

The Course (Web) – a personal critique

Be careful what you ask for!

POSITIVES

informative

innovative

interesting

layered learning

variety of different presentations

grounded in user lived

experience

positive use of video

(especially the narratives)

POINTS TO ADDRESS

A more critical approach to empowerment

The course is not for everyone as long as this is known

Fading out of jargon and acronyms

Ban Power-point in live presentations

Inclusion of more input on radical community development

Highlight examples of social work as a radical force in the past

Course discussion on involvement

What really does this mean to you?

Has recent developments in awareness of involvement gone off the rails?

Is community development the way forward or is it outdated?

How this course will grow and develop –it is not static

PAUSE

LOOK

LISTEN

REFLECT

ACT


This course will flourish and grow if we periodically take time to do all these as long as it continues to be grounded in that user lived experience.



'WHAT WORKS' TO SUPPORT INDIVIDUALS ON LIFE LICENCE (LIFERS) IN NORTHERN IRELAND:

A Community Development Approach

Annie McAnallen | Probation Officer | PBNi



The image features a central red rectangular box with a black border, set against a background of a repeating diamond-shaped pattern in shades of beige and black. Large black quotation marks are positioned at the top-left and bottom-right corners of the red box. The text inside the box is white and centered.

**THE WAY A SOCIETY TREATS ITS ELDERLY,
ITS CHILDREN, AND ITS PRISONERS SPEAKS
VOLUMES ABOUT ITS VALUES**

Marian Wright Edelman

WHY THIS PROJECT?

Limited research

Complex needs

Practical barriers

Psychological challenges

Public concern

Low reoffending rates

AIM & OBJECTIVES

Co-produce a resource

Working group

Identify what works

Develop resource

Evaluate impact

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT APPROACH

Participatory approach

Co-production

Strengths-based

Shared learning

OUTCOMES

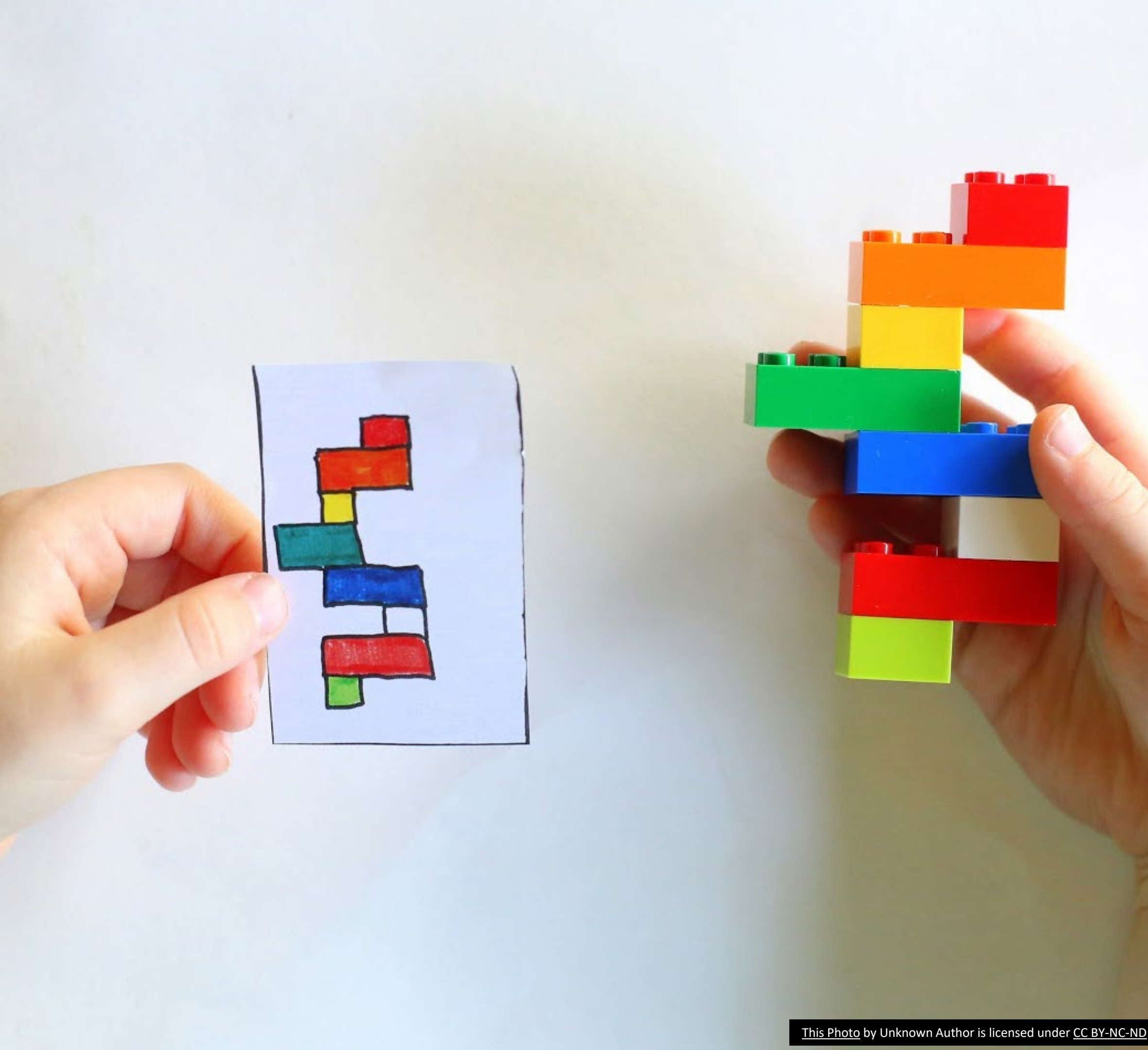
Practical resource

Improved understanding

Stronger relationships

Better reintegration

Safer communities



Building Blocks

Examining the opinions of parents to improve attendance of children with autism in a mainstream Primary School setting

Paul Eaton (Education Welfare Officer)

Education Welfare Service

Need for the Project / Issue Addressed

1

Context: rising concerns about attendance; mainstream primary setting

2

Why focus on autism: unique barriers; parental insight underused

3

Approach: community development + participatory methods

Project Aims and Objectives

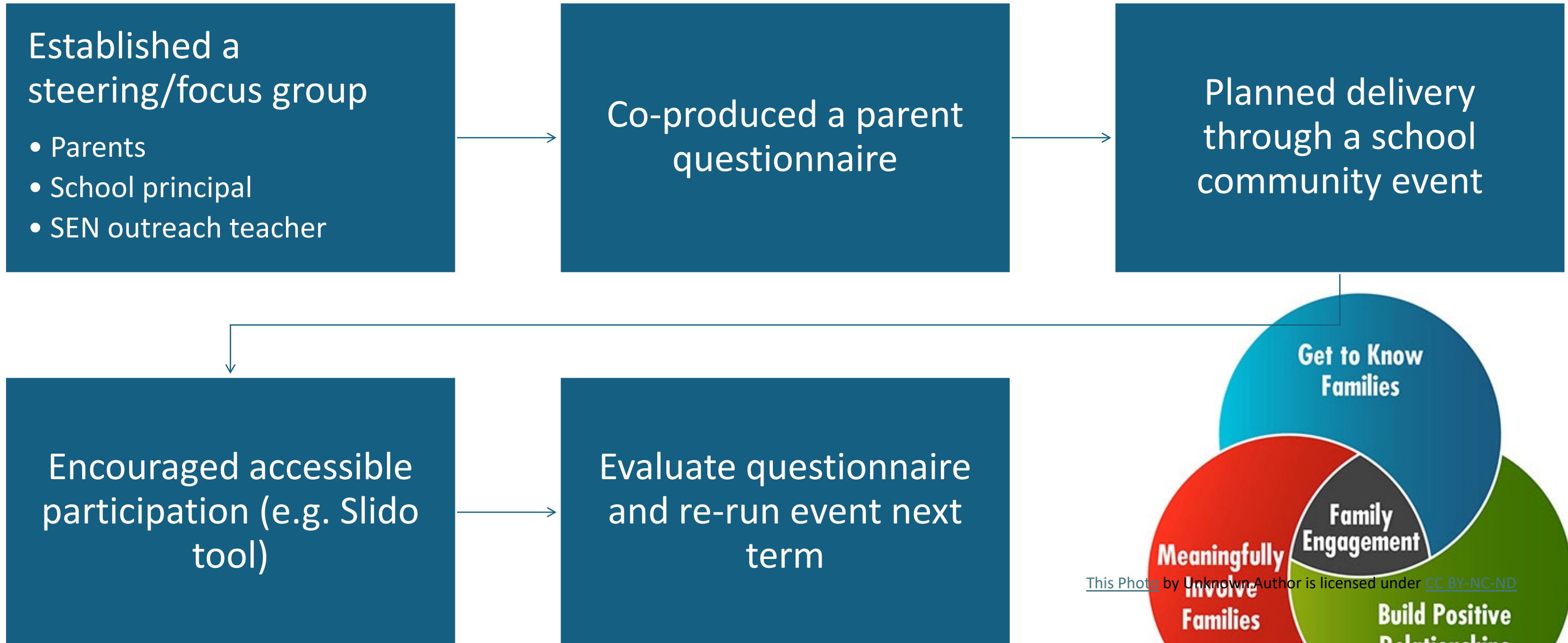
Aim 1: Understand parent perspectives on attendance barriers



Aim 2: Co-design practical strategies with parents and school staff

Key questions: What helps/hinders attendance?
What support do families need?

