

Kick-off for the SRC-funded programmes JUST ENERGY and JUST TRANSITION

Oct 12, 2023



Programme

- 9.00 Welcoming words, **Päivi Tikka**, Director of Division of Strategic Research
- Specific features of the SRC funding
 - New programmes JUST ENERGY and JUST TRANSITION within the SRC funded programmes
- 9.30 Promoting and monitoring impact at strategic research
- Joint programme activity and societal impact, **Milja Saari**, Senior Science Adviser
 - Communications at strategic research, **Helen Metsä**, Coordinator
 - Monitoring and evaluation of impact, **Katri Huutoniemi**, Science Adviser
- 11.00 Break (lunch for own account)
- 12.30 Initiating the clarification process of programmes' impact objectives begins
- 14.30 Afternoon coffee
- 14.50 Next steps for programmes and projects, Milja Saari

Welcoming words

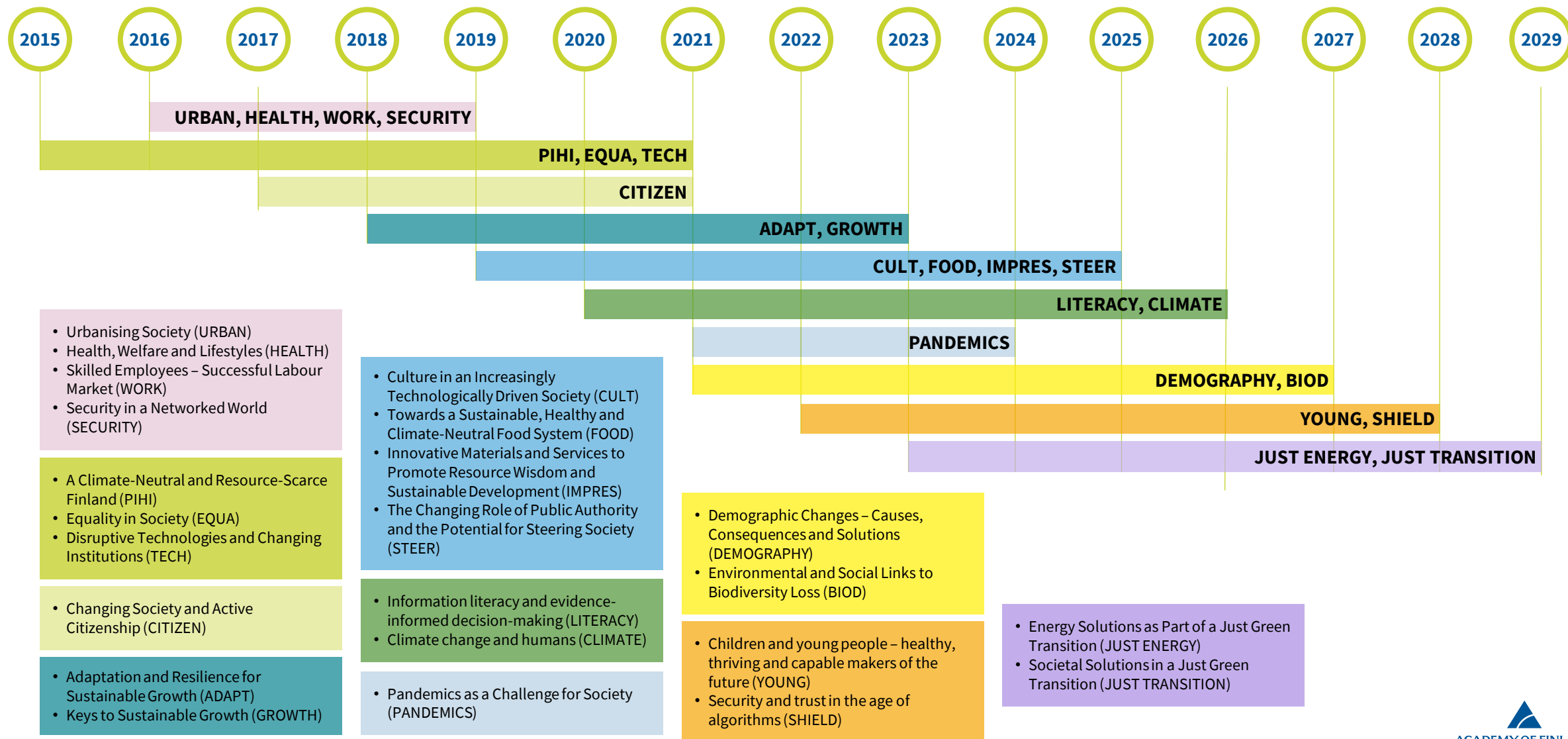
Päivi Tikka, Director of Division of Strategic Research

Strategic research tackles topical challenges in Finnish society

- Strategic research is used to reform and develop Finnish society in the long term.
- Strategic research supports research-based policy in line with the changing information needs of society.

