# Understanding the post-graduate research student experience in a culture of collaborative leadership


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# Thank you to …

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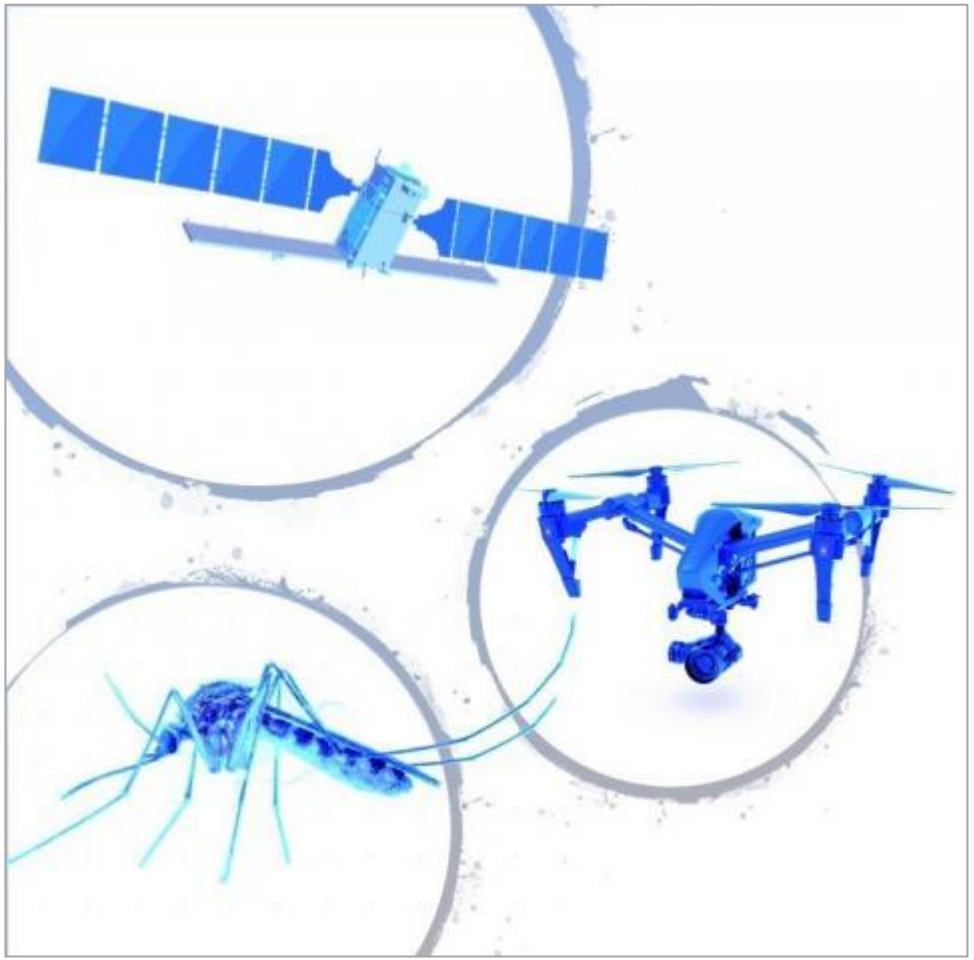
# Wicked problems



[DETECT: Integrated Space Technology Vector Control]

Research for All

RESEARCH FOR ALL

UCLPRESS

Special Issue: Public Communication of Science and Technology

Article

## A case study from Guyana of adapting engaged research design to promote 'fairness in knowing'

Holliman, et al, 2022 oro.open.ac.uk/83255/

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## Abstract

In this paper, we have combined ideas drawn from philosophy (epistemic injustice), critical theory (epistemicide) and practical approaches (engaged research design) with Indigenous knowledge to promote 'fairness in knowing' in a project called DETECT (Integrated Space Technology Vector Control for Enhancing community health and resilience against escalating climatic disruptions), an early warning system to support communities in identifying mosquito breeding sites using satellite, drone and ground-sensing technologies. DETECT used engaged research design to inform pre-award planning. We document how the project team, comprising Indigenous and other researchers,

models of leadership that are conceptualised in ‘more distributed, relational and contextual terms’