Community Development Intervention



Outcomes

Outcomes:

Increased parent voice

Stronger relationships

identified Barriers and supports

improved understanding of inclusion

Wider Impact:

Inform practice across services

Identify training needs

Key Message:

Improving attendance requires partnership, trust, and listening to lived experience—not just monitoring data.



Connecting migrant families to health improvement opportunities in a rural community to the West of NI

**Katherine McElroy, Principal Practitioner
PCC**

Project completed June 2024

Health Inequalities

- The project was born from a community engagement with the migrant community in a small town to the west of NI
- Many community health initiatives in the locality were rolled out through established traditional community organisations
- Migrant families felt disconnected from these traditional organisations
- Resulting in disenfranchisement in health improvement opportunities – leading to inequality



Aims and objectives

- Connect all the community with organisations that roll out health improvement opportunities
- Connect statutory and 3rd sector organisations who facilitate health improvement initiatives with all the community
- For all the community to engage with all the opportunities for health improvement that exists outside Primary Health Care



Community Development

“set of practices and methods that focus on harnessing the innate abilities and potential that exist in all human communities” (Gilchrist A & Taylor M: 2016 p2).

- Community Audit
- Asset Based Community Development approach

Many assets existed in this community but the migrant community said they were not connected into them, but wanted to be



Outcomes

- **A community health fayre was held to support all the community make connections – this has become an annual event**
- **This project formed the basis of PCC Support in the Community a radical change in the PCC Practice Model**
- **PCC wants to provide independent advocacy to people in all communities to try to combat health inequalities**
- **A clinic based model was developed alongside trusted 3rd sector organisations**

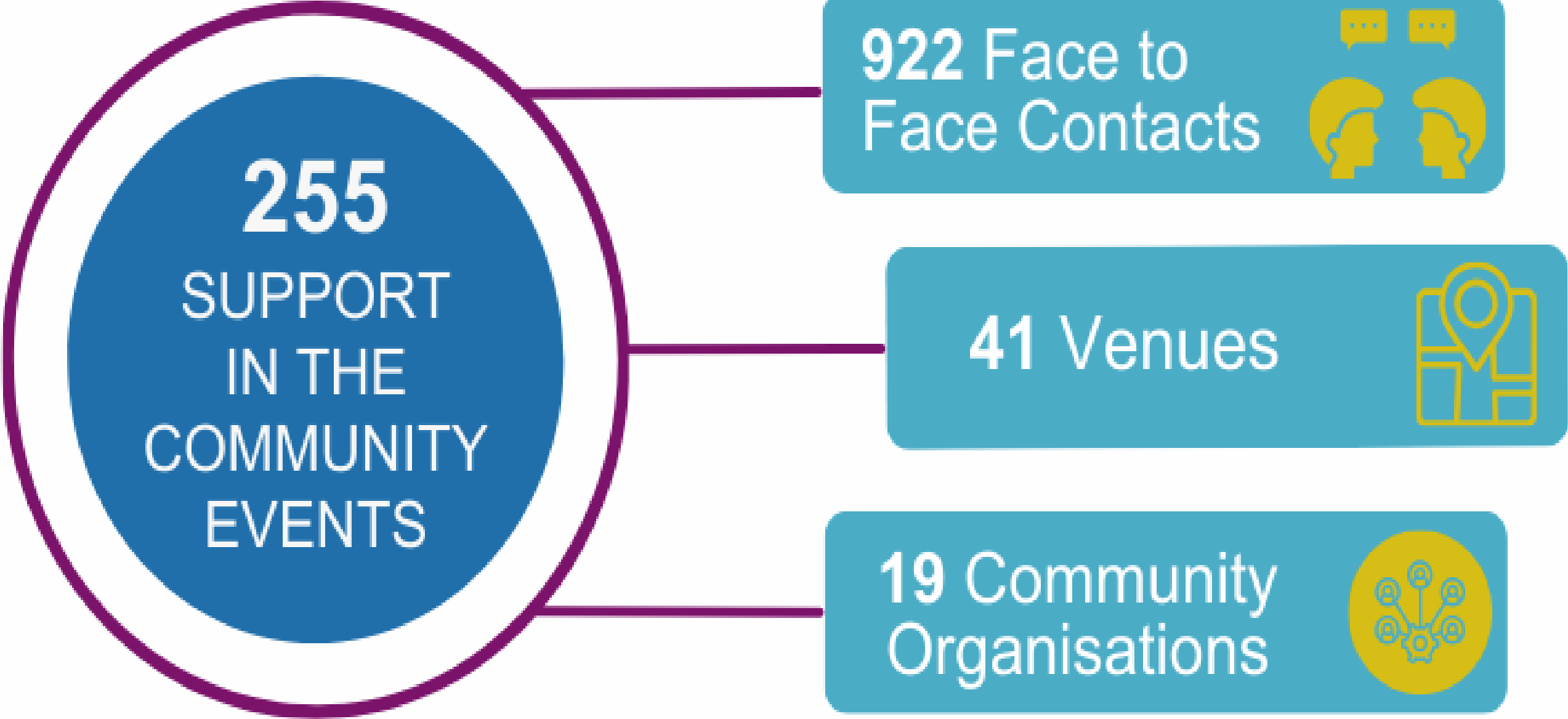


Outcomes (cont)

- **A clinic based model was developed alongside trusted 3rd sector organisations**
- **Pilot project took place from Nov 24-Nov 25**
- **255 sessions across NI have taken place**
- **Over 50% in case work coming to the PCC**
- **More diverse voices being heard in PCC engagement opportunities**
- **PENNE team of the year award**



PCC Support in the Community Nov 24 – Nov 25



Thank you

Any Questions



Child Poverty Interventions in County Fermanagh. A community development approach

Paul Kellagher. Independent Social Worker.

Director Accessible Adventures Ireland. CIC

Former Children's Services Manager. Action for Children.

The post pandemic period and child poverty in a rural context.

- ▶ I was leading a cluster of services across the Fermanagh Omagh Area.
- ▶ In the years immediately following the covid 19 pandemic, loss of earnings and rapidly rising cost of living was pushing many families to the brink.
- ▶ For Social Workers and family support workers in my teams it was part of every conversation and something that had to be addressed before other work could begin.
- ▶ Action for Children had set up a crisis fund.
- ▶ Local responses were fragmented across the community and statutory sector. This was exacerbated by the 3000 sq km rural geography of the area.
- ▶ Young people leaving care were particularly vulnerable and often unseen in the “Families in poverty” lens.

Leadership in a policy space. Who are the real experts?

- When politicians and elected representatives meet their constituents, does this change their thinking?
- Do we as Social Workers and or our organizations have “Agency” to speak on behalf of the families we support?
- Young people who have left the care system and /or are at risk of homelessness due to family breakdown are particularly at risk of poverty. (Hagleitner 2022)
- ▶ The very wealthy can use their resources to influence politics in ways which ultimately protect their assets from redistribution (Bartels, 2016).
- ▶ So why shouldn't we?

Community Development Intervention.



- ▶ Public Policy work with our NI and UK policy teams.
- ▶ Campaigns and Media Work.
- ▶ Meeting with young people in our 16+ service users to ensure their voices contribute to our strategy development
- ▶ Chairing a Poverty T&F Group as part of the Western Area Outcomes Group.
- ▶ Working directly with local council on contributing to their anti Poverty strategy.
- ▶ Internal leadership. Chairing AFC NI Participation group with a key focus on engagement with young people to ensure their voices are heard.

Outcomes.



- ▶ Young people's voices at the heart of the charity's work and included within the local Anti-Poverty Strategy (there was still no NI strategy at this point and FO council were the first to do this).
- ▶ Engagement in multiple public policy spaces including local and national media, council offices and NI Assembly committees.