The SRC works from within the Academy of Finland





The SRC, the Division and the programmes

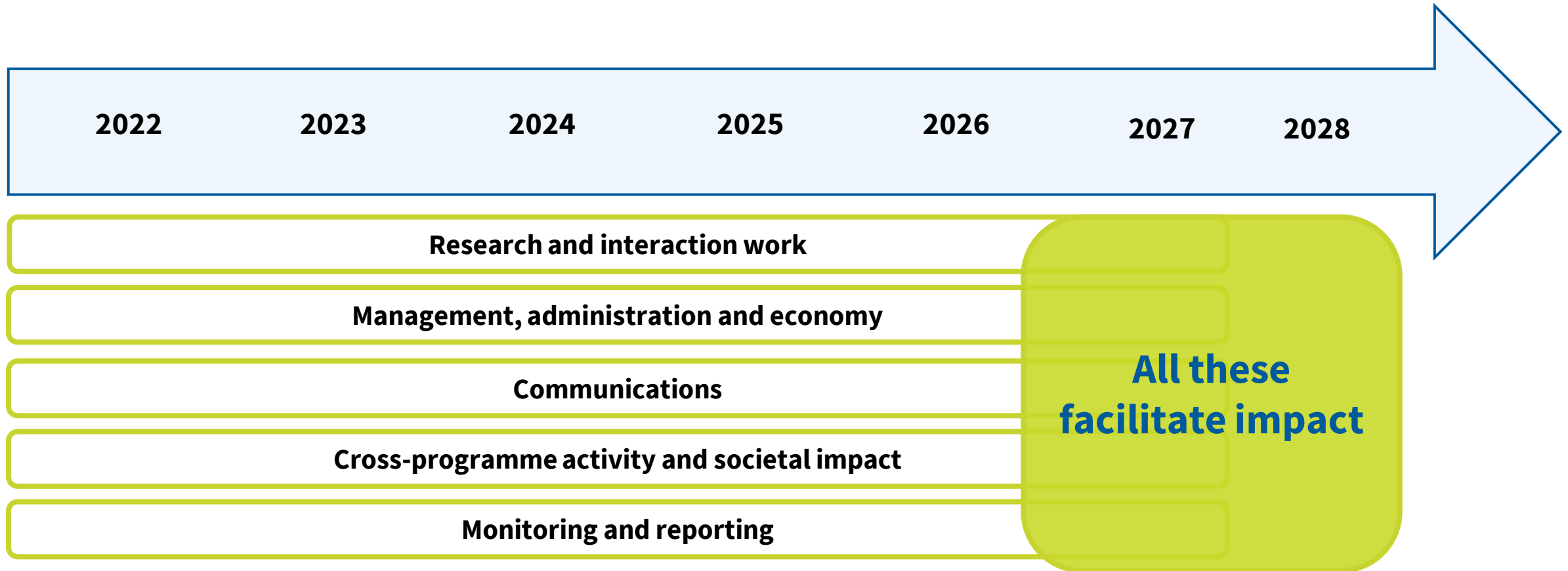
○ Programmes ● Number of projects ● Programme directors

Strategic Research Council (SRC)

Division of Strategic Research
administration, programme activity and societal impact reporting and monitoring



Programme cycle and key project processes 1/2



€27m in SRC funding for research into just green transition

JUST ENERGY

€62m applied for
€13.4m granted
5 funded projects

Funded organisations:
7 universities, 6 government
research institutes, 1
university of applied sciences,
1 company

84 collaborators, of which 4
ministries, 14 companies

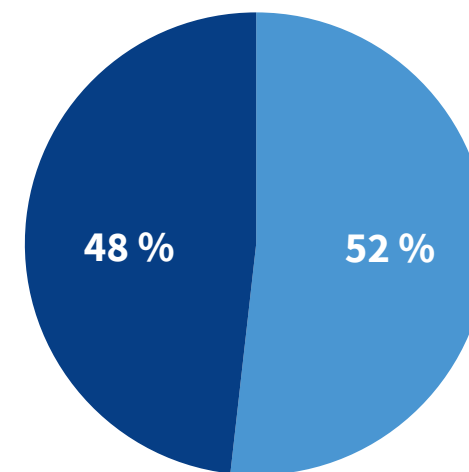
JUST TRANSITION

€118m applied for
€13.6m granted
5 funded projects

Funded organisations:
12 universities (2 foreign), 2
gov. research inst., 1 univ. of
appl. sciences, 2 companies

154 collaborators, of which 5
ministries,
23 companies

Gender distribution of
grantees



Men Women

2 funded programme directors

Joint programme activity and societal impact

Milja Saari, Senior Science Adviser

Vision for cross-programme social impact in strategic research



- Cooperation between the SRC, programme directors, programmes and projects and the Division of Strategic Research develops methods that strengthen dialogue between science and research and decision-making in society.
- Strategic research is a widely recognised supporter of co-creation and decision-making in society.

