

SSHRC  CRSH



Thinking Outside the Frame: Conceptualizing the Impact of Funded Art Research

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Overview

- **Context**
 - Evaluation of research and research impact
 - SSHRC's Research/Creation Grants Program
 - Study goals and objectives
- **Methodological Approach**
 - Data sources
 - Qualitative data analysis
- **Conceptual/Analytical Framework**
 - Towards an evaluation tool
- **Conclusions**
 - Strengths and limitations of the approach
 - Implications/applications for evaluators and stakeholders
 - Future research directions



Evaluation of Research and Research Impact

- **Significant developments in field of research evaluation over past two decades**
 - But much of the knowledge base relates more specifically to evaluation of science and technology or health research
- **Particular challenges related to evaluation of research in the social sciences, humanities and arts**
 - Current lack of adequate models, indicators, impact measurement tools
 - Recognition of the differences between social sciences, humanities and arts and the need for different approaches to impact measurement
 - Recent efforts internationally have contributed to stronger foundation for research evaluation in these fields, including practice-based disciplines



Evaluation of Research and Research Impact

- Important implications in current context where impact evaluation and determination of causal effects of programs is being promoted/enforced
- **An emerging challenge for SSHRC (and other funding councils that support arts and humanities research): evaluating impacts of research/creation**
 - The findings of the formative evaluation of SSHRC's Research/Creation Grants in Fine Arts Pilot Program suggest that there is a need to better define the impacts of these types of programs and to “obtain richer information on outputs, impacts, and outreach of research/creation activities”

What is Research/Creation?

- **Any research activity or approach to research that forms an essential part of a creative process or artistic discipline and that directly fosters the creation of literary/artistic works.**
 - Must address clear research questions, offer theoretical contextualization within relevant field(s) of literary/artistic inquiry, and present a well-considered methodological approach.
 - Both the research and the resulting literary/artistic works must meet peer standards of excellence and be suitable for publication, public performance or viewing.
 - Different from traditional creative arts practice *and* traditional academic research because it combines elements of the two.
 - Also called “art-based research”, “practice-led/based research”, “research in the arts”.





SSHRC's Research/Creation Grants in Fine Arts Pilot Program

- Pilot program designed in 2003 to support research within all fine arts disciplines (including contemporary arts and design) to:
 - Support high-quality *research/creation* in projects that advance knowledge in the fine arts and artistic production in Canadian postsecondary institutions;
 - Develop graduate and undergraduate art students' research skills;
 - Facilitate the dissemination and presentation of high quality work to a broad public; and
 - Foster collaboration among university- and college-based *artist-researchers*, other academic researchers, and professional artists
- Three competitions between 2004 and 2007
 - A total of 91 grants awarded for a total of \$13.8M
- Program was evaluated during, and will be again, at the end of the pilot phase



Disciplines funded by SSHRC's Research/Creation Program

Disciplines

Architecture, Urban and Regional Design and Planning

Cinema, Film Studies and Video

Communications and Media Studies

Creative Writing

Dance

Design

Education

Fine Arts

Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary arts

Literature

Media Arts

Music and Musicology

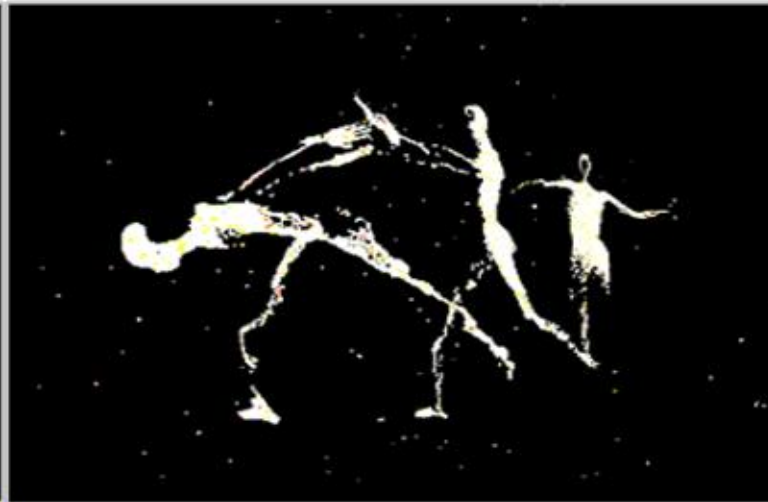
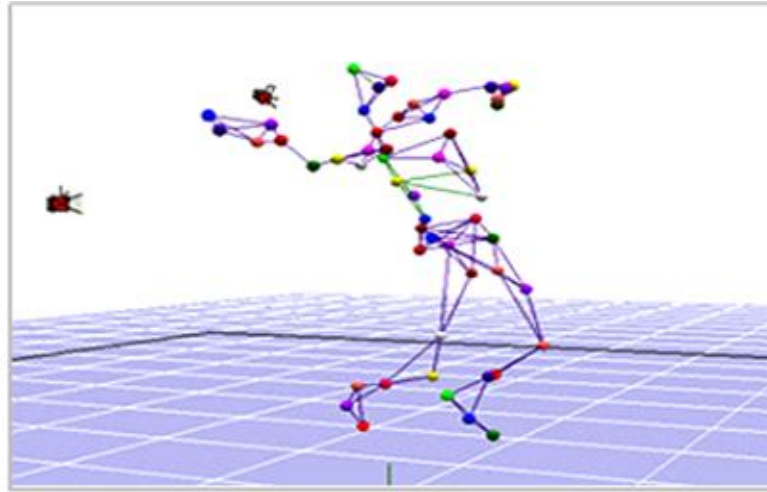
Social Sciences and Humanities

Theatre and Drama

Visual Arts



NoBody Dance (Époque, UQAM)



