

# Co-production Literature Review



Co-production involves:  
*"Processes that iteratively bring together diverse groups and their ways of knowing and acting to create new knowledge and practices to transform societal outcomes"*

(Wyborn et al. 2019)

## Principles of Co-production

### Mindset

- **Co-production is important, but not always the answer**
- **Co-production is a means to an end, not a box to check**
- **Co-production requires a significant commitment of time, energy, and resources.**
- **Acknowledge the interdependence between facts and values**

### Process

- **Priority should be given to the process of coproduction**
- **Co-production should be done in the context of a particular decision**
- **Establish co-production research standards**
- **One size does not fit all**
- **Support adaptive learning through formal procedures for evaluating processes and outcomes**

### Stakeholders

- **There should be a focus on building meaningful connections and collaborations**
- **Decision-making power during the process must be shared**
- **Respect, value and include all relevant perspectives**
- **There should be an understanding of reciprocity of the value of the process**

## Elements of Successful Co-production Processes

### Important Elements

Leadership	Community participation	Diverse skills	Resources: financial and social	Social networks	Sense of community
Sense of partnership	Contextual understanding	Acknowledging the power of community	Shared values	Critical reflection	Ground rules
Ongoing dialog	Joint ownership of decisions	Relationship building	Commitment	Flexibility	Continuous reflection
Innovation	Accommodation	Engagement locations are convenient	Partnership with universities	Diverse stakeholders	Mutual respect

## Critiques and Challenges

- Cost (time, money, effort)
- Stakeholder engagement can be incredibly taxing and intimidating
- Can lead to stakeholder fatigue
- There is an **absence of “actionable principles”** for translating scientific discovery into conservation practice
- Issues are often so **context specific** that it becomes **difficult to create a transferable model/ solution**
- Research that **suggests changes to traditional power structures is a significant challenge**
- There is a broad-based **perception that co-production will always lead to positive outcomes, but there is some evidence to say this is not always the case**
- There have **not been definitive assessments of the effectiveness and impact** of co-production
- It is **hard to measure the success of co-production—**what defines success and how do you measure it?
- People feel they **don’t have the training** to do stakeholder engagement properly
- People sometimes do **co-production for the wrong reasons** rather than to truly inform better decisions
- **Mismatch between research that is accountable to decision makers and that which seeks to challenge the status quo**

## Challenges for Academics

- **There is a lack of academic training in ways to facilitate co-production**—academics don’t feel prepared to engage in this process
- **Young researchers see ‘riskiness’ in being engaged in transdisciplinary research**, especially those who want to stay in academia. Transdisciplinarity is seen as an ‘add on’ while focused research is the core of what they are meant to be doing.
- It is **hard to measure the success of co-production—**what defines success and how do you measure it? **How can those measures of success feed into advancement of an academic career?**
- It can be **hard to publish co-production research**, and these publications can be viewed as “sub-par”
- There is a **disconnect between what institutions say they want (i.e. engaged faculty) and institutionalized practices of faculty reward**
- **Co-production is not always “cutting-edge”** in the traditional sense
- **Traditional measures might not indicate that co-produced science is ‘legitimate’ or ‘credible’**

## How-to Guides and Toolkits

Title	Description
Collective impact forum	Online network for those practicing collective impact to find the tools, resources, and advice they need. For sharing experience and knowledge to accelerate the effectiveness and adoption of collective impact. <a href="https://www.collectiveimpactforum.org/getting-started">https://www.collectiveimpactforum.org/getting-started</a>
Co-create	Guidebook and toolkit with a European audience, aimed at teaching co-design principles to businesses <a href="http://www.cocreate.training/testimonial/co-create-basics-2-2/">http://www.cocreate.training/testimonial/co-create-basics-2-2/</a>
INVOLVE	Guidance on co-producing a research project. It explains the key principles and features of co-producing a research project and suggests ways to realize the principles and key features. Finally, the guidance outlines some of the key challenges <a href="https://www.invo.org.uk/posttypepublication/guidance-on-co-producing-a-research-project/">https://www.invo.org.uk/posttypepublication/guidance-on-co-producing-a-research-project/</a>
Co-production portal	Web portal toolbox hosted by the Swiss Science agency for sharing tools and methods of co-production. Also represents a peer-to-peer network for a ‘community of transdisciplinary’ <a href="https://naturalsciences.ch/topics/co-producing_knowledge">https://naturalsciences.ch/topics/co-producing_knowledge</a>
i2S toolkit	The integration and implementation sciences toolkit hosted by Australian National University is a resource repository for those working to improve research impact on complex real-world problems <a href="https://i2s.anu.edu.au/">https://i2s.anu.edu.au/</a>
ODI ROMA	Guide and online resource for guiding policy engagement and influence. Focused on international development and less on research. The guide outlines an approach for improved policy engagement. <a href="https://www.odi.org/features/roma/what-is-roma">https://www.odi.org/features/roma/what-is-roma</a>
Doing Science Differently: Co-producing Conservation Outcomes	Primer for introducing major principles of co-production to those unfamiliar with the process and its goals <a href="https://luchoffmanninstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Co-producing-conservation-outcomes.pdf">https://luchoffmanninstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Co-producing-conservation-outcomes.pdf</a>