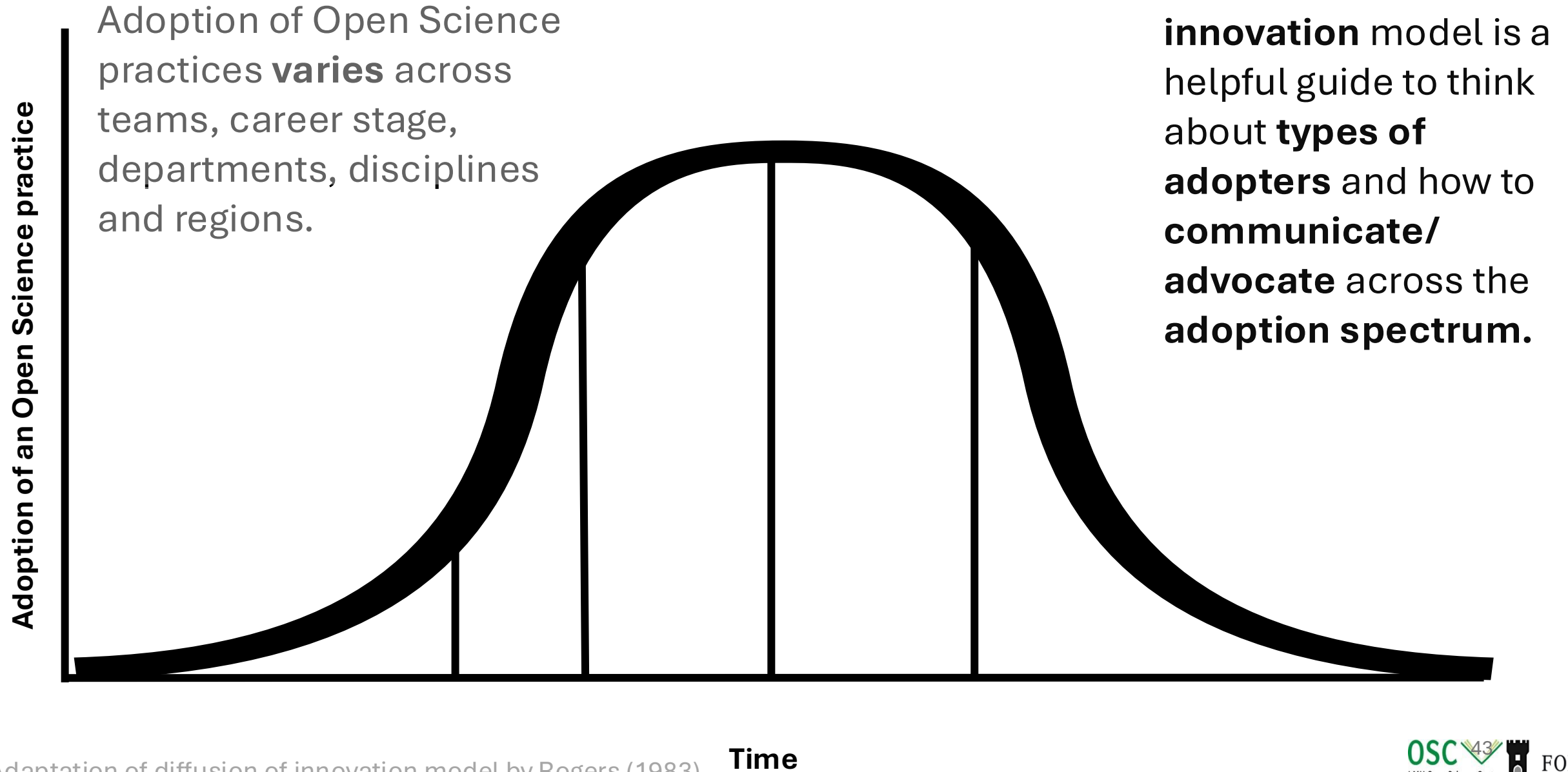


Adoption of Open Science practices varies

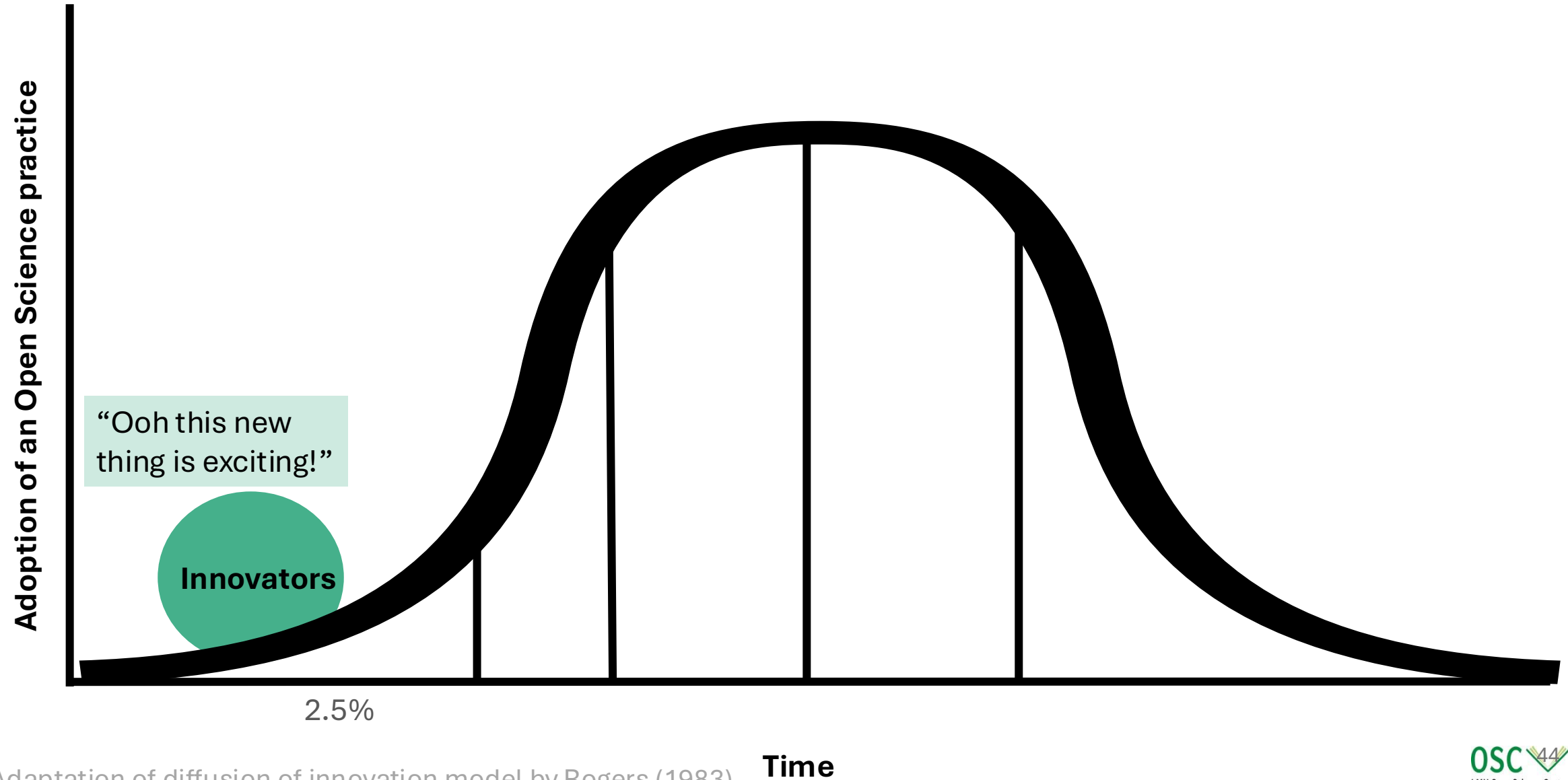
Adoption of Open Science practices **varies** across teams, career stage, departments, disciplines and regions.



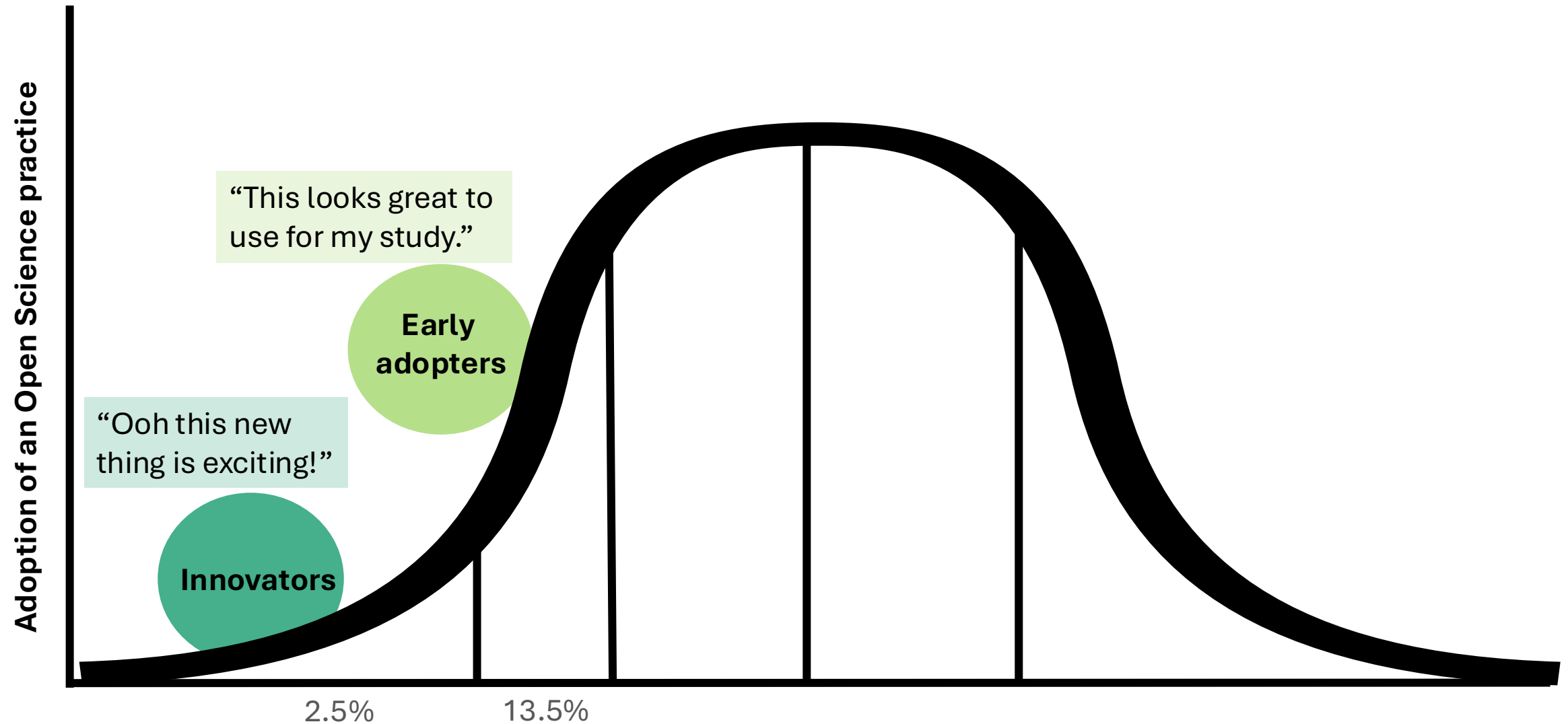
Culture change curve



Culture change curve: innovators



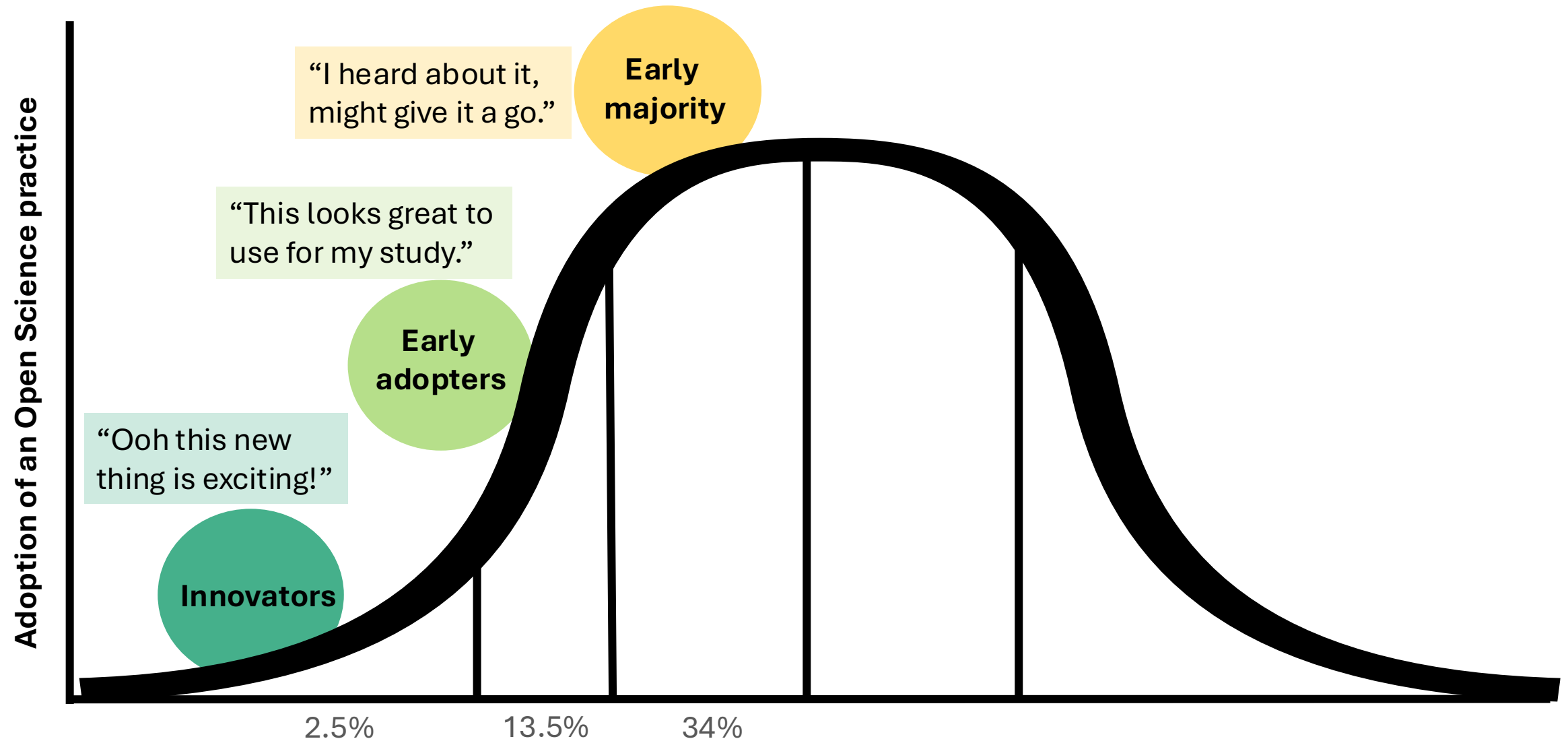
Culture change curve: early adopters



Adaptation of diffusion of innovation model by Rogers (1983)