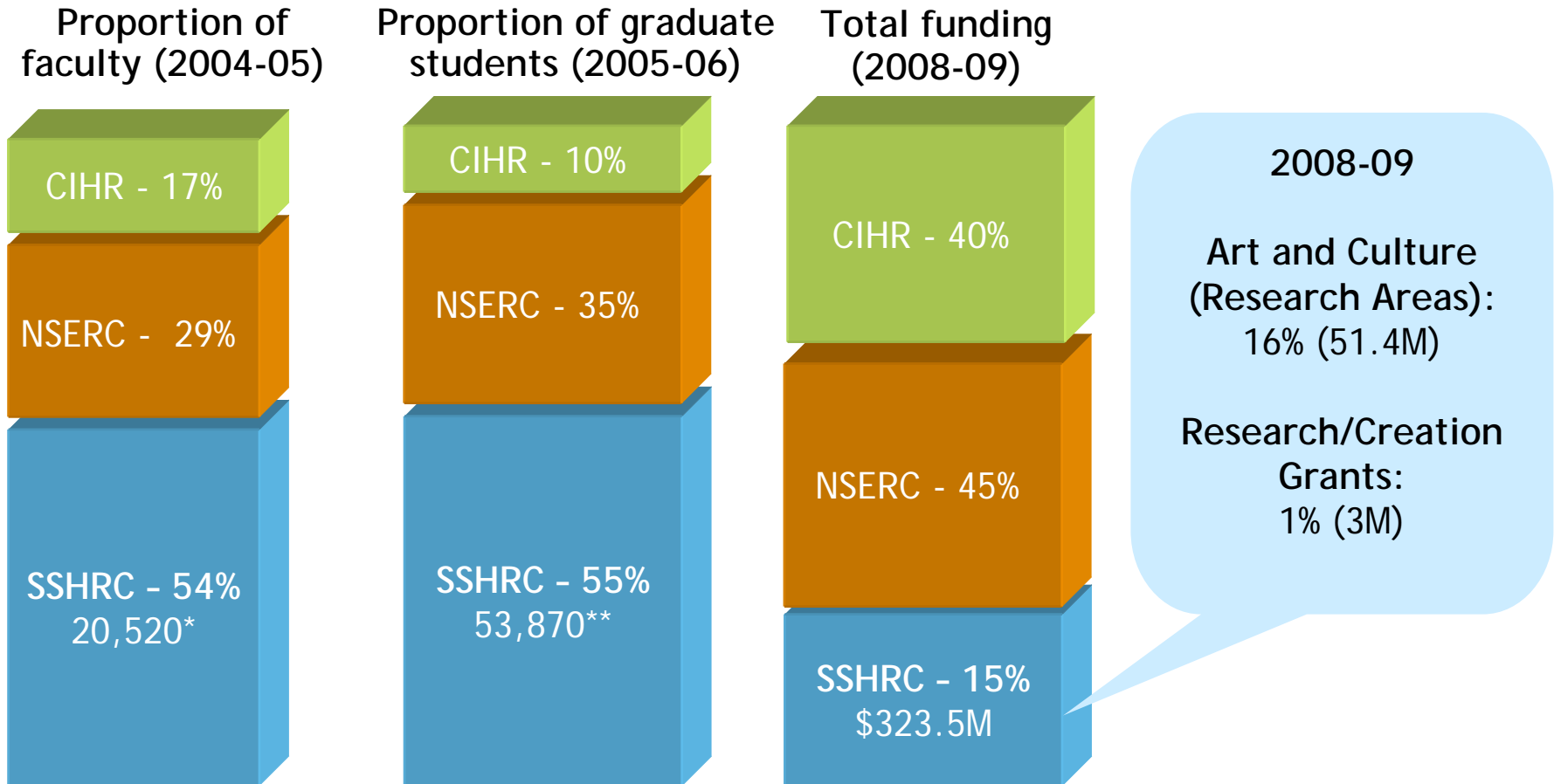


“Rethinking and Redefining Social Housing in the City Centre” Contest (Cormier, Université de Montréal)





Profile of Full-Time Faculty and Graduate Students in Canada



*2,490 "artist-researchers" (based on 2002 data)