Voices Are Not Enough

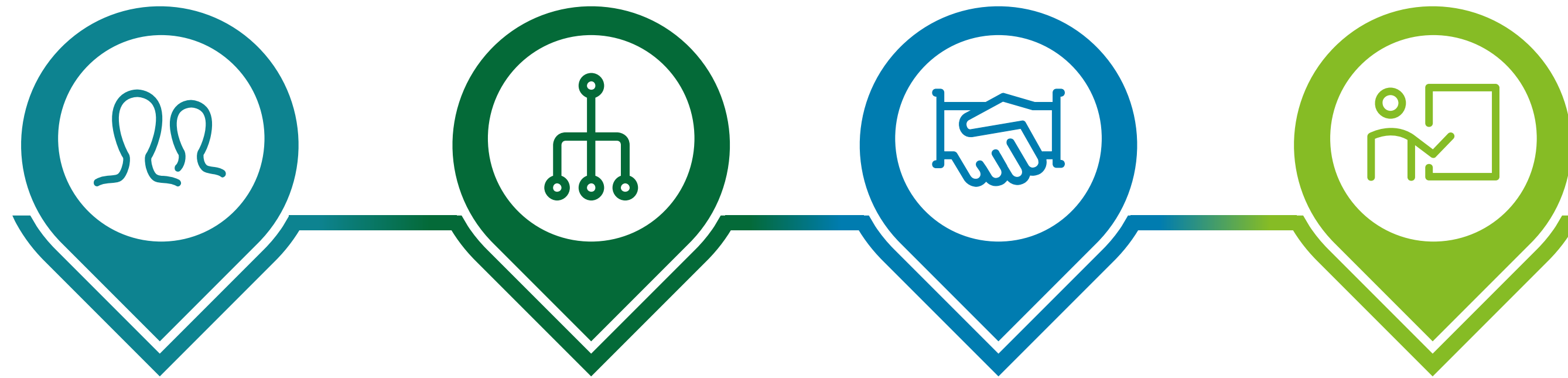
A Participatory Action Research Project with
Care Experienced Young People

Michael Ferris

Module Code: SWK763 (79428)



Northern Health
and Social Care Trust



Community Development Focus

The project targets improving outcomes for care experienced youth through co-production, partnership working and a Participatory Action Research approach

Addressing Structural Disadvantage

The initiative recognizes systemic and relational factors impacting care experienced young people beyond individual deficits.

Collaborative Change Approach

Meaningful change is driven by valuing lived experience alongside professional knowledge in a participatory process.

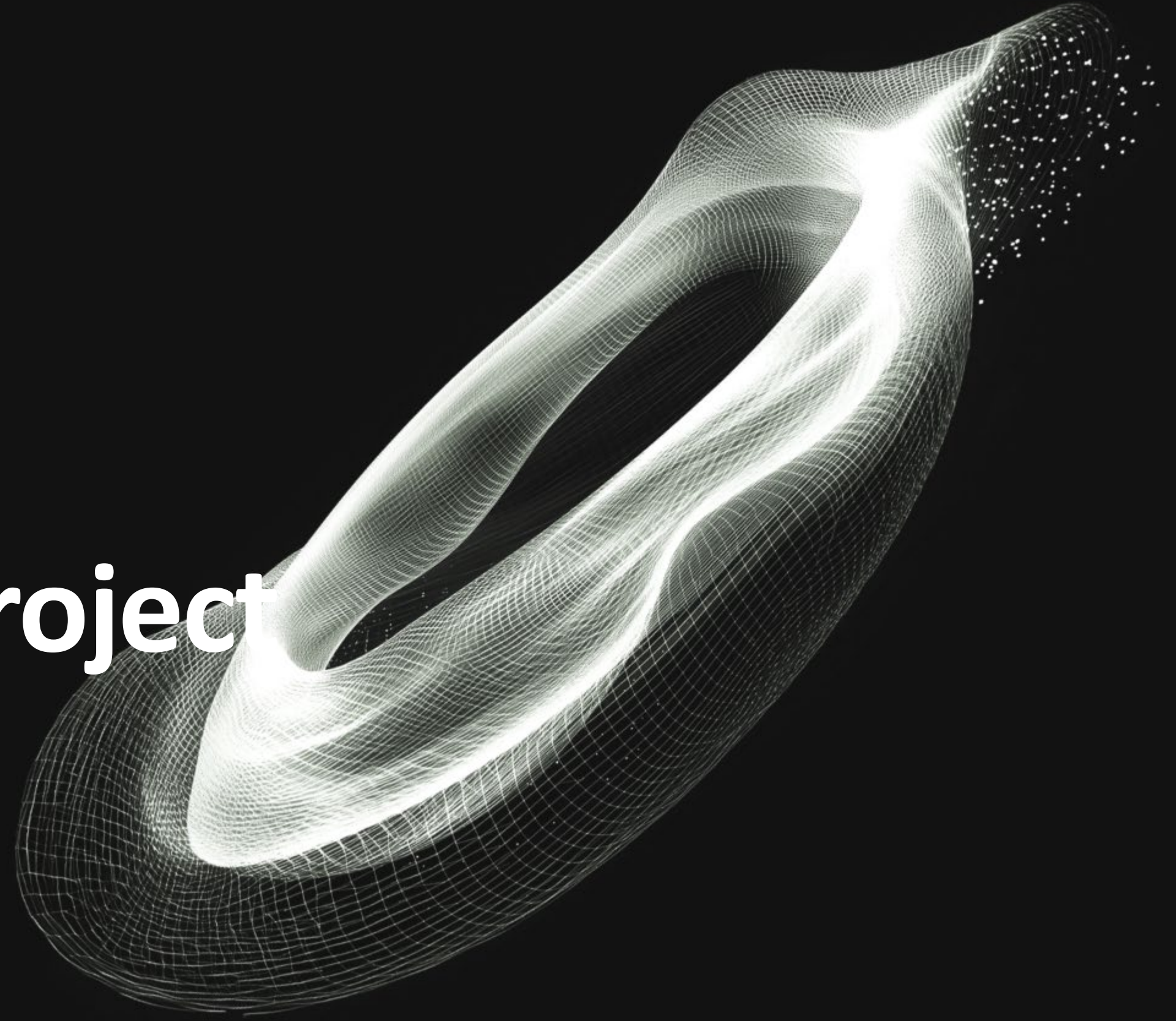
Presentation Structure

Overview includes rationale, aims, timeline, SWOT analysis, risk assessment partnership, leadership, change management, and sustainability.

Language Sensitivity & Co Production



Rationale for the Project



Challenges for Care Experienced Youth

Care experienced young people face poor educational, mental health, and housing outcomes, needing focused support.

Importance of Trusting Relationships

Stable, trusting relationships with professionals are key to improving outcomes for care experienced youth.

