



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

# **BETWEEN SCIENCE AND POLICY: INTERPRETING AND PRACTICING KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE IN THE UK ACADEMIA**

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# IN THIS PRESENTATION...

1. Part 1: Discussion of the broader academic context of KE;
2. Part 2: Discussion of the different framings of KE;
3. Part 3: Discussion of practices;
4. Part 4: Discussion on managing the boundaries between science and policy/practice;
5. Feedback

# RESEARCH DESIGN

# **BACKGROUND AND KEY CONCEPTS**

# RELEVANCE OF SCIENCE

- Tension between autonomy and embeddedness
- Integration and separation models
- Autonomy of science as a barrier to effective problem solving
- Autonomy of science as a guarantor of 'epistemic authority'



# INSTITUTIONAL LOGICS

“the socially constructed, historical patterns of cultural symbols and material practices including assumptions, values, and beliefs, by which individuals and organizations provide meaning to their daily activity, organize time and space, and reproduce their lives and experiences.”

Thornton et al. , 2012, p. 2

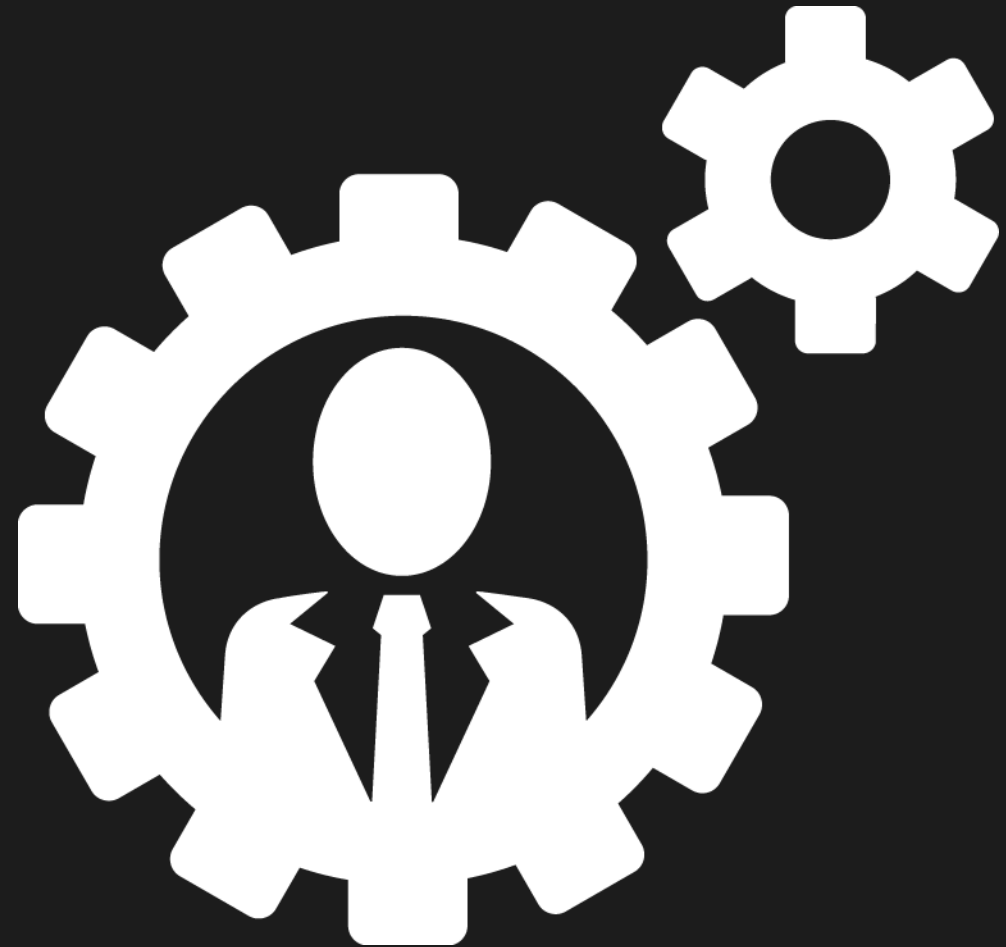
# KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF IL