** 1,812 graduate students in arts-related disciplines (based on 2002 data)

Source: SSHRC using Statistics Canada data and SSHRC administrative data



Study Rationale and Objectives

- **Study rationale**

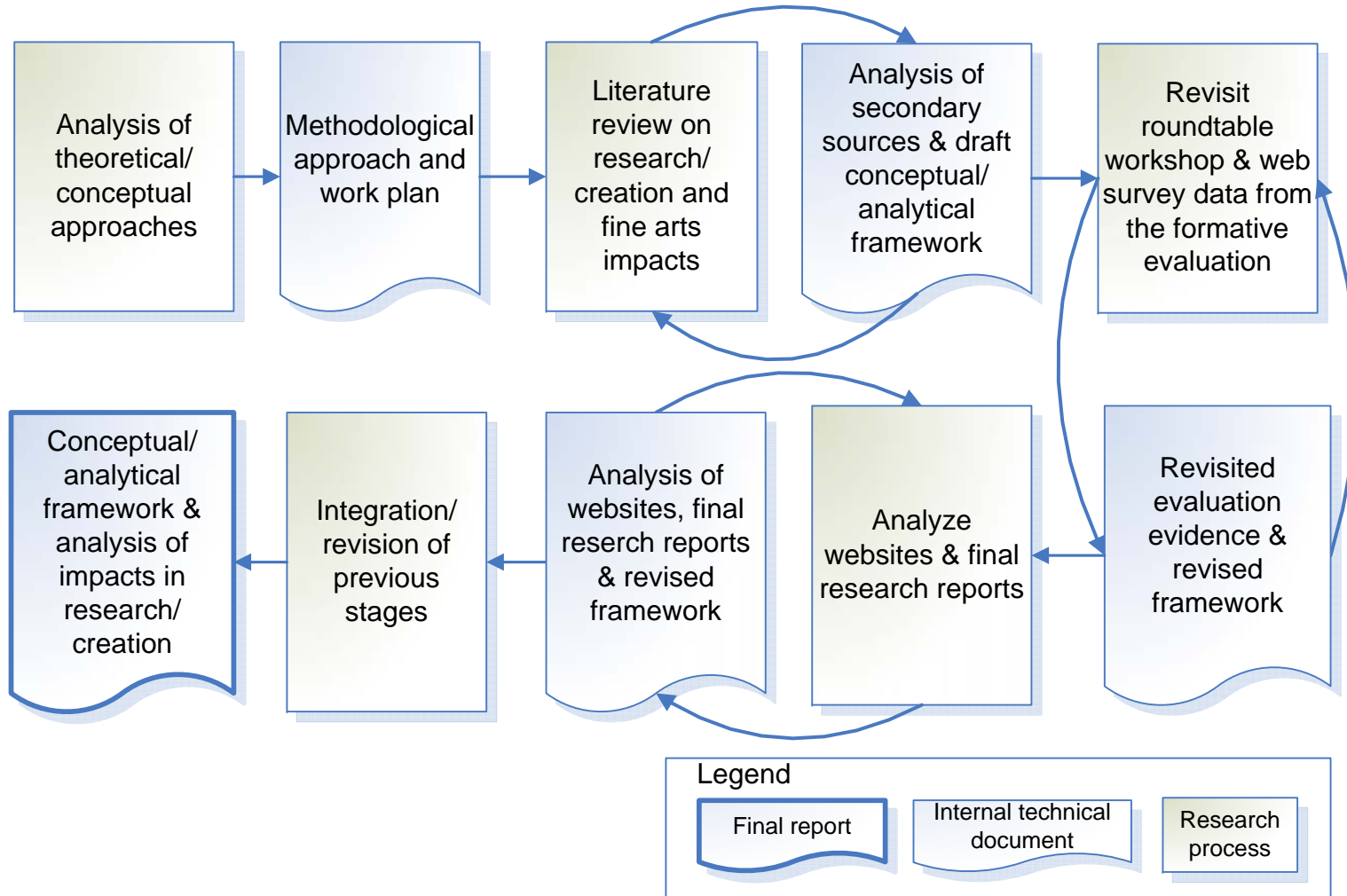
- During the formative evaluation of the pilot program, clearly defining and articulating the outcomes and impacts of research/creation was challenging for both the artist-researchers consulted and the evaluation team
- Formative evaluation recommended further work, prior to summative evaluation, to better define and to develop adequate measures to demonstrate the impact of funded research activities
- Study fits within larger umbrella of activity around capturing impacts of SSH research

- **Study objectives**

- To develop an approach leading to a conceptual/analytical framework of the impacts of research/creation in the arts
- To support the development of a new and more adequate tool for impact assessment of art-based research



Methodological Approach



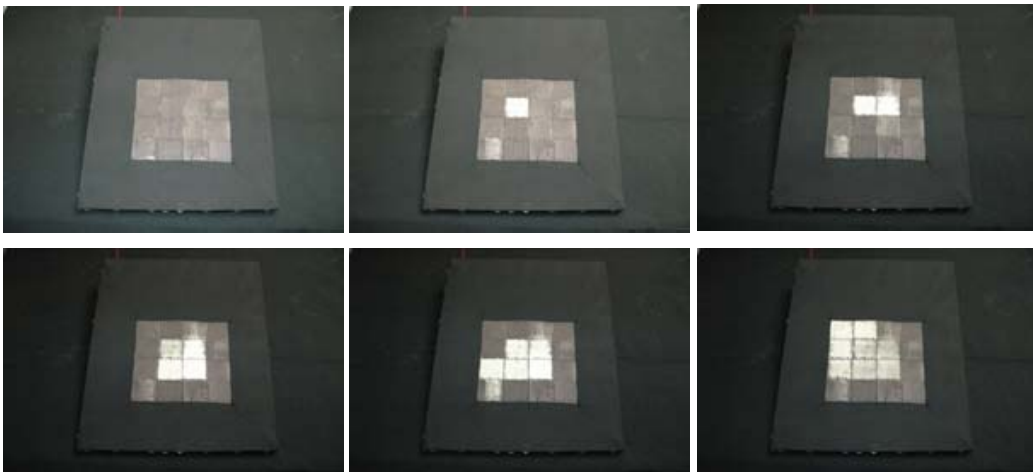
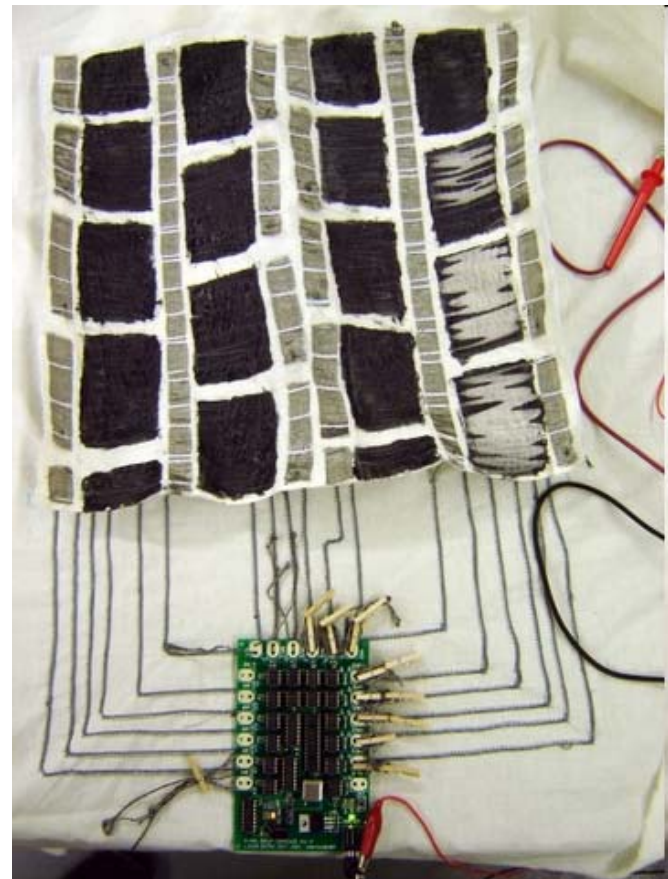


