



**Bournemouth
University**

Getting started in Public Engagement with Research (PER)

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Delivering PER activities

- Supporting existing activities like Café Scientifique, Public Lecture Days, ESRC Festival of Social Science, other one-offs.

Developing PER at BU

- Providing training, resources, advice to support PER activities generated by academics.
- Supporting funding bids involving PER.
- Culture of PER at BU – celebrating PER activities, PER Network, newsletter.

By the end of this session

- Understand what is meant by public engagement and why it is an increasingly important part of a research career
- Identify relevant audiences and understand how to target engagement
- Plan public engagement activity that complements and benefits research
- Evaluate public engagement activity and use this to demonstrate impact
- How to start right now – the practicalities

What is public engagement with research?

“Public engagement describes the myriad of ways in which the activity and benefits of higher education and research can be shared with the public. Engagement is by definition a two-way process, involving interaction and listening, with the goal of generating mutual benefit.”

National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE)

What are the benefits of public engagement?

- For your organisation
- For your participants
- For you

Why does public engagement matter?

Responsibility

- Accountability
 - Openness and transparency about spending public money
- Values and purpose
 - Demonstrate commitment to public good
- Trust
 - Acknowledging the public have a stake in the work of universities
- Relevance
 - Respecting the insights, experiences and expertise of the wider public enriches the relevance of research and teaching.

- Responsiveness

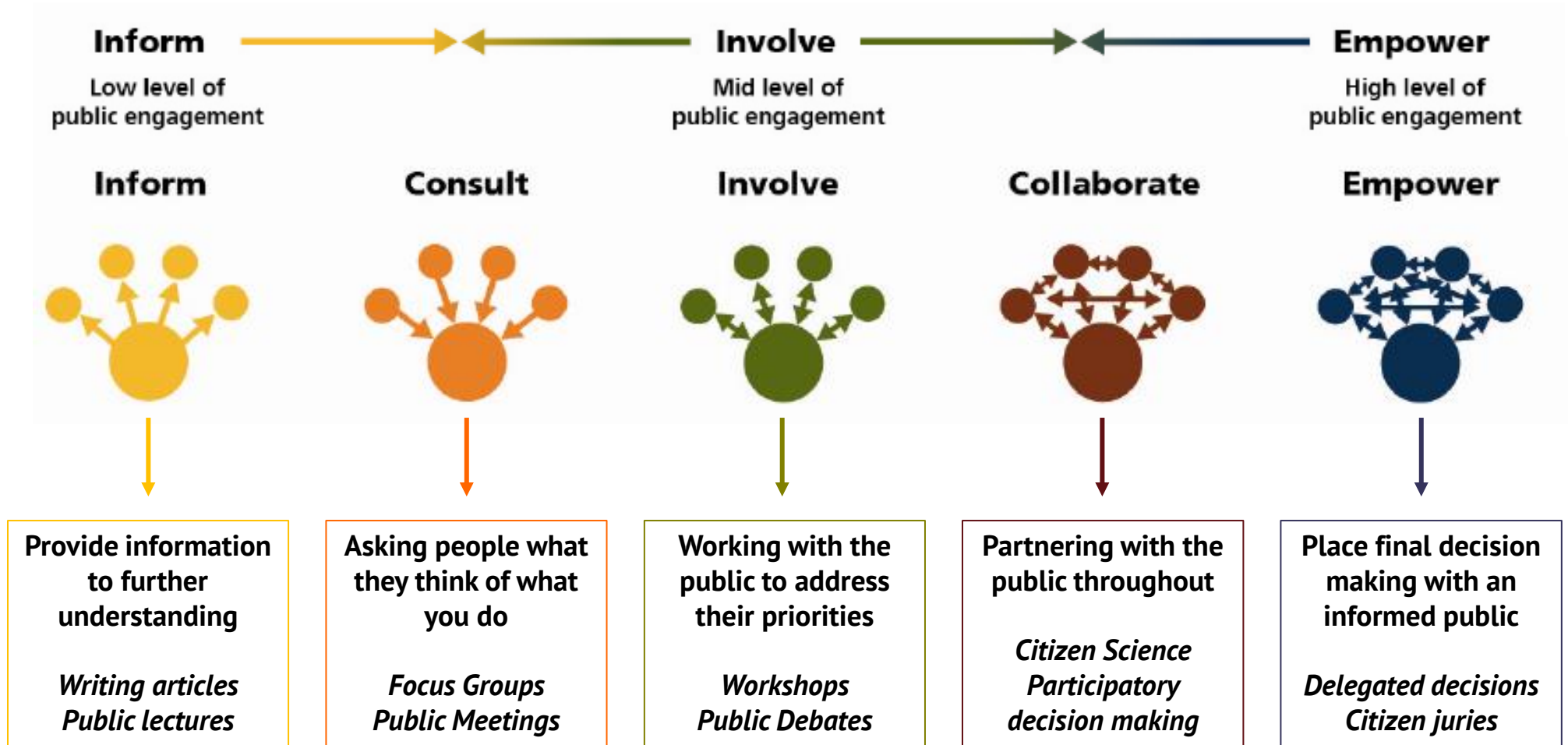
- Public engagement helps universities respond positively by building relationships animated by dialogue, partnership and co-production
- BU2025 – “Staff, students and graduates enrich society as active citizens in their communities”

