

Foundations of Implementation Science

Advancing the Science of
Implementation Science for Law
and Justice

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Collaborative for
Implementation
Practice

UNC SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK



Implementation Science

Implementation science is the study of the factors that lead to uptake, scale and sustainability of practices, programs and policies with evidence behind them.

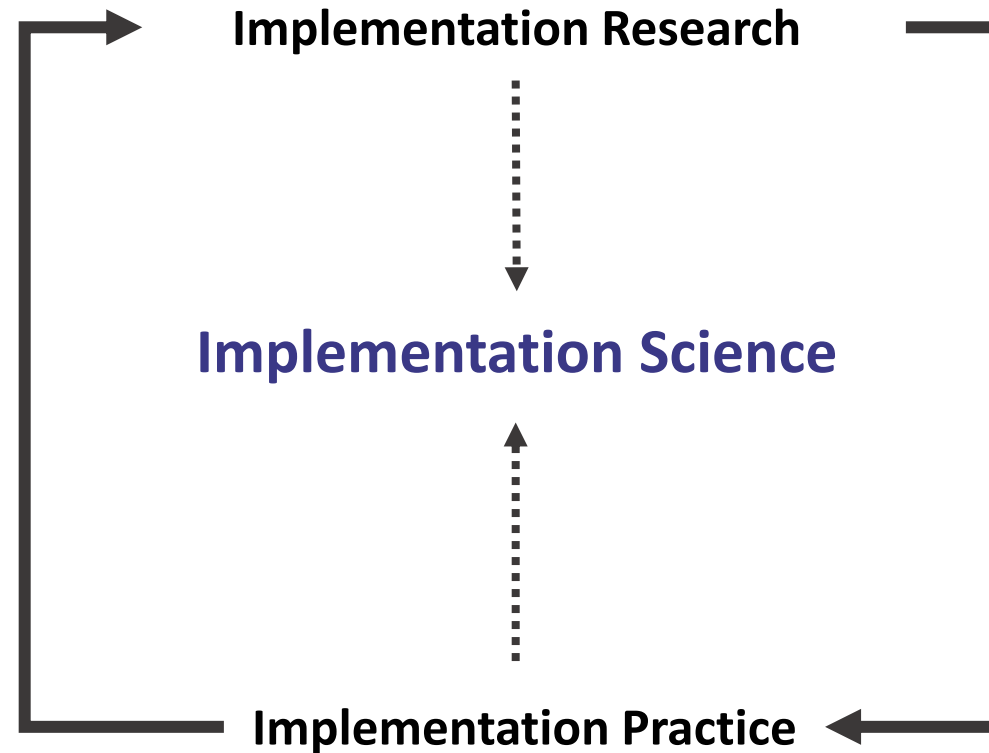
The purpose of implementation science is to create a bridge between research evidence and the real-world settings of service delivery to improve outcomes for those being served.

(Estabrooks et al., 2018)

Implementation Science

The fundamental goal of implementation science is to integrate research and practice experience in ways that improve the outcomes of those being served.

(Estabrooks et al., 2018)



Using Implementation Science

We can think about implementation science in three ways:

1. The use of **specific theories, frameworks, models and strategies with evidence** that can support effective, equitable and sustainable implementation;
2. The use of **'practical implementation science'** which refers to the translation of theories, models, and frameworks into user friendly tools and resources.
3. The development of specific **competencies** that support the **relational work of implementation**, which requires trust, psychological safety and co-creation.



Implementation Outcomes

Acceptability

Adoption

Appropriateness

Cost

Feasibility

Fidelity

Reach

Sustainability



Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research (CFIR) 2.0



Figure adapted by The Center for Implementation

Damschroder, L.J., Reardon, C.M., Widerquist, M.A.O. et al. The updated Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research based on user feedback. *Implementation Sci* 17, 75 (2022). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13012-022-01245-0>

