

Understanding the Changing Cultural Value of the British Council

*“the creative, communicative and connective
benefits of the BC’s interactions with its global
audiences and users”*

Marie Gillespie, Simon Bell, Colin Wilding
The Open University
20th February 2014



The Cultural Value Project

Aim: To produce a Cultural Value Framework

- Part of an Arts & Humanities Research Council funded research programme
- Draws on OU archive of research on the BC
- Conducts new archival/ historic analysis
- Develops new digital case studies
- Organises stakeholder workshops

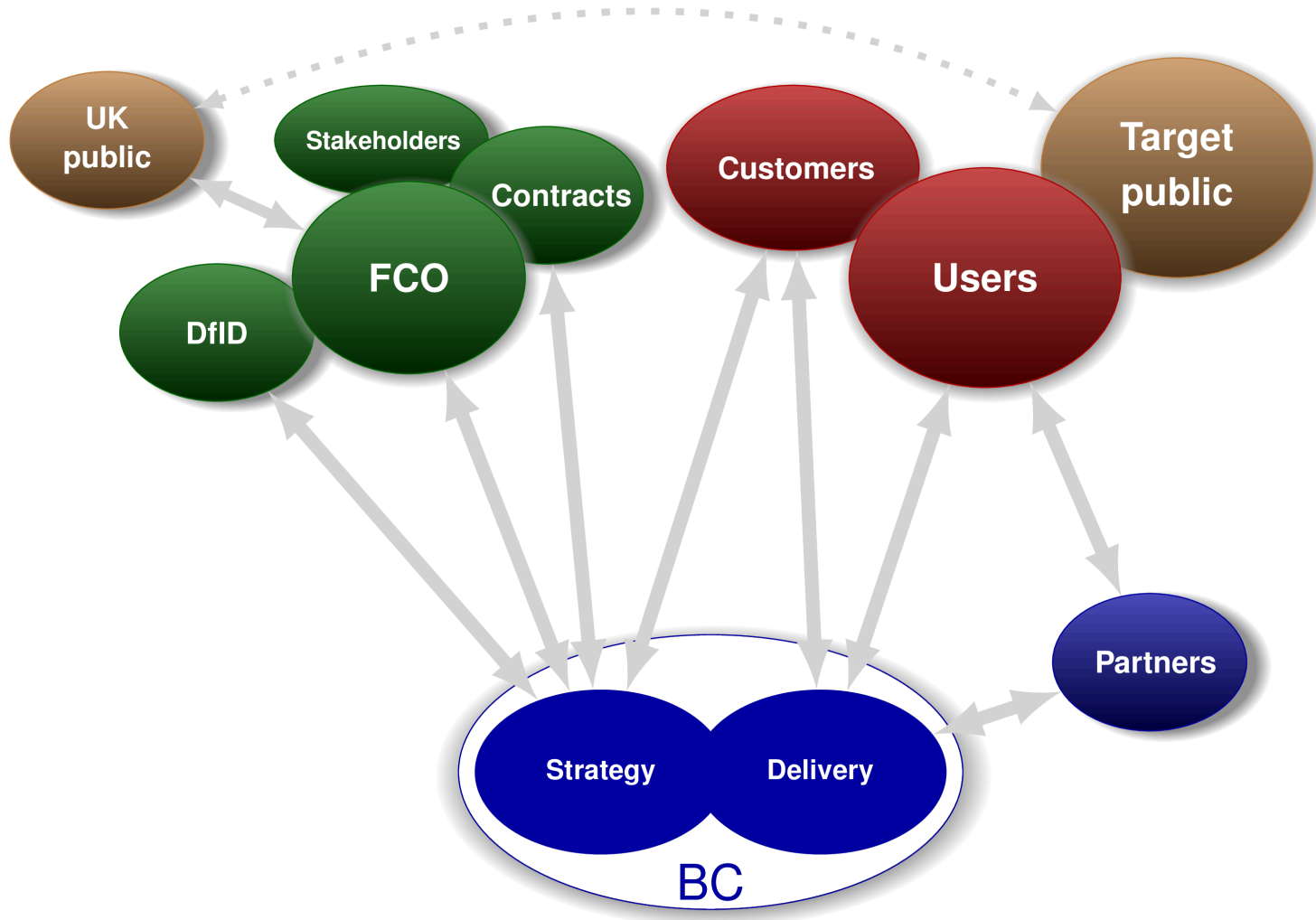
Research Questions

- Is BC a public good?
- Which publics does and should the BC serve?
- Do commercial and public service values co-exist in conflict or in creative tension?
- Can BC do cultural relations and public diplomacy work at the same time?
- What is distinctive about the BC?
- What role do new technologies and platforms play in changing how the BC operates and is valued?

