

Ethical onions

Peeling back the layers to be
a better qual UX researcher

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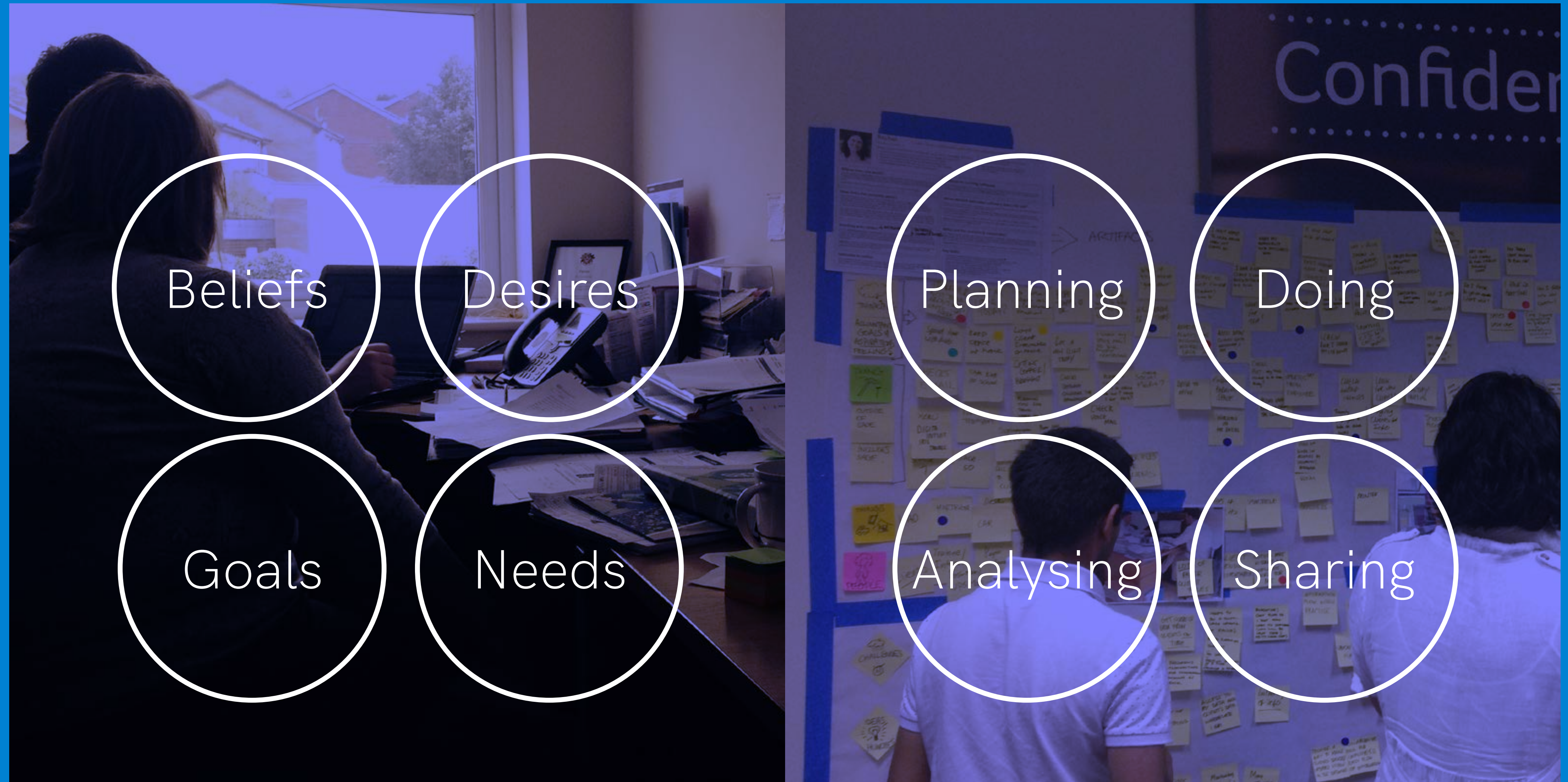
The outer layer

Introducing ethics, bias & rigour into our qual research practice



Are you an ethical
researcher?

