



**National
Museums
Liverpool**

**CO-PRODUCTION
FRAMEWORK**

At National Museums Liverpool, we understand co-production as a process that can disrupt the long-standing and unequal power relations which mean that only a small section of society visits our museums and an even smaller number of people get to shape them.

We acknowledge that our structures, priorities, processes and practices have not only worked to maintain this power imbalance, but continue to perpetuate wider inequalities in society. We have a lot of work to do to evolve into a new kind of museum equipped to meet these challenges. Co-production is key to this process of transformation.

This Framework sets out our understanding of co-production as well as the principles and processes that will underpin all of our work.



**WHAT IS
CO-PRODUCTION?**

Democratic in intent, co-production is about reconfiguring established power relationships, challenging inequality and working together to improve society.

It is when individuals and groups influence public services from conception right through to governance, delivery and evaluation.

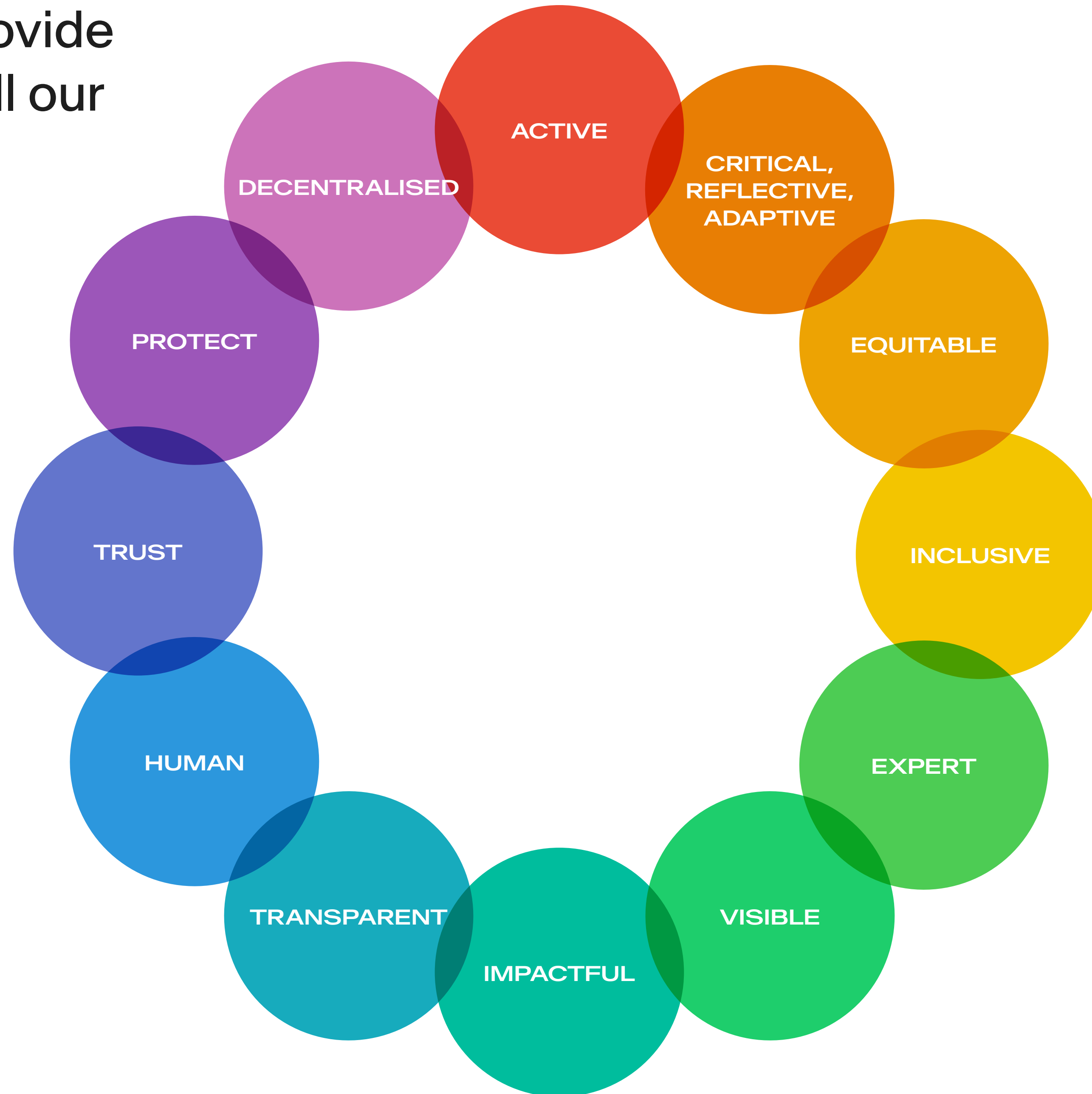
It demands that we build equitable and reciprocal relationships and that we generate mutual benefits.