Why does public engagement matter?

Benefits for academics

- Greater research impact
- Improved research quality
- Increased visibility
- It is important to funders and opens up access to additional funding
- Employment and promotion prospects
- Developing new transferable skills

Spectrum of Public Engagement



How to do public engagement

Four principles of high quality engagement (NCCPE)



- **Purpose:** Why are you doing the engagement?
- **People:** Who is involved in the project as participants, partners, or deliverers of the project? How have you considered their needs and interests in developing your approach?
- **Process:** Is the process appropriate to the purpose and people you are engaging with?
- **Evaluation:** Have you considered how to use evaluation to both inform your approach, and to assess its value?

- **Sharing what we do** (inspiring, informing)
 - to inspire or inform people about your work.
- **Responding** (to societal needs / requests)
 - working with organisations and individuals bringing their own ideas
- **Creating knowledge together / Doing research together** (collaborating, innovating)
 - co-production or collaborative engagement.
- **Applying knowledge together** (collaborating, innovating)
 - Working in partnership with others to make a difference
- **Learning from others** (consulting)
 - to inform and educate *you* through consultation and dialogue
- **Changing attitudes / behaviour**
 - to support people to make decisions in their lives.



- **Your publics**

- Targeting groups is better than ‘the general public’
- Being clear about who you are targeting helps you tailor the content, delivery and marketing

- **Your partners**

- Partner organisations could be participants, collaborators or advisors

- **Your team**

- Who you work with to deliver the activity
- Could be BU staff/ students, or partner orgs
- Does the activity serve their purposes?



Targeting your audience

- People can be organised into different groups.
- Decide who you want to engage with, and why.



Targeting your audience

- Build a profile
- Start with what you know
- Identify an audience champion



Targeting your audience

- Consider barriers to engagement
 - Small details can make/ break your project.