Dopson et al, 2016, p7 advance-he.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/impact-leadership-and-leadership-development-higher-education-review-literature-and

leaders who are equipped with inter-subjective skills and understanding, able to communicate effectively to bridge disciplines

Raelin, 2016 DOI: 10.1177/1742715014558076

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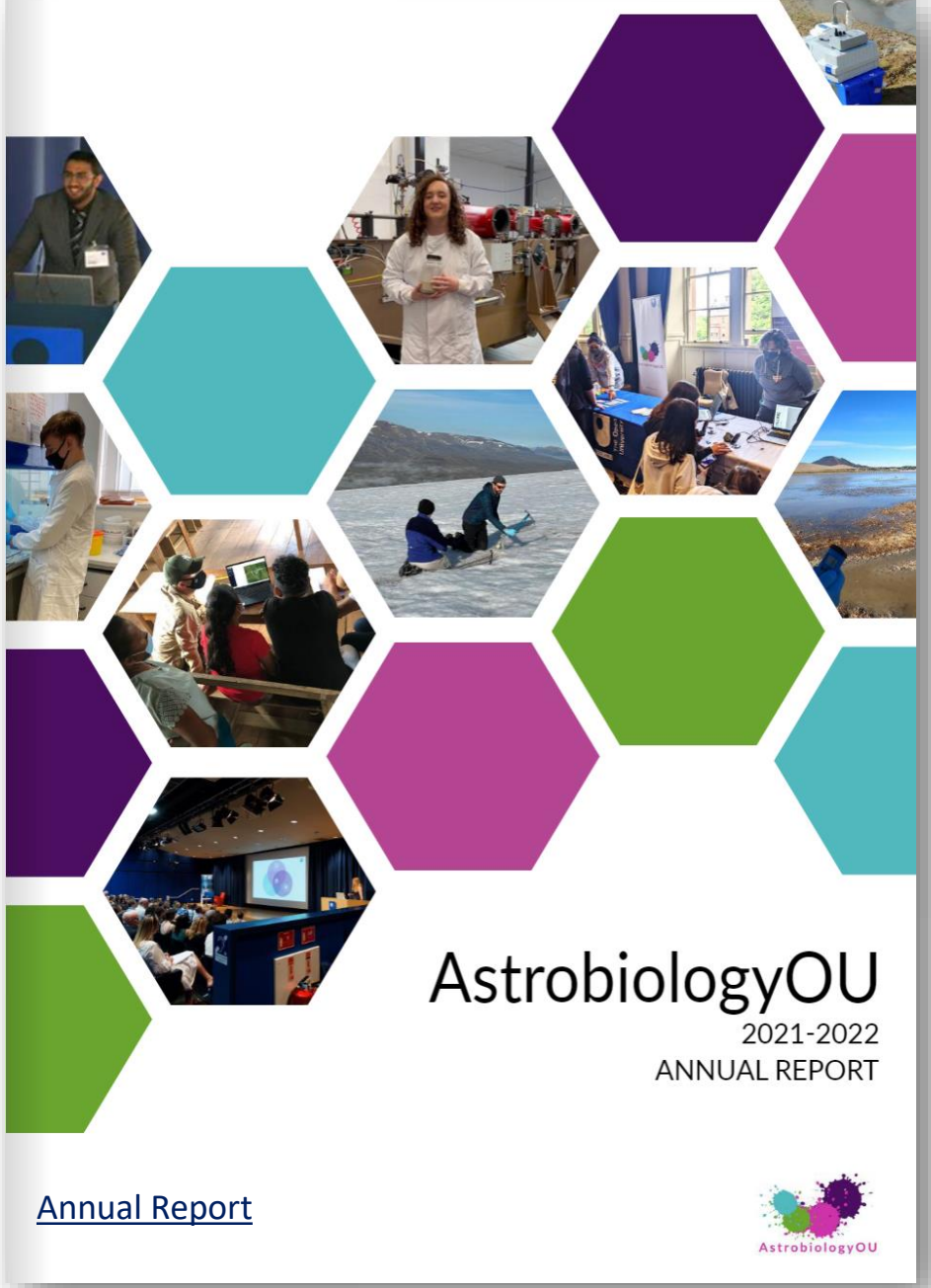
AstrobiologyOU, Photo by Hannah Cooper, 2021