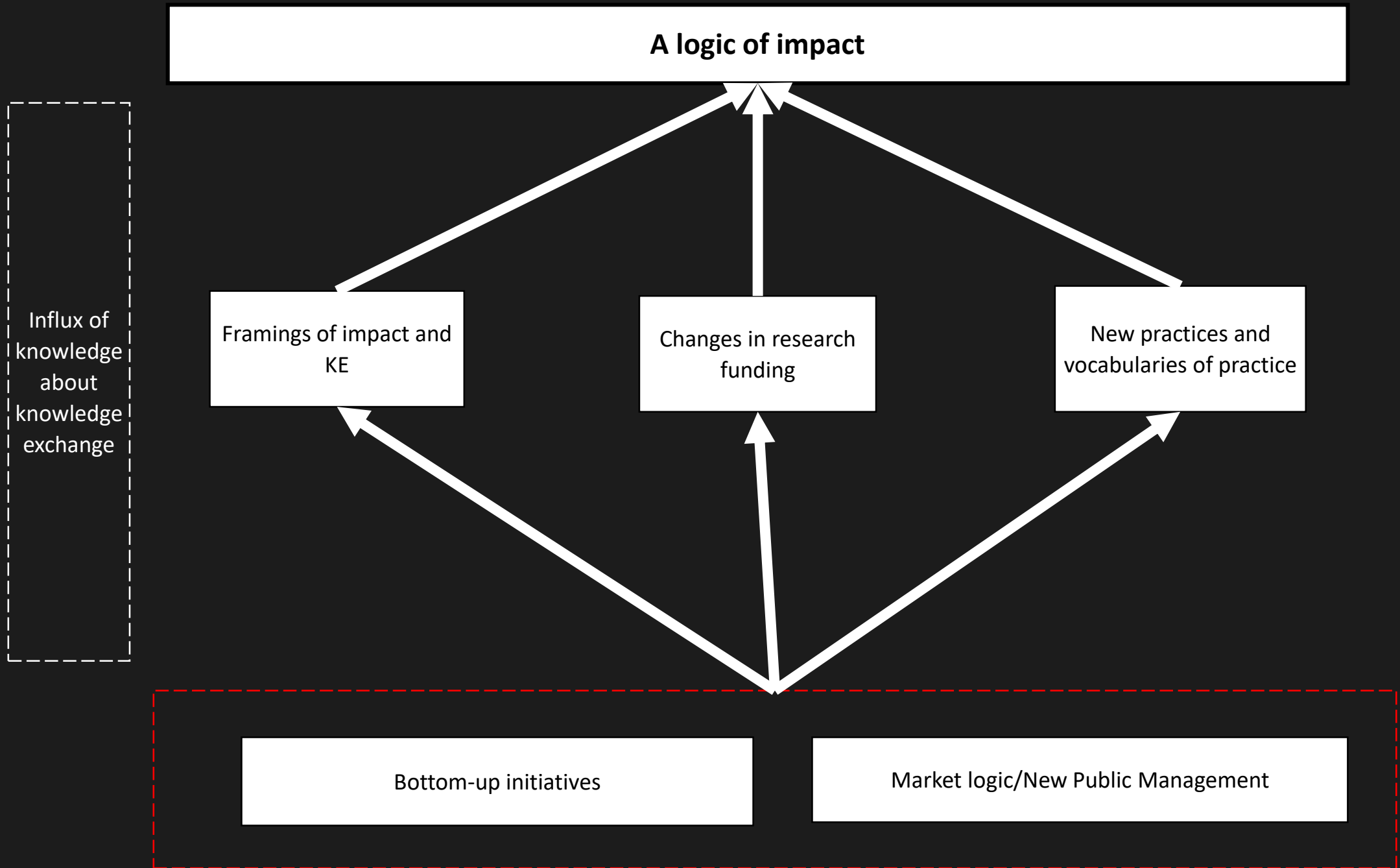
- Enable or restrict behaviour
- Guide practices
- Have inherent framings and theories



