

“What should funders and other large interdisciplinary research teams know?”

Critical Case Interview Results: Final Year
Regional Approaches to Climate Change – Pacific Northwest
Agriculture
(REACCH PNA) reacchpna.org



Critical Case Interviews & Project Summary Comments

Spring – Summer 2016

“What should funders and other large interdisciplinary research teams know?”

Who participated: Objective leads and key informants as identified in 2013 social network analysis. In addition, an open invitation was made to all others for one-on-one and/or team interviews. By July, 2016 a total of 28 people participated.

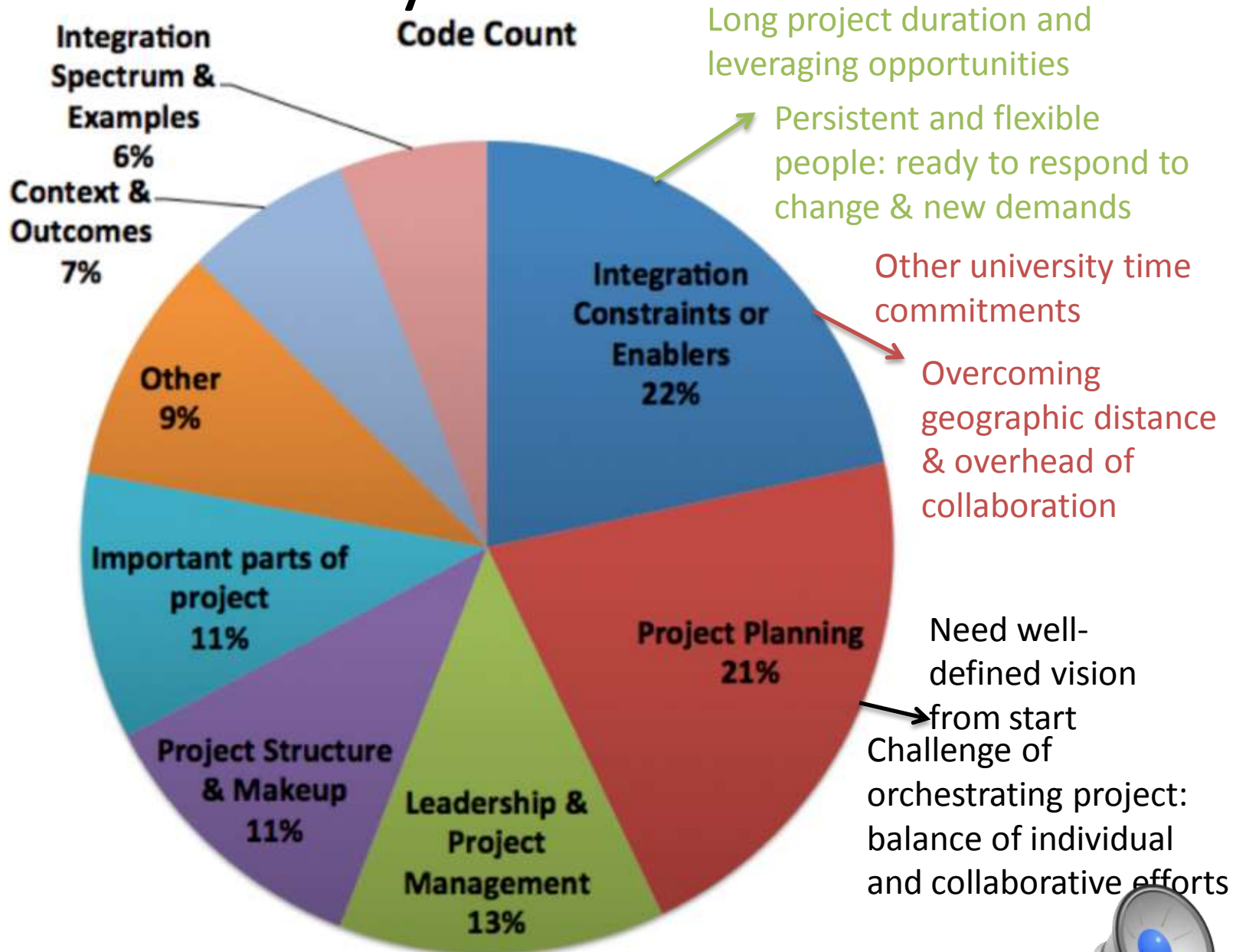


Inductive approach

- During the fall and winter of 2015, the **NIFA National Program Director, REACCH Project Director, as well as objective area PIs and other project participants** were asked “what was important to know about our collaborative experiences during the five-year REACCH project.”
- These preliminary interview results were combined with four years of annual survey data collected from all REACCH participants regarding “success” and “challenge” issues. This was reduced to a list of 26 themes that was then distributed before each individual and group interview that took place during the spring and summer of 2016. **Before the interviews participants were asked to review the themes and be ready to discuss which themes, if any, "stood out as being particularly important in the project's successes or challenges."**
- In one slide, here are the themes that were most mentioned...



Key Themes



N=254 statements from 28 people across nine REACCH objective areas



Key Findings: Build Meaningful Integration Events Early and Often

- Face-to-face meetings
- Graduate student projects
- Publications
- Extension products

On-going challenge (and not just within REACCH):

Sharing data



A Few Quotable Quotes

"Transdisciplinary research starts to shift your value system to value these team efforts... . We're going to have people who are more disciplinary-focused and others more transdisciplinary focused. The trick is to form a team that can accomplish both of those activities."

"(We had) success where there were existing collaborations. There was more struggle when people were new. (REACCH is) at a scale where a big part of the time is spent figuring out what the other person has that you need. REACCH had a lot of that developmental time to get to know people and develop relationships. (It is) hard to create something on the fly that doesn't have prior engagement and collaboration."

"We need to be thinking about the science, how to do it, how make it successful... . Step back and do a little bit of cheerleading, more coaching and appreciating. Annual meetings were great that way."

"Part of the trust and security comes with people working together. It isn't that people aren't so different from before (start of the project), but the dynamics of the group, coming out and being a really positive...these kinds of dynamics take a couple of years. Or a whole life time. That's the nature of interdisciplinary collaboration."



Process Feedback Methods:

Thank you for your help shaping and improving the project for five + years...

Qualitative Feedback: Annual survey and on-going interviews to identify successes and challenges of our management and administration practices

Quantitative Survey: Annual measures of trust & respect, collaboration satisfaction and productivity



Social network analysis of collaboration and integration between participants



...from your assessment and evaluation team!



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