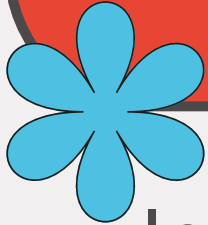




Applying co-
production
principles in
research:

*Reflections from
young people and
academics*

Background



- In childhood studies, co-production is a collaboration between researchers and young people to inform research.
- Although its use is growing, the definition and principles of co-production varies across contexts.
- We used an existing framework of six principles developed by NEF and Nesta to co-produce research with young people.



Researchers and young people reflected on their experiences of using these co-production principles in research:

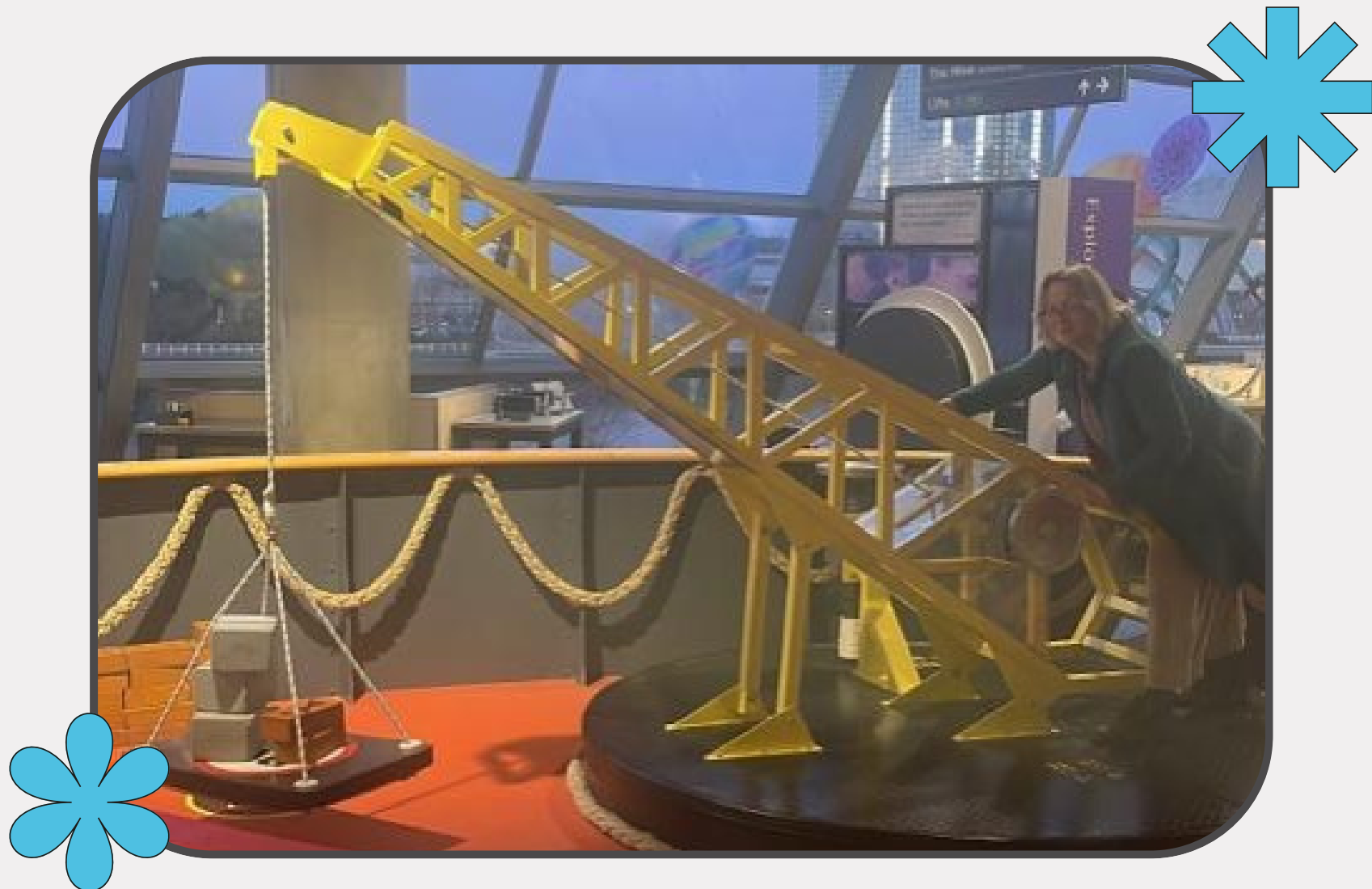
Principle: Valuing All Participants



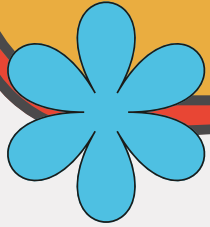
Reflections: Not every participant should have to contribute to the research equally. Nevertheless, we must value their input and offer them opportunities at every step.

Principle: Building on Strengths

Reflections: Young people's involvement in research can be supported by offering them a range of interesting opportunities that build new and existing skills.



Principle: Mutual Responsibility and Benefits



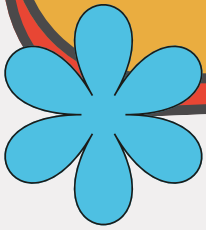
Reflections: A tricky principle! Benefits for both researchers and participants encourage them to get involved in co-production. However, sharing responsibility for delivering research with young people is challenging.

Principle: Peer Support Networks

Reflections: Taking the time to build strong relationships between participants pays off! These peer networks result in effective co-production, and are also a source of support for participants.



Principle: Blurring Distinctions



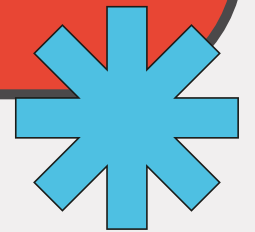
Reflections: By valuing young people's lived experiences as equal to researchers' academic skills, distinctions between their roles began to blur. However, some boundaries are still needed to safeguard young people.

Principle: Supporting People to Deliver Work Themselves



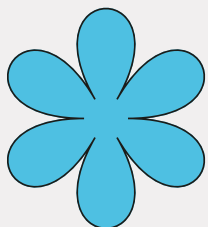
Reflections: Young people should be encouraged to conduct research themselves. As many young people were new to research, researchers supported them as needed. Often, this meant the research process took longer, which could be stressful when there were deadlines to meet.

Additional Principles

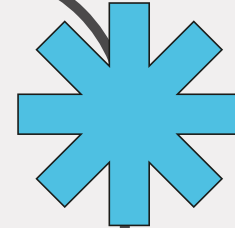


Researchers and young people identified three additional principles that they felt were needed when co-producing with young people:

- Being flexible and adaptable during the research process as circumstances change
- Respecting the boundaries of all those involved
- Honest and transparent discussions between researchers and young people



Conclusion



- Relationships are central to effective co-production but require time and effort to build
- Responsibilities are not easily shared as researchers are in the position of power and are usually in charge of the research
- Co-production principles must be adapted to the context of their use