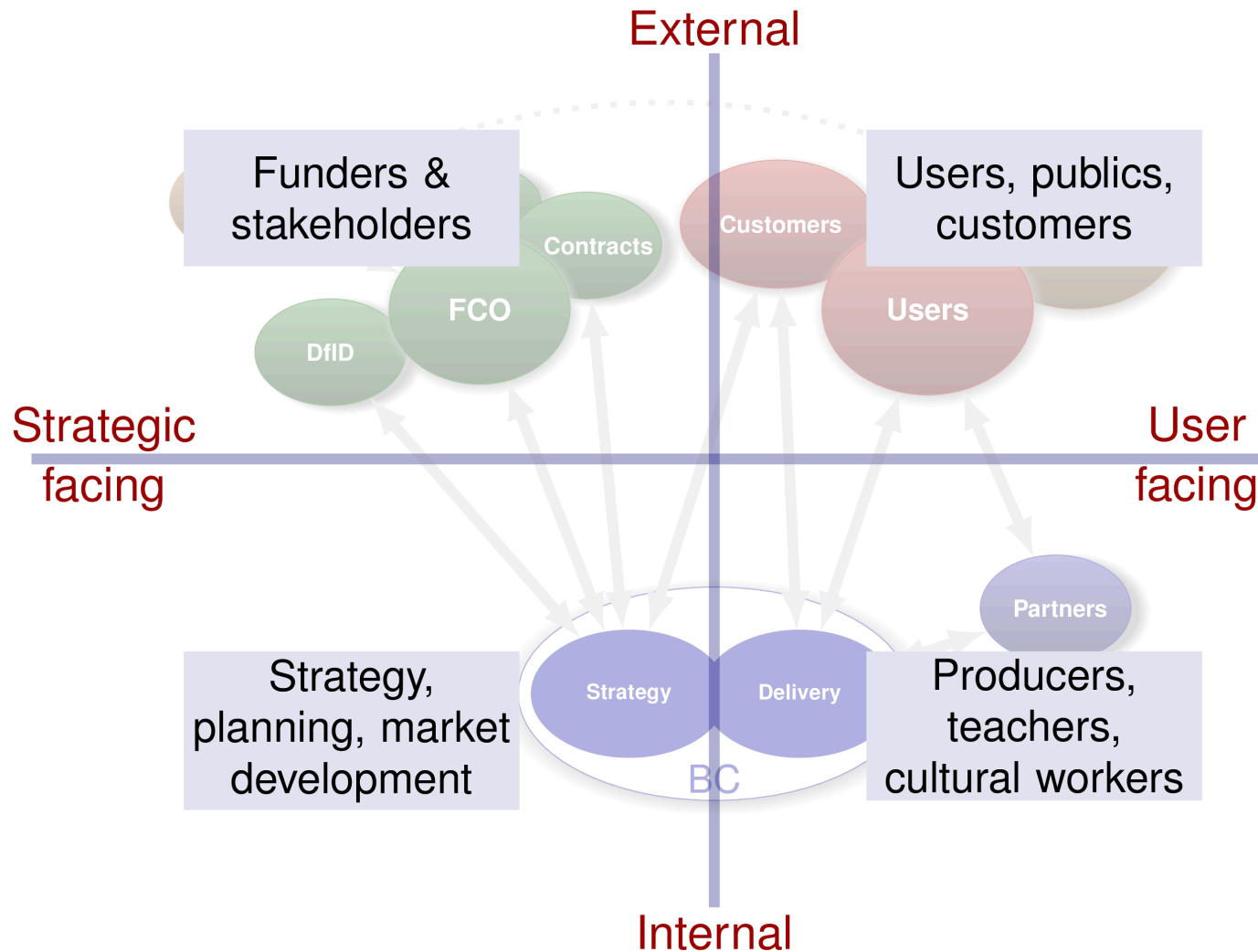
To Understand Value: Value Analytics

- BC users are changing
- New, more competitive platforms
- Impact analysis is limited
- VA – mixed and mobile methods
- Avoids goal-driven performance targets
- Opens up new components of value for users and for BC.

Understanding the contexts of Cultural Value



The structure of CVF emerges



BC Cultural Value Framework

Funders and Stakeholders

Components of cultural value:

- Sustainability