Time

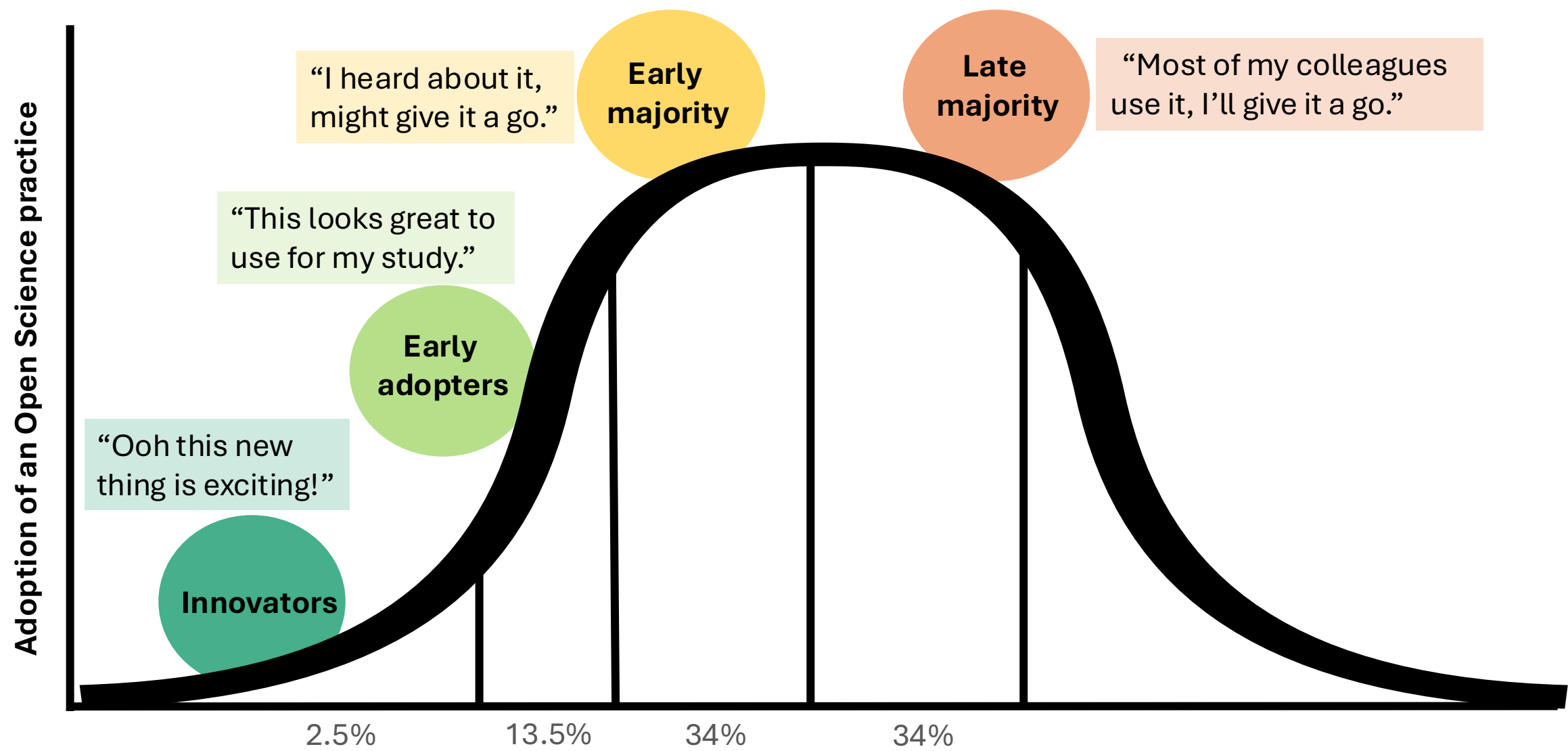
Culture change curve: early majority



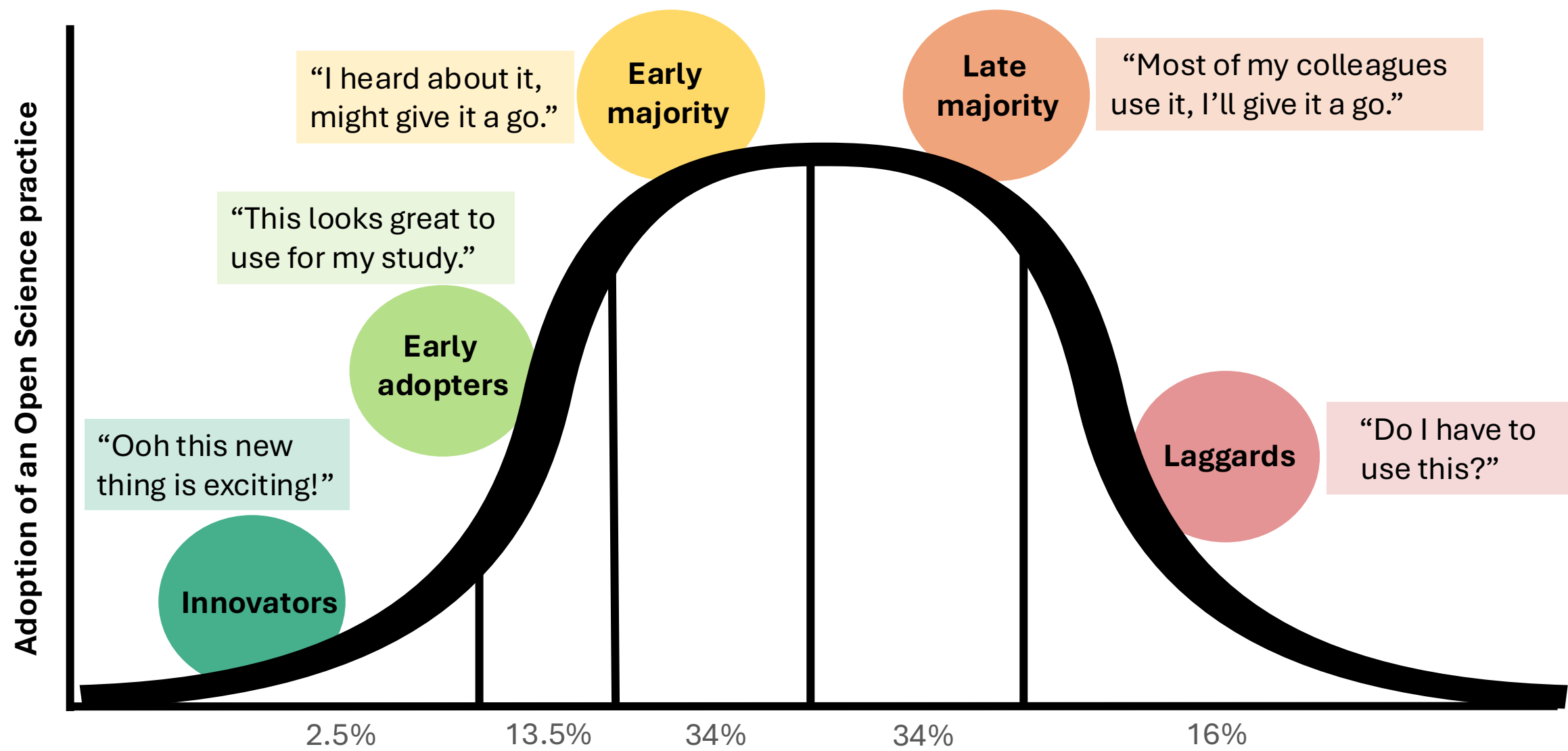
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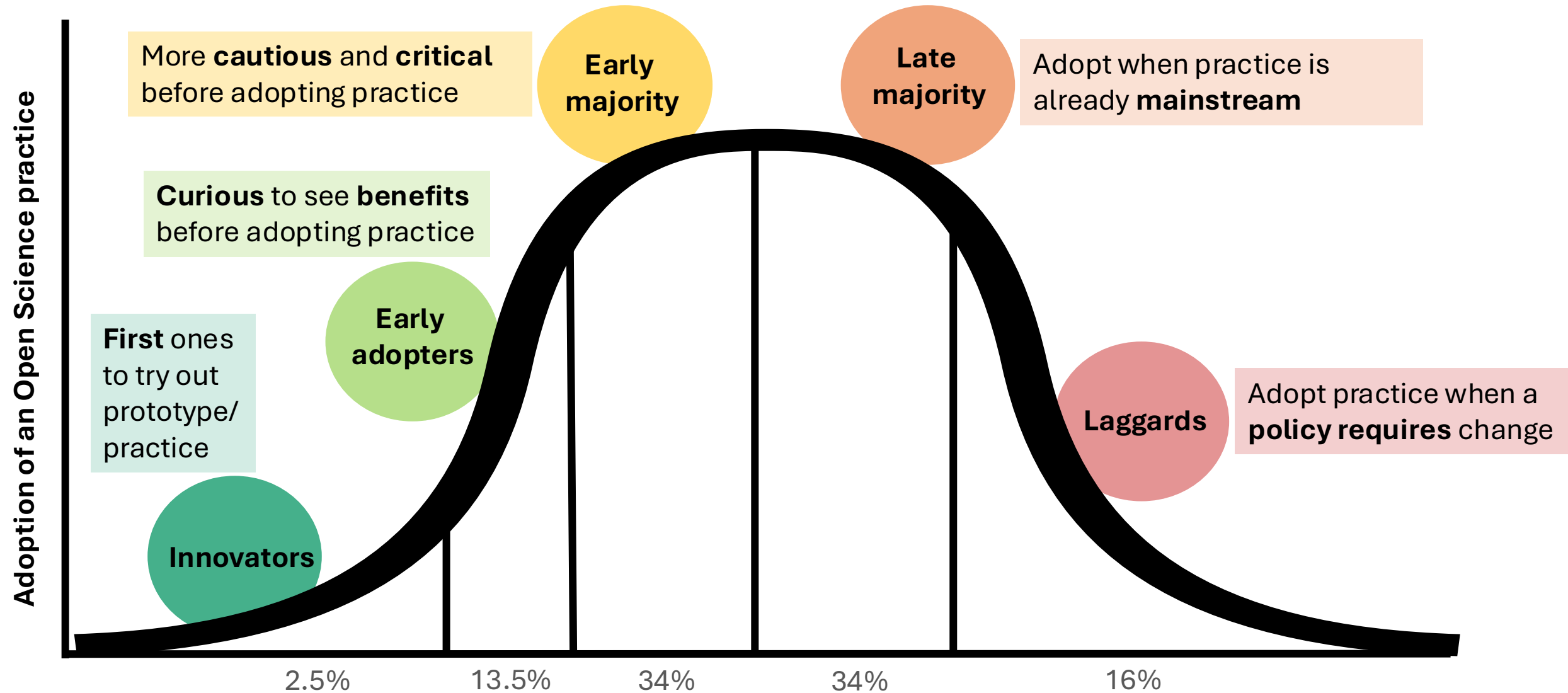
Culture change curve: late majority



Culture change curve: laggards



Culture change curve: time to adoption



Varying norms and awareness of Open Science practices

1. **Which** Open Science practice do you think is the **most used**? And the **least**?