Qual research in UX is hard



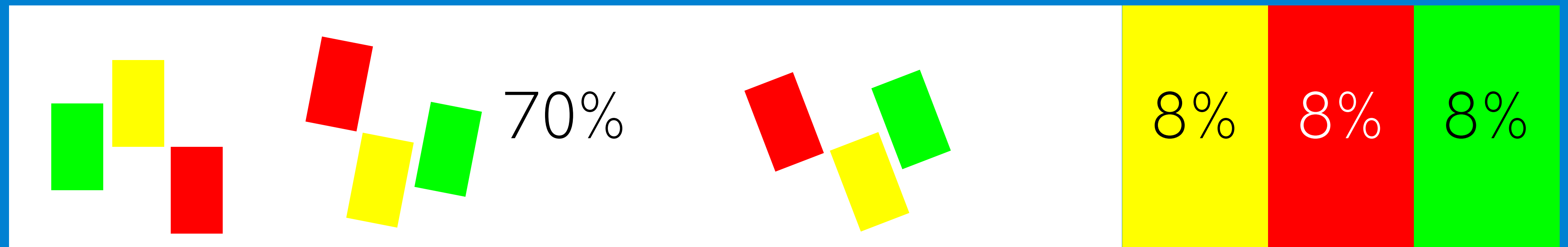
~~Qualitative research is hard~~

Qualitative research that is ethically sound, rigorous and is designed to combat and work with bias is hard.

Very hard.

Scale of ethics, rigour & bias (ERB) consideration in qual UX research

A typical research project



OMG we can do research

Whatever research madness happens here

Other

Ethics, rigour, bias

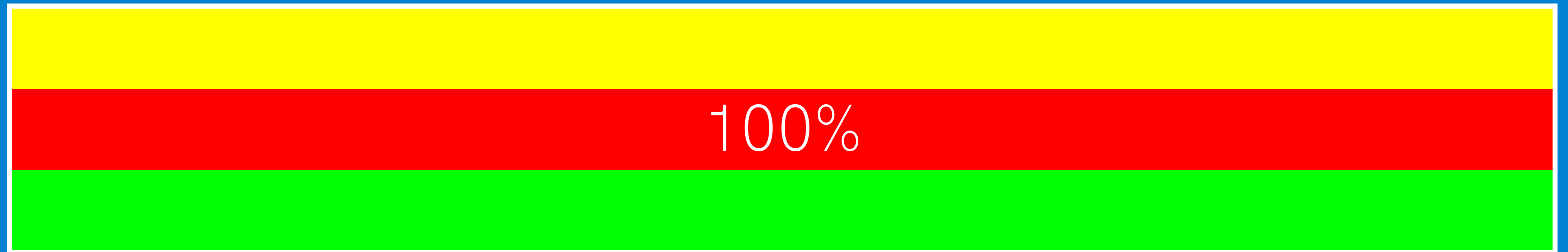
Beginning

Towards the end

The future

Scale of ethics, rigour & bias (ERB) consideration in qual UX research

A typical research project



Well considered qual research

Beginning

The future

Ethics:

A set of moral principles and actions that govern the way we conduct human participation research

Rigour:

Ensuring quality is present throughout our research design from inception to completion and beyond

Bias:

Any trend or deviation from the truth in data collection, data analysis, interpretation and publication which can cause false conclusions.

So, is it reasonable to adopt this mindset?