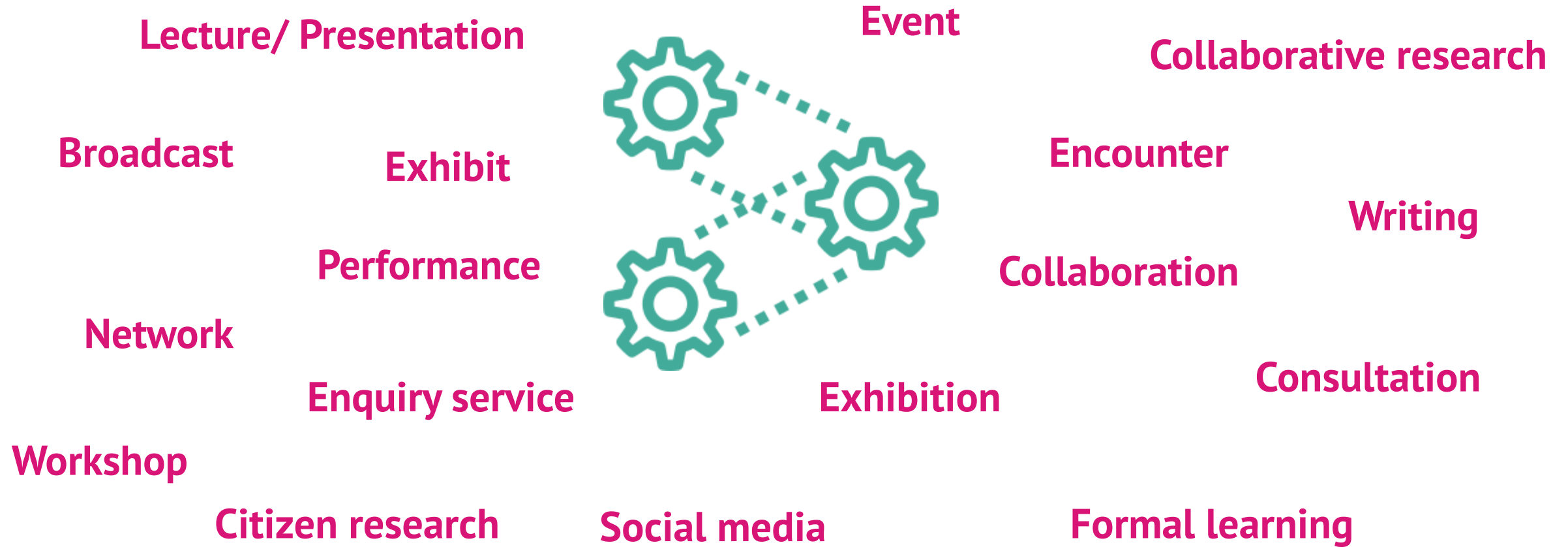


Targeting your audience

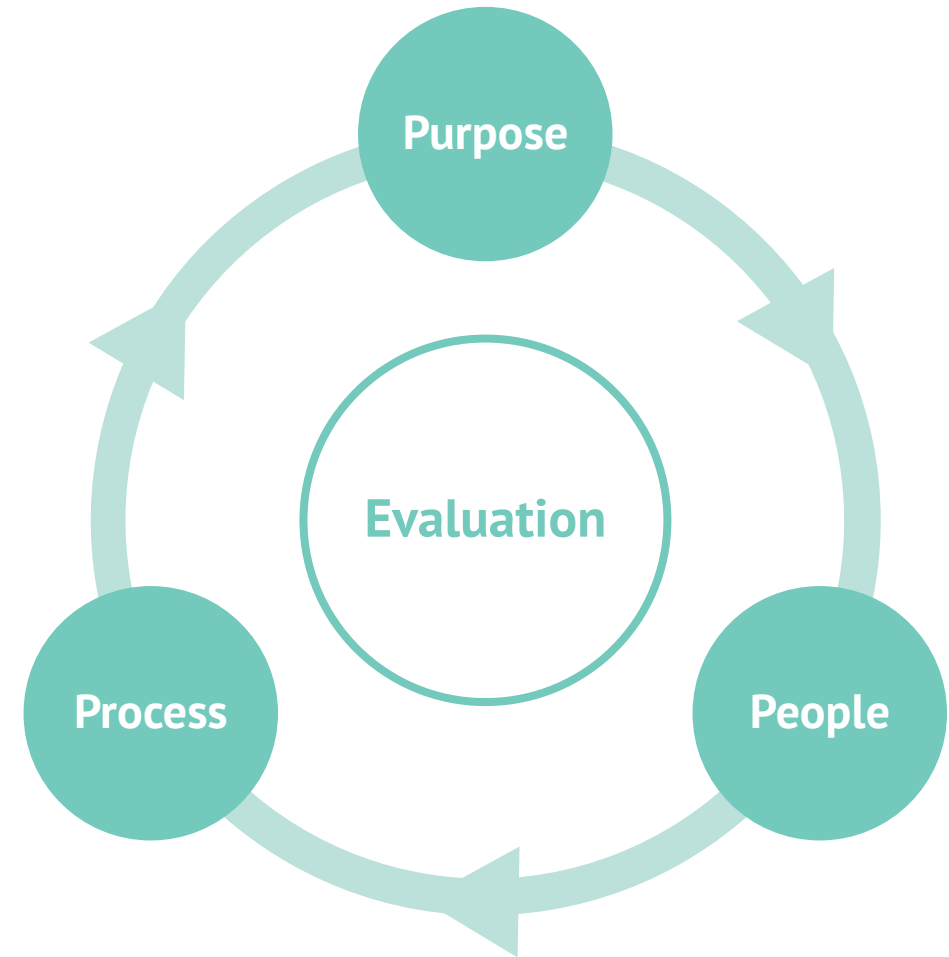
- Ask yourself challenging questions?
 - What do the audience get out of it?