Open Science practices

Open Data

Open Code

Open Materials

Open Research

Open Peer Review

Preprints

Preregistration

Registered Reports

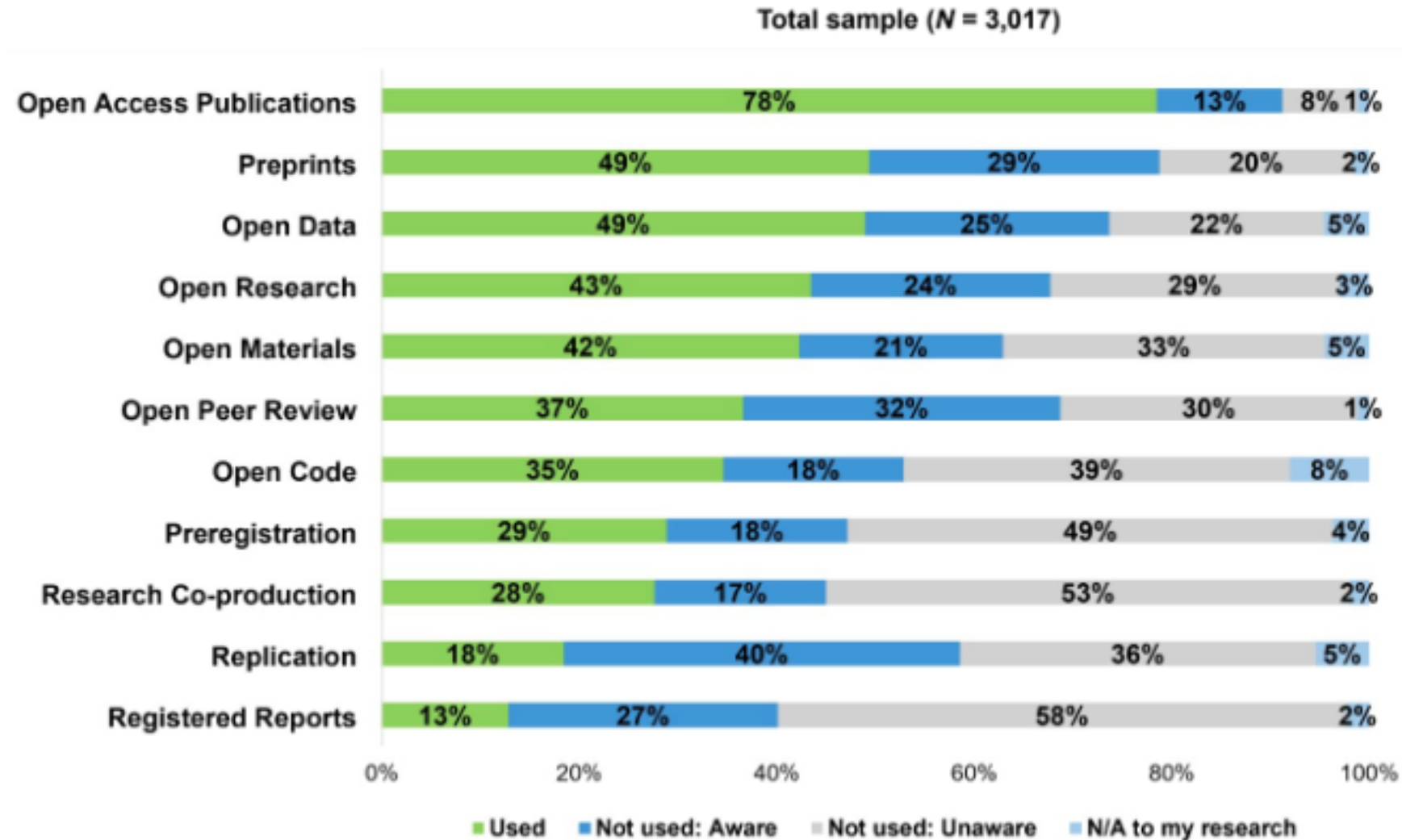
Replication

Open Access Publications

Research Co-production

Open Access is now the norm

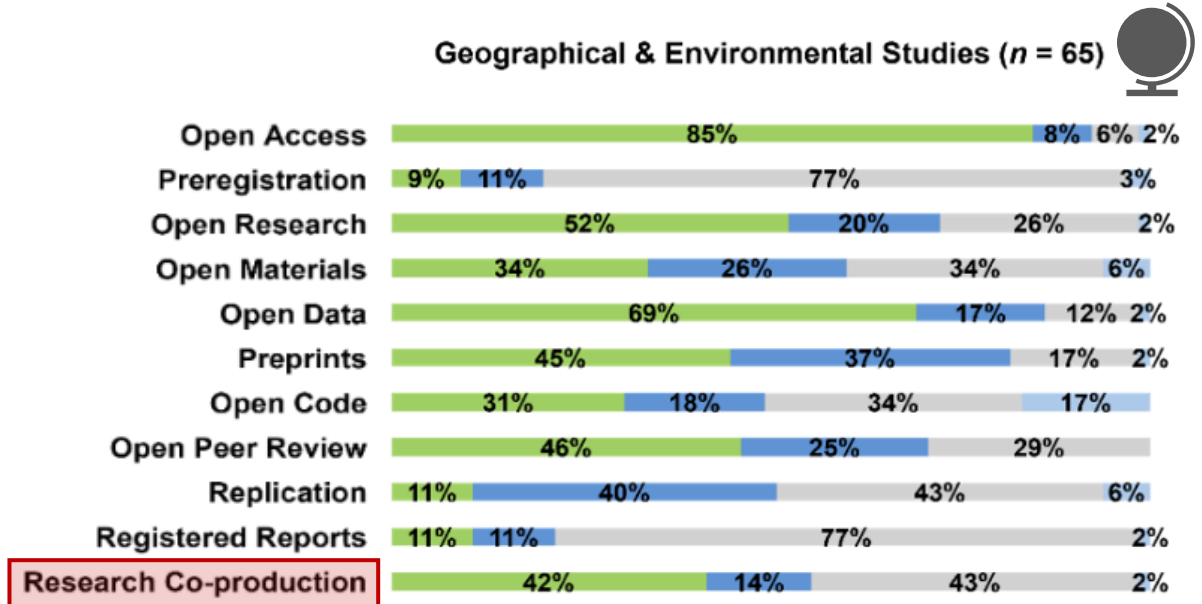
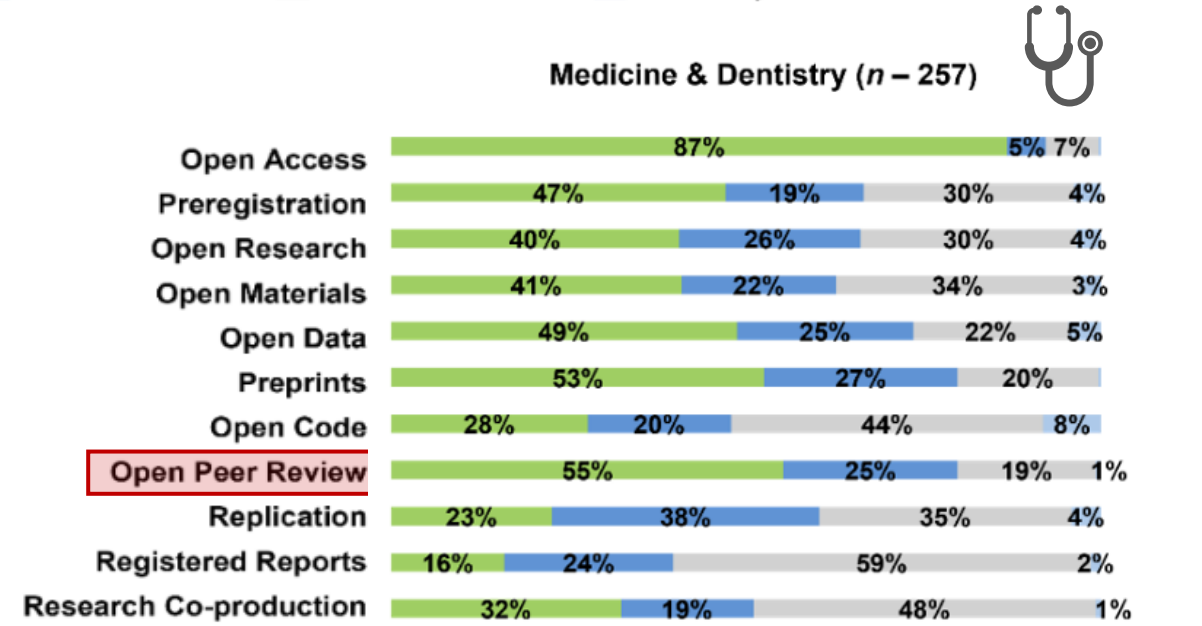
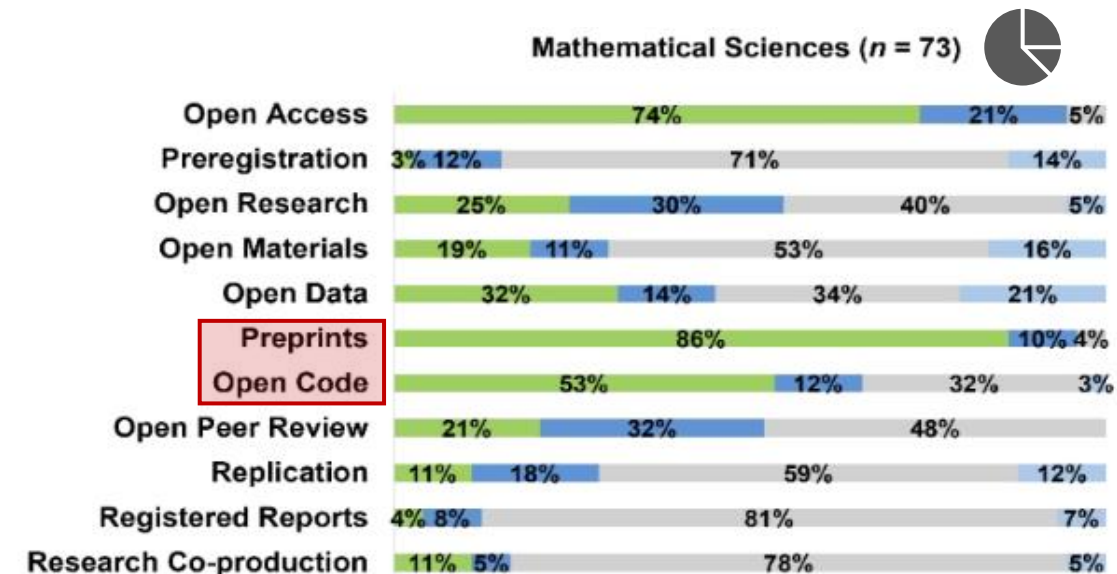
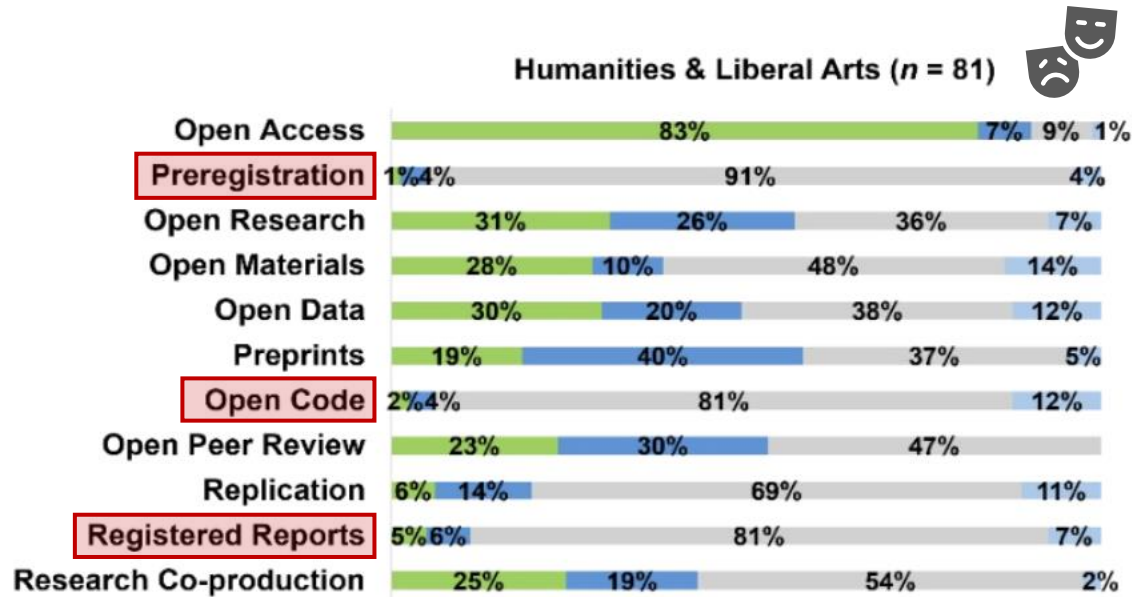
Adapted from Pennington et al. 2026