AstrobiologyOU

## AstrobiologyOU

… working together to understand how, and where, life might be found and to address the scientific, governance and ethical challenges faced by astrobiology-related exploration missions




Annual Report

# Understanding the post-graduate research student experience in a culture of collaborative leadership

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## Objectives:

- to explore meanings of ‘collaborative leadership’
- to examine the impacts of collaborative academic leadership on leaders, post-graduate research students and professional services staff
- to identify ways to enhance the learning experience of post-graduate research students working under collaborative leadership

## Methods:

- Scoping review
- Interviews (purposeful sampling)
- Scenario workshops (purposeful sampling)

## Outcomes:

understand collaborative academic leadership

examine pathways to enhance learning and career outcomes for research students

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# Perceptions – collaborative leadership is …

# Access to knowledge, experience and expertise

Yamato 000593 (Martian meteorite)
Open University Virtual Microscope collection
virtualmicroscope.org/content/yamato-000593-nakhlite

> it's an advantage that we have such spec (sic) to go to *the* person. If you want to go to someone about rocks, you go to the rock person and you have that authority to do so. But it's also very immersive and you can get lost.
>
> Participant 03

> access to people who are experts in their specific thing
>
> Participant 01

# Access to knowledge, experience and expertise

Arizona, C Grand, 2019

I can be a working parent, I can be a researcher and I can lead a research group, because I have the headspace … if I'm out for a week, the group's not depending on me. I know that everything is 100% fine

Participant 08

# Trust, respect, empowerment

Emily Post Institute, 2023

The support, the feeling that you've been heard, that your ideas are important. I think collaborative leadership would make everyone involved feel better about themselves ...

I feel comfortable sharing ideas, even if these ideas might sound stupid ... I feel really comfortable, as if we are working towards the same goal

Participant 09

# Wider horizons

… quite often [scientists] work in a little bubble where it's, ‘oh well, we just do our little sciency work’ and we don't really think about the implications of our work and the wider context of what we do, where our data comes from, how our data is used, the history behind how we've acquired that data …