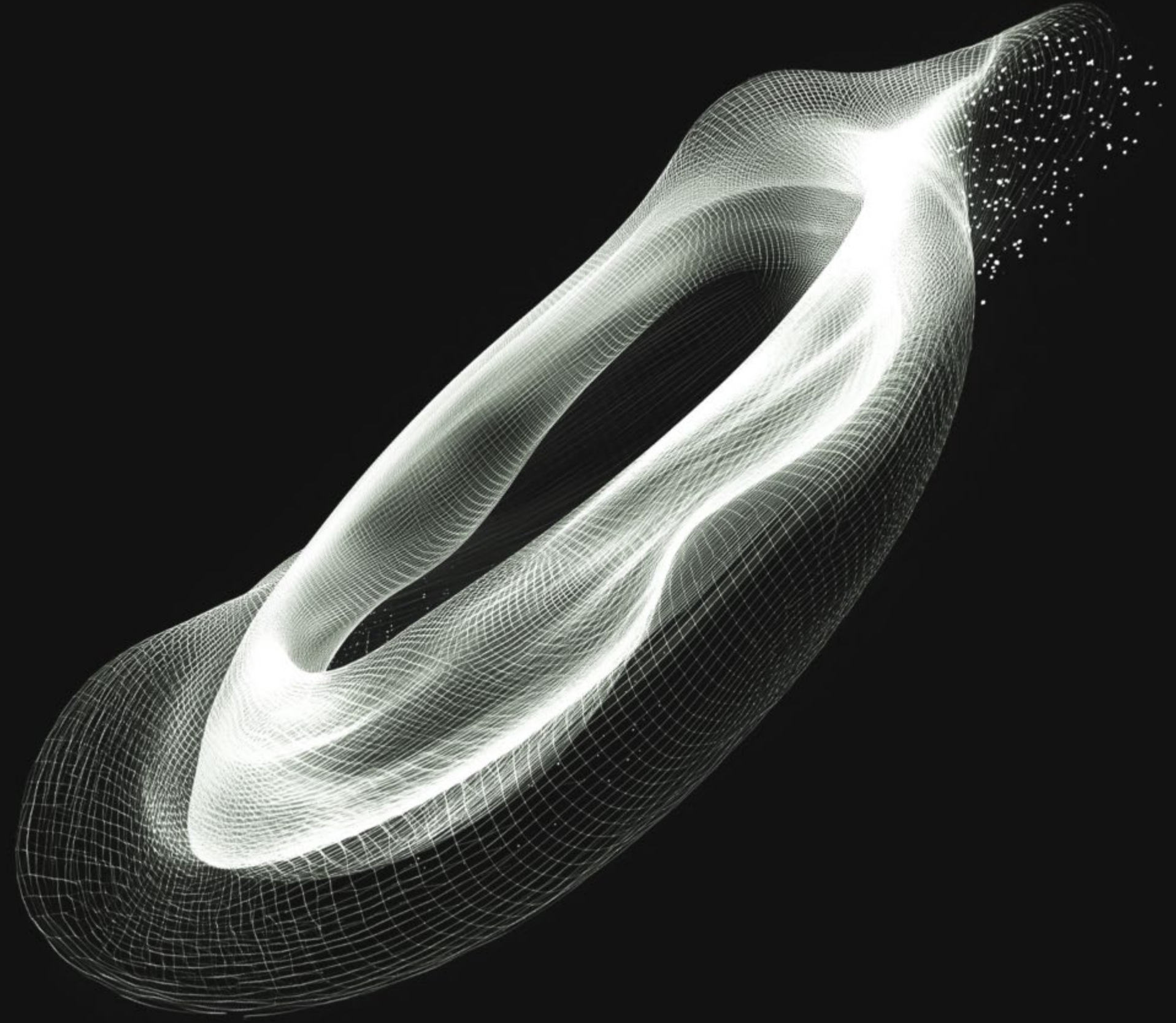
Gap in Co-produced Resources

There is a lack of locally co-produced materials or resources reflecting youths' perspectives during transitions leaving care.

Supporting Practitioners and Youth

The project aims to boost practitioners' confidence and competence, improving youth experiences together.

Aim and SMART Objectives



Aim and SMART Objectives

Project Aim

Co-produce improvements in care experienced youth transitions educational attainment, health, housing and employment opportunities.

Co-produce Resources to Improve Outcomes

Develop resources within the six months that integrates lived experience with evidence-informed practice.



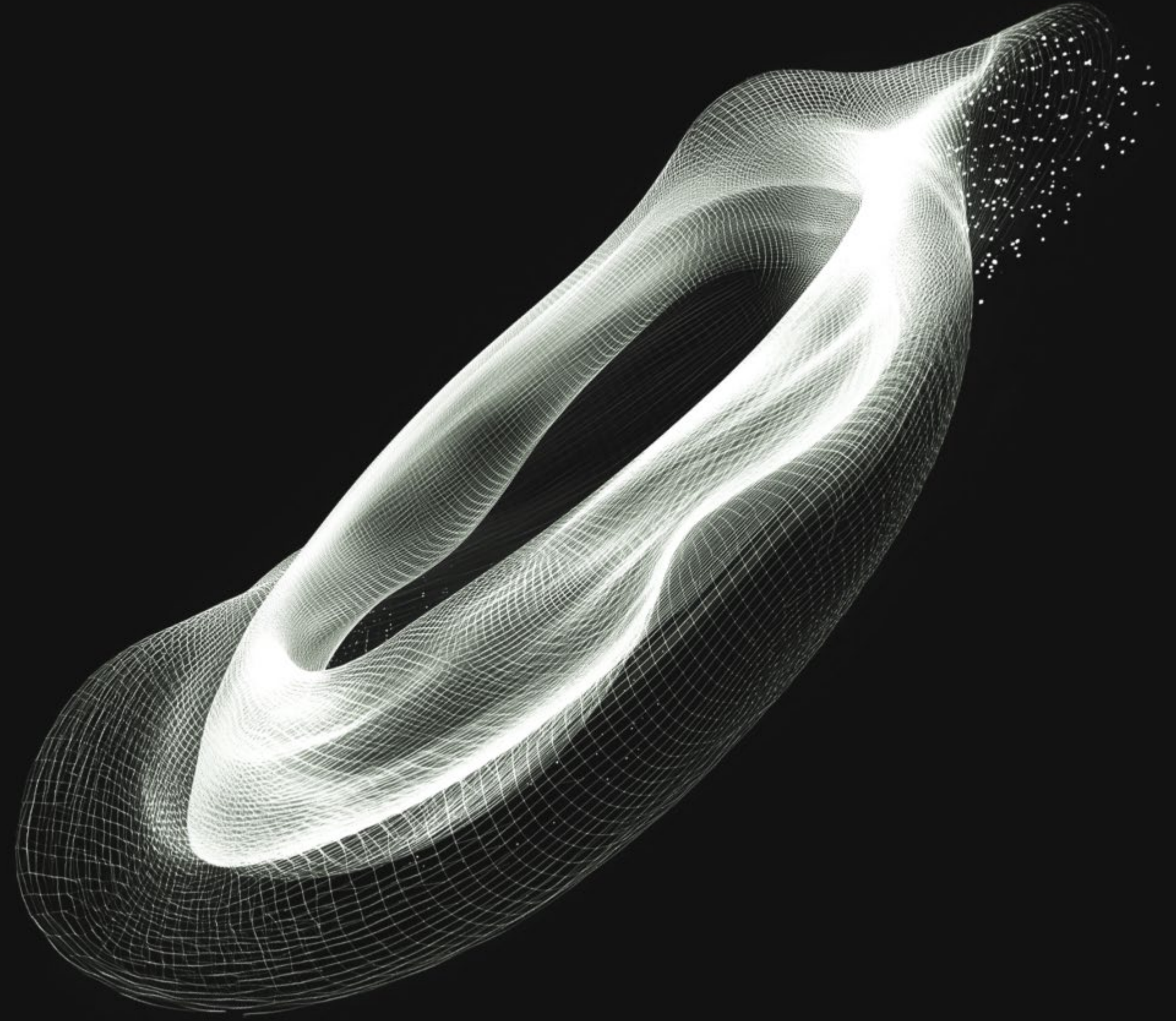
Establish Working Group

Form a team of participants including young people, social workers, PA's community and voluntary practitioners, Housing Executive, supported housing projects, Education, AHPs and VOYPIC

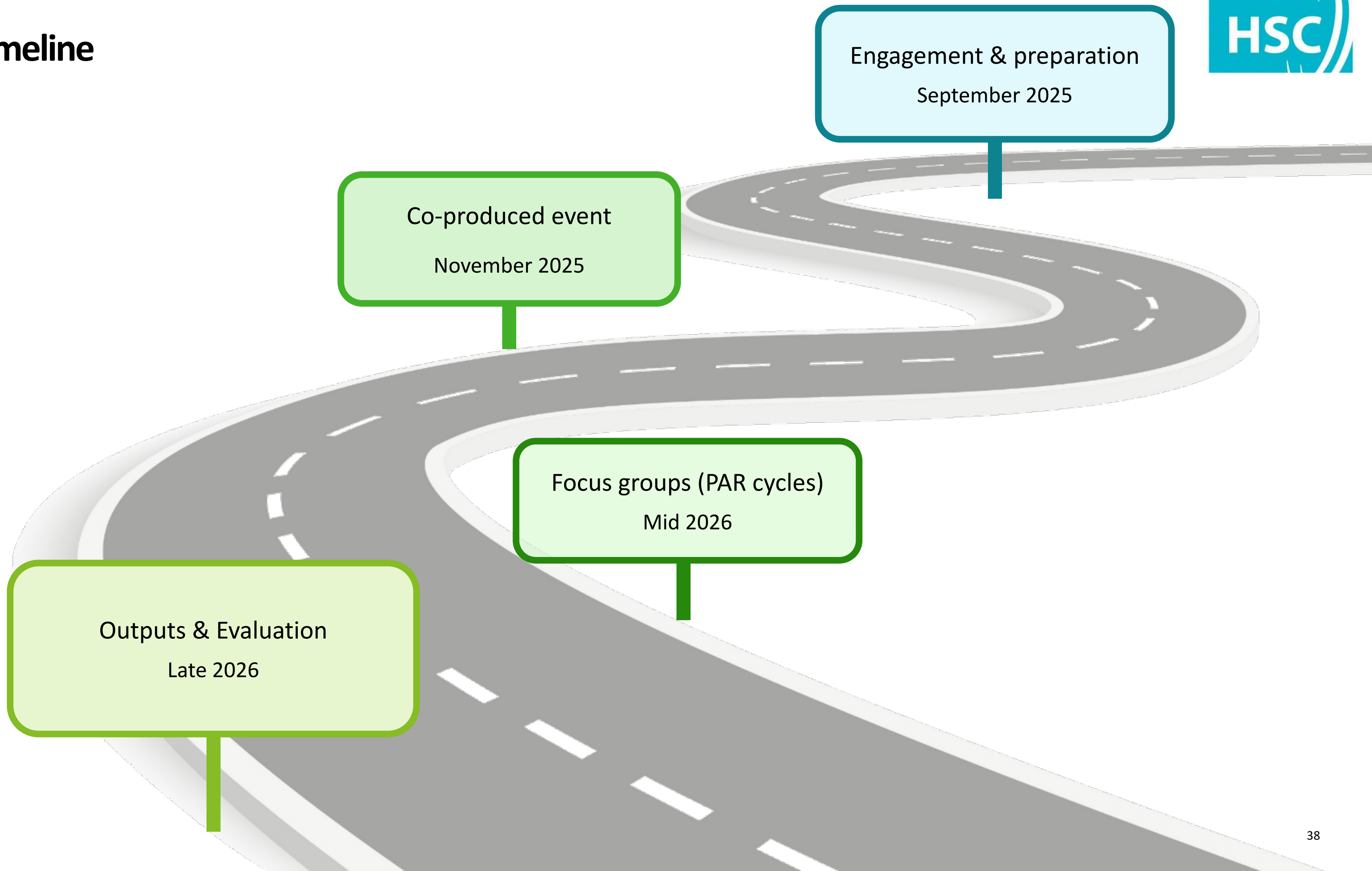
Embed in Practice and Evaluate

Strengthen participation and collect feedback from young people and practitioners within six months.

