

#1 DESIGN

TRUST IS BUILT, NOT ASSUMED

- Negotiate research questions with communities
- Reflect on and be transparent about the purpose and limits of the research
- Take time to build relationships and co-create shared language and principles
- Deep listening – ask communities about their research priorities
- Offer choices on how people can engage



#2 CONDUCT

PEOPLE ARE NOT DATA THEY'RE COLLABORATORS

- Embed on-going consent and allow maximum time for people to withdraw
- Share findings with people who offer their stories to check and redact and/or co-analyse
- Co-design methods with participants
- Aim to create safe, comfortable, accessible spaces
- Encourage mutual and reciprocal learning by embedding shared language



#3 SHARING

OUTCOMES BELONG TO COMMUNITIES TOO

- Offer choice: use of real name or stay anonymous
- Consider and mitigate harms of naming
- Co-produce authorship and attribution agreements
- Share outputs accessibly and transparently
- Design real-world solutions WITH participants



A MANIFESTO FOR ~~RESEARCH~~ GO PRODUCING KNOWLEDGE

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The material underpinning this vision was co-created by workshop attendees brought together by **E4J**, **Unlock**, **FACT** and the **University of Chester**.

All collaborators had experience of being researched, doing research or working on ethics committees in criminal justice. This visual format was developed with **Interactive Academia** by **Sean Patrick Media**.

Content workshops were funded by **UKRI grant MR/Y017110/1**, design workshops funded by **Social Science Lab** at **Anglia Ruskin University**

PURPOSE

We are rooted in a commitment to centring human experiences of criminal justice by embracing human-centred, inclusive research practices that are co-designed with communities.

To breathe life into research by honouring the agency, voice, and lived expertise of those directly impacted by criminal justice systems—not merely viewing them as vulnerable, but as capable, insightful contributors.

Guided by principles of love, respect, radical care, and equity, we seek to build shared language and frameworks that lessen harms and go beyond institutional safeguarding to protect and uplift people. Our work will seek to endorse strong emerging practices and, at times, be unapologetically activist.

We are committed to producing live, adaptive frameworks which learn from community-led insights and provide choices regarding attribution, while holding space for nuanced, ethical engagement.

Our work is not only about studying systems—it's about transforming them.

A Manifesto for ~~Research~~ Co-Producing Knowledge

VISION

Criminal justice research is often deeply unethical. Conventional approaches frequently misrepresent individuals and communities, and risk missing a wealth of knowledge beyond academic boundaries.

We envision a future where knowledge about criminal justice emerges from and serves the communities it studies, valuing people as partners and Knowledge Producers.

This approach was built through deep listening with individuals and groups directly impacted by the criminal justice system.

We invite reflection on this vision to build potentials for a more ethical, representative and impactful knowledge base.

VALUES

B **#1 Balance of power**
Negotiating research questions and direction together, seeking to balance power, and embracing the emergence of insight from diverse experiences and skillsets.

A **#2 ACCOUNTABILITY**
Accountability not only to institutions, but to the people and communities at the heart of our work. Prioritising human relationships and recognising that meaningful collaborations take time.

L **#3 LEGACY**
Leaving behind lasting community resources, ensuring that the knowledge and connections created continue to grow long after the research ends.

A **#4 AGENCY**
Grounding work in trust, drawing co-agreed boundaries, building long-term partnerships, and committing to collective action.

N **#5 NURTURE**
Centralising care as a practice and a principle: showing up with kindness, love, and empathy (not sympathy), and working with compassion and self-awareness.

C **#6 COLLABORATION**
Recognising the importance of choice, continued consent, and growing in partnership—learning, resolving, and moving forward together.

E **#7 EQUITY**
Being of service, fostering spaces of hope—while managing expectations, preparing thoughtfully, and ensuring aftercare is not an afterthought.

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