Impact through programmes

- An SRC programme is more than the sum of its parts:
 - Many things are worth doing together as a programme or together with other programmes.
 - **Scientific cooperation** to address the same societal challenge allows for greater impact.
 - For instance, cross-disciplinary collaboration and new scientific initiatives.
 - **Cooperation to achieve societal impact**
 - Enabling a dialogue between research and knowledge-users aims at a more active interaction between science and policymaking, in order to produce better decisions and research that is more responsive to the information needs of various societal actors.

Impact is created through

Co-creation

- Continuous collaboration between producers and users of knowledge.
- Implemented through a dialogue between the SRC, programme directors, the Division of Strategic Research and stakeholders.
 - For example, Tietokumppanus.
- Supports the research work of the projects and the utilisation of research data in decision-making in various sectors of society.

Facilitation of information support

- It is not only about transferring information and experts from one location to another, but also about **facilitating active dialogue and interaction** between research and policy.
- Example: the “Saumakohtia” dialogues, developed by the Forum for Environmental Information and applied by strategic research, with parliamentary political groups and Finnish MEPs.

Programme activity and societal impact are part of the work of SRC-funded projects

- Funding principles of the Strategic Research Council:
 - Since the pursuit of societal impact is a key element in SRC programmes, the funded consortia and programme directors are required to participate actively both in the interaction activities of their own programme and in the cross-programme activities for societal impact.

Call text:

- Funded consortia shall actively participate in [programme activity](#). Programme activities include joint events, compilation of data and participation in the drafting of newsletters.

The projects and the Programme Director form a programme package

- The projects carry out their own research and interaction activities and are actively involved in [programme activity and societal impact](#).
- The Programme Director is responsible for developing programme-level interactions and cross-programme cooperation, and for promoting the societal impact of strategic research. He/she will also be responsible for facilitating the definition of programme objectives and monitoring their achievement in collaboration with the projects and the STN. The Programme Director will also be expected to make a significant contribution to the joint programming and impact activities of strategic research.

Programme activity and societal impact

- Programme activities within the programme
 - New scientific breakthroughs, research synergies between projects, co-development of methodologies.
 - Joint project interaction, promoting social impact at programme level.
 - For example through Vaikuttavuussuunnitelma and Vaikuttavuuden vuosikello.
- Impact activities between programmes
 - Promoting the societal impact of research through collaboration between programmes + in cooperation with experts from the Strategic Research Unit.
 - Facilitation, co-development, communication.
 - Tietokumppanus, the “Saumakohtia” dialogues, ratkaisujatieteesta.fi, newsletter etc.

Joint programme and impact activities support

- **Concortium PIs and interaction coordinators**
- **Programme directors**
 - JUST ENERGY: **Juha Peltomaa**, Development Manager, Finnish Environment Institute, [firstname.lastname\(at\)syke.fi](mailto:firstname.lastname(at)syke.fi)
 - JUST TRANSITION: **Olli-Pekka Ruuskanen**, Research Director, Pellervo Economic Research, [firstname.lastname\(at\)ptt.fi](mailto:firstname.lastname(at)ptt.fi)
- **Division of Strategic Research**
 - Milja Saari, programme and impact activity coordination, [firstname.lastname\(at\)aka.fi](mailto:firstname.lastname(at)aka.fi)
- Mentor programme directors (early programme stages)
 - JUST ENERGY: **Asta Salmi** (asta.salmi@oulu.fi), IMPRES programme
 - JUST TRANSITION: **Minna Lammi** (minna.lammi@aru.ac.uk), CULT programme

Communications at strategic research

Helen Metsä, Coordinator

Communication about strategic research

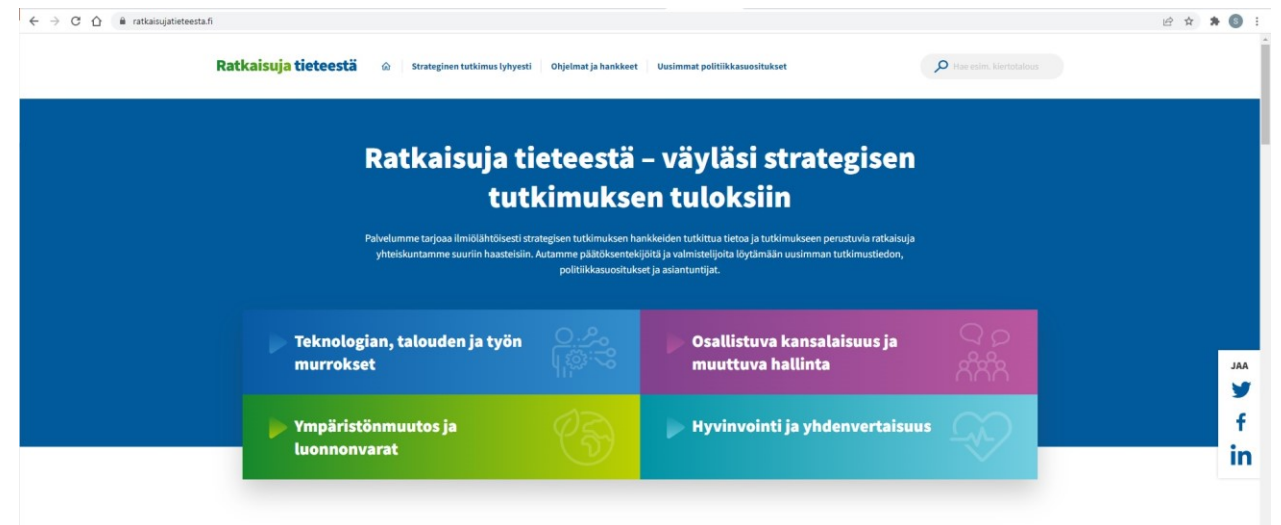
- The communication of strategic research focuses on the whole set of strategic research and the funding instrument. → Projects run their own communication efforts.
- Knowledge of the SRC funding instrument is one of the prerequisites for impact.
→ That's why acknowledging the funder correctly is important.
- What is expected of the projects and how does the Division of Strategic Research support the projects in communications?
 - Acknowledging and tagging the funder
 - Sending policy briefs and event links
 - RSS feed and project information on strategic research webpage
 - SRC Newsletter and brochure
 - Social media
 - Strategic research logo, PP templates and guidelines etc.: Material bank (Research Council of Finland)
 - Meeting with interaction coordinators