Methodological Approach

- **Qualitative approach : Open coding of impact data**
- **Multiple lines of evidence, multiple data sources**
 - Literature review (peer-review papers and grey literature)
 - 35 documents were reviewed covering:
 - a) arts research in the academic setting (16 doc.)
 - b) impacts of research in the arts more generally (6 doc.)
 - c) social impacts of the arts (8 doc.)
 - d) examples/case studies on the research impacts in the arts (5 doc.)
 - Revisit web survey and roundtable data from the formative evaluation
 - Web survey: 64 funded and 104 unfunded artist-researchers
 - Roundtable workshop: 13 funded artist-researchers
 - Web scan of funded artist-researchers and final research reports
 - Project websites, professional/personal websites, and other related web-based sources: 12 funded projects
 - Final research reports of 6 SSHRC-funded artist-researchers

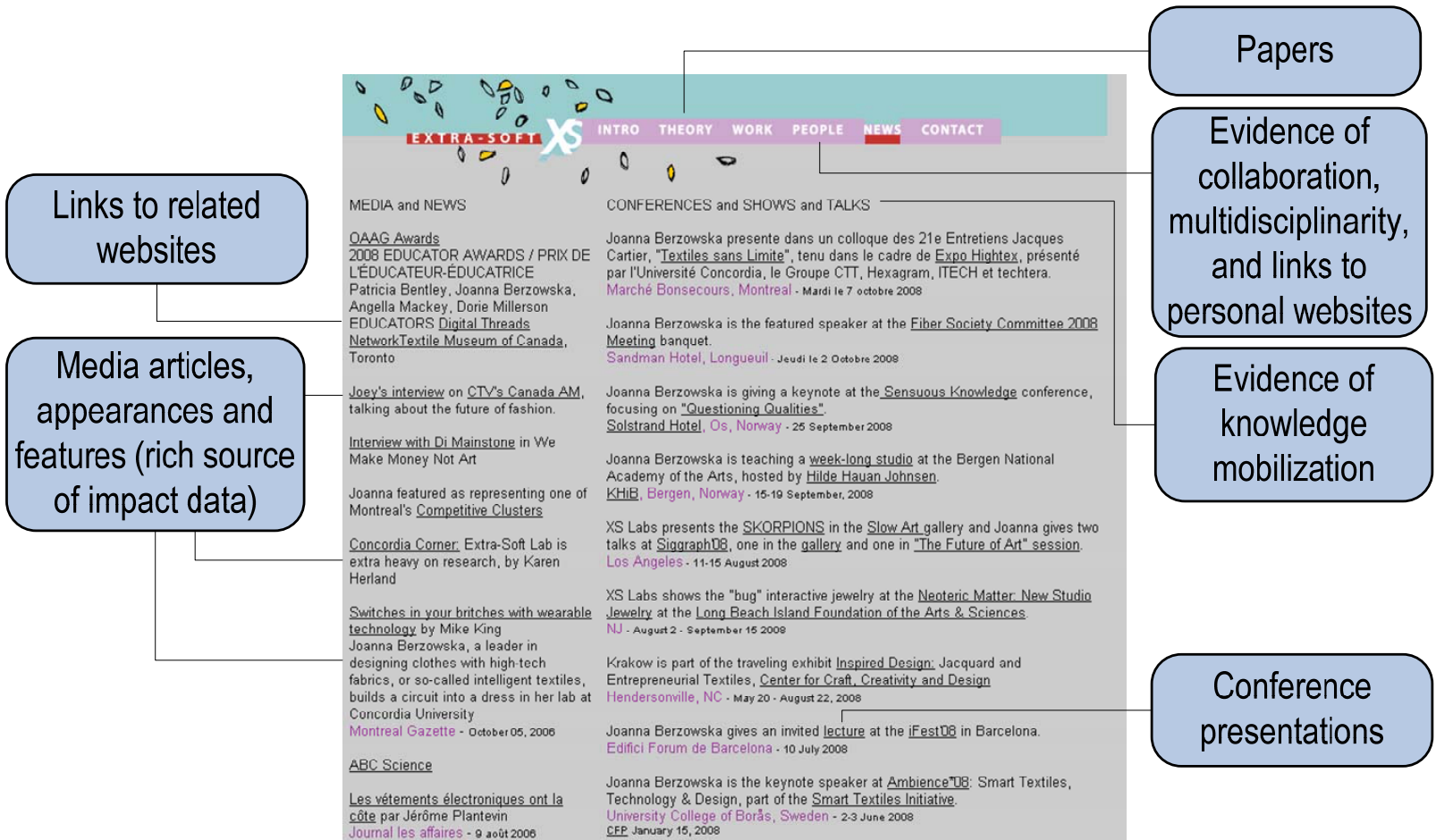


Animated Quilt (Berzowska, Concordia University/Hexagram)





Web scan data extraction: XS Labs (Berzowska)