- Partnerships
- Transnational Development
- Diplomatic

Five components in each quadrant

Components of cultural value:

- Reputation
- Mutuality
- Leadership
- Technological
- Quality

Strategy, planning and market development

Users, Publics, Customers

Four quadrants

Components of cultural value

- Utility
- Relevance
- International
- Quality
- Participation

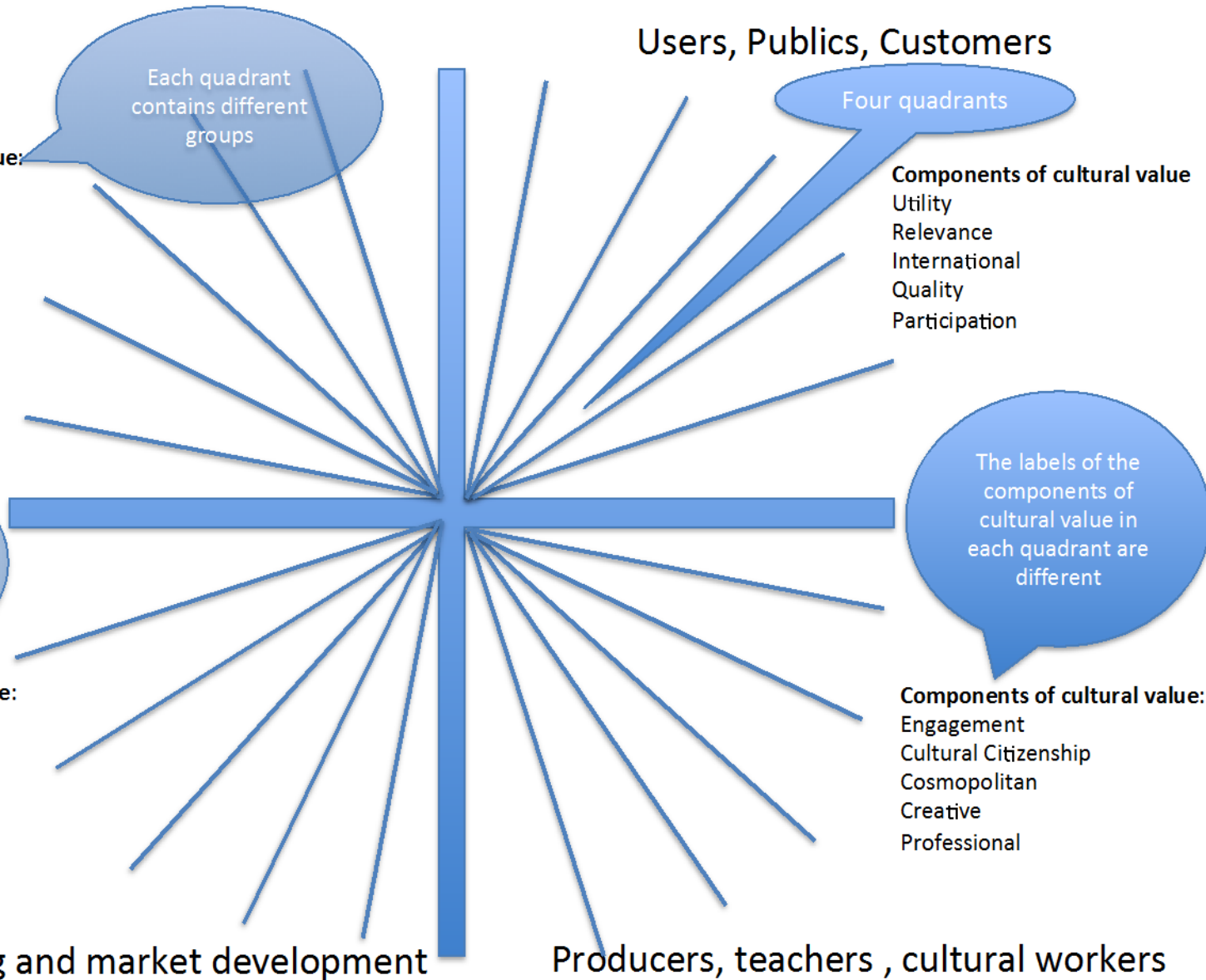
The labels of the components of cultural value in each quadrant are different

