We know that it takes time to find shared interests and refine research questions, so this tool is designed as an iterative process of designing and exploring together.

Exploring interests, developing questions

Creativity through constraints.

This session is a chance to refine your ideas within realistic limitations.

Work through together

Brigstow Institute
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bristol.ac.uk/brigstow

Before using this toolkit...

This toolkit has been created for you to use flexibly as a playful prompt for conversations within your group. It consists of four sections:

Ideas and Interests
Framing the Research
Creativity Through Constraints
Project Proposal

Each section has a suggestion of whether this might be better carried out apart or together.

Consider how you will want to work through this as a group – how will you ensure all voices be heard?

Ideas and Interests

This session is a chance to identify areas of shared interest in an open way.

What?

What am I / we interested in?
Where do our interests intersect?

Why?

Why does this topic matter?
What difference could this research make?

How?

How could we explore this topic?
What methods and approaches could we use?

Who?

Who could the "dream team" involve?
(different academic disciplines, lived experience, technical, creative)

Framing the research.

This session will move you from "Ideas and Interests" through to a research question that is worth taking forward.

What?

**What possible research questions would help us to explore this topic?
Can you prioritise or conflate the questions?**

Why?

Why does this research question(s) matter? What can we add to the existing research in this area? (including and beyond my discipline)

How?

How can we answer this research question(s)? What perspectives, approaches and sources have been used before? What could we borrow from other disciplines / practises?

Who?

Who else might influence our ideas? Is there anyone else who has the experience / interests we are looking for?
Do I still want to pursue this idea with the team?

Creativity through constraints.

This session is a chance to refine your ideas within realistic limitations.

What?

What is a feasible research question given the time and resources we have?

Why?

Why are the questions we are posing distinctive and new?
Why now?
What legacy can this leave or difference can it make?

How?

How can we tackle these questions on a manageable scale?
What will we make together as part of the research process?
What resources do we actually need?

Who?

Who is missing?
Do we need to find someone with the relevant expertise and interests to join, or do we adapt our "how" to fit the team?
Are we each still critical for this project?

Project Proposal.

This session will help you to translate your conversations and ideas into a project proposal.

Work through together

What?

**What is your research question(s)?
What does this research seek to do?**

Why?

Why is this research important?
How will this add to existing research?

How?

- **What research methods and approaches are we using?**
- **What will we make together as part of the research process?**

Who?

Who is involved?
What do we each bring to the project?

We would appreciate any feedback on this toolkit to help us to develop it further.

You can find a feedback form here:

www.bristol.ac.uk/brigstow /resources/interests_questions