Participant 01

George Hodan CC0

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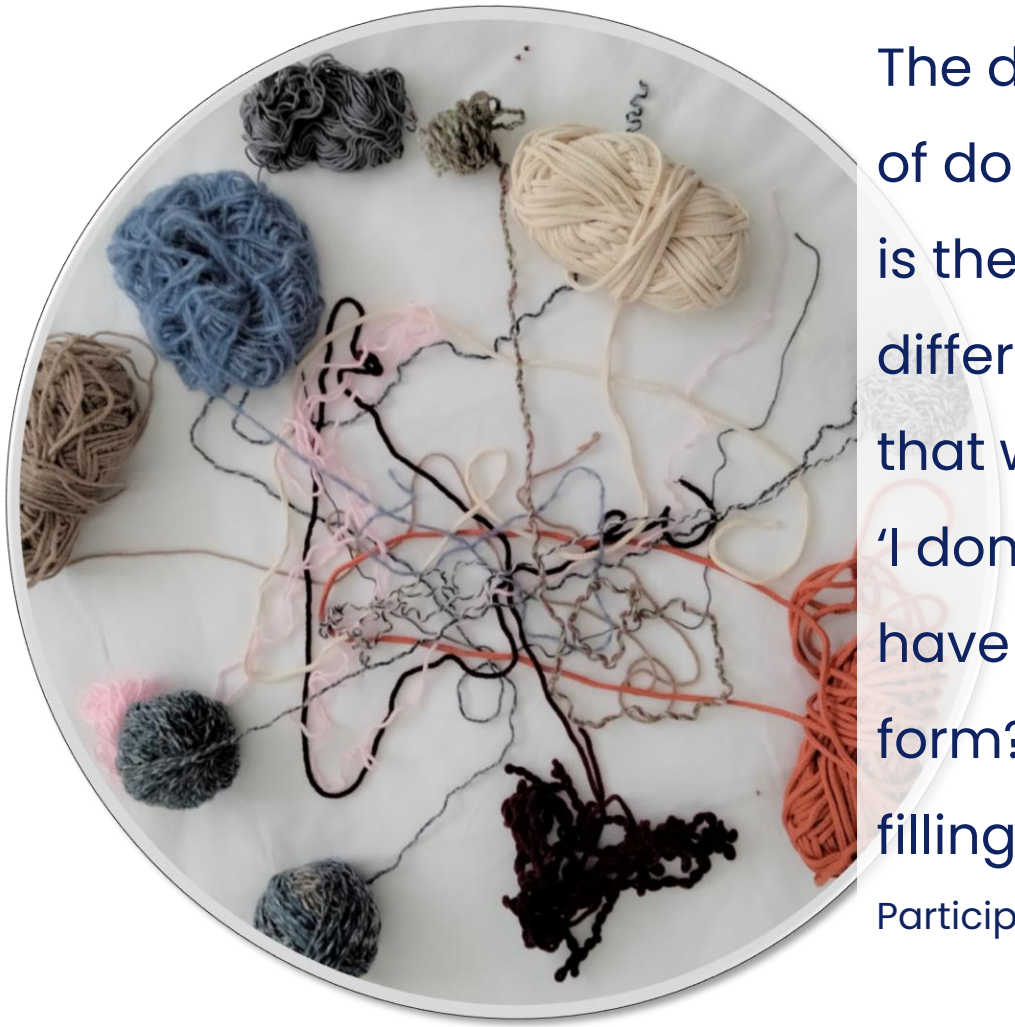
# Challenges