Co-production brings together different forms of experience and knowledge – both lived and learnt – to generate better outcomes and mutual support.



PRINCIPLES

These principles provide
the foundation for all our
co-production



ACTIVE

Some social groups and communities make use of and play a major part in shaping our shared cultural resources. We will actively seek out and prioritise involvement from groups and individuals who have been historically and continue to be under-served by National Museums Liverpool.

CRITICAL, REFLECTIVE, ADAPTIVE

It will take time to drive the level of inclusive change needed to transform National Museums Liverpool. With deep listening and by embracing new ways of working we will become more adaptive, critical and reflective.

EQUITABLE

We will work to create equitable (fair and equal) relationships with and amongst all our co-production partners and amongst the National Museums Liverpool team. Co-production necessitates being part of a growing network of relationships and we will work to ensure mutual benefit so that all our partners are advantaged by working with National Museums Liverpool. We will work with our co-production partners to explore what mutual benefit looks like to them.

INCLUSIVE

Even when we might feel that we have created an open and equitable environment or team, there will be barriers stopping full and inclusive participation for some. We will work to identify and remove barriers to participation in order to enable full and active involvement for everyone.

EXPERT

Working in partnership and valuing the expertise of our stakeholders does not mean leaving our own professional expertise at the door. We will bring varied forms of professional experience and institutional resources to our work with partners.

VISIBLE

In order to nurture more and deeper networks, strengthen our collective community assets and show the importance of this work, we need to make our collaborations visible to our visitors, to our stakeholders and to our funders.

IMPACTFUL

Our work has to make a positive difference in the world – we want to work with our fellow citizens to improve museums and to benefit wider society. We will work on the questions that matter most to our stakeholders and continually reflect on, evidence and explore our impact in the world.

TRANSPARENT

Strong relationships are built on transparency, shared decision-making and clear communication. We will ensure that we make information available and accessible at all stages and that our processes enable teamwork and collaboration in their fullest sense.

HUMAN

Museums enable us to understand the past, learn and express ourselves in the present and imagine our shared future together. Making museums with and for everyone demands a human approach which places high value on lived experience as well as a diversity of perspectives and ideas.

TRUST

We will recognise the expertise and capabilities of our communities, partners and all our stakeholders and work to create opportunities to support their development.

PROTECT

In all our actions we will work with an ethics of care to always prioritise the safety and wellbeing of our partners, our staff and all our stakeholders.

DECENTRALISE

Traditional ways of working in museums work to maintain and centre a limited museum culture and set of cultural norms. We will work to decentralise our practices and processes by sharing power and embracing an openness to varied ideas and outcomes.



OUR PROCESS

Building on a strong tradition of collaboration, we will work with our stakeholders to create networks, alliances and long-term relationships ensuring that a wide range of lived and professional experience drives all our decision-making.

Engaging with our partners and audiences in a range of ways, our aim is that co-production – deep, intensive and ethical partnership working with communities, groups and individuals including those traditionally under-served by museums – becomes our primary way of working, our default setting. We will need to devote time to this work and learn to work in new ways with one another and with our partners.