» 1. Choosing a study

» 2. Setting up and doing a study

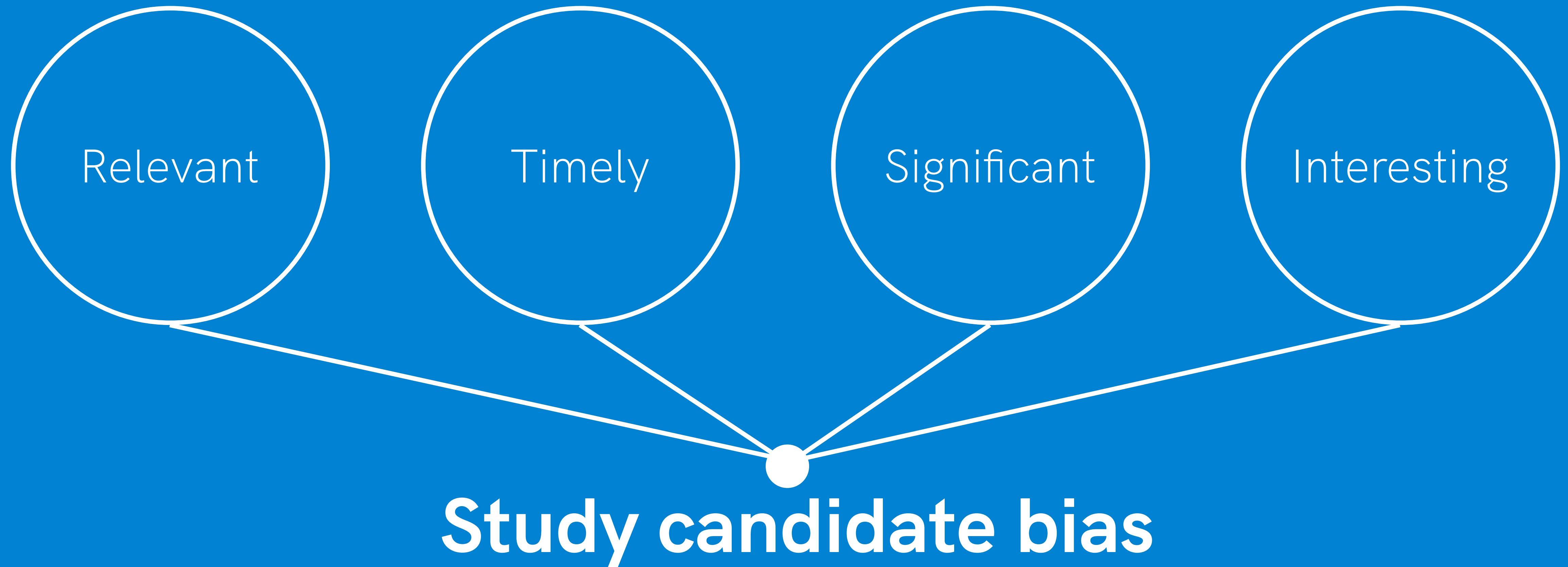
» 3. Analysing study data

Slicing and dicing

Mixing theory with practice to fine tune our qual research



1. Worthy qual research



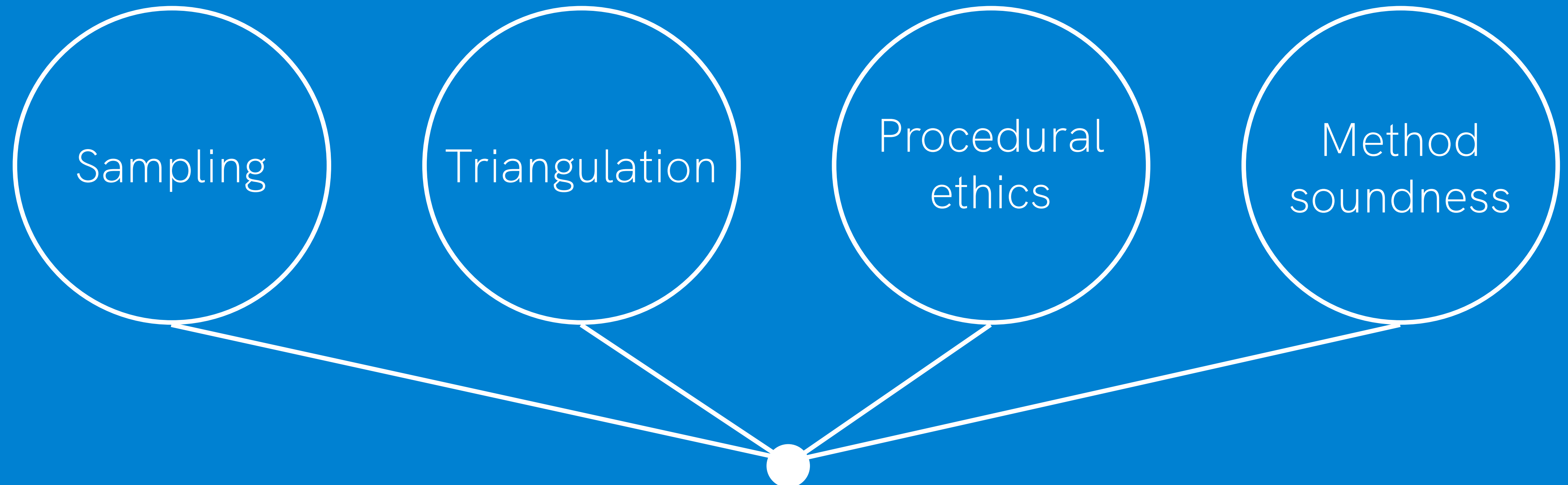
What does this look like in practice?