Components of cultural value:

- Engagement
- Cultural Citizenship
- Cosmopolitan
- Creative
- Professional

Producers, teachers, cultural workers

Each quadrant contains different groups



Allows us to produce a snapshot

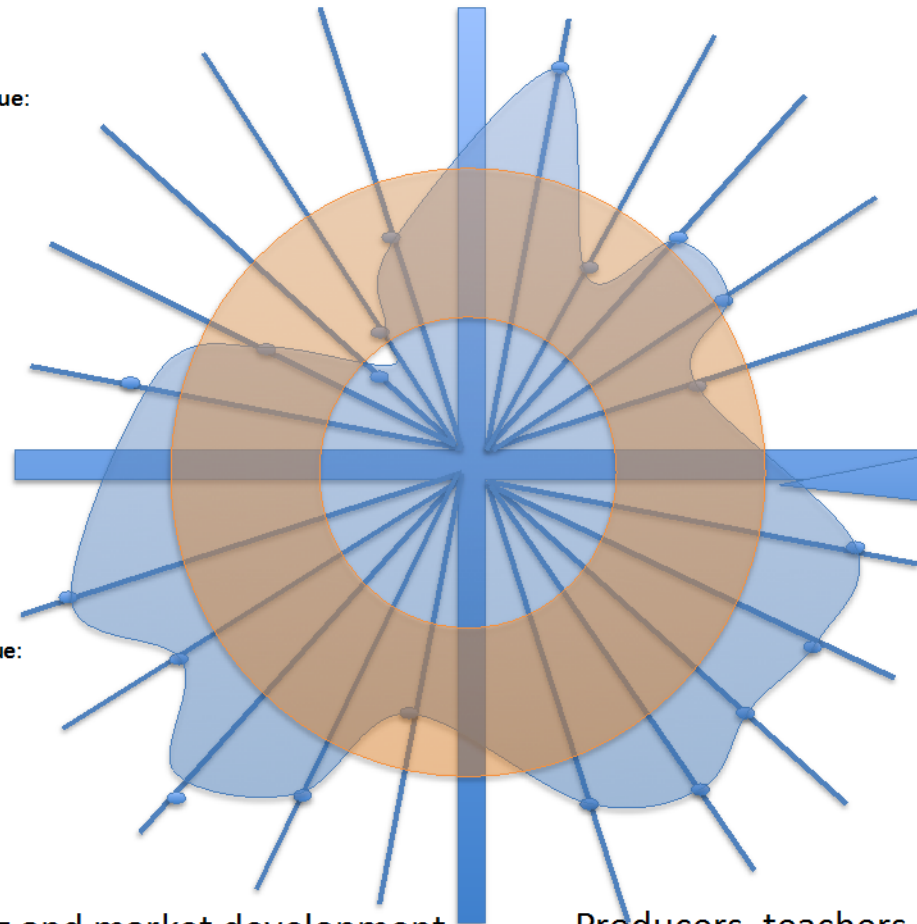
Funders and Stakeholders

Components of cultural value:
Sustainability
Partnerships
Transnational
Development
Diplomatic

Users, Publics, Customers

Components of cultural value
Utility
Relevance
International
Quality
Participation

Illustrative
Intuitive
Evaluative



In this example we might say that the organisation is performing well in CV terms for the internal communities but is underperforming for Funders.