Together, we can become more effective agents of change and transform National Museums Liverpool into an organisation which not only challenges but acts upon inequality.

Through co-production, National Museums Liverpool will become a more embedded, connected, diverse and vital organisation over which a far greater number of people, more representative of society as a whole, have a sense of ownership and involvement.

Built on our 12 principles – the foundation stones for all our co-production - National Museums Liverpool's approach involves an ongoing process with our partners of building relationships, exploring shared interests and mutual benefit, setting goals and defining outcomes, evaluating, reflecting and refining.

**BUILD
RELATIONSHIPS**



IDENTIFY
shared & mutual interests

OUR PROCESS



PLAN
together, identify goals, define outcomes,
ways of working, & measures of success



EVALUATE
with partners – does the framework
lead to meaningful outcomes?



**REFLECT
& REFINE**

PROTECT

How will we prioritise the wellbeing of our partners and colleagues?

DECENTRALISE

How will we work together?
What processes will we use to transfer power and authority?
How will we challenge our assumptions about the work and the language we use?

INCLUSIVE

How will we identify and remove any barriers to full participation?

VISIBLE

How will we make everyone's work visible to visitors, stakeholders and funders?

EQUITABLE

How will we address power imbalances and what concrete actions will we take to create equitable relationships and experiences?

TRUST

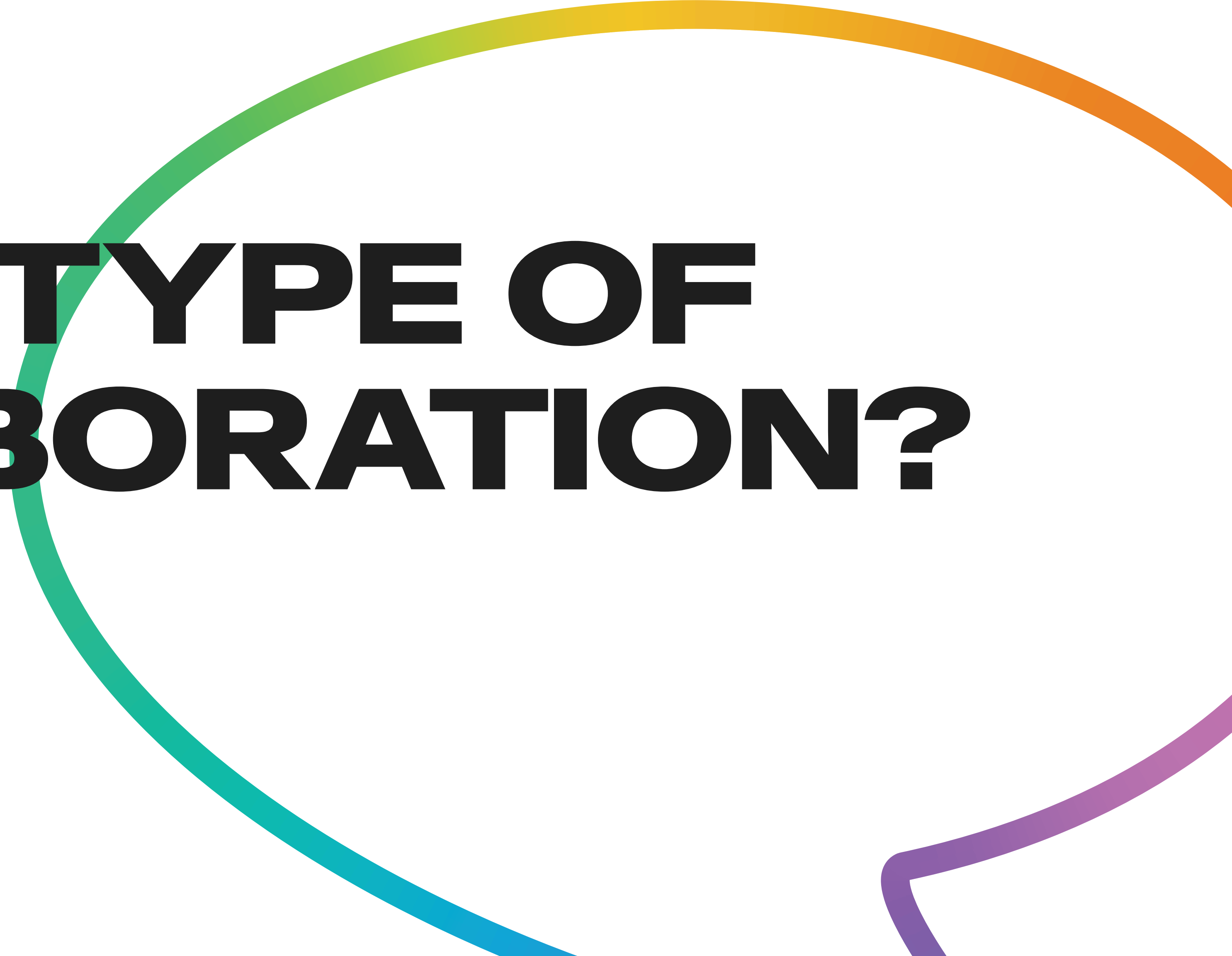
HUMAN

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CRITICAL,
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**WHICH TYPE OF
COLLABORATION?**

WHAT IS IT? WHAT DOES IT INVOLVE?

Shared vision and goals that have been decided with co-production partners from the outset.

A partnership of equals in which everyone's input has the same value and where outcomes benefit everyone.

All decisions made together.

Co-production partners are involved throughout from conception, through design to delivery and evaluation.

A project in which you work with co-production partners towards a mutually agreed vision and goal.

A partnership of equals in which everyone's input has the same value.

Co-production partners are involved throughout the design and all design decisions are made jointly.