Project: Your project						
<i>Owner: Haydyn Phillips Over sight: Peer group Signoff: UX Team 24/7/14</i>						
Research Area	Redesign or New	Methodology	Progress	Worthyness criteria	Measures (UX/Usability)	Practioner and peer review comments
Understanding of user types; propensity & barriers for online use	New	Remote semi-structured Skype/Phone interviews (approx 16 participants)	Complete	Relevance - we have no data around this now, this is a core area and could be a blocker to our specific user group	Comprehension & validity	Seems like a good idea, but worth checking with published research on general user data on online use and any other specific journals or company data
Understanding of workflow for n users	New	Remote semi-structured Skype/Phone interviews (approx 3 participants);	Complete	Interesting - we need to know how people currently perform these actions so we can create prelim TA	Perception & workflow	Yes - needs to be done, not sure method is that rigourous though and we need to be careful on overuse sampling
Understanding of content and object grouping	New	Remote open card sort (5 participants)	Complete	Significance - compliance have limited data on how these users think about legislation and we have no data on how to build an initial IA model	Time to complete sort Clustering/dendogram	We need more than > p=5. Compliance are unsure here so definitely worth writing a mini proposal/draft

Hypothetical situation

» Working in a small UX team, you've been asked to complete two large scale ethno projects. You don't have resources for both, **how do you choose?**

2. Setting up and doing a study



Research proposal & study execution rigour

What does this look like in practice?

Recruitment screener

- » A semi-formal(ish) document that outlines specific criteria linked to your sampling method
- » Includes a variety of variables that you may wish to screen for to make your study more robust

Pilots & guides/protocols

- » Always pilot your study. It should be built into your process.
- » Your guides/protocols should give you clear and honest focus for delivering your research

Hypothetical situation

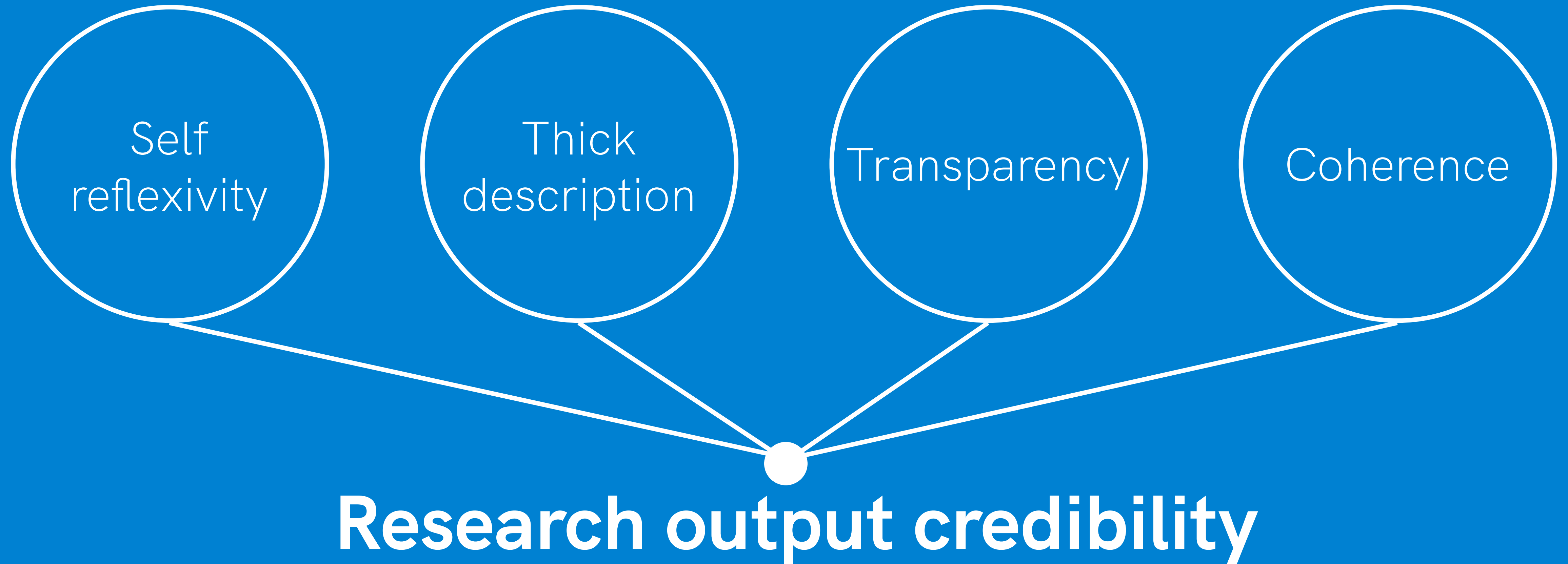
» For an upcoming research study, you're struggling to recruit representative users.