Project Timeline



Project Timeline



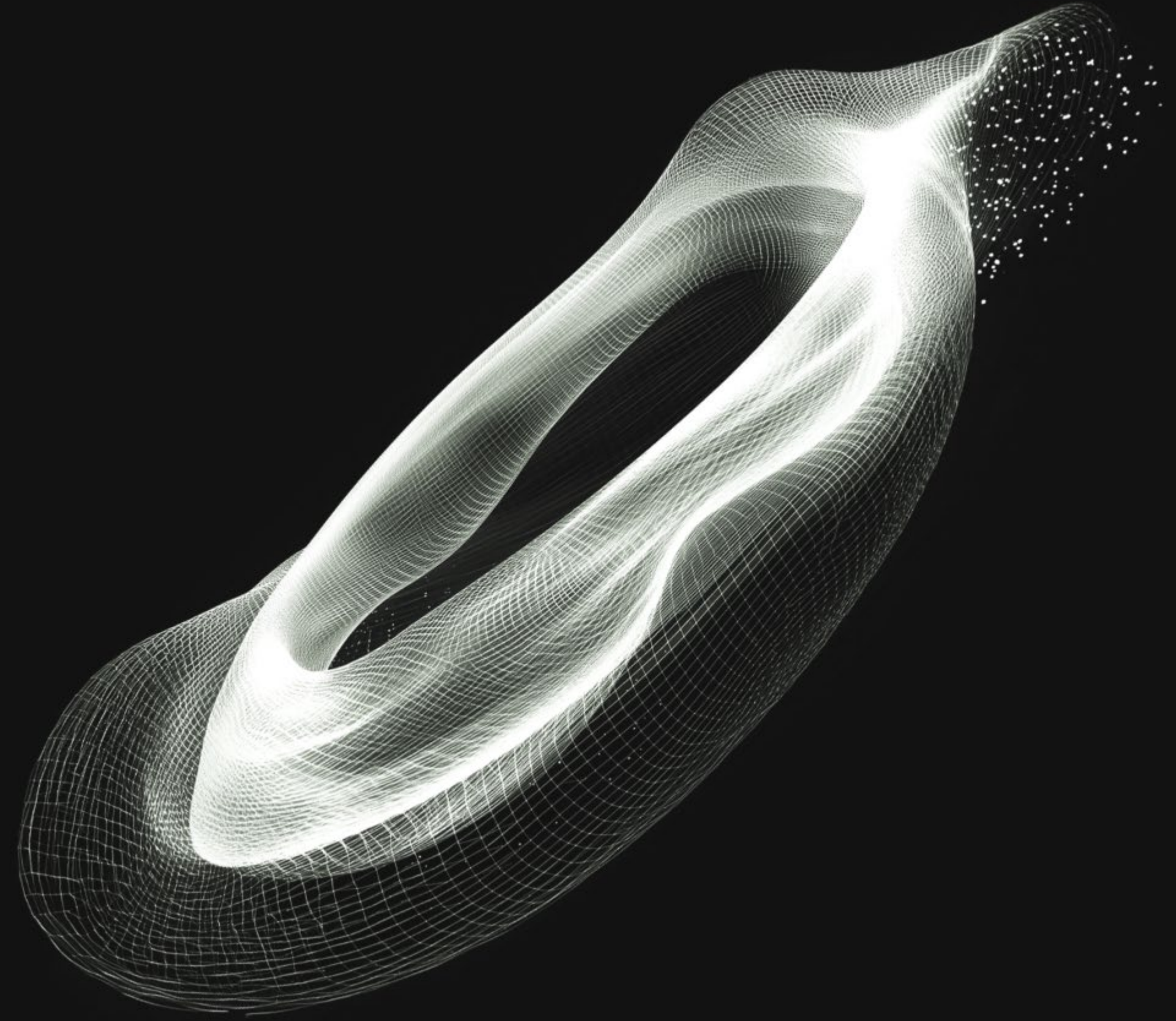
Engagement & preparation
September 2025

Co-produced event
November 2025

Focus groups (PAR cycles)
Mid 2026

Outputs & Evaluation
Late 2026

SWOT Analysis



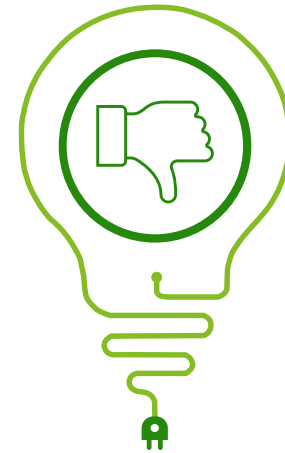
Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT Analysis)

Strengths of the Project



Expertise of practitioners and authentic lived experience input strengthen the project's foundation. Strong existing partnerships enhance collaboration. Relationships and expertise are already evident.

Project Weaknesses



Limited time and funding impose constraints, while sustaining engagement or maintaining representation poses ongoing challenges.

Opportunities for Growth



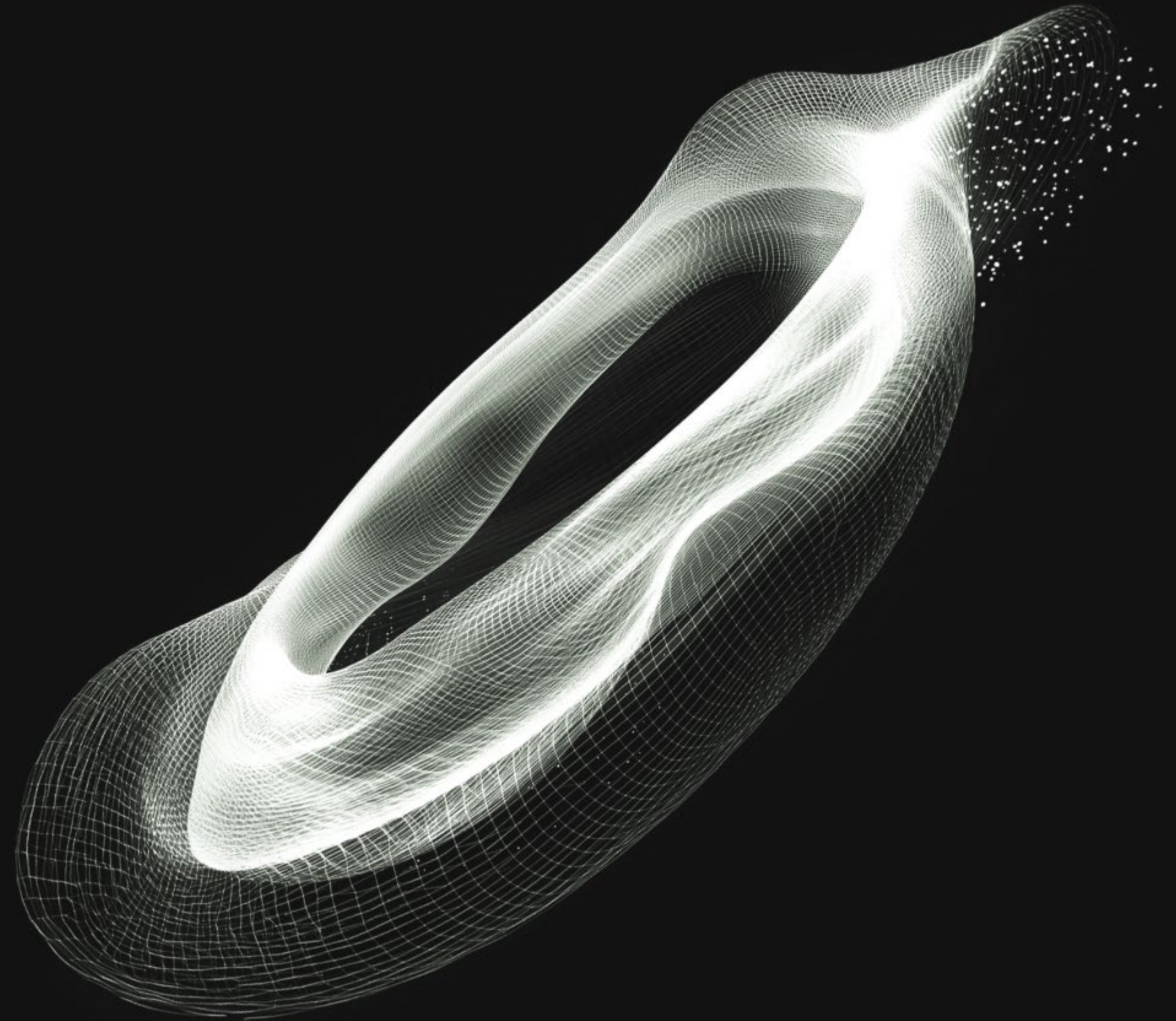
Opportunity to influence practice culture, improve youth outcomes, and create transferable service models.