The implementation and delivery of the work rests with NML staff, but staff are guided by the input of co-production partners.

You decide on your project and its goal before any involvement from coproduction partners.

While designing your project you bring in lived expertise by regularly engaging with co-production partners and asking them to express their views in various ways.

You choose whether co-production partner's lived expertise influences the decisions you make.

You decide on your project and its goal before any involvement from coproduction partners.

You gather information by inviting co-production partners to fill in surveys or attend meetings to say which proposal they prefer or what they think about an issue.

You draw conclusions and make decisions based on the knowledge you learn.

There is no discussion with co-production partners on how their opinions might alter your project.

HOW DO WE SHARE DECISION MAKING?

Decision making is shared equally throughout.

Some decision making opportunities are shared, but the ultimate choice is made by museum staff.

The knowledge you learn is limited by the scope of the questions you decide to ask.

Decision making is not shared.

HOW DO WE LEARN FROM ONE ANOTHER?

Knowledge learned from co-production steers the project or organisation's direction and determines its delivery.

Learning is a two-way process, where everyone is able to ask questions and bring items for discussion.

Outcomes benefit all partners.

CO-PRODUCTION

is done with co-production partners

Knowledge learned from co-design steers the project's direction and informs its delivery.

Learning is a two-way process, where everyone is able to ask questions and bring items for discussion.

CO-DESIGN

is done with co-production partners

Knowledge learned from engagement can influence decisions during the project if you so decide.

Learning is a primarily a one-way process, with museum staff primarily asking the questions and setting the topics for discussion.

ENGAGEMENT

is done for co-production partners

Knowledge learned from consultation can influence your decisions if you so decide and is limited to what you decide to ask.

Learning is a primarily a one-way process, with museum staff primarily asking the questions and setting the topics for discussion.

CONSULTATION

is done for co-production partners

This Co-production Framework sits alongside the
National Museums Liverpool Co-production Toolkit.

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