Methodological Approach

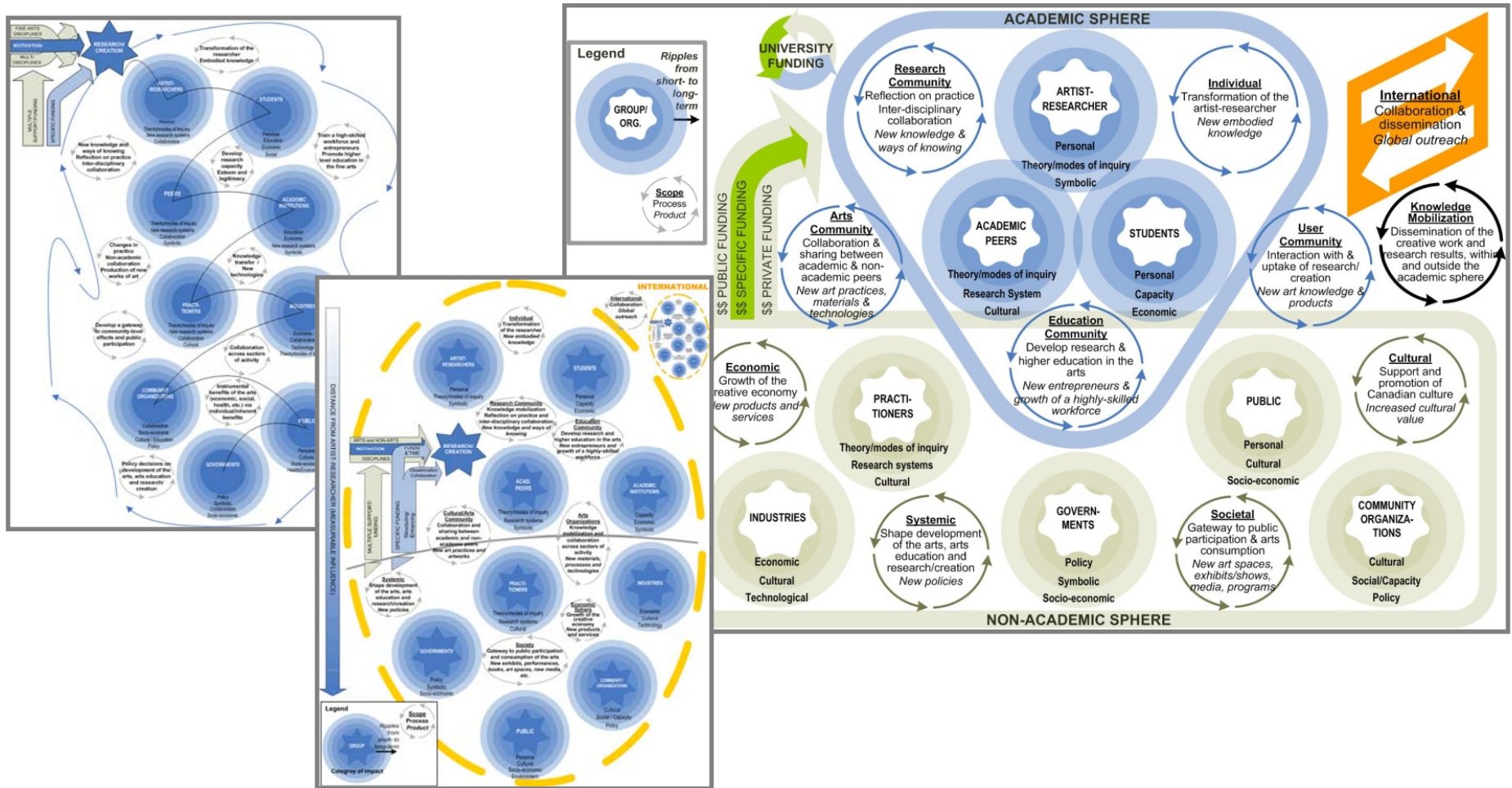
▪ **Qualitative data analysis**

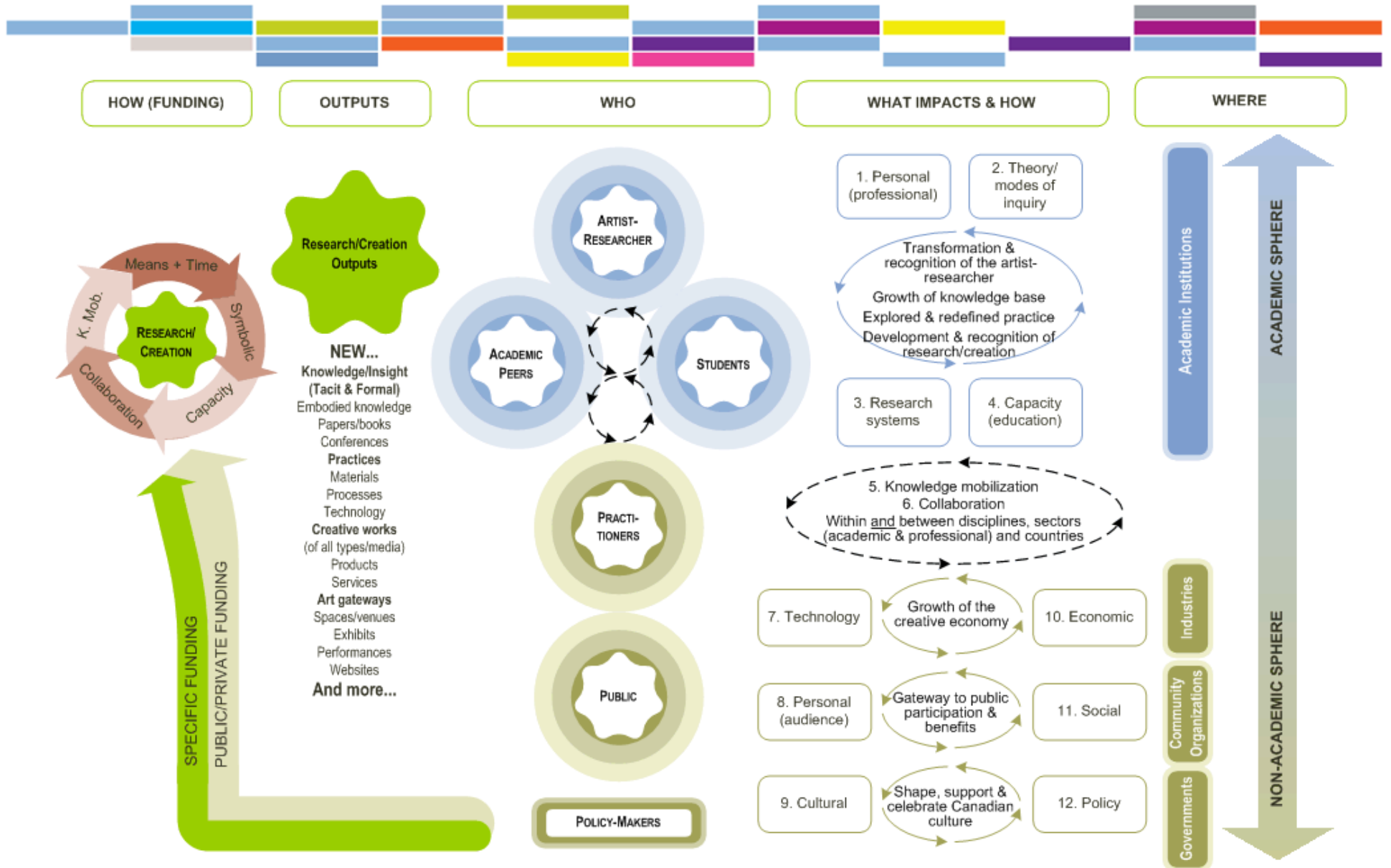
- Open coding of impact captured in data sources on 2 levels:
 1. Groups on which the impacts have an effect (and where)
 2. Categories/types of impact
- Distinction was made between changes that occurred as a result of R/C funding vs. impact of R/C activities and outputs

▪ **Development of conceptual/analytical framework**