Potential Threats



Power imbalances, scope creep, tokenism and limited uptake threaten successful project outcomes.

**Partnership
Working and
Capacity Building**



Partnership Working and Capacity Building

Collaborative Partnership

Partnership working unites statutory services, CV groups, and young people with care experience to share knowledge effectively.



Capacity Building through Learning

Shared learning, reflection, and skill development build both individual and collective capacity among participants.



Empowering Young People

Capacity building helps young people gain confidence to influence practice and contribute creatively.

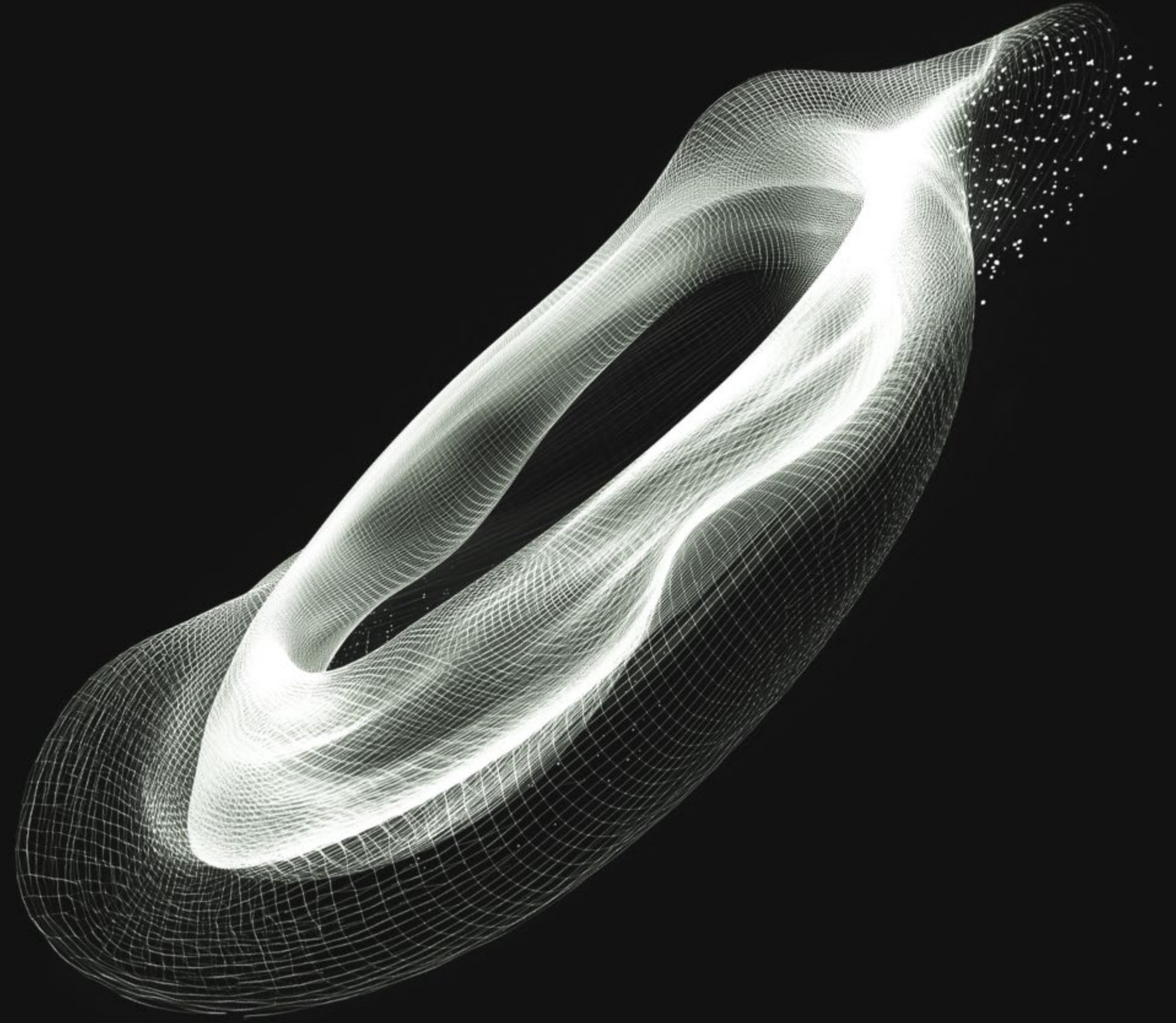


Supportive Collaborative Practice

Practitioners are supported to work collaboratively and reflexively for better outcomes in partnership projects.