# LOGIC OF IMPACT

- NOT (ONLY) REF!
- Different framing of science-society (policy, economy, culture)
  - Science as an active participator in problem solving
- Emergence of new practices and vocabularies of practice





**EVIDENCE TO DO WHAT?**

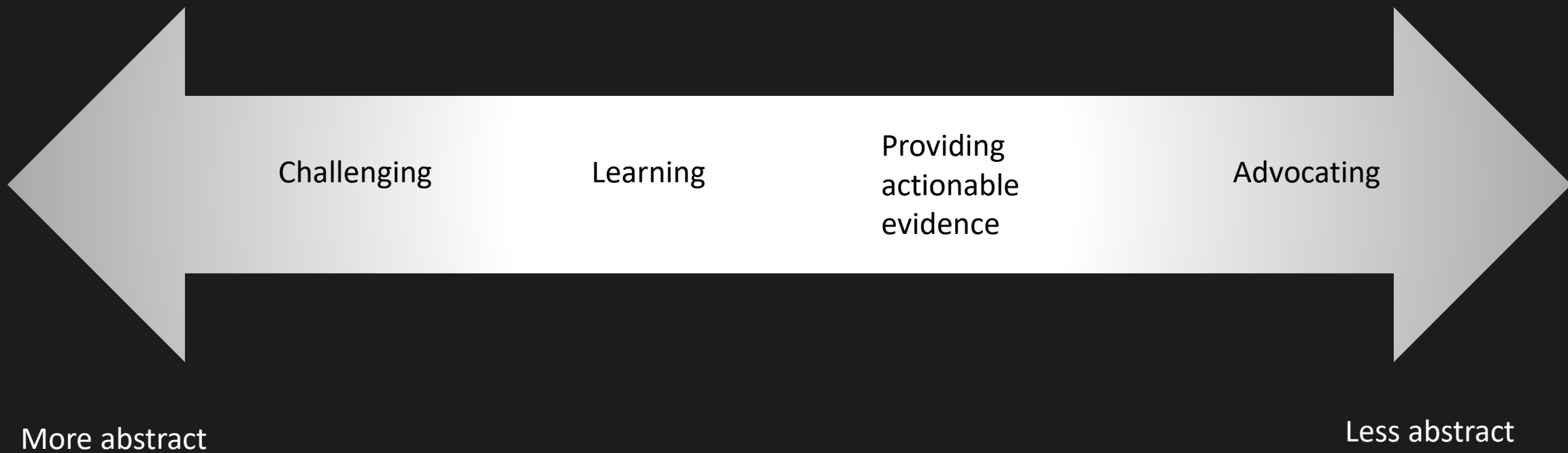
**DIFFERENT FRAMINGS OF KE**

# DESIRED OUTCOMES

1. policy practices;
2. policy itself (rules, law, prohibitions);
3. the policy-making process;
4. the particular positions and arguments;
5. institutional action frames - the beliefs values and perspectives;
6. meta-cultural frames – broadly shared values, beliefs, perspectives

Schön and Rein, 1994, p. xiii





# FACILITATION AND REPRESENTATION

|           | Facilitation                  | Representation |
|-----------|-------------------------------|----------------|
| Knowledge | Learning                      | Challenge      |
| Action    | Providing actionable evidence | Advocating     |