Varying norms and awareness across disciplines

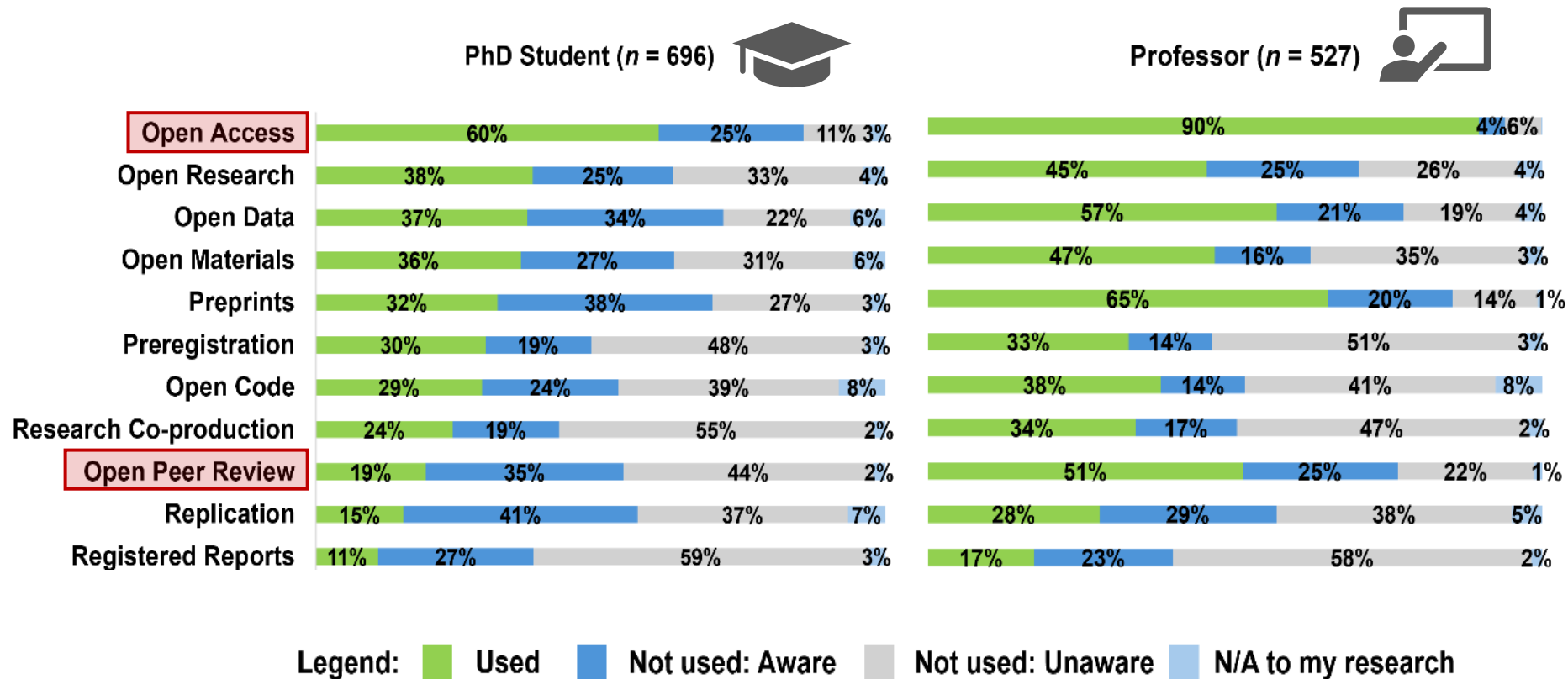
Adapted from Pennington et al. 2026

Legend: ■ Used ■ Not used: Aware ■ Not used: Unaware ■ N/A to my research



Varying norms and awareness: career stage

Adapted from Pennington et al. 2026

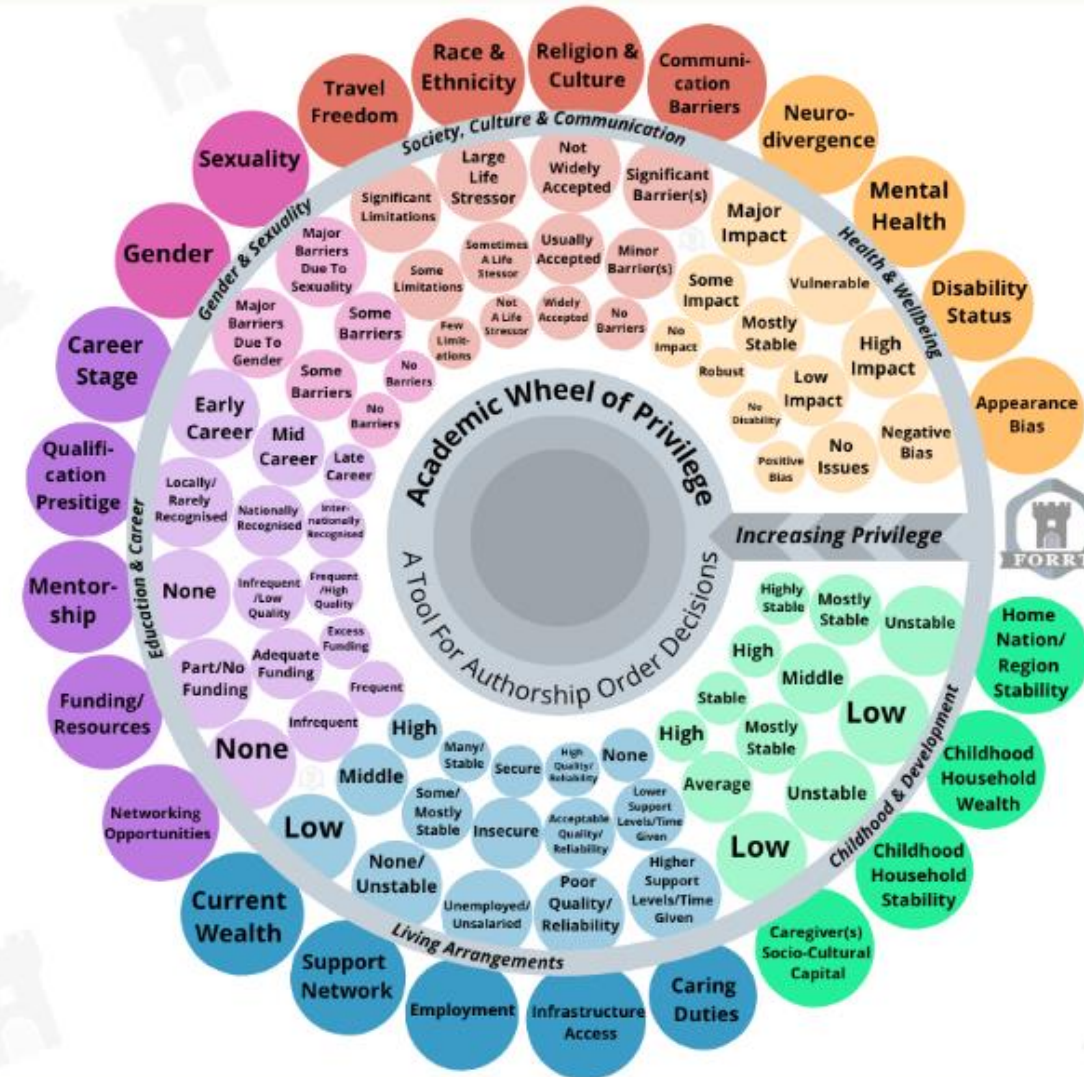


Social location influences leadership and research culture

Social and cultural factors such as **gender**, **ethnicity**, **employment status**, **travel freedoms**, etc. influence how you do research.

Social location influences leadership and research culture

Social and cultural factors such as **gender, ethnicity, employment status, travel freedoms, etc.** influence how you do research.



The **Academic Wheel of Privilege** is a framework to reflect on how social location influences academic activities (e.g. **authorship decisions, building collaborations, study design, and leadership**).

Adapted from
Middleton et al. 2026
(CC BY NC SA)

Figure 1. The Academic Wheel of Privilege with 24 baseline socio-cultural categories across six sectors. The effect of the concentric rings makes it appear like a funnel – the closer you get to the centre the more you are likely to spiral into more privilege. An extended description of the figure can be found in S2, with accompanying bibliography for each socio-cultural category in S8.

Social location influences leadership style

Each of us map onto a different **social location**, which **can change** over time.

Our social location influences our **values**, **actions** and the **research culture** we foster as leaders.

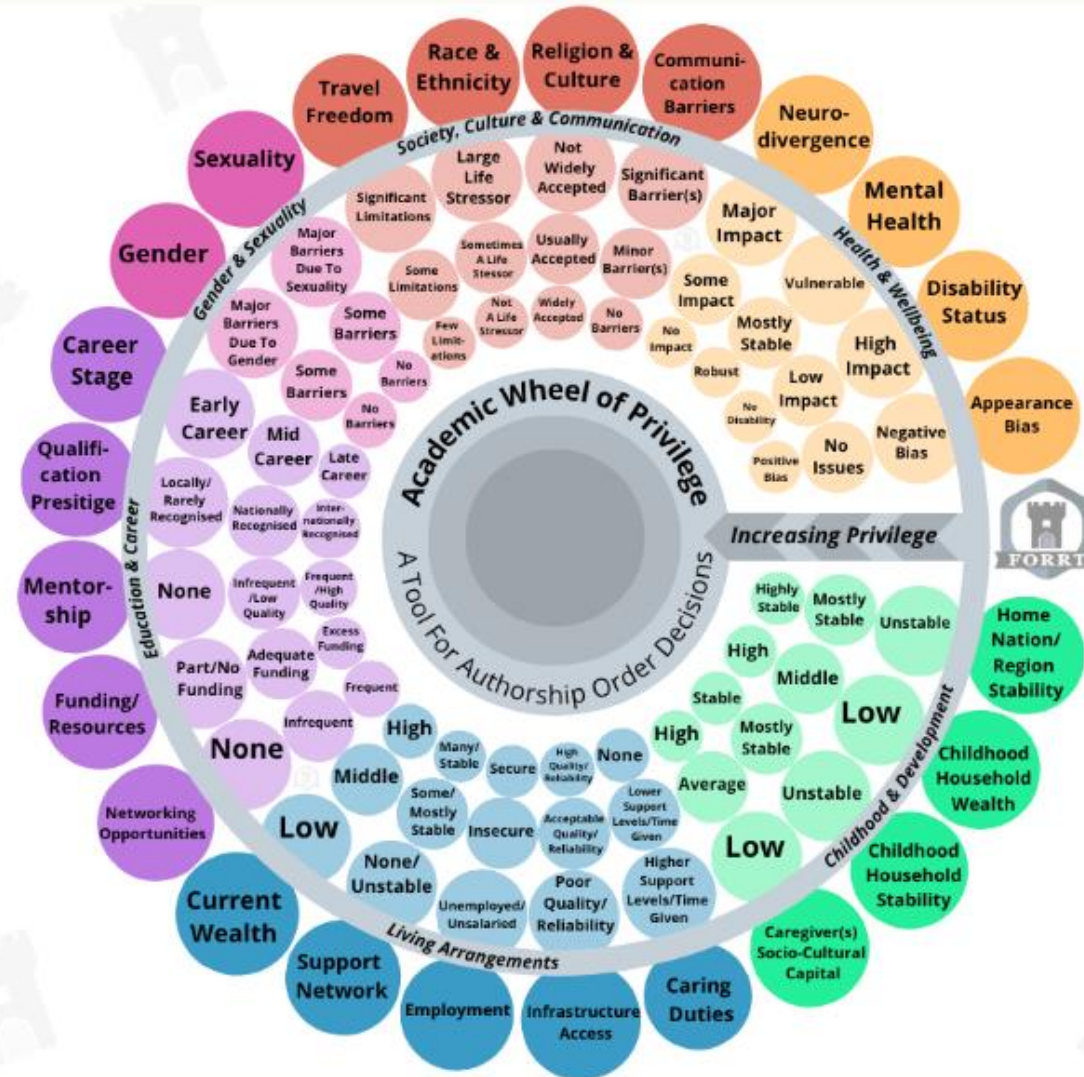


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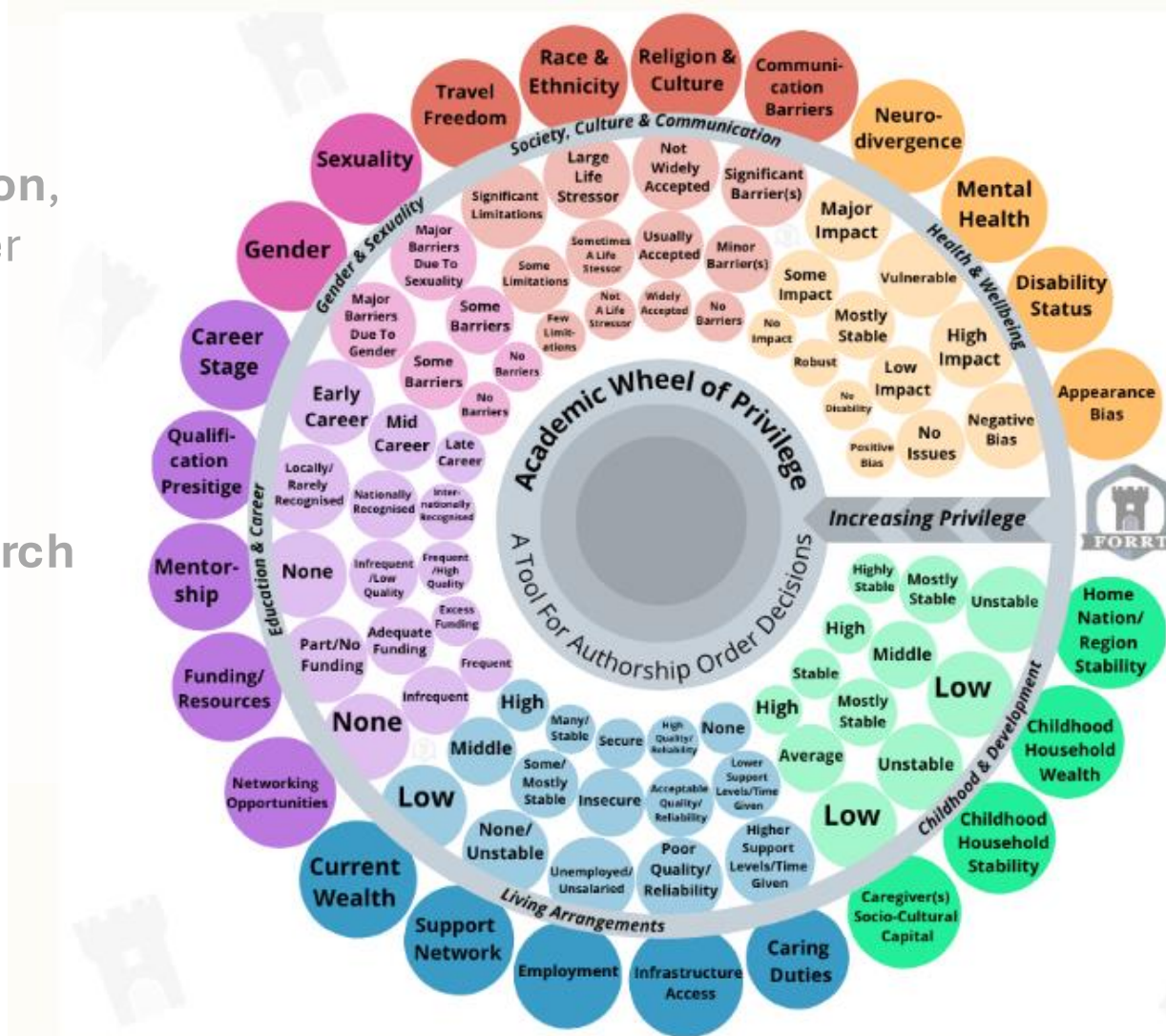


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Example: teaching a reproducible coding workshop



The workshop is likely to be **led differently** if you are a tenured male professor, disabled post-doctoral researcher or a female international PhD student.