- A visual framework was developed based on the connections and interactions between these groups and types of impact
- Iterative and collaborative development over 4 months: each draft integrated new and complementary evidence drawn from data sources, and addressed feedback on limitations and issues raised by previous drafts

Development of the conceptual/analytical framework







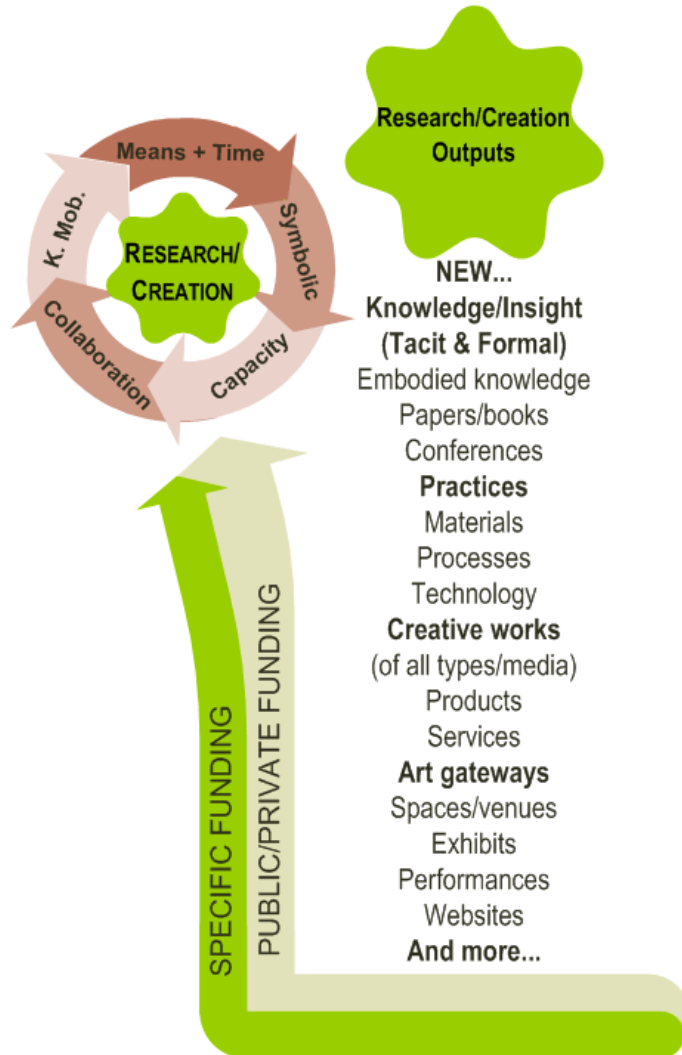
Common Plants (Rudakoff, York University)