Communication channels of Strategic Research

- Websites (strategicresearch.fi, ratkaisujatieteesta.fi)
- Social media:
 - X: [@Akatemia_STN](https://twitter.com/Akatemia_STN)
 - LinkedIn [Strateginen tutkimus | Strategic Research](https://www.linkedin.com/company/strateginen-tutkimus)
 - Instagram [@stn_akatemia](https://www.instagram.com/stn_akatemia)
 - YouTube [Academy of Finland](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqWz8v8v8v8v8v8v8v8v8v8)
- Thematic newsletter
 - New programmes and projects featured in Jan 2024

Ratkaisujatieteesta.fi

- A website launched at the end of 2021, in particular to support policymaking and decision preparation.
- A key channel for bringing together key results of SRC projects, the latest research data, policy briefs and experts.
- The website contains phenomenon-based information and research-based solutions to current issues in our society.



The aim of the ratkaisujatieteesta.fi website is to

- provide research-based solutions to support policymaking;
- attract knowledge users to get to know SRC-funded research;
- provide an overall picture of strategic research and a gateway to sources of the latest research also for a wider audience, e.g. students;
- strengthen the visibility and societal impact of strategic research.

Solution cards

- Provide a way for SRC programmes and projects to communicate their key research results to policymakers in a crystallized form.
- A good solution card
 - is **topical**;
 - offers **new knowledge** to support societal debate and decision-making;
 - presents **concrete solutions** to a societal challenge;
 - is clearly **motivated**; solutions are based on research.
 - i.e. closely linked to ongoing project activities (publications, policy briefs).

How do SRC projects participate in the website?

1. By collaborating with programme directors to produce and update solution cards.
2. By communicating about the website.
 - The projects play an important role in raising awareness of the website!
 - For example through social media and featured on own website.

Let's make ratkaisujatieteesta.fi a well-known website where policymakers know they can find the latest research data and solutions related to societal challenges.