# **BETWEEN EXCELLENCE AND RELEVANCE**

**KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE AND ACADEMIC PRACTICES**

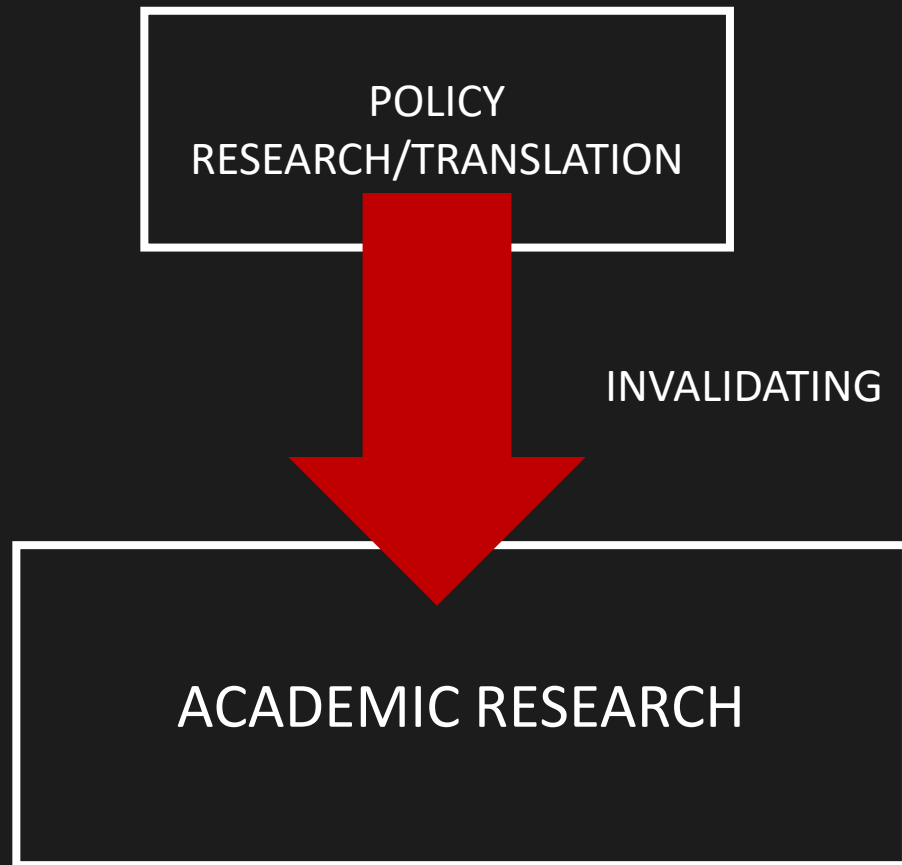
“As soon as I said five years they’ve lost interest.”

# KNOWLEDGE (EXCHANGE) PRACTICES

|                                   | PRODUCING<br>ACADEMIC RESEARCH             | TRANSLATING<br>RESEARCH   | PRODUCING POLICY<br>RESEARCH          |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| TYPE OF ACTIVITIES/<br>STRATEGIES | Conducting primary<br>research, publishing | Seminars, workshops,<br>policy briefs, blog,<br>website, media<br>relations | Commissioned<br>research, evaluations |
| RELATIONSHIP TO<br>CONTEXT        | De-contextualised                          | Contextualising   | Contextualised                        |
| GUIDING<br>INSTITUTIONAL LOGIC    | Logic of excellence                        | Logic of excellence<br>and logic of impact                                  | Logic of impact                       |
| TIME                              | Long-term                                  | Long term or short<br>term  | Short-term                            |
| TYPE OF IMPACTS                   | Conceptual                                 | Conceptual/Instrumen<br>tal   | Instrumental                          |