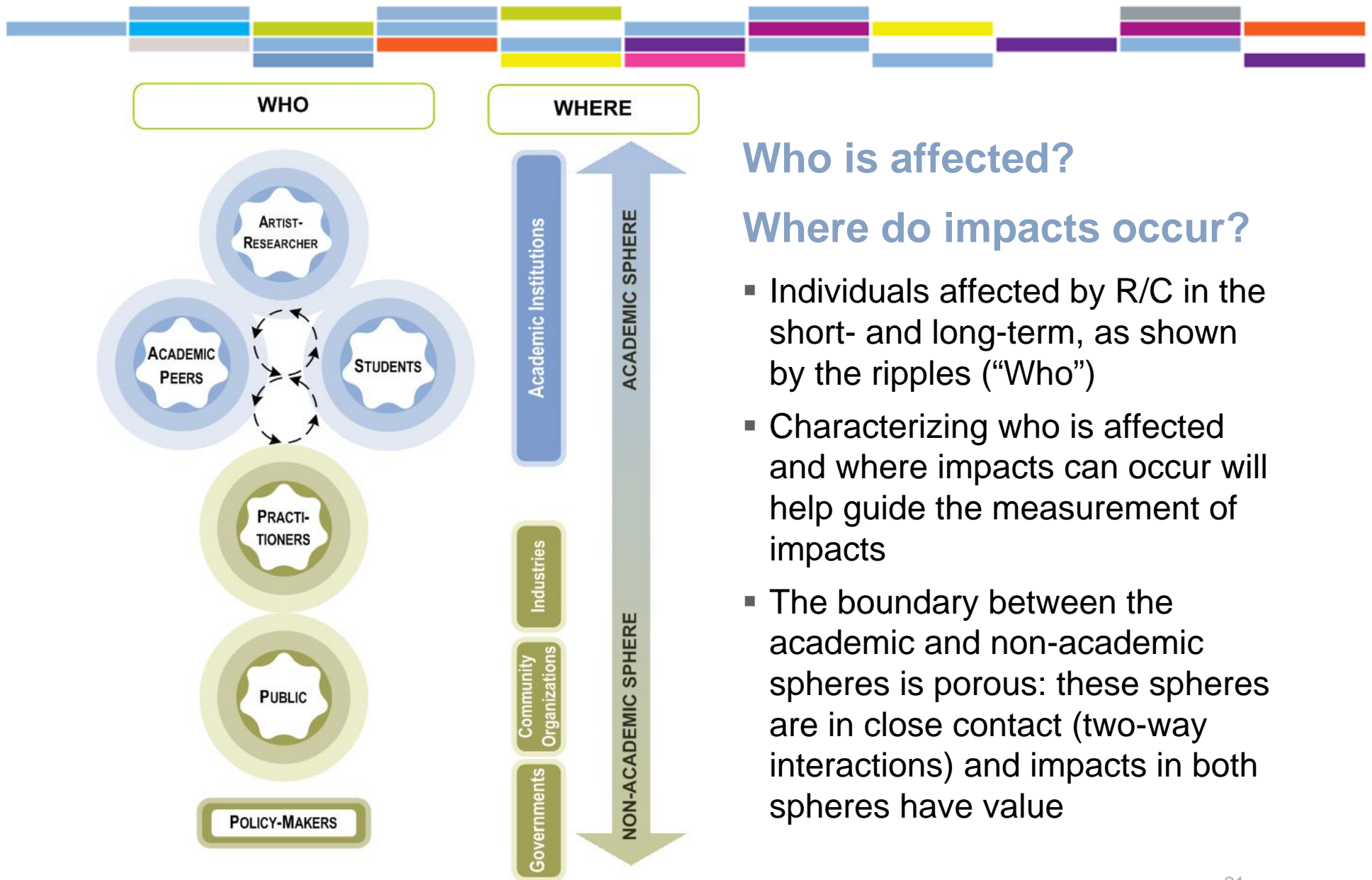
HOW (FUNDING)

OUTPUTS



How does funding have an impact on R/C and its outputs?

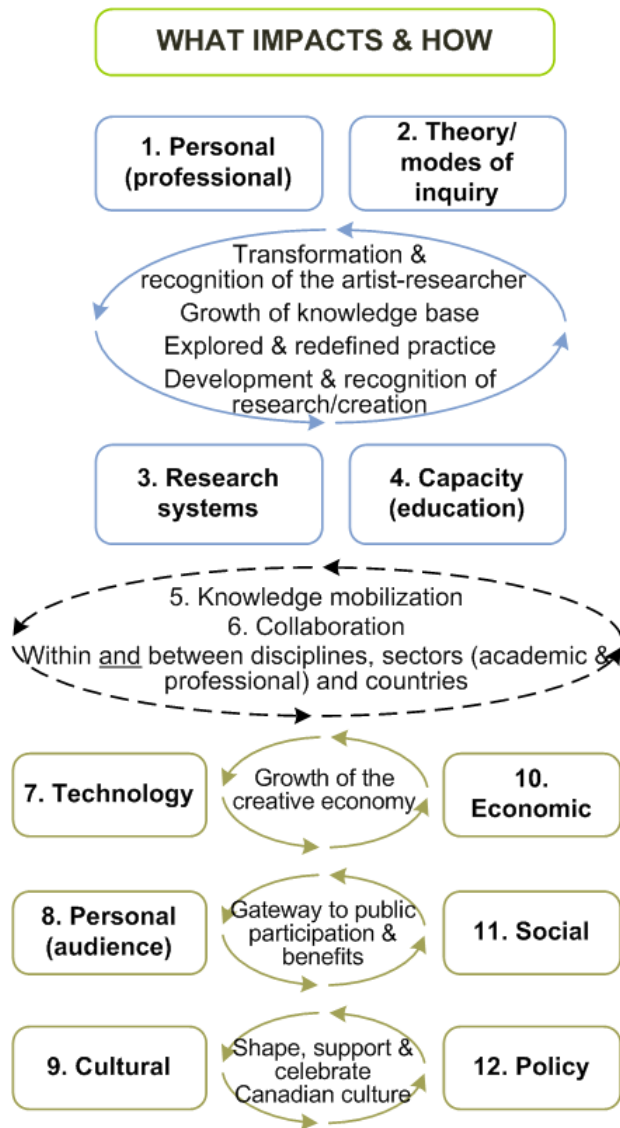
- Funding in R/C has an impact on means (funds and time), legitimacy (symbolic worth), and capacity to produce R/C outputs
- Funding also increases opportunities for collaboration and dissemination
- Thus, R/C grants also contribute to increasing the reach and breadth of the impacts of R/C outputs
- Outputs of R/C are highly varied (e.g., tacit/embodied or formal)



Who is affected?