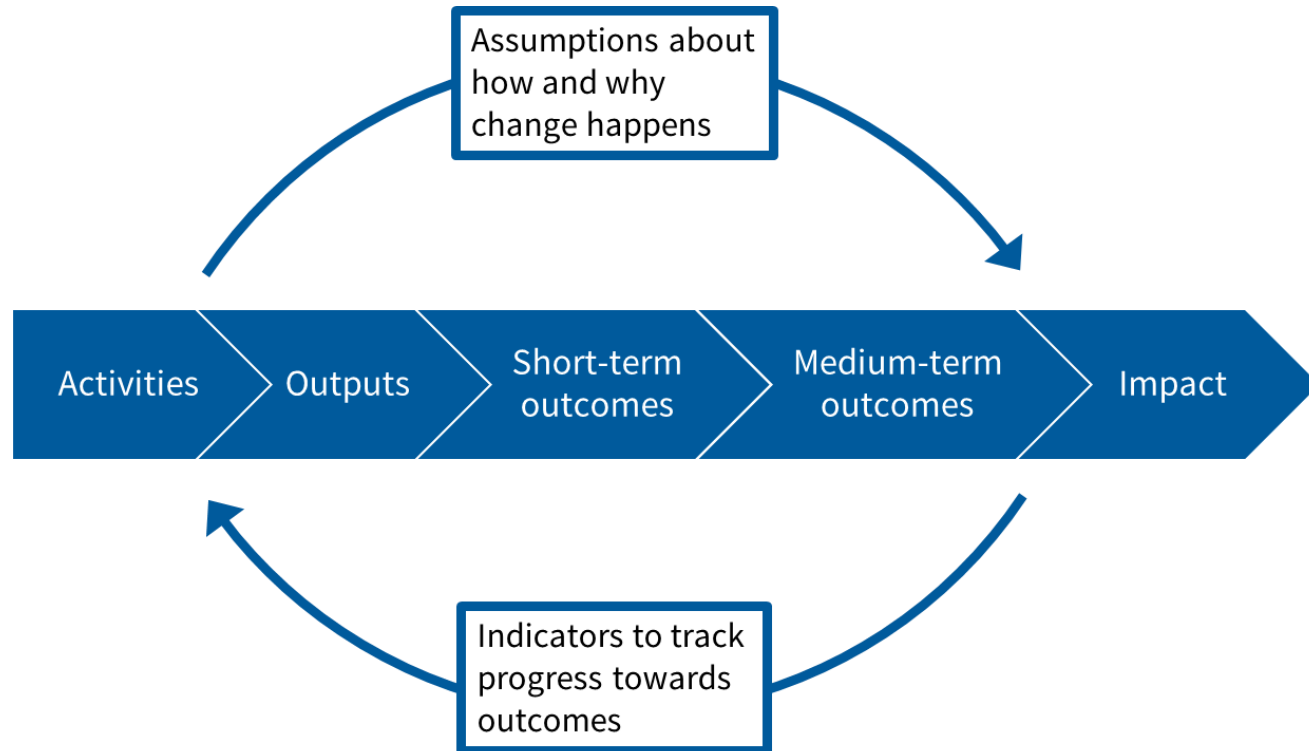
Monitoring and evaluation of impact

Katri Huutoniemi, Science Adviser

What kind of impact is expected from the projects?

- The impact of strategic research focuses on the societal challenges identified in the research programme.
- The pursuit of impact is linked not only to the **projects'** own research and interaction plans, but also to the **programme's** impact objectives, defined jointly by the projects and the programme director.
- Both the projects (individually) and the programme (together, guided by the programme director) will specify their impact objectives by **31 March 2024**.
- Cf. the UK's REF: *"impact is defined as an effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, beyond academia"*.

Impact refers to a desired societal change



Theory of change

- Researchers must have **assumptions** as to how their activities can contribute to the change.
- The SRC-funded project is responsible for specifying and monitoring the (short-term, medium-term) outcomes it aims to achieve.

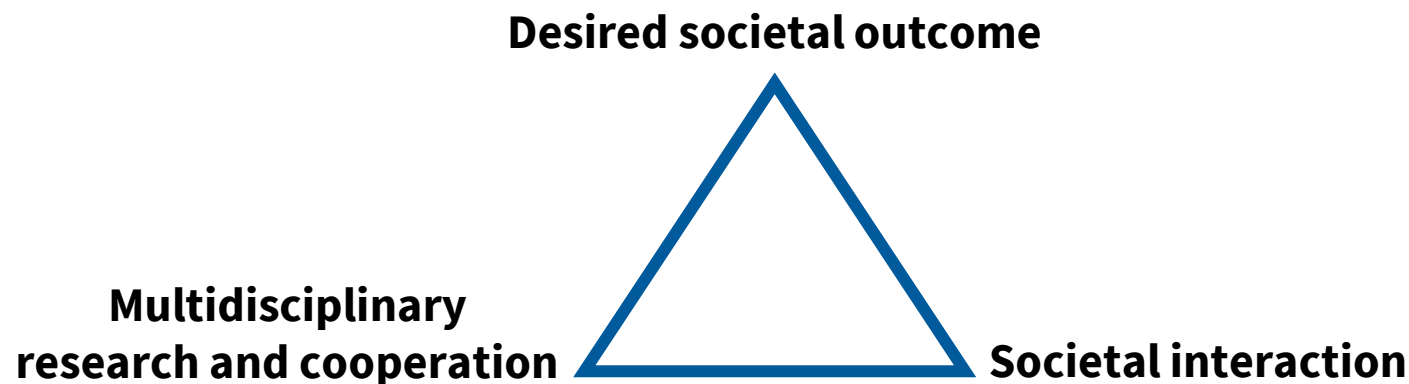
Purpose of monitoring and evaluating impact

- Part of the statutory duties of the SRC.
- Support for managing and guiding SRC-funded programmes and projects.
- Learning from experience, disseminating good practices.
- Making the impact of strategic research visible.

Achieving the desired outcomes is not a prerequisite for continued funding and missing them is not a sign of failure!

Follow-up targets in impact story

- The **desired societal outcome** of the project's work – an up-to-date description of its progress and how it relates to the programme's impact objectives.
- Project's **multidisciplinary research and cooperation** to achieve the outcome – relevance and added value.
- Project's **societal interaction** to achieve the outcome – key activities and their effects.



Evaluating the impact of strategic research

- The evaluation criteria are based on the core objectives of strategic research and on programme-specific impact objectives.
 1. promoting high-quality, multidisciplinary research on the problems and needs in the programme's domain.
 2. creating concrete steps towards tackling those problems and needs in Finnish society.
 3. strengthening research and stakeholder communities in the programme's domain.

The evaluation has so far been carried out at programme level after the end of the programme, but this will change. The impact evaluation can cover both ongoing and completed programmes or projects (not individual ones).