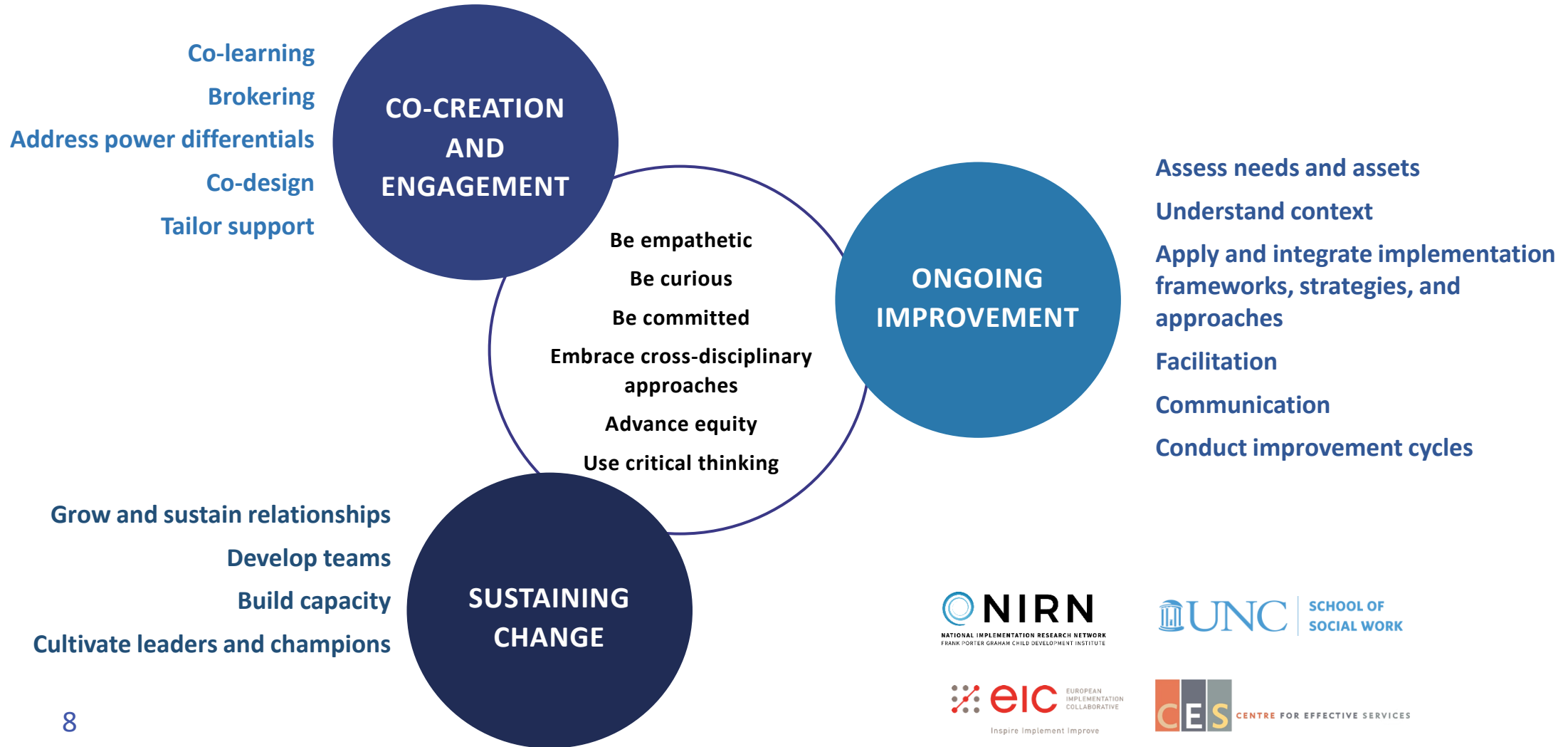
Competencies & Implementation Strategies

Implementation strategies alone are insufficient to understand the breadth and depth of the skills that professionals supporting implementation require in providing implementation support.

The work supporting implementation must account for the dynamic and highly relational nature of policy and practice implementation involving multiple layers of context and differing norms and values among partners.

(Albers et al., 2020)

Implementation Support Practitioner Competencies



Application of Implementation Science in Correctional Settings

Findings from a recent systemic review of 24 eligible studies that used an implementation science framework in an adult criminal-legal settings

- Majority of studies (63%) examined implementation determinants, and the most common determinants were associated with inner setting (organizational)
- Acceptability was the commonly examined implementation outcome (42%)
- Few studies (25%) explicitly tested implementation strategies
- Correctional health research has not kept pace with advancements in implementation science (2 studies published per year over 14 years)
- Greater testing of implementation strategies in criminal-legal settings is needed. Hybrid designs that simultaneously examine effectiveness of interventions and implementation strategies should be considered.

Van Deirse et al., 2023

