

A decorative background at the top of the slide featuring a network diagram with red and black nodes connected by lines, set against a light red gradient.

# The Impact of Social Sciences and Humanities on Society

14-16 October 2020, Ottawa

12.30 – 13.45pm

## (Regional) Research Infrastructures for SSH

*Claire Samson (Chair) – Canada Foundation for Innovation*

*Robert Luke – e-Campus Ontario*

*Rick Delbridge – University of Cardiff*

CANADA FOUNDATION FOR INNOVATION

**AESIS Panel:  
(Regional) Research  
Infrastructures for Social  
Sciences and Humanities**

Introductory remarks from  
Claire Samson, Ph.D., P.Eng.  
VP Programs and Planning for CFI

October 15, 2020

## ABOUT THE CFI

- Created in 1997, the CFI is the Government of Canada's main agency for supporting research infrastructure.
- The CFI's core objective is to enable researchers to undertake world-class research and technology development that leads to social, economic and environmental benefits for Canada.
- The CFI's other objectives include attraction and retention of top research talent, training the next generation of researchers and supporting private-sector innovation and commercialization.

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## THE CFI APPROACH TO RESEARCH FUNDING

The CFI holds competitions for eligible Canadian universities, colleges, research hospitals and non-profit research institutions.

The CFI funds up to 40 percent of a project's costs. Matching funds are secured by the proponent from any other source.



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## FUNDING FOR SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES (SSH)

CFI-funded infrastructure serves researchers and promotes productive networks and collaboration among Canadian academic, public and private sectors.

Over the past six years, funding for research infrastructure for SSH in CFI competitions has increased.

Two types of funding:

- Direct infrastructure costs
- Operations costs of national facilities



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# Érudit

Érudit supports innovation in the Canadian scholarly publishing sector, offering integrated services and boosting the international impact of Canadian SSH research.

Érudit is an online production and dissemination platform that allows its users to access extensive collections of Canadian SSH research publications. Emphasis is on open access.



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# Érudit

Érudit's collections are viewed in 85 countries around the world by more than 1,100 subscribing institutions.

130 publishers use Érudit for the production and digital distribution of their journal.

Érudit supports bibliometric research projects by giving access to its database to researchers.



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## CANADIAN RESEARCH DATA CENTRE NETWORK (CRDCN)

CRDCN is a unique partnership between a consortium of more than 30 Canadian universities and Statistics Canada.

CRDCN is composed of over 30 secure computer labs housed on university campuses across the country and informs public policy by providing access to statistical data files supported by state of the art computing and analytics.





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## CANADIAN RESEARCH DATA CENTRE NETWORK (CRDCN)

CRDCN researchers have made major scientific and policy contributions across many disciplines, including almost 700 new publications in the last two years.

These publications have been on a variety of SSH research topics, including population health and well-being, income and employment, education and social development, and immigration and settlement, with important crosscutting topics such as Indigenous and gender issues.



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## FORMAT

- Presentation from Dr. Robert Luke
- Presentation from Dr. Rick Delbridge
- Open discussion
- Wrap-up: Formulate 2-3 most important outcomes and/or recommendations



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## INTRODUCTION TO DR. ROBERT LUKE

### CEO at eCampus Ontario

- Former Vice President, Research & Innovation at OCAD University.
- Expert in public-private partnerships for research and development.



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# INTRODUCTION TO DR. RICK DELBRIDGE

## **Professor of Organizational Analysis at Cardiff Business School**

- Former Dean of Research, Innovation and Enterprise at Cardiff University.
- Led the development of the Social Science Research Park (SPARK).





# (Regional) Research Infrastructures for SSH: Examples and Reflections from Cardiff

Professor Rick Delbridge  
Cardiff University



# Overview

- **the context**
  - **Weak local economy, very reliant on public sector, significant societal challenges (economic, health, well-being); research-intensive university with significant research strengths across social sciences; close working relationships with city and Welsh governments; ‘City Deal’ and Challenge Funds**
- **the initiative**
  - **Social science-led innovation underpinned by inter-disciplinary research and focusing on societal challenges, promoting collaboration with public, private and third sectors, building new partnerships and the creation of a purpose-built facility: the Social Science Research Park (SPARK)**
- **strengths**
  - **Founded on high quality research and good collaborative relationships; significant university investment; ‘fits’ both with local needs and national strategies for research, innovation & research impact**