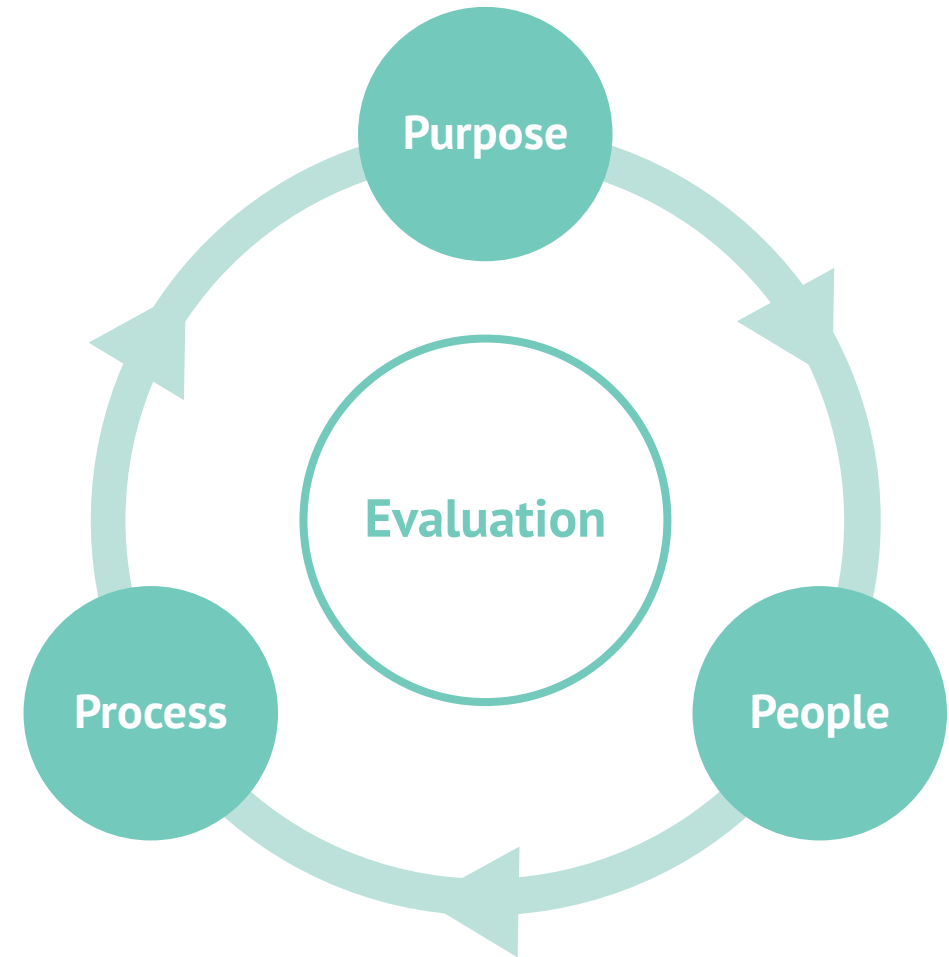
Process



- What difference did it make?
- Evaluation should be part of planning
 - Did you achieve your purpose?
 - Did the people get what they wanted?
- Include it from the start
- REF Impact



- Think of it like a mini research/
PER project
 - Aims
 - Methods
 - Data analysis
 - Reporting
 - Not *actually* research



Evaluation methods

Media analysis

Event app

Focus groups

Advanced tally counting

Photo survey



Workshops

Pop-up shops

Graffiti wall

Sign-in sheets

Video diaries

Quizzes

Interviews

Post-it note wall

Vox pops

Questionnaires

Post cards

Voting buckets

Rich pictures

Reward cards

Aerial or fixed point photography

Using your evaluation

Impact

- Public engagement can count as impact if measured and evidenced properly
- Extending evaluation for maximum impact