Results of latest evaluation (SRC programmes EQUA, PIHI, TECH, CITIZEN)

Points of success

- Relevant programme themes.
- Interdisciplinary project structure, problem-setting and results.
- Participatory approach with stakeholders.
- Extensive societal interaction during programme.

Points to improve on

- Compatibility of research topics between projects.
- Cooperation at programme level, broader interdisciplinarity of projects.
- Deeper co-creation from the outset.
- Engaging knowledge-users in the uptake of results after programme completion.

[The evaluation reports are available on our website](#)

Consortium's reporting

REPORT FORMAT	SCHEDULE	MAIN CONTENT
State-of-play report (word)	By 31 March 2024	Public presentation of the project, including its desired societal outcomes
Annual reporting (SARA)	Annually by 31 March	Impact reporting
Interim report (SARA)	In March 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities, results, outputs • Impact reporting
Final report (SARA)	Upon programme completion in 2029	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities, results, outputs • Impact reporting

Additional information and guidelines: [Project monitoring and reporting](#)

At start: state-of-play report (5–10 pages)

- The purpose of the report is to present the starting points for the consortium's research and interaction at the start of the project as well as the desired societal outcomes.
- Targeted at policymakers and other actors beyond academia.
- Published on the strategic research website.
- Submitted in Finnish by 31 March 2024.
- Forms the basis for the consortium's impact reporting (impact stories).

What kind of outcomes should a project strive for?

YES!	NO
<p>The desired societal outcome is important for the project and the programme; achieving the outcome clearly advances the objectives of the programme.</p>	<p>The desired societal outcome is secondary for the project or the programme.</p>
<p>The outcome is relevant for several parties and stakeholders of the project, and they can commit to pursuing it.</p>	<p>Only one consortium party is committed to pursuing the outcome. The outcome is not considered important among the project stakeholders.</p>
<p>The outcome is understandable and relevant also for a wider audience.</p>	<p>The outcome is so abstract or isolated that its relevance does not translate to a wider audience.</p>
<p>The resources of the project facilitate concrete progress towards the outcome. Progress can already be made during the project, even if the outcome is only realised later.</p>	<p>The outcome is so extensive or ambitious that the project's resources will not produce concrete progress.</p>
<p>Progress towards the outcome can be monitored during and/or after the project period.</p>	<p>It is not possible to monitor or estimate progress towards the outcome with any 'indicators'.</p>

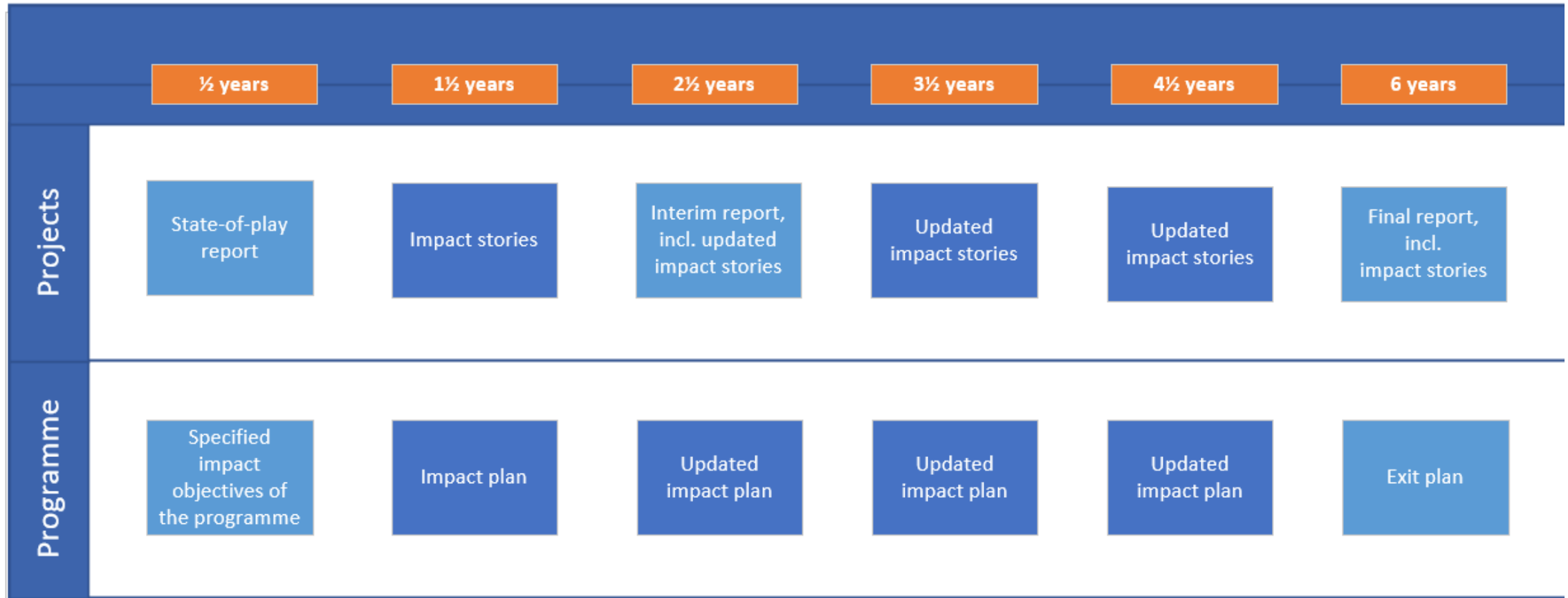
Initiating the clarification process of programmes' impact objectives begins

Programme's impact objectives

The programme's impact objectives serve as a tool for programme management and guide the monitoring and evaluation of projects and the work of the programme director. Programmes and projects may choose to use these objectives in their own communication.