# Underpinning Assumptions and Foundations

## Importance of:

Interdisciplinary research

Societal-challenge focus for both research and innovation

Collaboration and co-creation of knowledge

Inclusive conception of 'value' (public & economic)

Building from strengths

Partnership approach

'Fit' with local context

Developed with wider institutional, policy and funding context in mind

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# Overview: The Physical Space

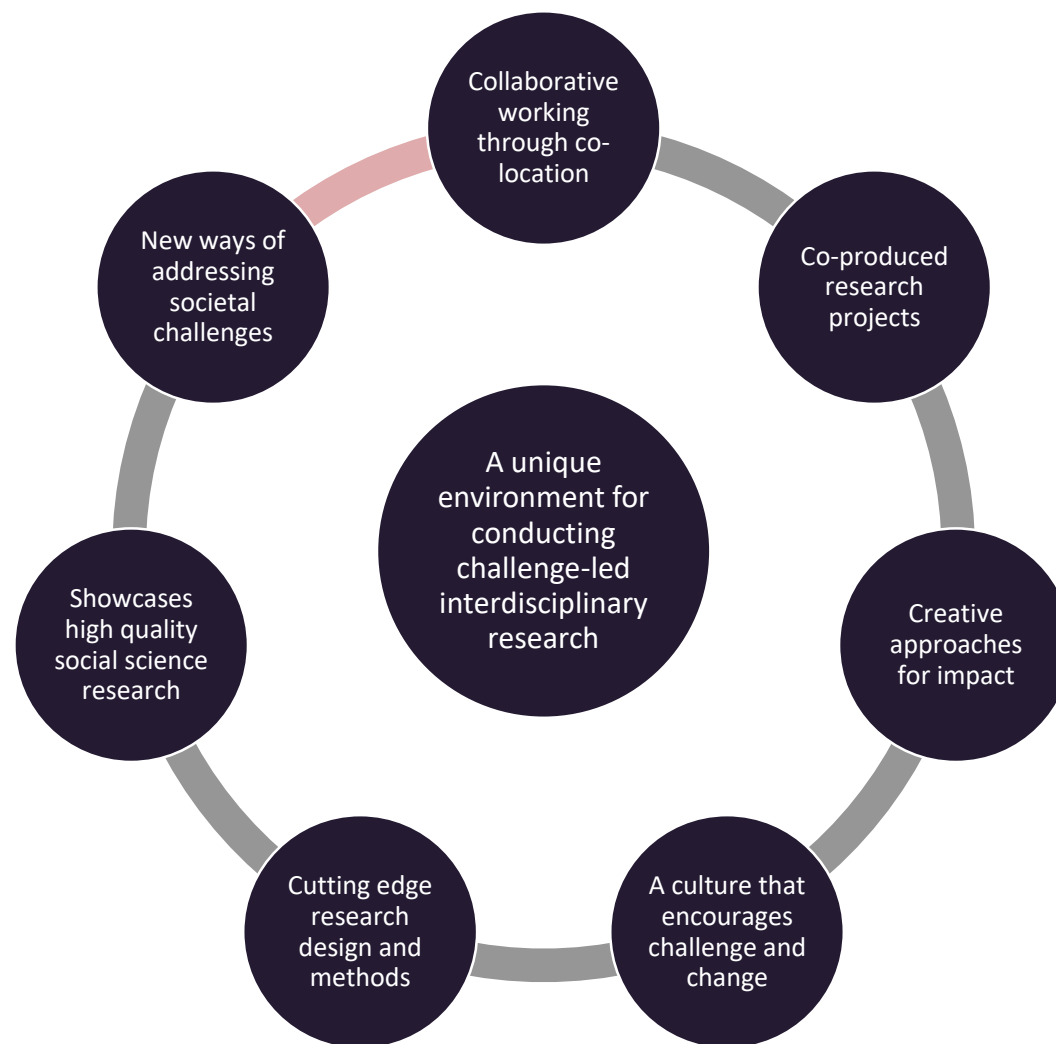
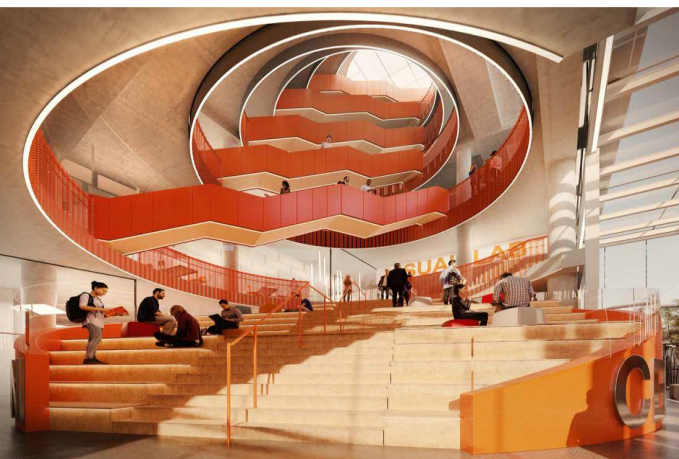
- c. £60M investment to construct a 12,000m<sup>2</sup> building to house two activities, the **Business Innovation Centre** and the Social Science Research Park (**SPARK**), as part of our Innovation System
- **Business Innovation Centre** includes 2,900m<sup>2</sup> of lettable space, including 500m<sup>2</sup> of wet labs and 300m<sup>2</sup> of co-working area, providing incubation, grow-on and commercial letting space
- **SPARK** will co-locate researchers with key stakeholders, supporting and developing innovative knowledge-based clusters (for example, crime & security, civil society, economy, & public services innovation)
- Behavioural Lab, Visualization Lab, ReMaker Centre and Secure Data Lab to support collaborative research and innovation
- Home to up to 800 people - c.400 will be external organizations from the public, private and third sectors