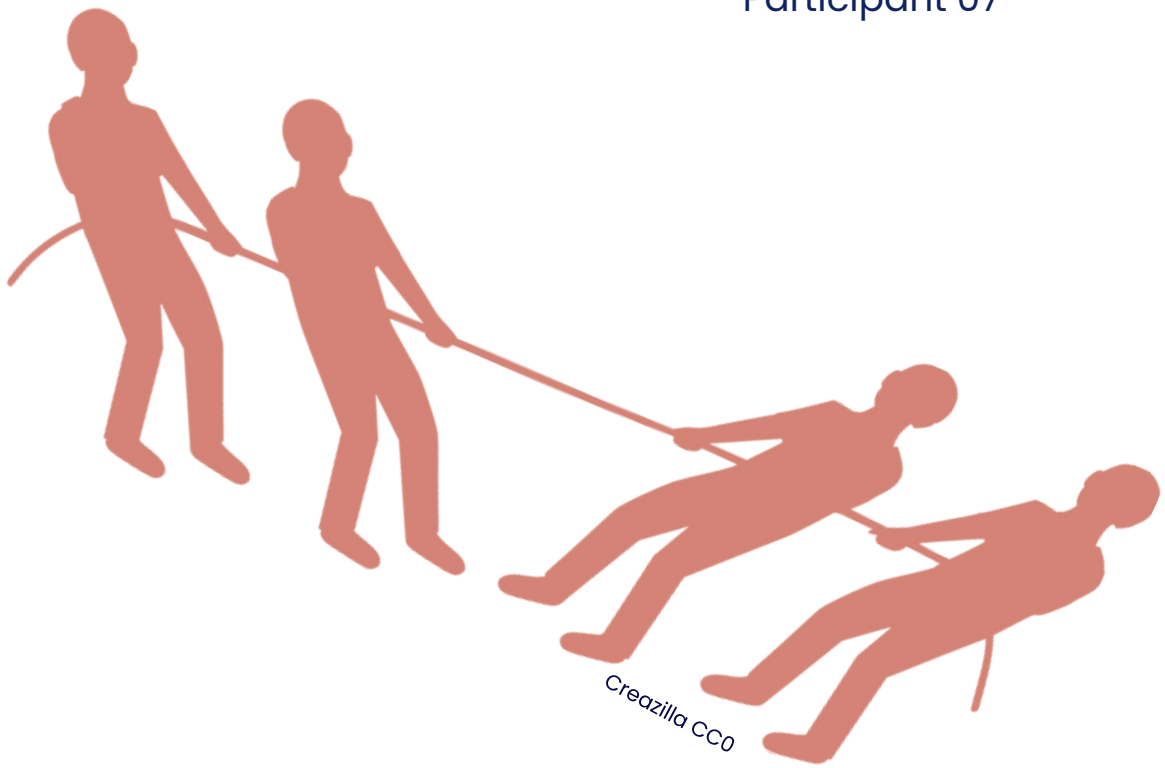
The different forms that you have to fill in … the different ways of doing your upgrade, what you need to do the upgrade … it is the same process pretty much, but because you're in different schools … Me and my flatmate had different things that we needed to do. So we were 'Well, what are we doing?'… 'I don't understand why you have to do this by *then*, but I have to do this by *then*'… 'Why are you having to fill in this form? … I don't have to fill in this form'. So then you end up filling in all the forms just in case …

Participant 01

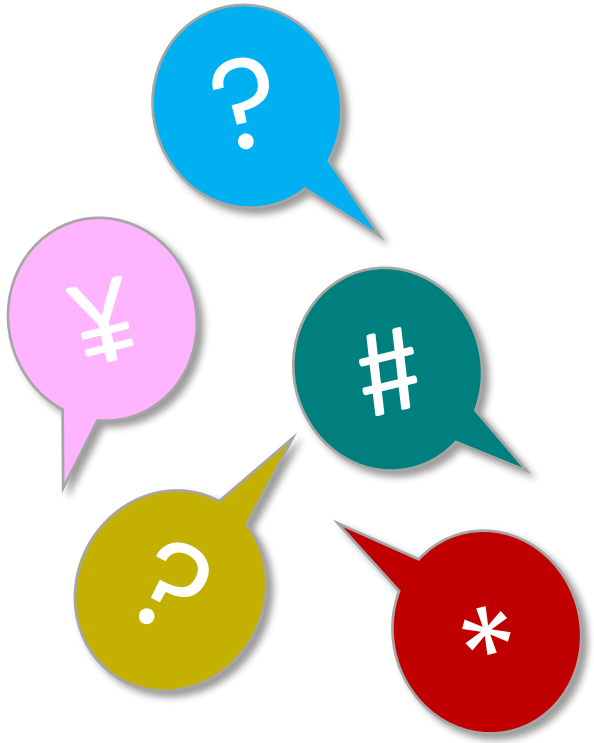
# Challenges

there definitely was a bit of conflict between what one person thought and what someone else thought, and [I was] stuck in the middle

Participant 07



# Challenges



never has [name1] collaborated before, in my knowledge, and it was very difficult for [name1] to understand how [subject2] works and [name2] doesn't really know how [subject1] works. So having two supervisors trying to collaborate on a piece of work from a student, there's a lot of different answers and questions, and a lot of different narratives

Participant 03

Commitment to – and visibility of – collaborative leadership encourages people to think outside the ‘bubble’ of their own experience, value different ways of knowing and sustain a culture of trust and respect

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