- **The goals of the workshop are:**
 - Familiarize ourselves with the projects
 - Get an understanding of the programme entity generated by the projects
 - Initiate the clarification process of programme's impact objectives
- **After the kick-off event,** the programme director will take responsibility for the process of specifying the programme's impact objectives.

The process of planning and monitoring impact in new SRC programmes



Task 1 – Brief presentation of project’s impact objectives

- **Question:** What societal challenge does your project aim to address and how?
 - No traditional project presentations, thank you 😊
- **Task time:** 15 minutes
- **Task objective:** Presentation of the projects’ desired societal outcomes and impact objectives (max. 3 min. per project)

Impact (outcome, effect, change, or benefit) = a change caused by the examined activity or other examined factors either alone or in conjunction with others.

Task 2 – What kind of programme are we forming together?

- **Questions:**
 - What might the projects bring "beyond" the programme description?
 - Is there anything the projects do not "cover"?
- **Task objective:** Locating the projects within the programme description and creating a common understanding of the programme.
- **Task time:** approx. 30 minutes

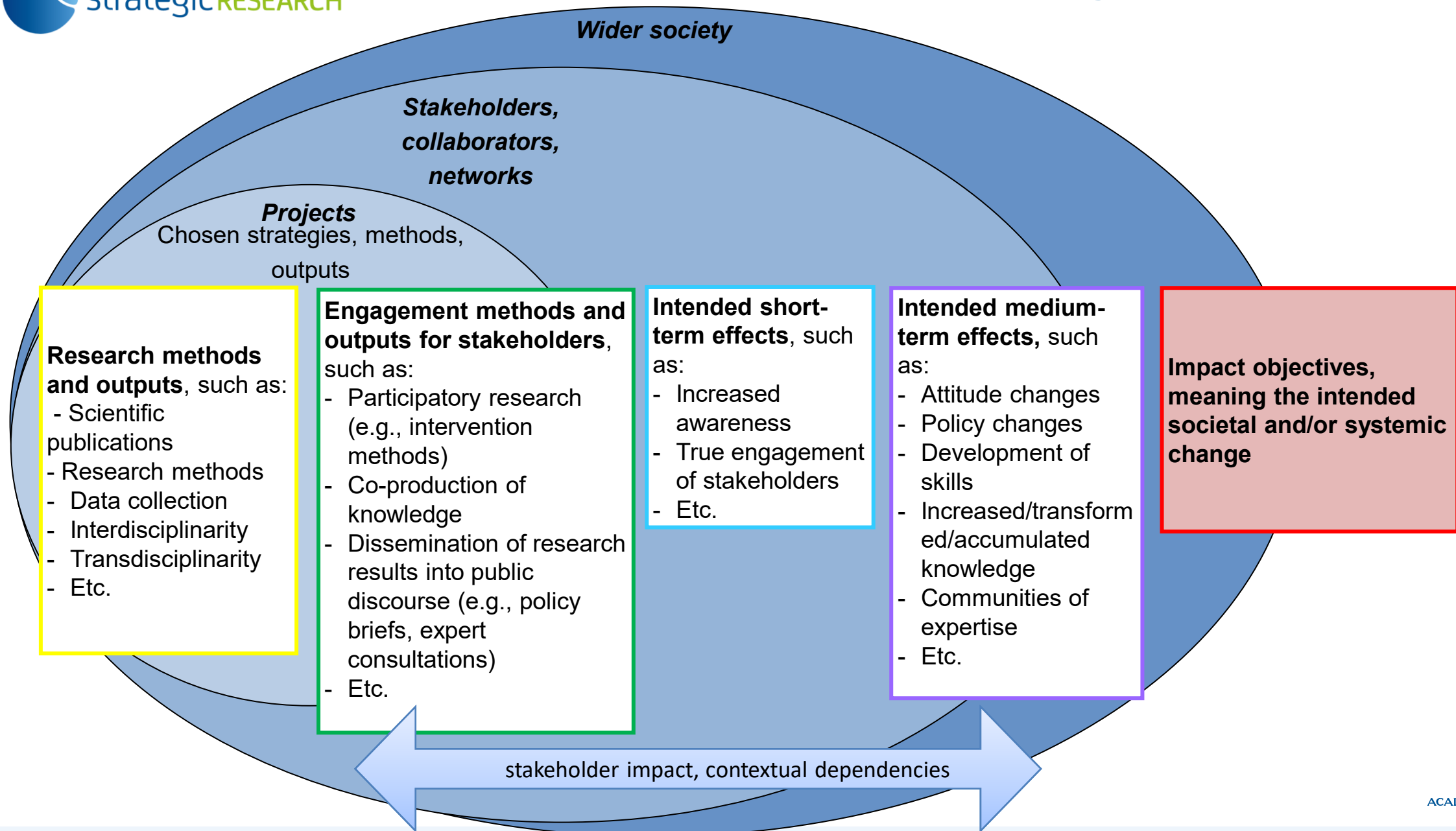
Task 3 – The planned impact of the projects as the foundation of the programme’s impact objectives