# SPARK Vision

A community driven by expertise, creativity, curiosity and entrepreneurship focused on tackling the complex challenges facing societies around the world



# Partnership with Nesta exemplifies the approach

Y Lab is the public services innovation lab for Wales, a partnership between Cardiff University and Nesta

- It supports public service innovators in Wales with funding, expertise and guidance to experiment and test their ideas.
- It researches the hows and whys of public service innovation in Wales and around the world, helping to spread good ideas.
- Projects include Innovate to Save and Health, Arts, Research, People (HARP)



**Public Services Innovation  
Lab for Wales Labordy  
Arloesedd Gwasanaethau  
Cyhoeddus Cymru**

# Innovate to Save

**A £5 million programme to improve public services and make cashable savings in Wales**

- **15 organisations supported through the R&D phase between 2017 and 2020.**
- **£269,398 distributed in grant funding to initiatives with potential to improve public services.**
- **4 loans of £2.8m disbursed to Leonard Cheshire, Fabric, Flintshire Council and Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue to scale their projects.**



# Latest Initiative: Public Services Testbed

## In development with Cardiff Capital Region:

'Recognising the local importance of the public sector, we will establish a Public Services Testbed with a **mission-driven approach to generate new collaborations and public services improvements and enable the delivery of public sector innovation and economic value.** This approach involves the identification of a major 'grand challenges' and the development of 'missions' with clear and ambitious targets for improvement that form a basis upon which a number of related and complementary multi-sector (private, public, third sectors) projects may be identified in order to deliver business growth opportunities. **The combination of public services innovation with new thinking in public sector procurement has the potential to generate new market opportunities, and commercial value that benefits the region.'**

(2019: 13)

# First initiative: 'Piloting the PST'

- **Cardiff Capital Region Challenge Fund**

- Approach to local wealth (re-) building in the context of Covid.
- Public services problems addressing societal challenges as focus for innovation projects creating new commercial opportunities
- Modeled on SBRI

- **Partnership between CCR and Cardiff University**

- Experimentation in trialling different approaches
- Exploring partnerships with other challenge funders (Welsh Government, Nesta, Innovate UK)

**AWAITING CCR CABINET  
FINAL APPROVAL  
EXPECTED ON 19<sup>TH</sup>  
OCTOBER**

# Some final thoughts

- **Strengths**
  - Underpinning assumptions continue to 'feel right' and attract support
  - Beginning to have successful examples to inform further activities and create opportunities
- **Weaknesses**
  - It has taken a long time to get this far...
  - University bureaucracy (increasingly) risk-averse
  - Partners have different priorities and competing demands
- **Lessons learned**
  - Key importance of senior champions (SSH research is not usually the focus for major investment in facilities)
  - Need patience and a strong commitment
  - Helps to have a clear vision and to be 'in tune' with your context and wider institutional and policy developments (but these change!)