



Idea Factory 2022

Thematic analysis of open-ended survey questions

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Overview, key findings

The open-ended questions were analysed thematically and the following two core themes emerged: Research impact and Networking. Within the theme, Research impact, were three sub-themes: Holistic understanding of the research ecosystem, Valuing communication skills, and Thinking beyond the research/academia bubble.

The thematic analysis is based on responses to the following questions:

- What has been the most valuable part of Base for you?
- How has Base helped you become a better scientist or further your potential career objectives in science?
- Describe the value you gained from the networking events at the Idea Factory.

The broad outcomes from these core themes was greater awareness and understanding about research translation, the potential for their own research to have an impact and the steps to take to achieve that, and the skillset necessary to communicate and build the appropriate networks. What emerged in participants answers, however, was the primary theme, Confidence, belief and motivation. This reflects participants greater confidence and motivation to act or believe that they can act to achieve the outcomes in the core themes. In this context, that means participants perceive they now have the confidence and motivation to translate their research, build connections and approach people to initiate dialogue, and to seek more information to take the next step toward translation. Although only 36% of all the comments were classified under this primary theme, it reflects the quantitative data that shows high proportions of survey participants are now confident or very confident in initiating conversations and engagements with industry stakeholders; communicating the value of their research and developing credibility with industry. The two data sets suggest it is an impact of some value for participants at the event. It is also a theme that could be worth understanding in greater depth in evaluations of future FLEET training programs. The core themes, sub-themes and primary themes and their connections are modelled in Figure 1 below.

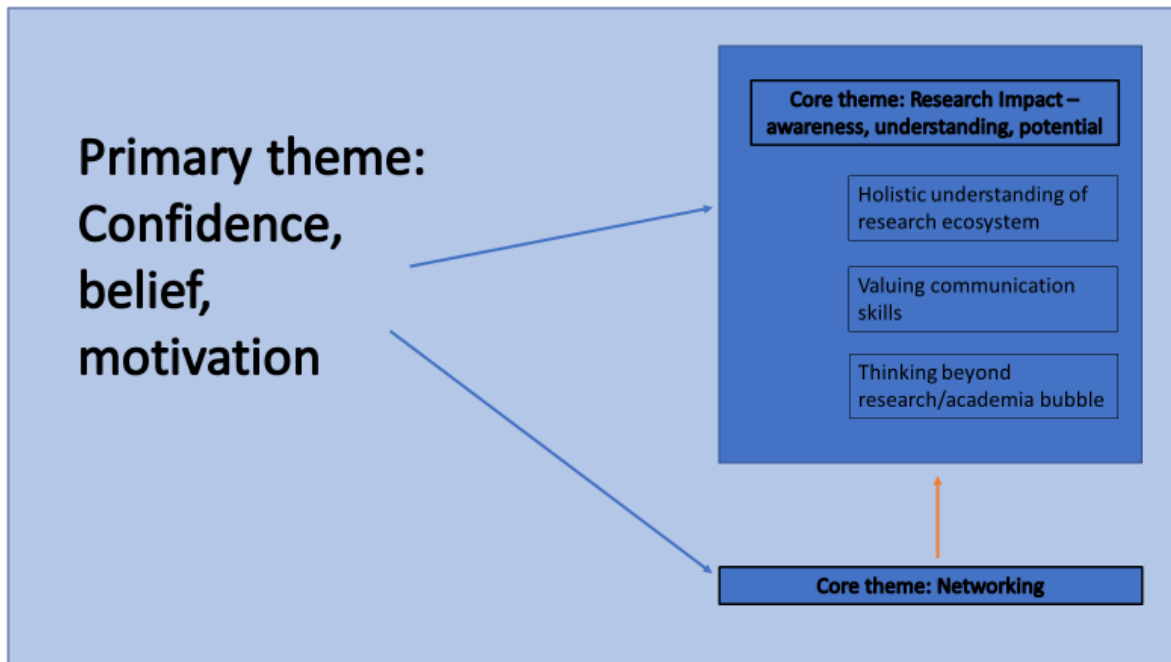


Figure 1. Model of primary, core the sub-themes to emerge from thematic analyses of the Idea Factory 2022 survey data.

The core and primary themes are outlined in more detail below. Each are supported by quotes from the survey and testimonials.

Primary theme: Confidence, belief, motivation

As noted this primary theme reflects a personal shift in participants' mental state to one where they now have greater confidence and motivation to act or a belief that they can act to translate their research as a result of their participation in the Cruxes program. For some it was a belief or realization they really could translate their research should they choose, for others it was a motivation or increased confidence to take that next step toward actually translating their research, for instance to apply for that translation grant, begin the necessary dialogues, or motivation to collect the appropriate research to make it happen.

Going from ideation to actually believing I can translate my research.