Risk Assessment

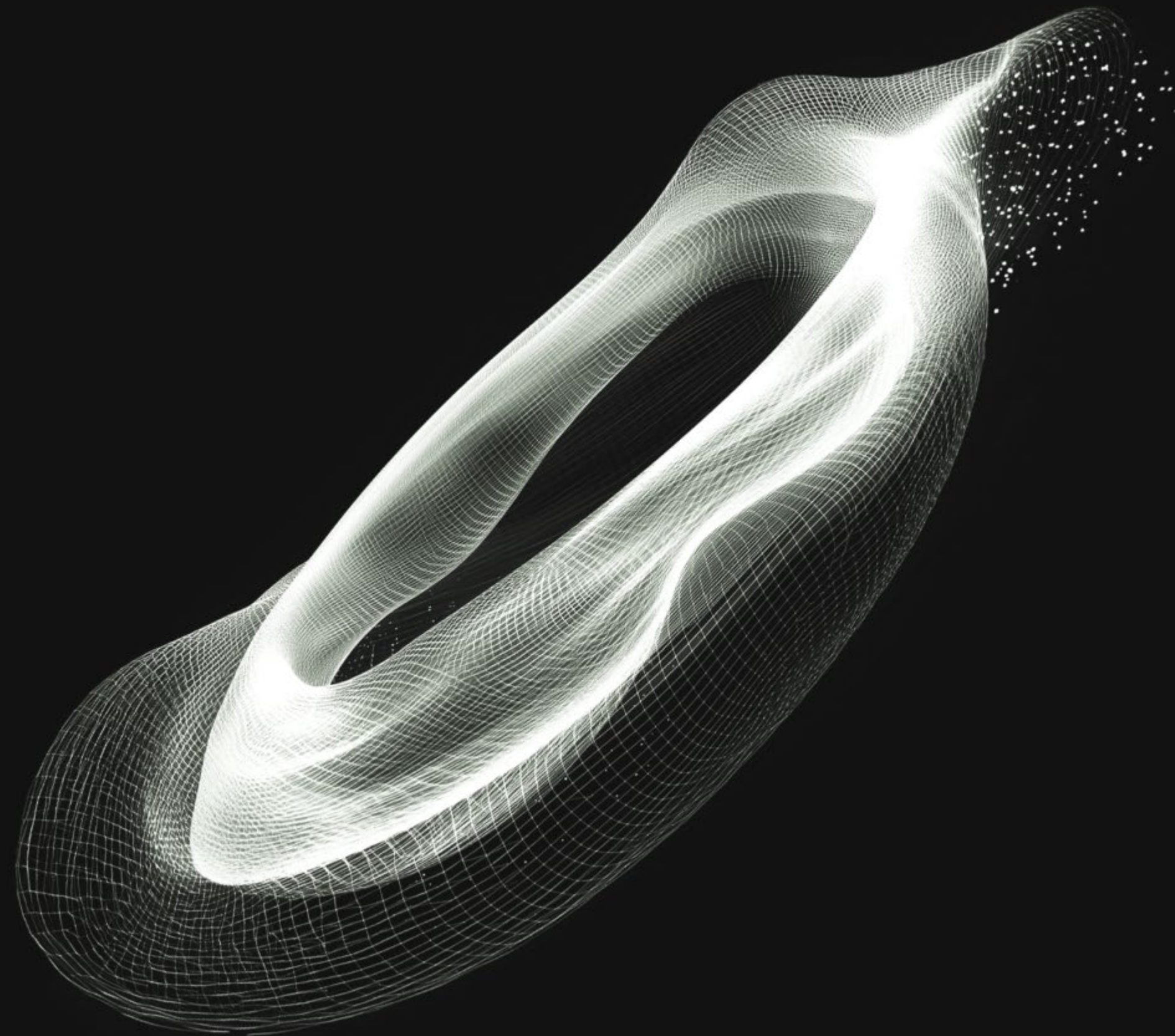


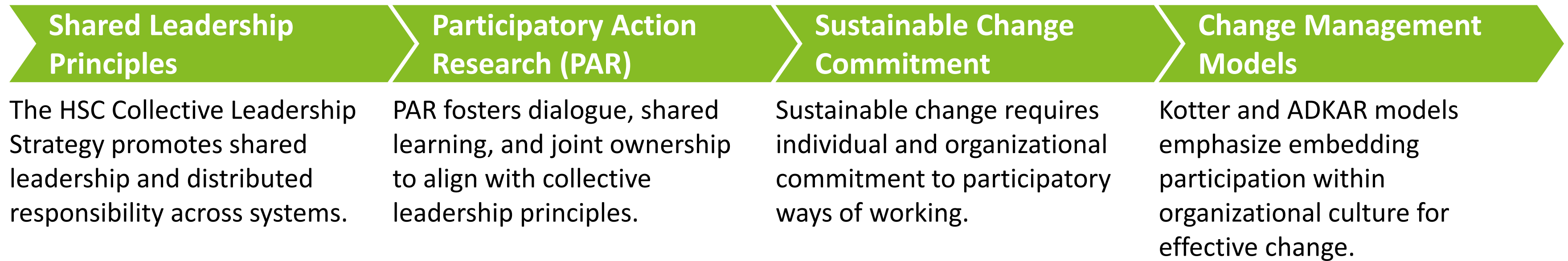
Risk Assessment: Service User Considerations



Risks	Mitigation Strategies
Re-traumatization	Trauma-informed practice
Power imbalance	Rights-based participation
Safeguarding risks	Safeguarding processes
Engagement fatigue	Flexible engagement

Collective Leadership and Change





What is ADKAR?

ADKAR is a change management model developed by Prosci to help individuals and organisations manage change successfully.

A

Awareness

Understanding *why* the change is needed.

K

Knowledge

Knowing *how* to change — training, information, skills.

D

Desire

Wanting to support and participate in the change.

A

Ability

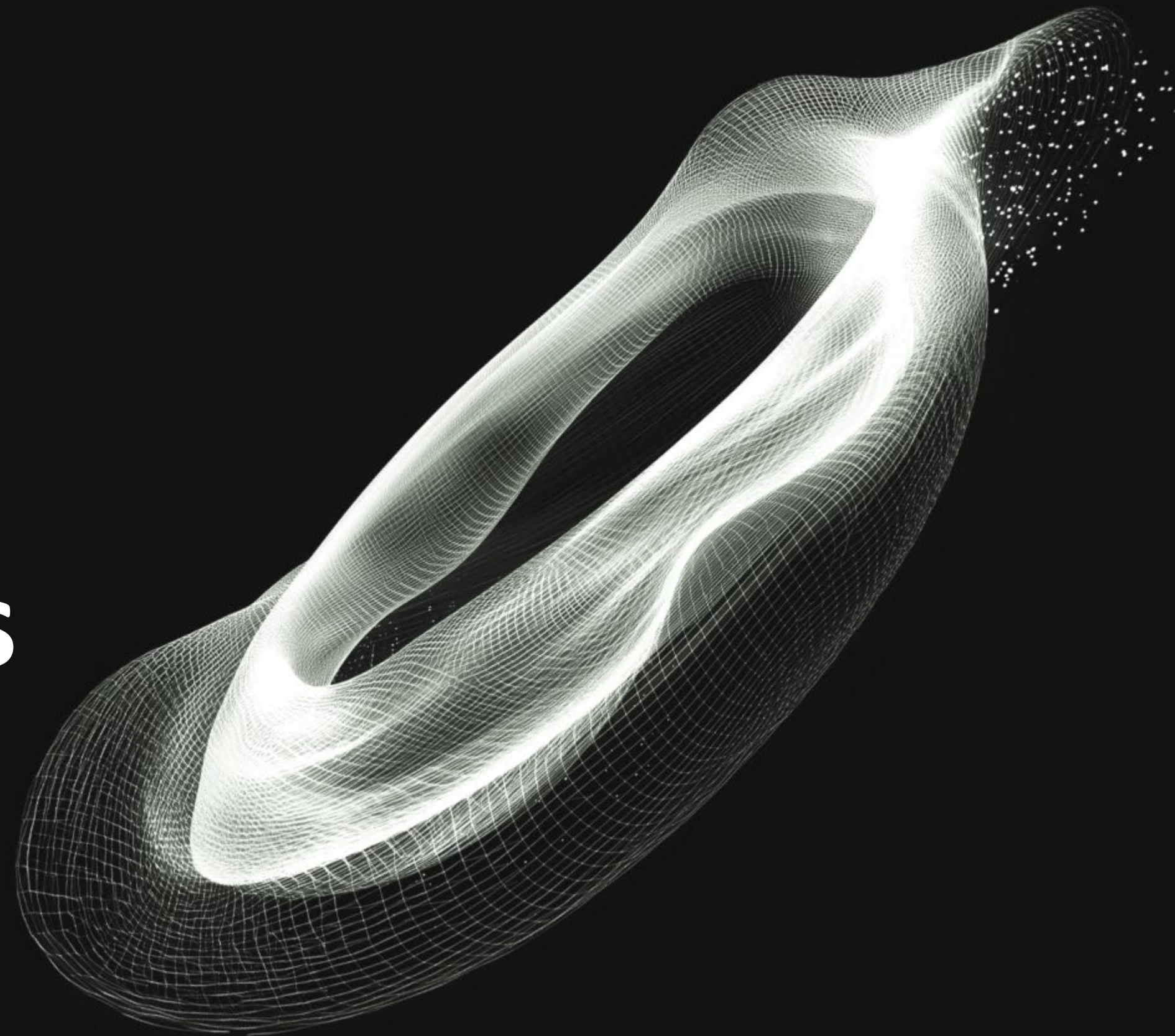
Being able to apply the change in practice.

R

Reinforcement

Sustaining the change so people do not revert to old ways.

What Care Leavers Told Us



What Care Leavers Told Us

Preparation for Independence

“Care leavers emphasized the importance of early and gradual preparation for independent living.”

Trusted Relationships

“Continuity of relationships with trusted adults supports care leavers’ wellbeing and decision-making.”