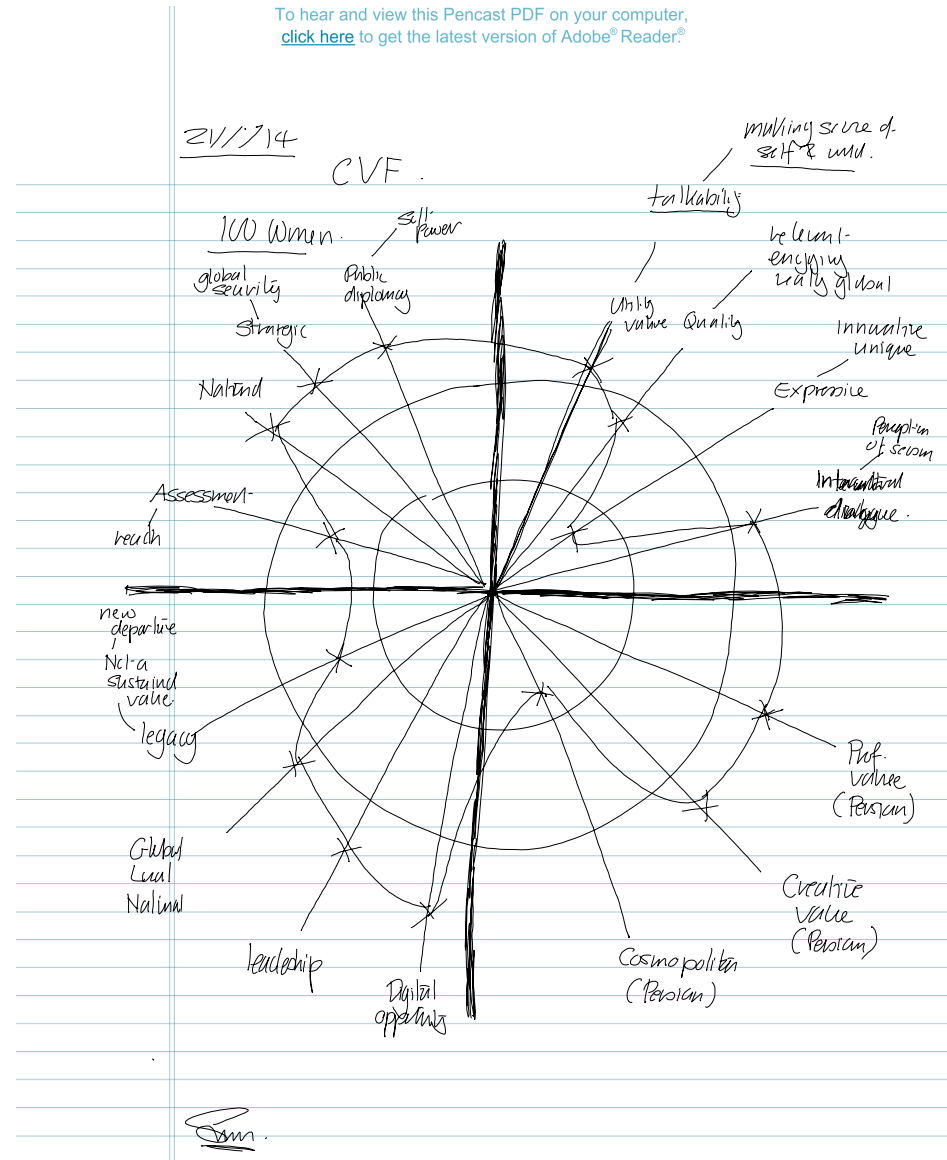
Components of cultural value:
Reputation
Mutuality
Leadership
Technological
Quality

Components of cultural value:
Engagement
Cultural Citizenship
Cosmopolitan
Creative
Professional