- **Task objective:** Identifying programme-level connections and potential synergies based on the projects’ own impact objectives
- **Task time:** approx. 55 minutes

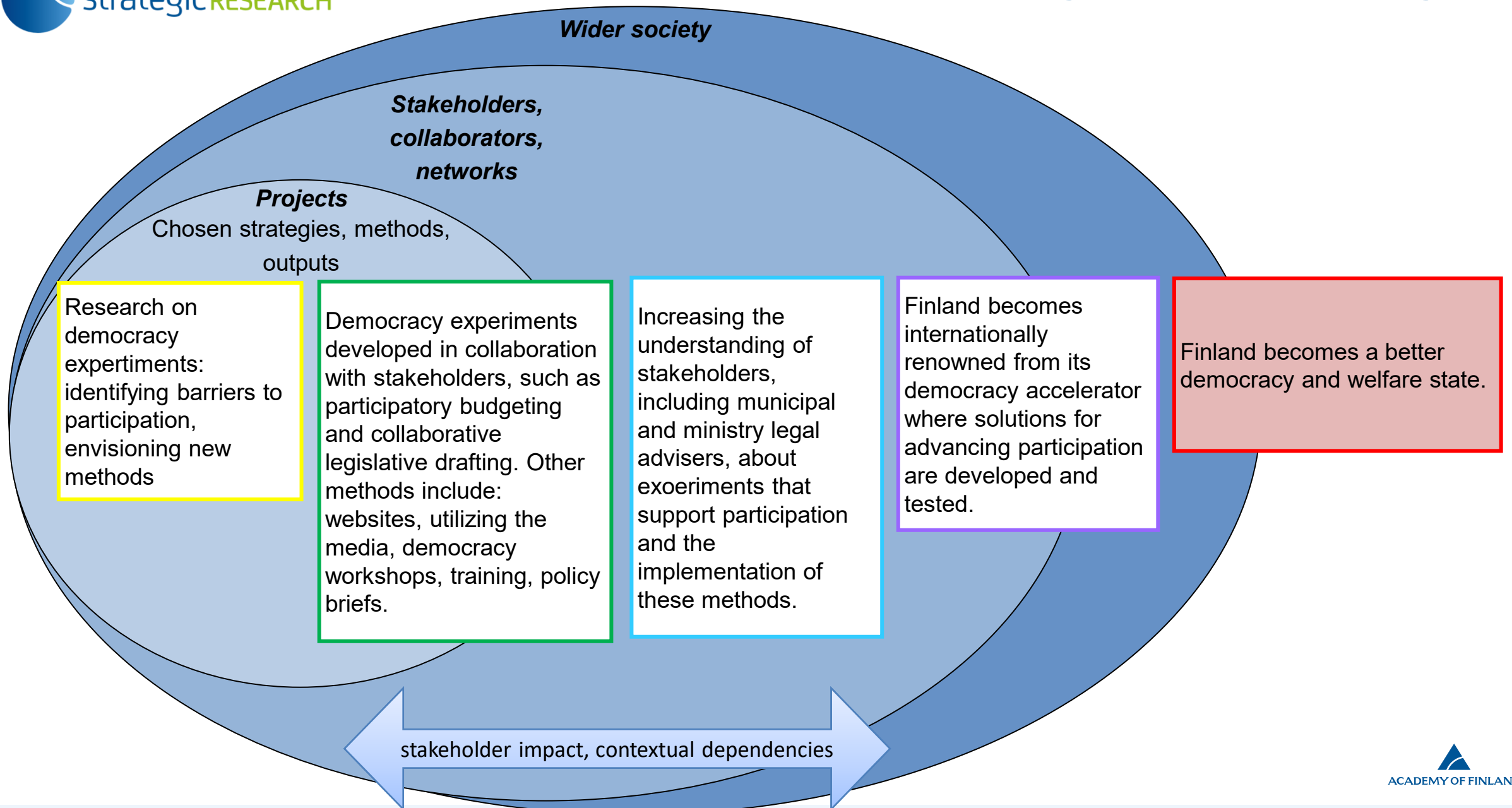
Do you find one or more societal challenges that all projects aim to influence? What about shared stakeholders or research synergies?

In the future, the programme’s impact objectives will be part of the activities as well as monitoring of both projects and the programme.

How and why desired change is happening?



BIBU: How and why desired change is happening?





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Thank you!



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