Extension exercise in workbook section 7.2:
What is my social location?

Social location and adoption of Open Science practices

Funding/resources

Ability to pay for Article Processing Charges (APCs) for **Open Access** publications

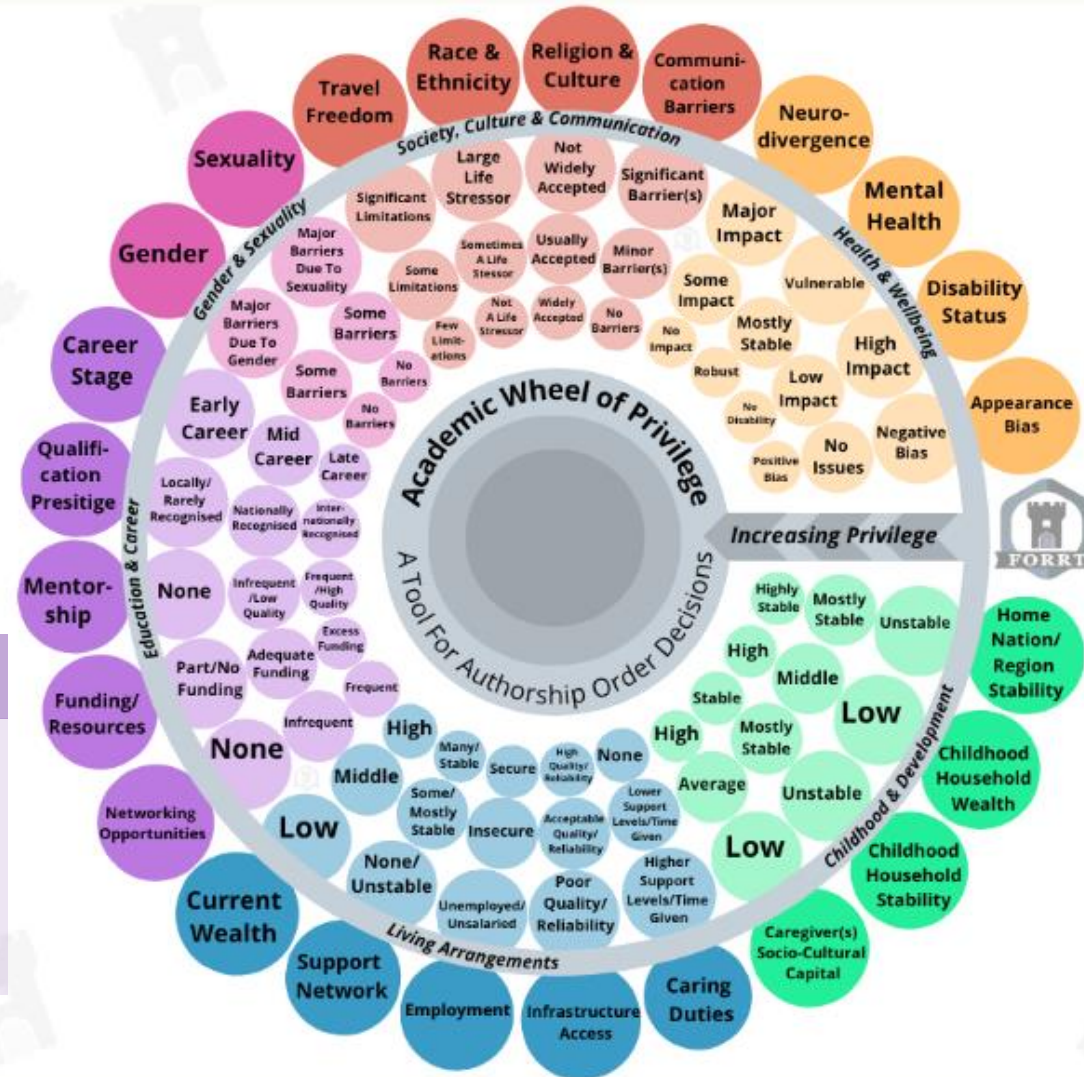


Figure 1. The Academic Wheel of Privilege with 24 baseline socio-cultural categories across six sectors. The effect of the concentric rings makes it appear like a funnel – the closer you get to the centre the more you are likely to spiral into more privilege. An extended description of the figure can be found in S2, with accompanying bibliography for each socio-cultural category in S8.

Adapted from
Middleton et al. 2026
(CC BY NC SA)

Social location and adoption of Open Science practices

Culture and language

Study design, language accessibility of **Open Educational Resources**.

Utility of **open peer review** perceived differently across cultures

Funding/resources

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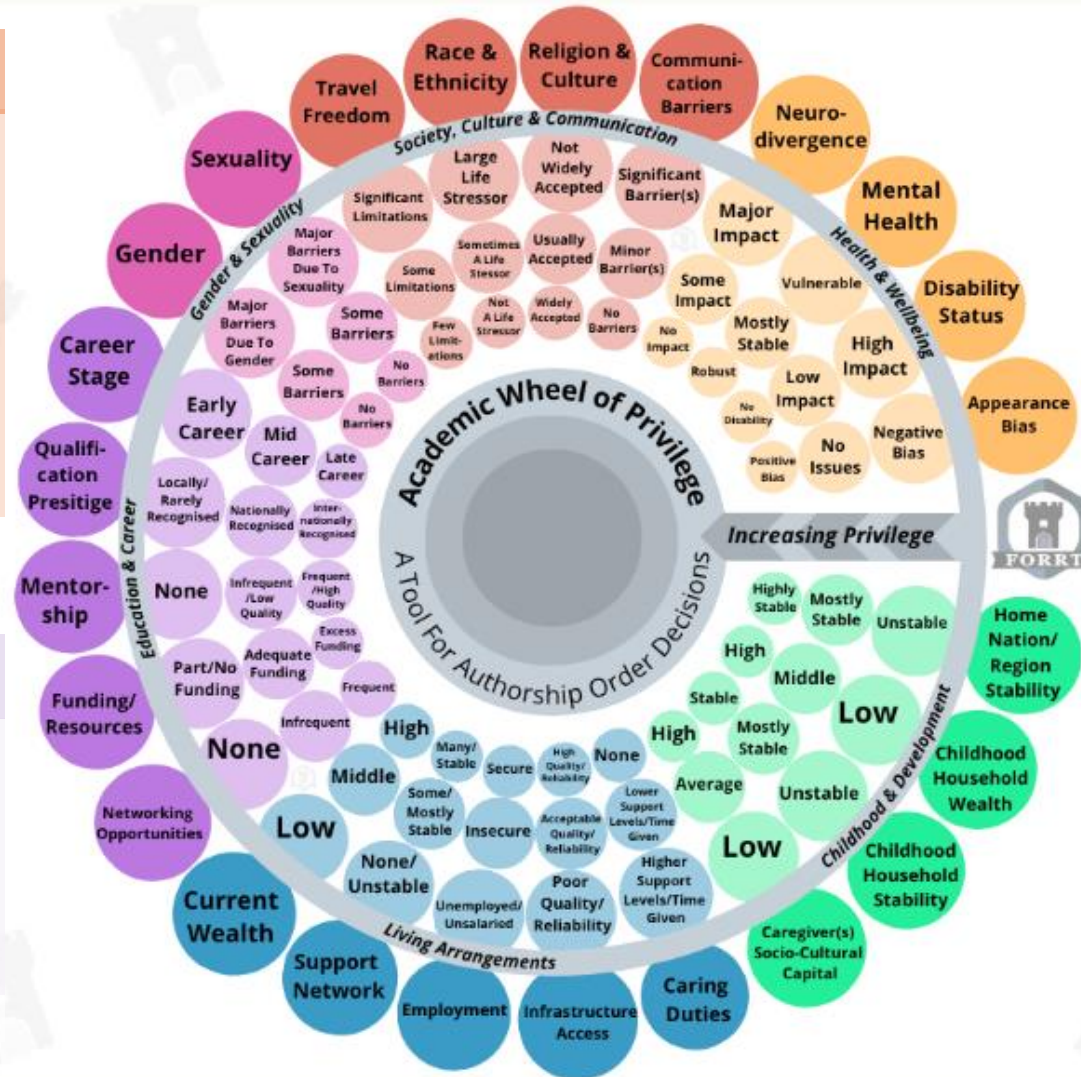


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Disability status

Accessibility of **digital platforms** and time to implement Open Science practices

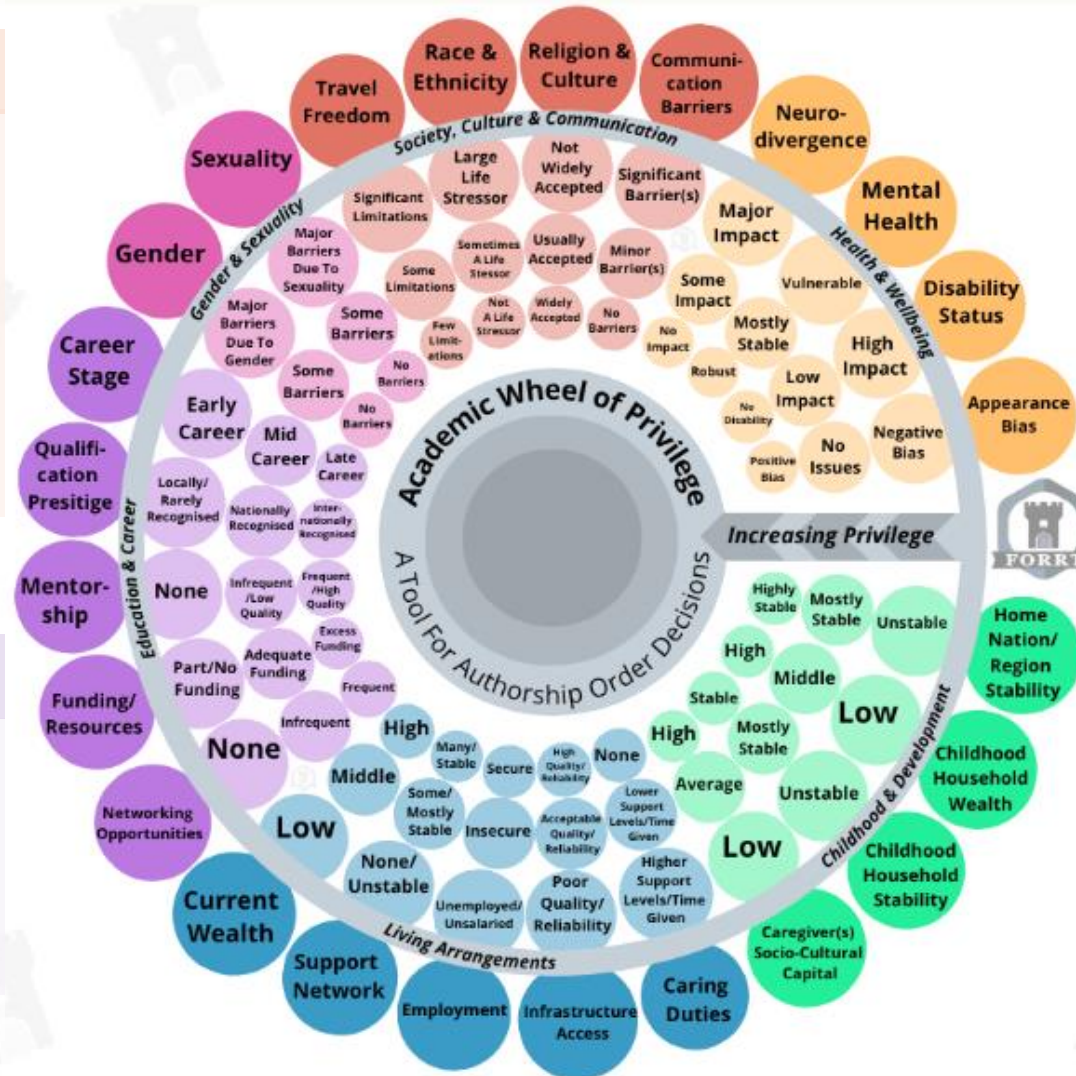


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Home nation stability

Ability to make and sustain collaborations or engage in **Big Team Science** projects