**Legitimacy?**

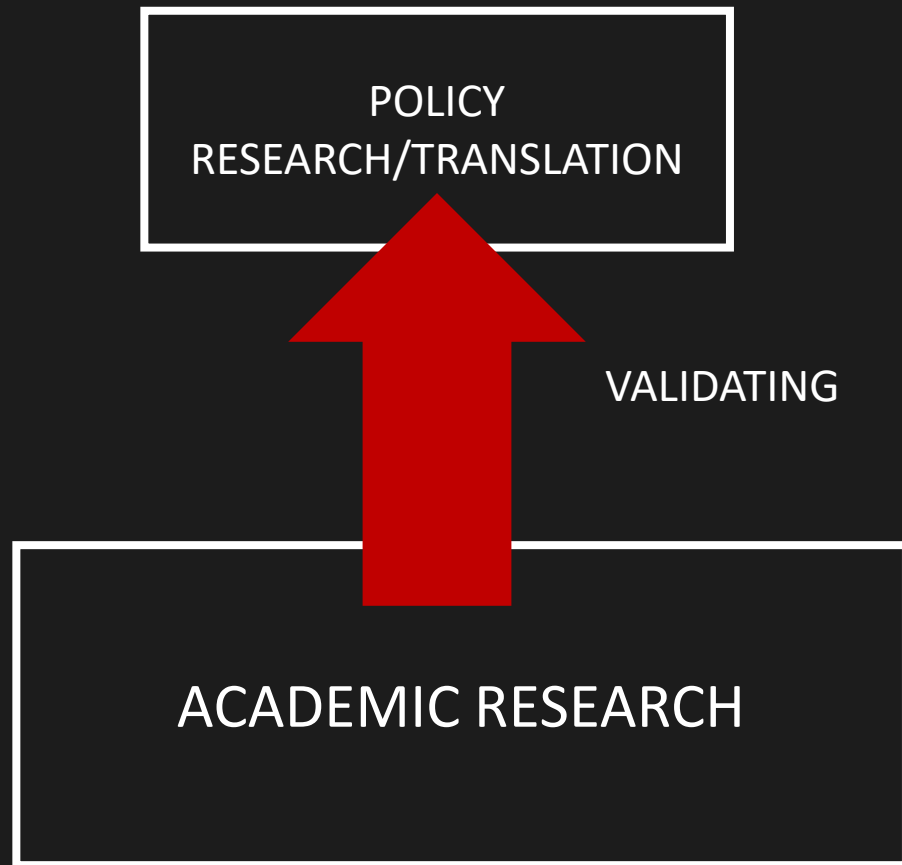
# LEGITIMACY



“I mean I do think that our academic reputation suffered. And I think I could say that quite categorically... [...] and for myself I definitely felt like I was perceived differently from other staff at the same grade, even though my job title included "research fellow".

When you go into knowledge exchange work as an academic, all of a sudden you are not taken as seriously, which is a problem, given especially that now we are all supposed to be doing knowledge exchange work.” (GF 1)

# LEGITIMACY

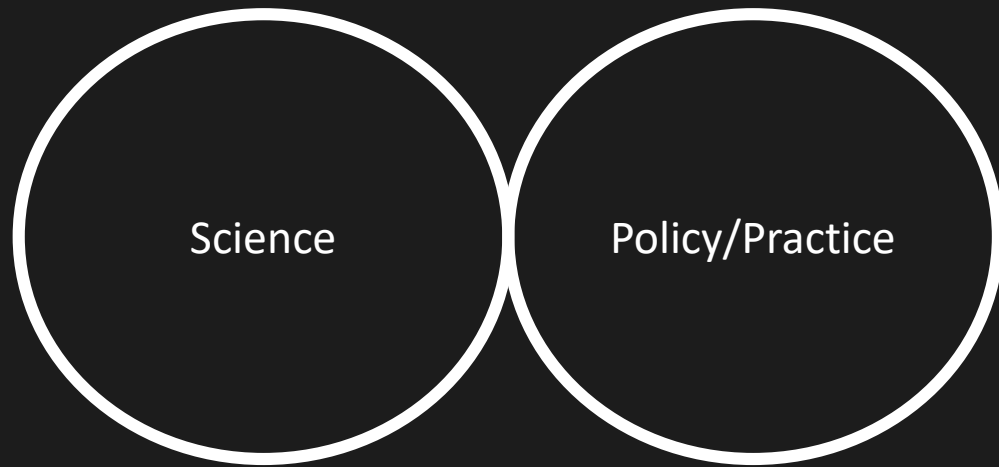


“As long as  
you're doing  
good research,  
that's [impact]  
a good thing”.  
(Fuse 7)