Frustrated you resort to whoever you can

find, **after all someone is better than**

no-one right?

3. Analysing study data



What does this look like in practice?

Inter-research debriefs

- » Allow for researchers to compare and contrast qualitative accounts to allow for variability and feedback
- » Can aid in reducing bias by encouraging analysis triangulation

Analysis frameworks

- » Qual research is highly varied, but by developing frameworks for common types of research such as CI or SSI you increase rigour, reduce bias and allow for a more considered approach

Hypothetical situation

» You're halfway through coding an interview transcript and can't read a paragraph accurately. You decide to "fill in the blanks" **How would this impact your analysis?**

Into the mix

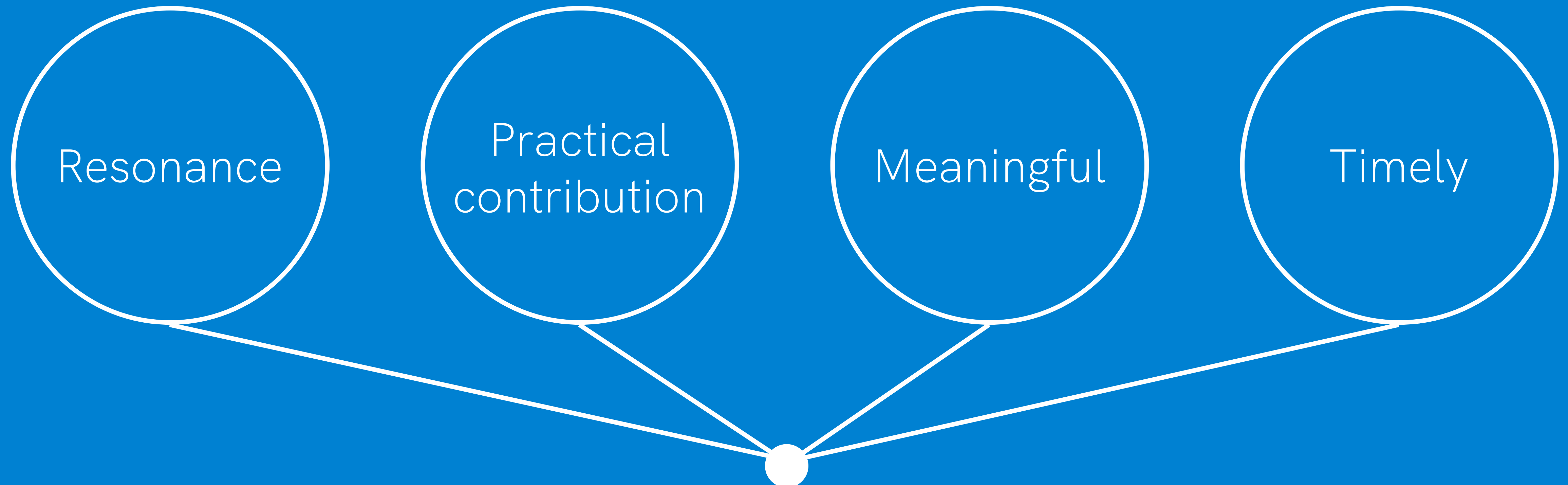
Where our qual research is set free into the world



Sharing study data & beyond

A vibrant, multi-colored nebula in space, featuring swirling clouds of gas in shades of orange, yellow, green, blue, and red. Numerous bright stars of various colors are scattered throughout the scene, set against a dark, star-filled background.

Elements of a thorough study



Impact on product, business & people

However, be aware!

- » All projects and researchers are different
- » ERB mean different things to different people, accept and explore differences
- » ERB should never immobilize a study unless for the “right” reasons

Ethics, rigour and bias don't live alone

» They are essential, rich parts of qual research that should be considered throughout the study lifecycle. Use them in the the right way, your project data will thank you for it :-)