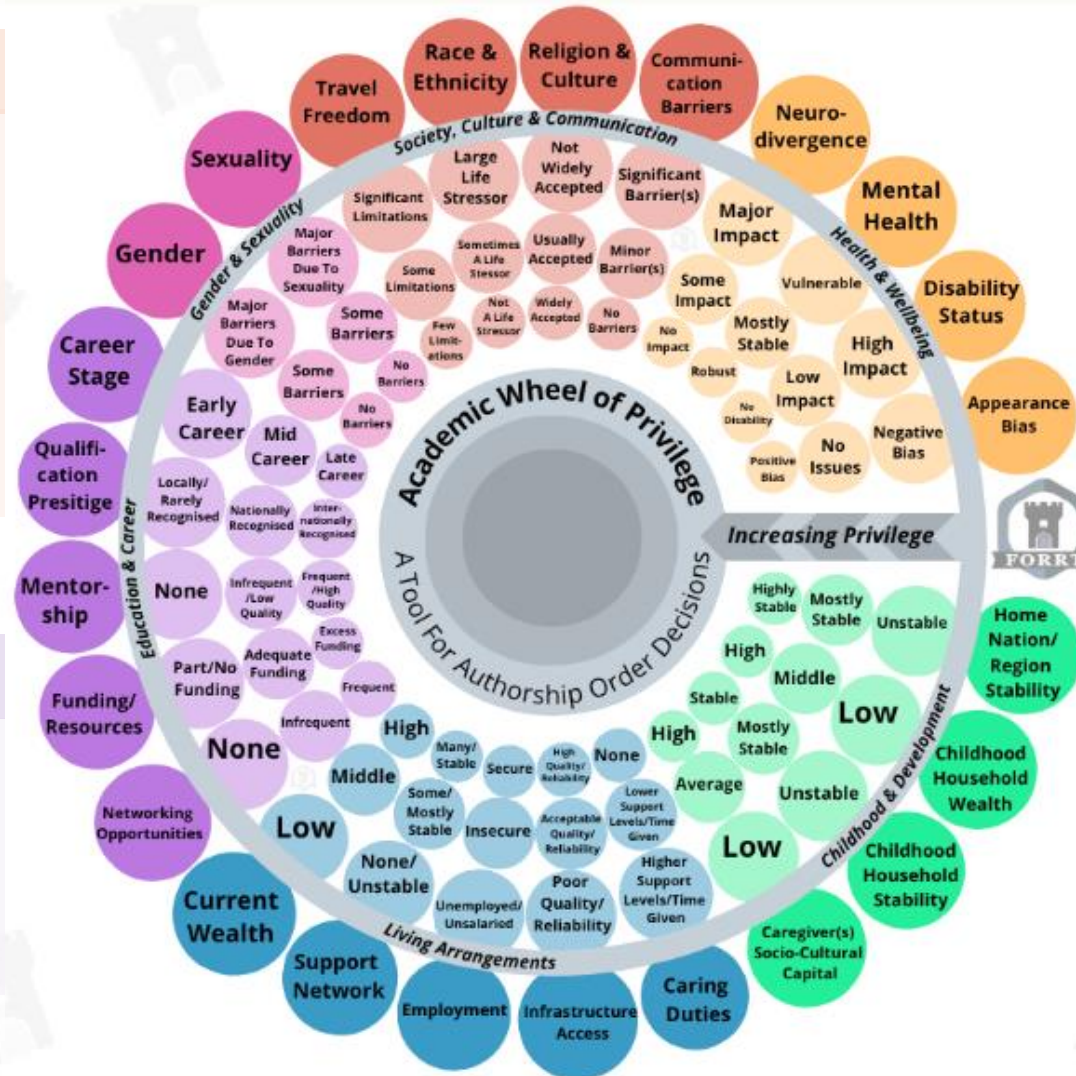


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Disability status

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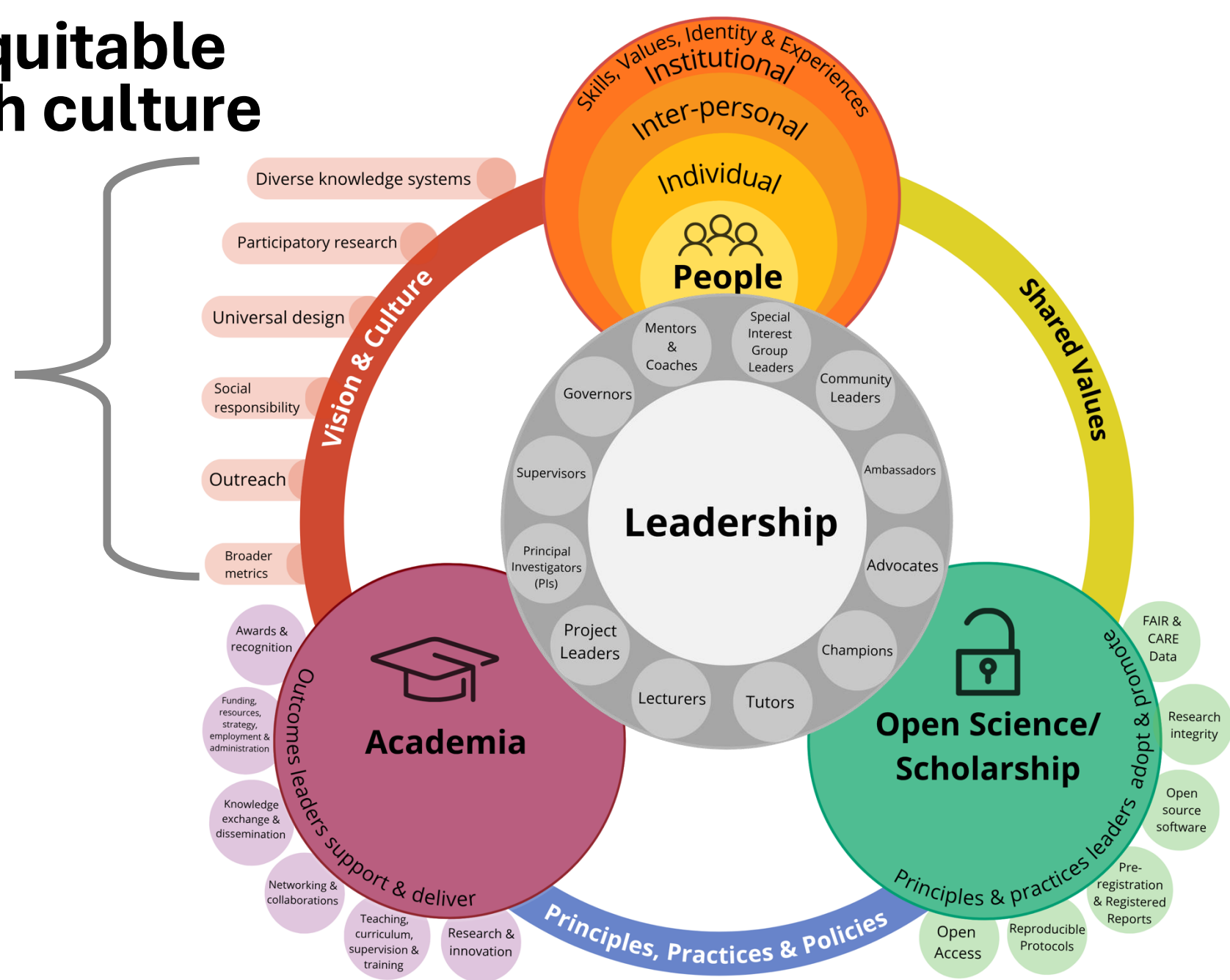
Ability to make and sustain collaborations or engage in **Big Team Science** projects

Employment status

Insecure or short-term employment influences capacity to do a **preregistration** or **registered report**

Towards an open, equitable and diverse research culture

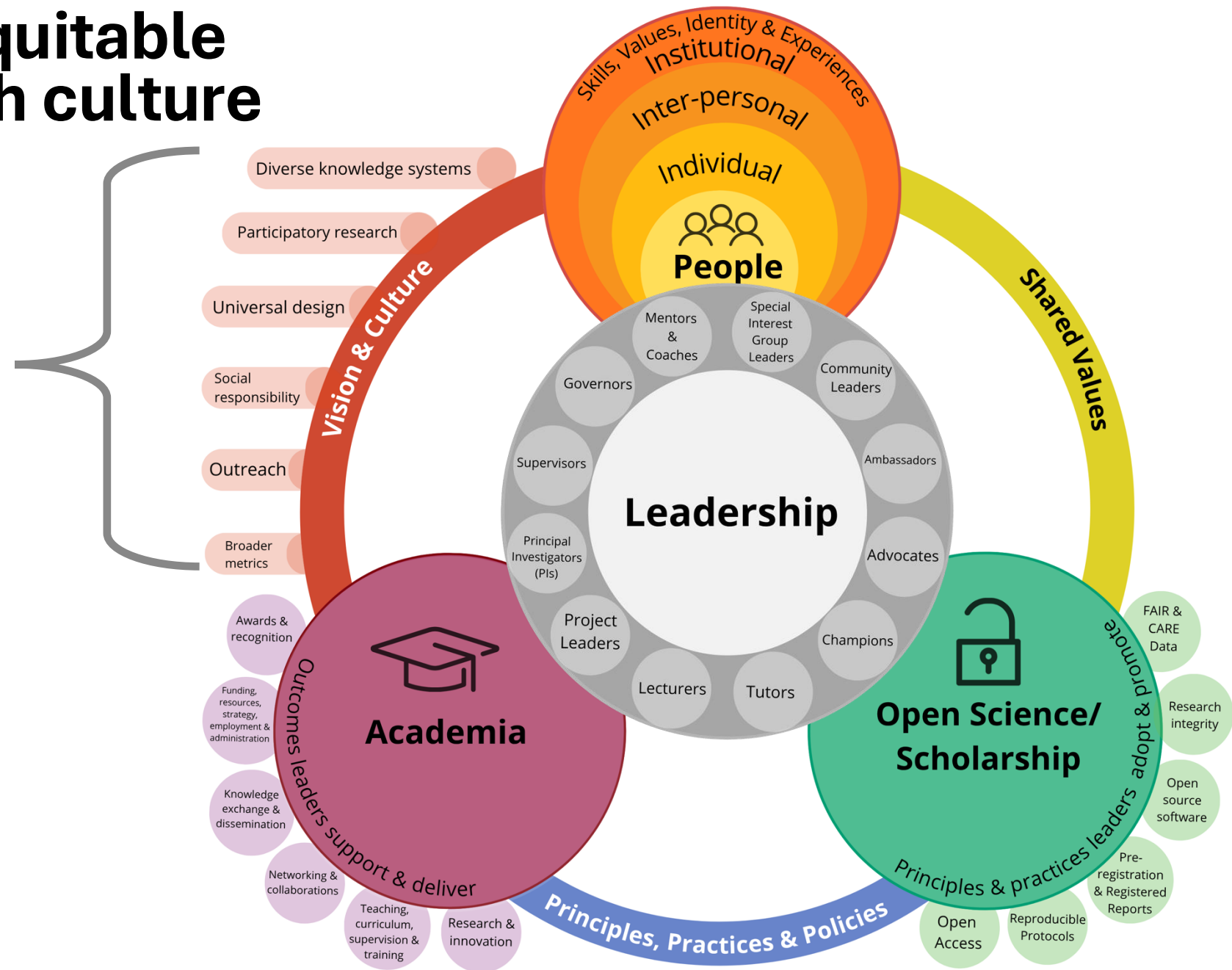
A **healthy** research culture **enables** high quality research (which also **safeguards** research integrity)



Towards an open, equitable and diverse research culture

A **healthy** research culture **enables** high quality research (which also **safeguards** research integrity)

Identify what is **working well** and what is not

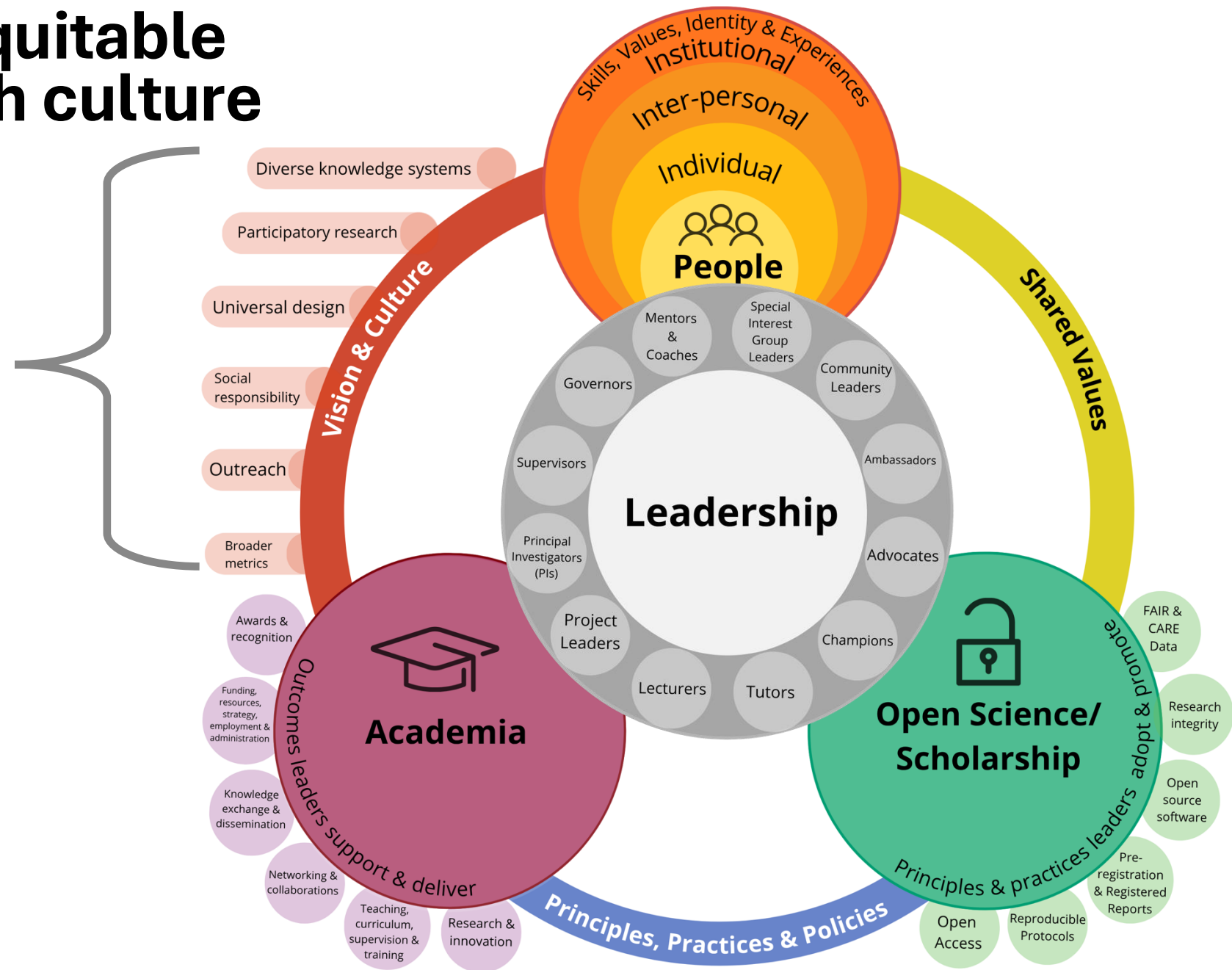


Towards an open, equitable and diverse research culture

A **healthy** research culture **enables** high quality research (which also **safeguards** research integrity)