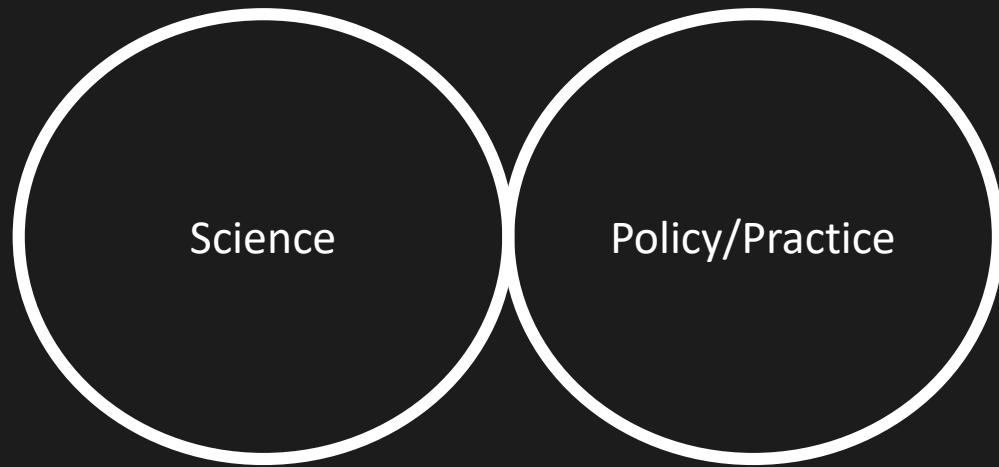
# **‘IT’S MARRYING POLITICS WITH EVIDENCE’**

**BOUNDARIES BETWEEN SCIENCE AND POLICY**

# KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE AS A BOUNDARY MANAGEMENT



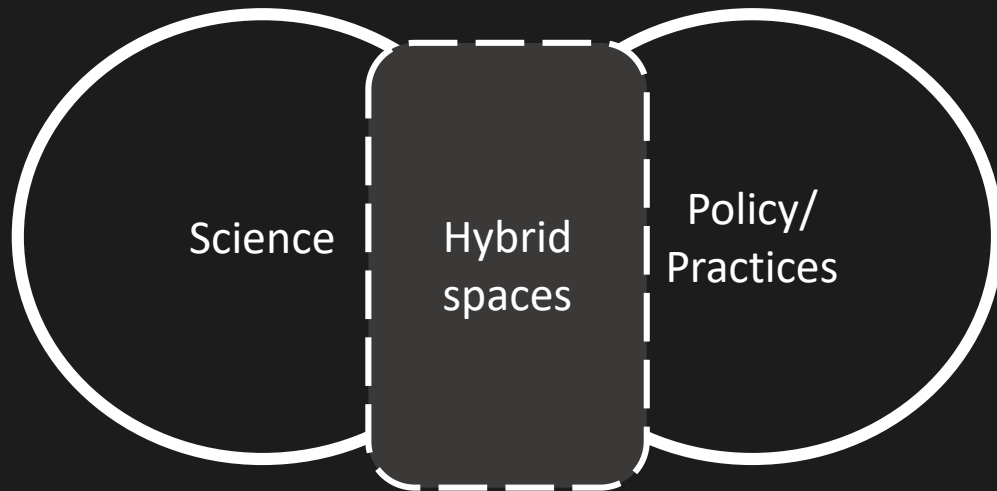
# KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE AS A BOUNDARY MANAGEMENT



Carlile (2002) - three types of differences in knowledge sharing across the boundary:

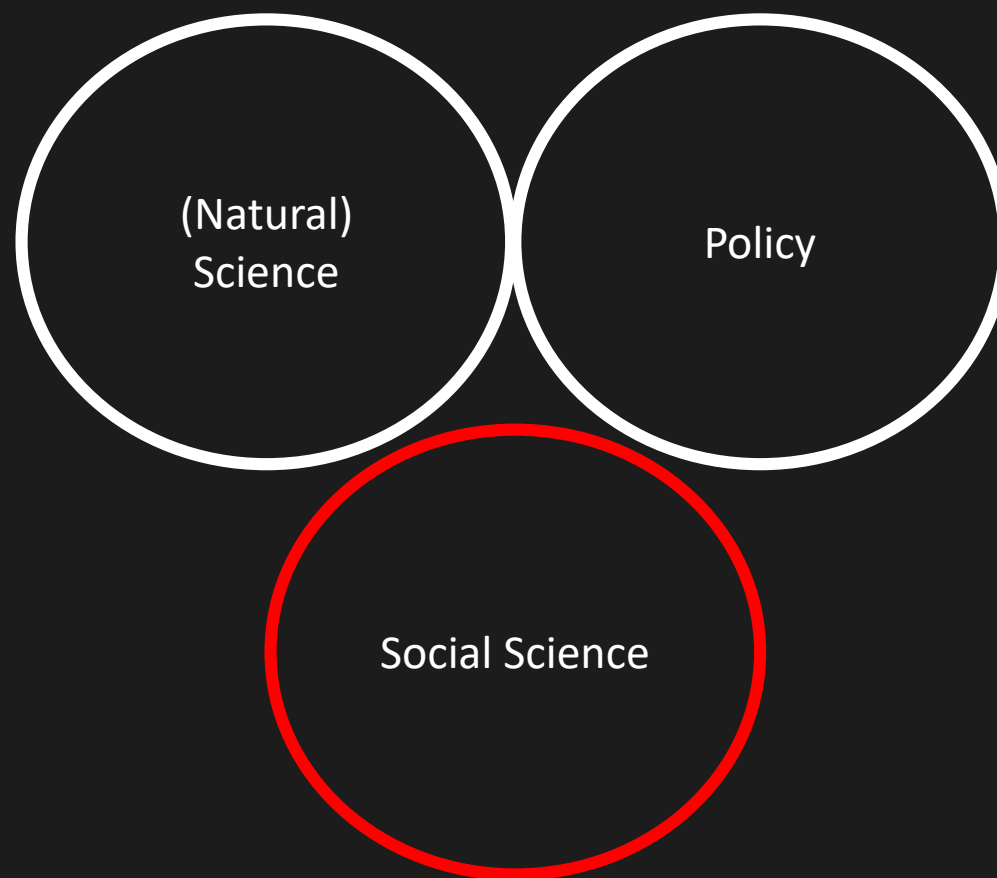
- **semantic (different language),**
- **syntactic (different meanings),**
- **pragmatic (different practices)**

# STRATEGY 1: BOUNDARY BLURRING



- Shared research projects
- Visiting policy fellows
- Embedded researchers
- Rapid response models

# STRATEGY 2: BOUNDARY SETTING



# INSIDE-OUT

“In both cases of the academics from Genomics Forum, they have done it [collaborated with the organisation] without compromising their academic integrity, as it were, which I think is important.” (NGO partner, Genomics Forum)

“Well, as I say, I think having a link in formal research is always useful. And having that ability to have someone who can, you know, sort of work across the boundaries, so work across different organisations to bring them together to get the information you need. And I think I found that actually kind of worked quite well because they always identified as neutral as well. And, you know, it's more to have this independent approach as well.” (Policymaker 10, Fuse)