Where do impacts occur?

- Individuals affected by R/C in the short- and long-term, as shown by the ripples (“Who”)
- Characterizing who is affected and where impacts can occur will help guide the measurement of impacts
- The boundary between the academic and non-academic spheres is porous: these spheres are in close contact (two-way interactions) and impacts in both spheres have value



What are the impacts of R/C?

How do they occur?

- 12 categories of impacts (“What”), emerged from the analysis based on their prevalence and value
- Feedback loops (“How”) represent the processes and interactions between the impact categories
- Central role of structuring and/or enhancing impacts: knowledge mobilization and collaboration situated between academic and non-academic spheres



Towards an evaluation tool – adding the time element

	Artist-researcher	Academic peers	Students	Academic institutions	Practitioners	Industries	Community org.	Public	Government
1. Personal (professional)	Short-term impact	Short-term impact	Short-term impact		Longer-term impact				
2. Theory/modes of inquiry	Short-term impact	Short-term impact	Longer-term impact	Longer-term impact	Short-term impact	Longer-term impact	Longer-term impact		
3. Research systems	Short-term impact	Short-term impact	Longer-term impact	Longer-term impact	Short-term impact				
4. Capacity	Longer-term impact	Longer-term impact	Short-term impact	Short-term impact	Longer-term impact	Longer-term impact			
5. Knowledge mobilization	Short-term impact	Short-term impact	Short-term impact	Longer-term impact	Short-term impact	Short-term impact	Short-term impact	Short-term impact	
6. Collaboration	Short-term impact	Short-term impact	Short-term impact	Short-term impact	Short-term impact	Short-term impact	Short-term impact	Short-term impact	
7. Technology	Short-term impact	Longer-term impact	Longer-term impact	Longer-term impact	Longer-term impact	Short-term impact	Longer-term impact		
8. Personal (audience)		Longer-term impact	Longer-term impact		Longer-term impact			Short-term impact	
9. Cultural	Longer-term impact	Short-term impact	Short-term impact		Short-term impact	Short-term impact	Short-term impact	Short-term impact	Longer-term impact
10. Economic	Longer-term impact	Longer-term impact	Short-term impact	Longer-term impact	Longer-term impact	Short-term impact	Longer-term impact	Short-term impact	Short-term impact
11. Social			Longer-term impact				Short-term impact	Short-term impact	Short-term impact
12. Policy							Short-term impact	Short-term impact	Short-term impact

■ Short-term impact
 ■ Longer-term impact



Conclusions

■ Strengths of the approach

- Grounded in systematic inquiry and validated by stakeholders
- Generated increased understanding of broad range/reach of impacts of R/C (both funding and R/C itself)
- Contributed to better understanding of R/C as a practice-based discipline within the SSH

■ Limitations of the approach

- Attribution of impacts to funded projects is a perennial issue
- Impacts on end-users and overall social, cultural and socio-economic impacts not explored
- Capturing vs. measuring impacts



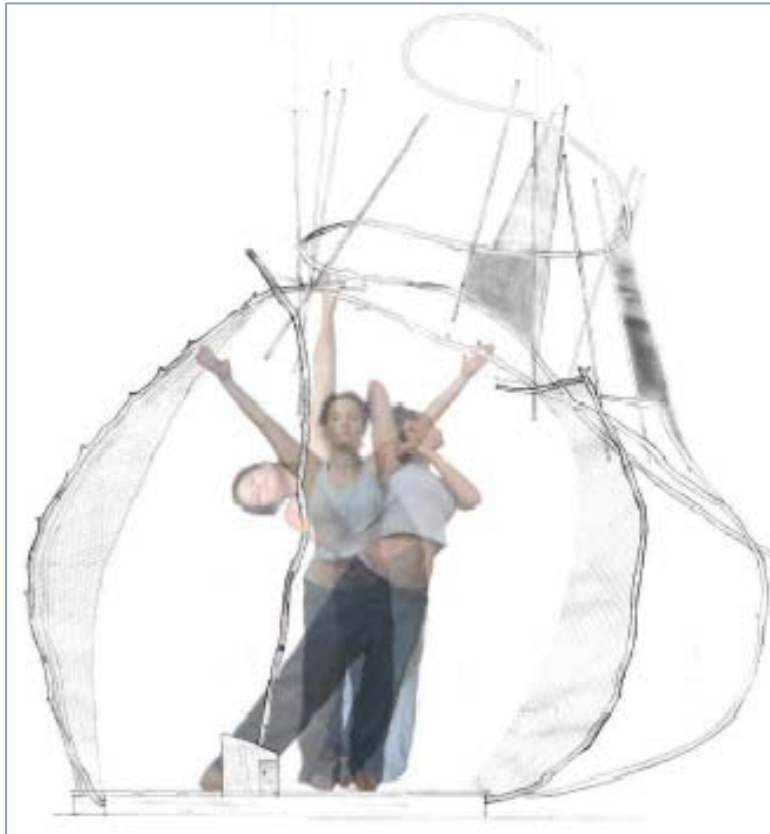
Conclusions

- **Implications/applications for evaluators and stakeholders**
 - Impact is a multi-dimensional concept (space, time, etc.)
 - Impact taxonomy adapted to other disciplines/areas of inquiry
 - Help evaluators within academic institutions to better conceptualize/assess the impact of these disciplines and generate buy-in among R/C community
- **Future research directions**
 - Testing of framework through evaluation
 - Implications of porosity/overlap
 - Contribution of R/C to social/economic impact of the arts
 - Comparison with impact of other practice-based disciplines



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Any questions or comments?

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→ Full report available at:

http://www.sshrc.ca/site/about-crsh/publications/pub_evaluations-eng.aspx



→ Rapport complet disponible :

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