Identify what is **working well** and what is not

Recognize how your **actions** shape the research culture



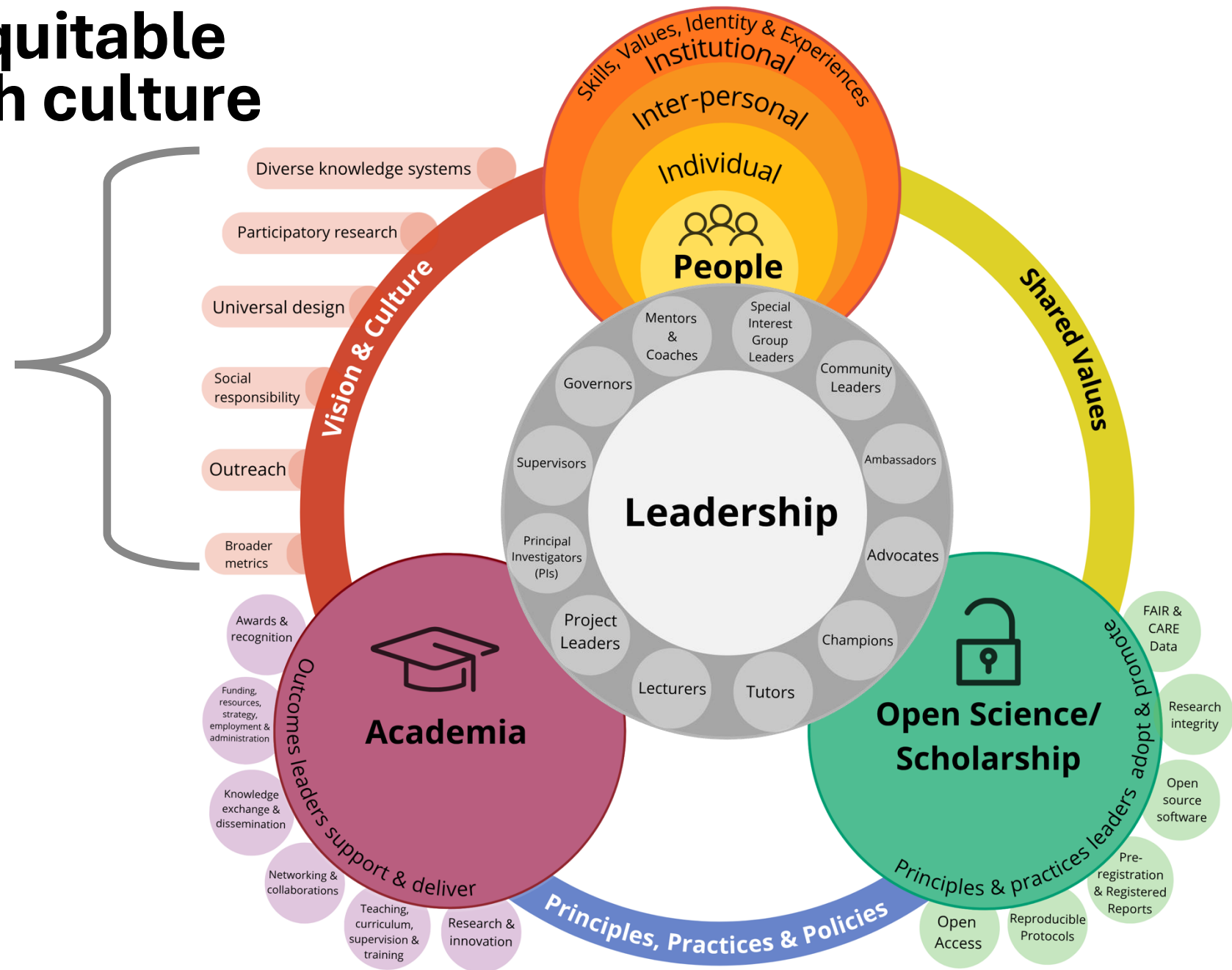
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Try out **new** ways of **thinking** and **working**



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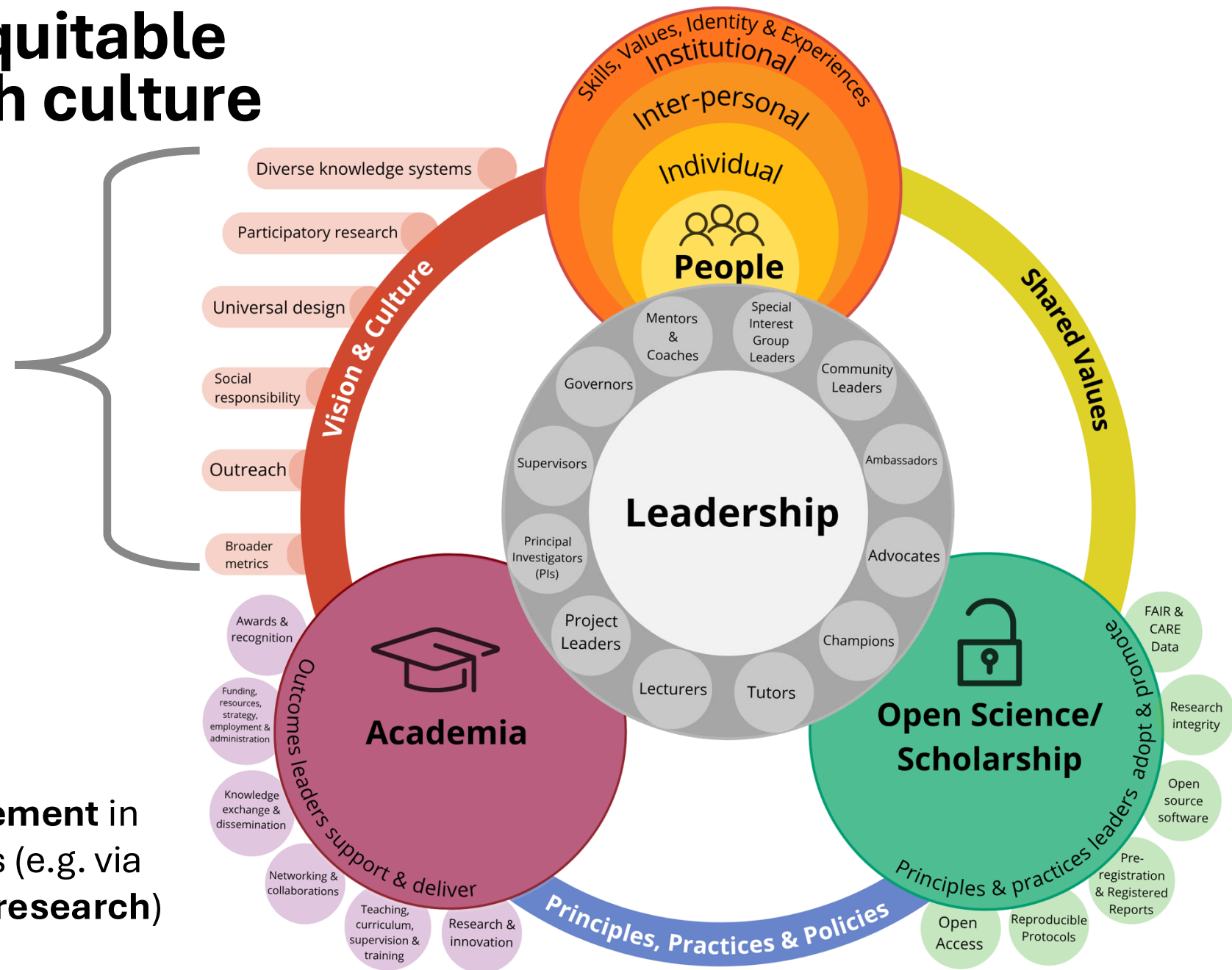
Identify what is **working well** and what is not

Recognize how your **actions** shape the research culture

Try out **new** ways of **thinking** and **working**

Increase opportunities for **engagement** in the learning and research process (e.g. via **Universal Design, participatory research**)

Check your workbooks for additional resources!



Towards an open, equitable and diverse research culture: Universal Design (UD)

The **proactive** creation of spaces designed with human **variability** in mind.

Aims to **minimize barriers** and be **usable** by the widest range of people.

Increase opportunities for **engagement** in the learning and research process (e.g. via **Universal Design**, participatory research)

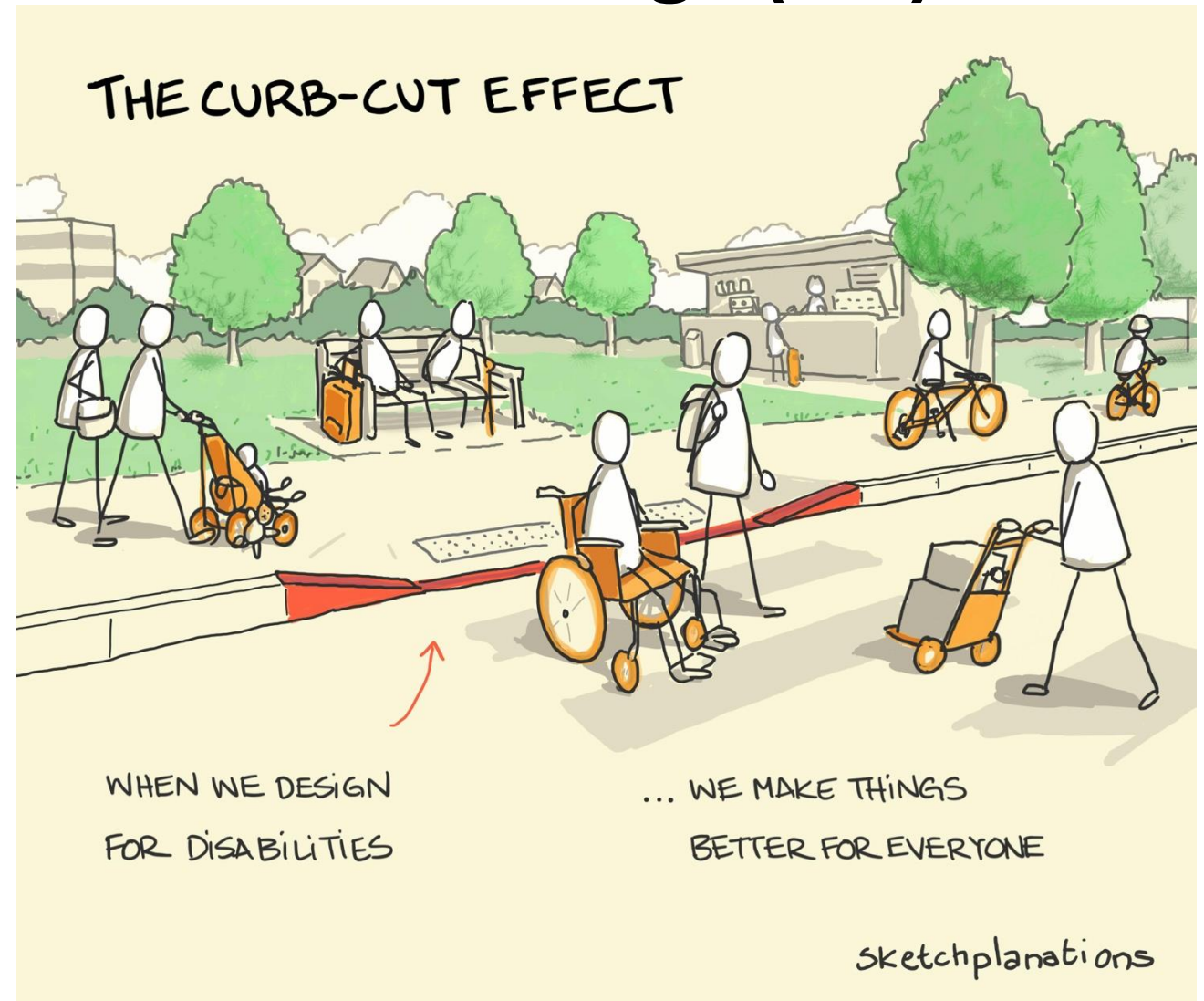


Image source: <https://sketchplanations.com/the-curb-cut-effect>

Towards an open, equitable and diverse research culture: Universal Design (UD)

Example: Extend FAIR principles to include **Universal Design** to information sharing.