It motivated me to search for more information towards this direction. In fact I've created a folder on my desktop with some "industry/application"-driven papers that can be really useful for my research.

It gave me more confidence to apply for the EQUUS/FLEET Translation Program. Also, it helped me with future correspondence with potential research collaborators.

This workshop really helped with the transition from a student to professional researcher that I have personally been struggling with. It emphasised how much I was achieving as an individual, as opposed to part of a research group

My idea went from a daydream to something I can seriously consider.

By having a large group of early career researchers, with access to later term professionals, I found I was much more confident in networking than I have been otherwise. An excellent opportunity



This expectation of being insulated from any real consequence was shattered on the first day, when Jonathan and Emily assigned us homework: By the next morning, we had to talk to five people about our idea...I was extremely intimidated and seriously considered not trying to go for all five. In hindsight, I think pushing us to take real steps was a big strength of the workshop: research translation involves a lot of unsolicited communication, which I find scary and therefore probably wouldn't have done for the first time on my own initiative.

I think everyone participating came out with good contacts, good experience, and more confidence that they could produce impact.

Core theme: Research Impact

The workshop helped facilitate participants' awareness, understanding and potential of their research to have an impact: That is, participants could conceptualize how their fundamental research has the potential for translation and impact and how to communicate this to others outside their areas of expertise. This itself was facilitated by participants' broader understanding of the research ecosystem.

Gaining insight into and understanding the basics of translating fundamental research into potential future applications

Connect my research to the industry and try to solve some practical problems.

I think it helped me to look at my research project from a different perspective. It also made me realize that my research can also have impact outside of the realm of "Scientific Journals" and "academia" per se

The theory we covered was interesting and useful, but not nearly as good as flipping the switch from "research translation is a cool thing some scientists do" to "I could translate my research." Talking to people is both the first thing you need to do and the thing you need to keep doing continuously, so doing it in the workshop was a big step.

Sub-themes

Holistic understanding of research ecosystem: Participants broadened their understanding about the research translation process by becoming aware that research and translation operate in a complex system (an ecosystem) with multiple stakeholders and diverse value sets that affect their research and its potential for translation and impact. This includes learning about the other research in their own centre, through to a scientist's accountability to stakeholders including the public.

To think of the research enterprise as an ecosystem; to be aware that research progress is not linear; it is important to communicate our work effectively.

I think it is interesting to understand these sorts of bigger picture type opportunities for example for future grant applications, and also so that we are better able to hold ourselves accountable to taxpayers who ultimately fund scientific research.

It has made me more aware of the opportunities and challenges that confront start-ups, and why so many of them fail.

Motivation to think beyond their research / academia bubble: Linked to the sub-theme, understanding of research ecosystems, but restricted to their own research rather than the larger research environment. This sub-theme reflects how participants shifted how they perceived their



research and that it can have an impact beyond academia or the notion of curiosity-driven knowledge.

I think it helped me to look at my research project from a different perspective. It also made me realize that my research can also have impact outside of the realm of "Scientific Journals" and "academia" per se. It motivated me to search for more information towards this direction. I've created a folder on my desktop with some "industry/application"-driven papers that can be really useful for my research.

Valuing communication skills: Participants appeared to value learning to communicate their research with someone outside their area of expertise. They learned the necessity of understanding their audience and what they value. This improved their confidence to start the dialogue necessary to translate their research.

Learning tools to help explain my research to a broader audience was super helpful, like starting with the why.

I feel that I have the tools to communicate my research better and drive conversations and actions towards impact.

I think the things that I've learned about how one can communicate ideas and how to approach people were really valuable in such an important way.

Being able to talk to people with projects with different focuses helped me to talk about my research to an audience with a different level of knowledge in my area.

Core Theme: Networking

While the survey question, Describe the value you gained from the networking events at the Idea Factory, makes it difficult for a networking theme not to emerge, it is the connection of this theme to the Primary theme, confidence, motivation and belief that makes it significant. Participants did get value out of meeting people and expanding their networks, but more importantly, the process helped build their confidence and motivation to take the necessary steps towards translation of their research, or instil in them a belief that they could, if they choose to.

It gave me more confidence to apply for the EQUUS/FLEET Translation Program. Also, it helped me with future correspondence with potential research collaborators.

By having a large group of early career researchers, with access to later term professionals, I found I was much more confident in networking than I have been otherwise. An excellent opportunity.

I think everyone participating came out with good contacts, good experience, and more confidence that they could produce impact.

It was great to meet other people who are thinking of turning their research into something more.

Being able to talk to people with projects with different focuses helped me to talk about my research to an audience with a different level of knowledge in my area.



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...This helped to get connections with academic and some of non-academic people, which may help in the future for my research

I found potential testers for the prototype product I want to build. I expanded my network.