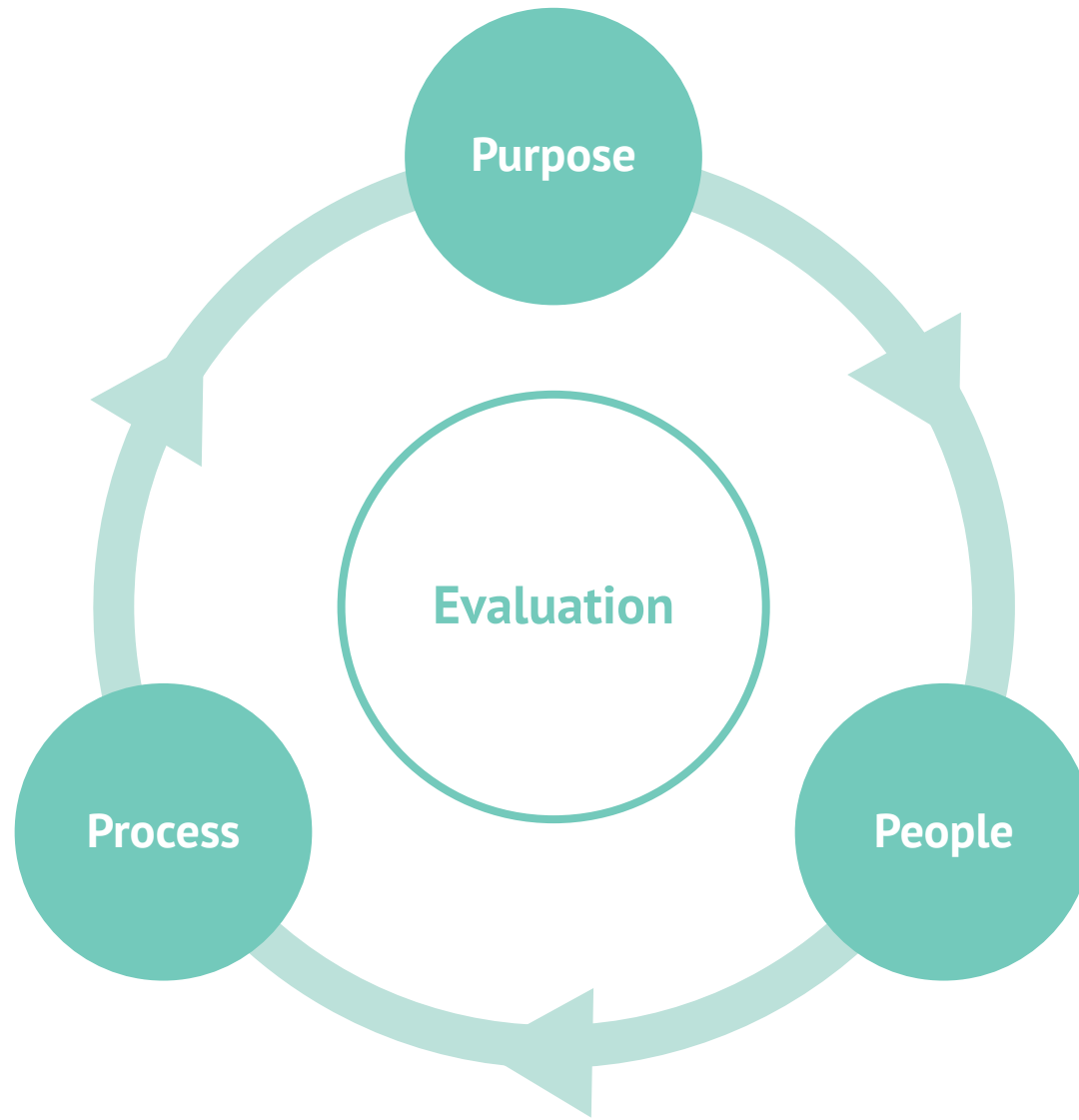
Self reflection

- Learn from evaluation

Reporting

- Who wants this data? Funders, HoD etc
- What do they want to see?
- Presenting it to partners

Moving on



Getting started

- Check existing opportunities
- Develop new ideas
- Seek funding if necessary
- Keep up to date
- Look out for additional training or engagement opportunities.



Thank you