Strategy, planning and market development

Producers, teachers, cultural workers

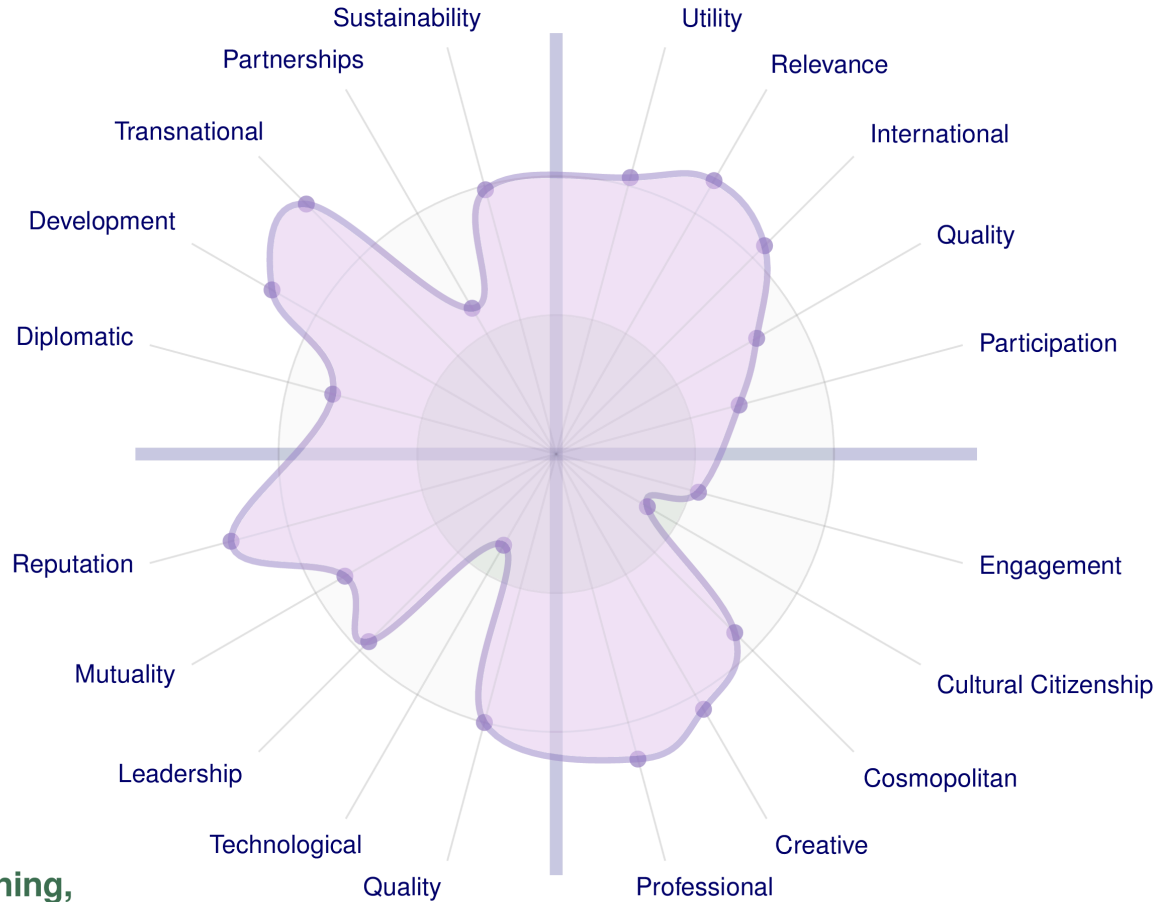
The CVF diagram emerges from a collaborative process – which is as important as the final product. It's a collective representation of diverse perspectives and mixed sources of empirical data. It's **illustrative, evaluative and intuitive**



South Asia Season

Funders & stakeholders

Users, publics, customers



Strategy, planning, market development

Producers, teachers, cultural workers

We would like to have your views

- What do you find most intriguing/ interesting about the CVF?
- What is least clear?
- What should we be focusing on in order to improve the CVF?