# BEYOND INSTRUMENTAL AND CONCEPTUAL IMPACTS

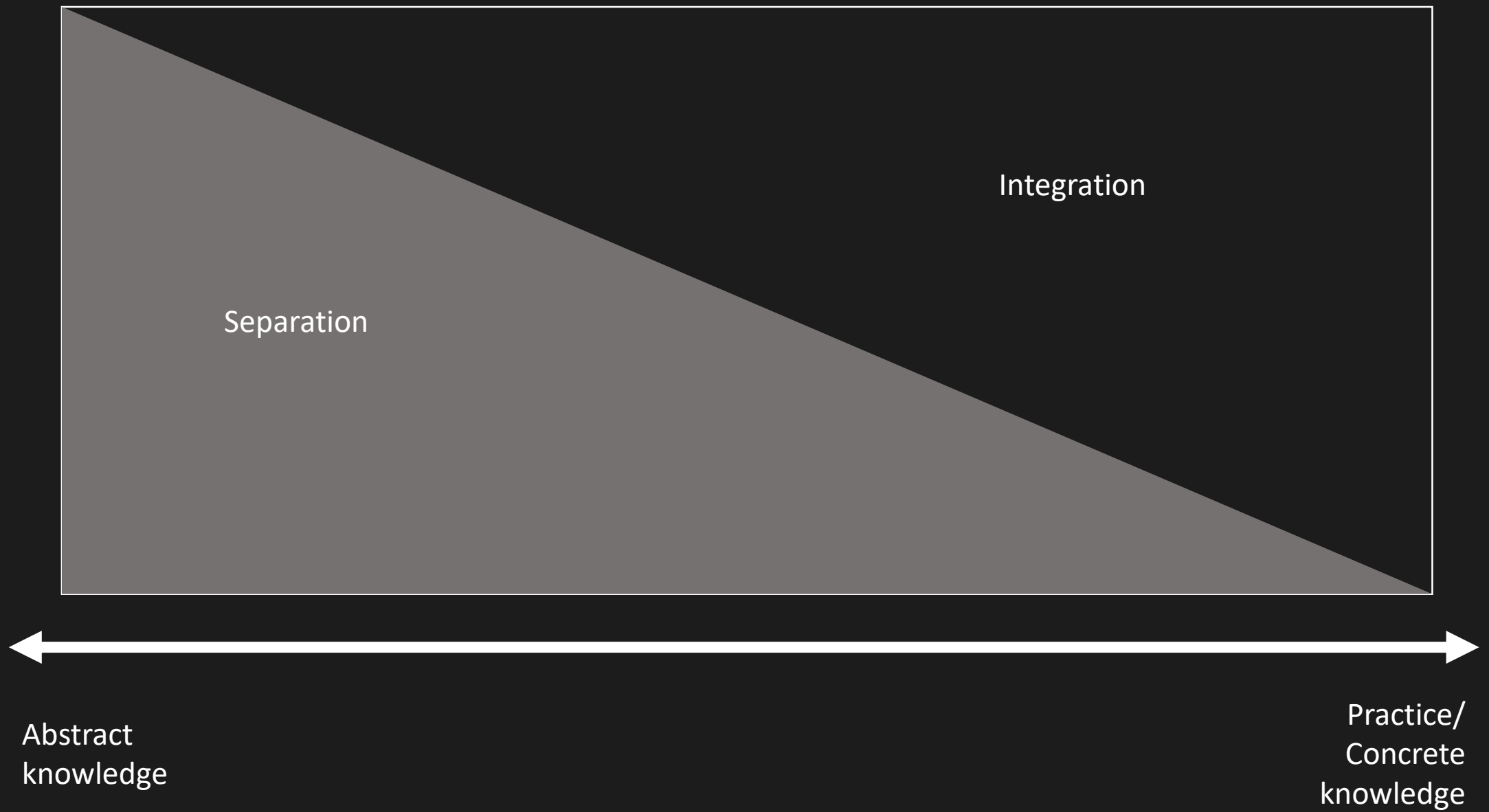
## PROCESSUAL IMPACT

“The first thing we’ve learned is to think about the health evaluation at the very, very beginning, rather than, “Oh, crikey, we’ve done [a lot of work] that could affect their health - we need to research it.” Across the organization, absolutely, in the future, if we did any other scheme, we’d be thinking about that health research before we start.”



# CONCLUSION

- Authority of science in policy stems from navigating two contradictory expectations of close involvement into the policy process while simultaneously remaining the position of the “critical outsider”;
- Layered institutional change, rather than paradigmatic shift;
- Separation/integration models never appear in a “pure” form;



THANK YOU!