Include **plain language** summaries, captioned **video** or **audio** format summaries to research outputs/educational materials (Phan et al. 2025).

Many people benefit (e.g. neurodivergent, disabled, non-native speakers, those with caring duties)!

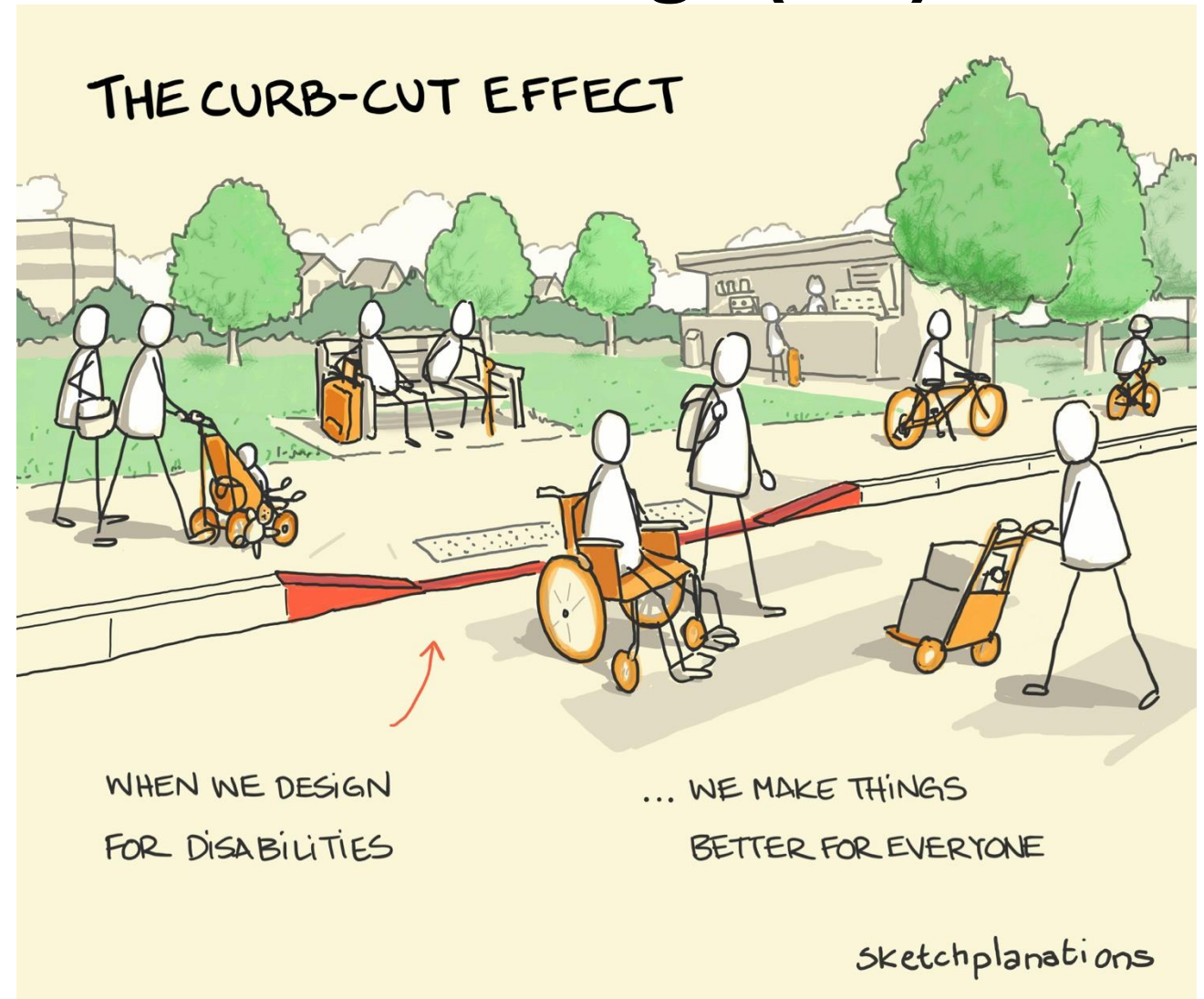
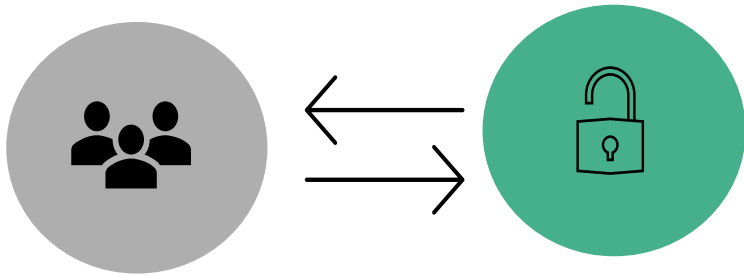


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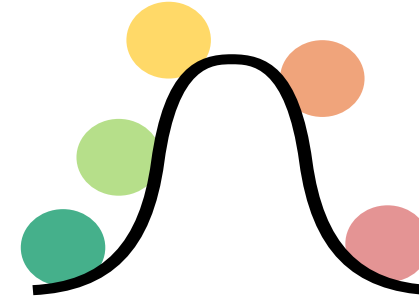
Interim summary



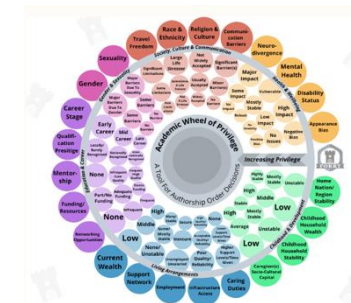
Effective leadership and Open Science have many **shared values**



Adoption of Open Science practices **varies** across teams, career stage, departments, disciplines and nations.



There are **5 adopter types** of Open Science practices: innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority and laggards



Social and cultural identities influences how we navigate research spaces, **leadership** and **engagement** with Open Science practices

What does leadership in Open Science/Scholarship mean to you?



Dr Beth Montague-Hellen

Head of Library & Information Services
at Francis Crick Institute

“Leadership involves knowing **where you're going**.
There's no point in rigidly adhering to open
research practices if you don't know
why you're doing them.

We need to be open to trying new things and
dropping practices that no longer work for us to
help get to the goal of an **accessible** and
reproducible future for research”

Case study on leadership in Open Science: FORRT



Dr Flavio Azevedo (he/him)

Asst. Prof Interdisciplinary
Social Sciences (Utrecht)
and FORRT Director



FORRT

What does leadership in Open Science/Scholarship mean to you?



Dr. Flávio Azevedo

Assistant professor in Interdisciplinary
Social Sciences at Utrecht University

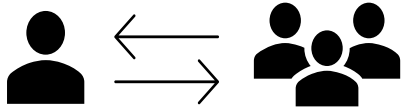
Director of FORRT (Framework for Open
and Reproducible Research Training)

“Leadership in Open Science means **building the conditions** for others to participate, contribute, and lead.

It is not only about making research more transparent, but also about **transforming the structures** that determine whose knowledge is valued, whose labor is recognized, and who has the resources to shape scientific practice.

Leadership, to me, is **collective, reflexive, and accountable**: it is about creating infrastructures and communities that make a more open, equitable, and just science possible.”

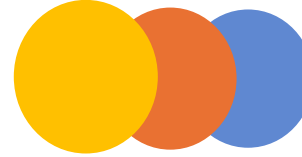
Final summary



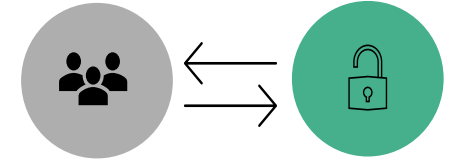
Leadership is about people!



Self-leadership is critical step towards leading others



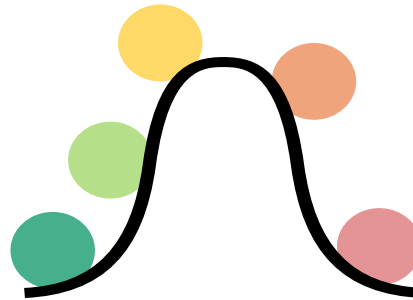
Values shape actions



Effective leadership and Open Science share many values



Research/learning culture shaped by our values, social location and work context



Culture curve can be used to identify types of Open Science adopters



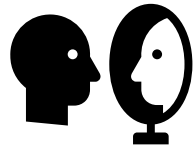
Awareness and adoption of Open Science practices varies

Leadership qualities we practiced

We've worked our **emotional intelligence** muscles in this session!



Empathy



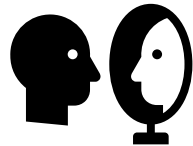
Self-awareness

Leadership qualities we practiced

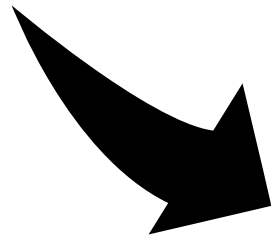
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Empathy



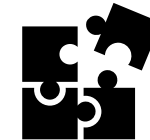
Self-awareness



In the next two sessions we will work on:



Knowledge



Problem solving



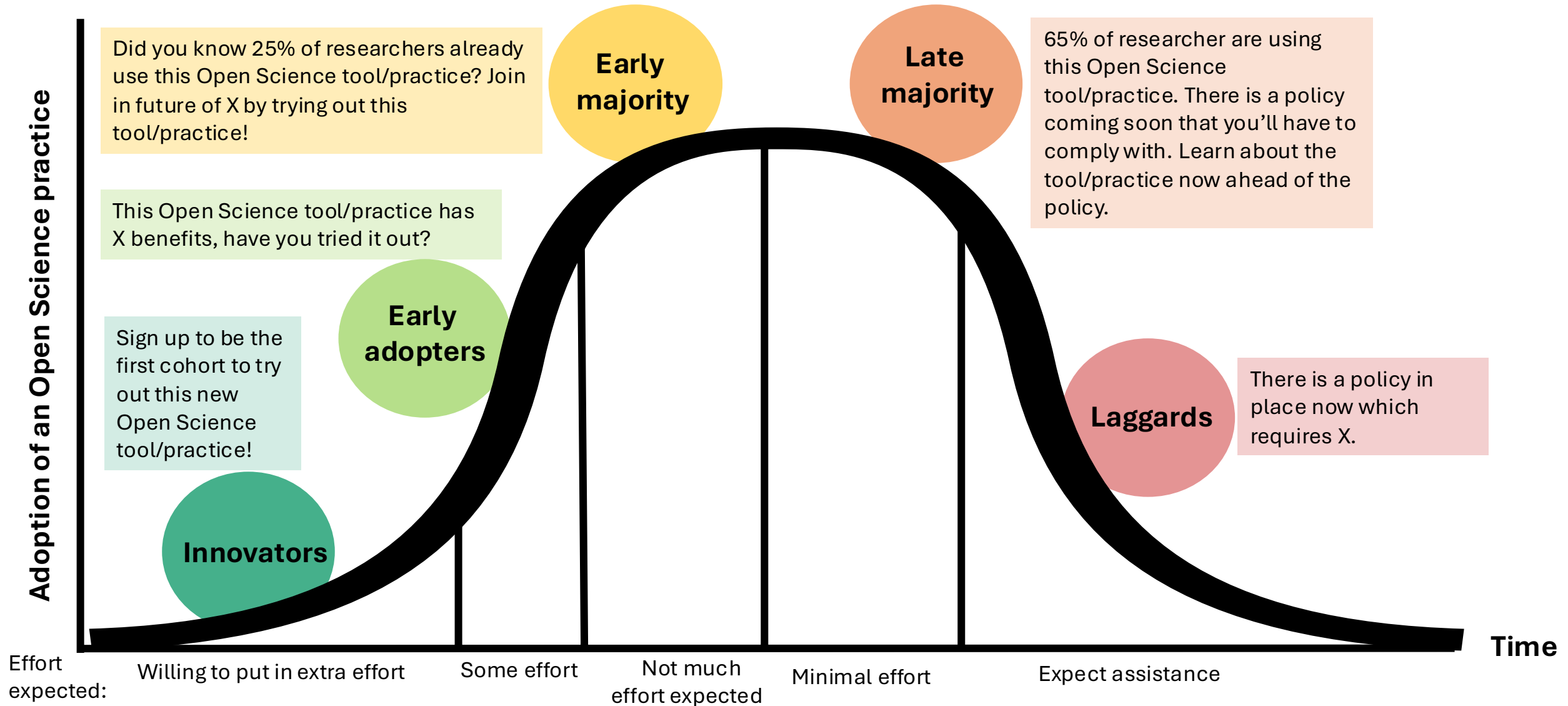
Collaboration

Questions



Communicating with different adopter types

How to **tailor messaging** depending on adopter type based on the effort adopters expect.



Adaptation of diffusion of innovation model by Rogers (1983); Skelly & Rusu (2023)

Acknowledgements

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Elisabeth Bik, Fotis Mystakopoulos, Beth Montague-Hellen

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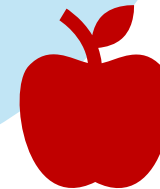
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Break time
10:30-10:45 CEST



Next up: Navigating leadership in Open Science: challenges