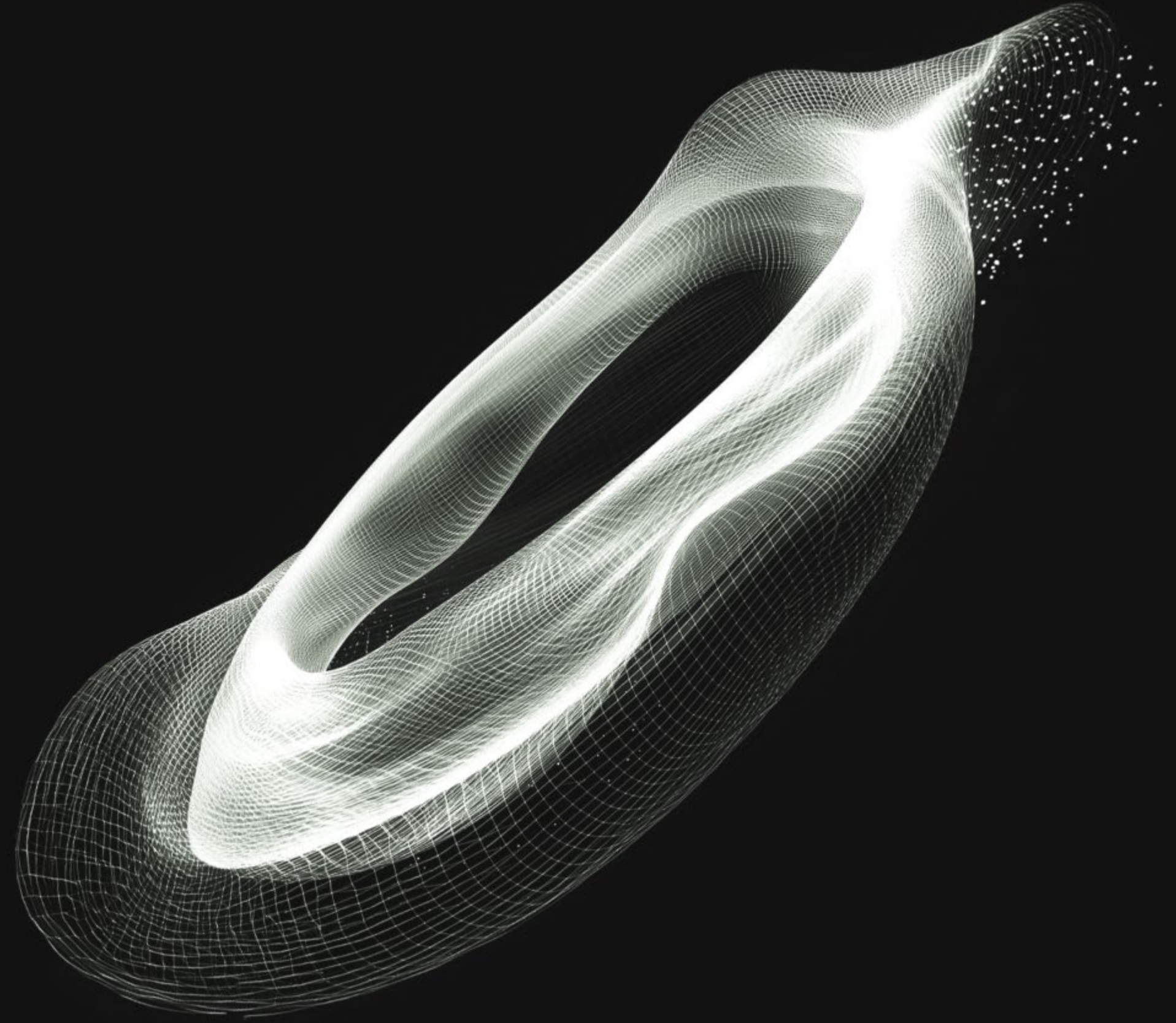
Access to Life Skills

“Practical life skills access was identified as essential for care leavers’ successful transition.”

Meaningful Involvement

“Care leavers highlighted the need for meaningful involvement in decisions affecting their lives.”

Exit Strategy and Sustainability



Exit Strategy and Sustainability

Clear Exit Strategy

A clear exit strategy helps to ensure the project is both ethical and sustainable. Work is ongoing to embed learning from the project into practice and to support continued participation and development beyond the timeline.

Ownership Transfer

Resource ownership transfers to a designated team of people after evaluation for continuity.

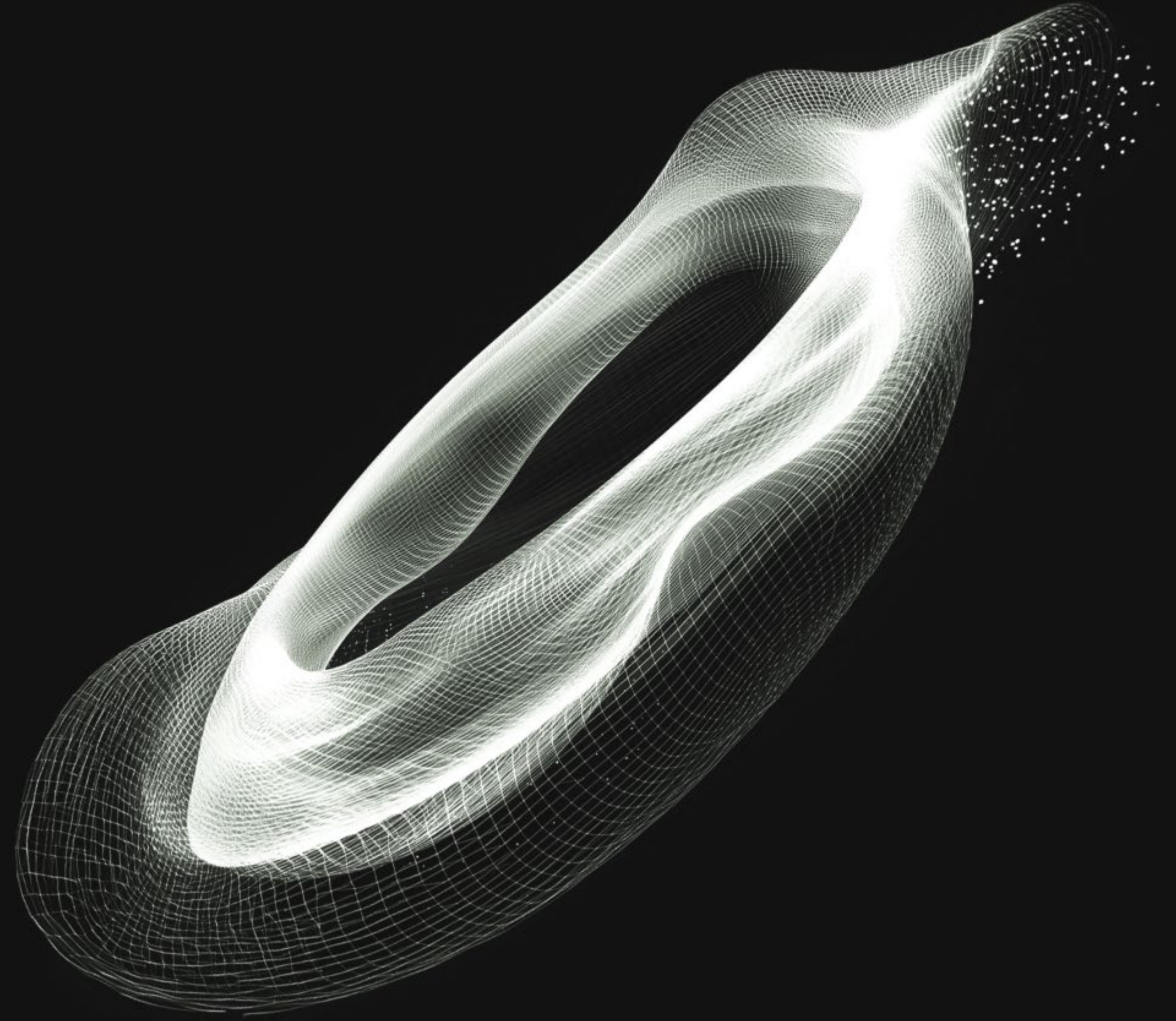
Ongoing Review and Involvement

Regular review points and youth involvement maintain project relevance and engagement.

Ethical Participation

Planning exit from the start honors contributions and prevents tokenism.

References



Foundational Literature

The project draws on research in community development, participatory action, and leadership theories.



Key Research Themes

Co-production, relational practice, and change management theory are central to the project's framework.



References

Policy and Practice Guidance

Relevant policies and practice guidelines support the project's approach and outcomes.



Academic Referencing Assurance

A sample of the academic references are noted in the reference list.



Any Questions?



Northern Health
and Social Care Trust

References (Harvard)

- Arnstein, S.R. (1969) 'A ladder of citizen participation', *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 35(4), pp. 216–224.
- BASW (2021) *Code of ethics for social work*. Birmingham: British Association of Social Workers.
- Bath, H. (2008) 'The three pillars of trauma-informed care', *Reclaiming Children and Youth*, 17(3), pp. 17–21.
- Baum, F., MacDougall, C. and Smith, D. (2020) 'Participatory action research', *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, 74(2), pp. 86–92.
- Department of Health (2022) *Care leaver strategy for Northern Ireland*. Belfast: Department of Health.
- Department of Health NI (2019) *Co-operating to safeguard children and young people in Northern Ireland*. Belfast: Department of Health.
- Gilligan, R. (2009) *Promoting resilience: supporting children and young people who are in care, adopted or in need*. London: BAAF.
- Kemmis, S., McTaggart, R. and Nixon, R. (2014) *The action research planner: doing critical participatory action research*. Singapore: Springer.

References (Harvard)

- Kotter, J.P. (1996) *Leading change*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.
- Ledwith, M. (2020) *Community development: a critical approach*. 3rd edn. Bristol: Policy Press.
- Lundy, L. (2007) ““Voice” is not enough: conceptualising Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child’, *British Educational Research Journal*, 33(6), pp. 927–942.
- McIntyre, A. (2008) *Participatory action research*. London: Sage.
- NICE (2021) *Looked-after children and young people (NG205)*. London: National Institute for Health and Care Excellence.
- NICE and UCLAN (2021) *Creating our lives: children and young people’s views on care and leaving care*. London: NICE.
- VOYPIC (2023) *Participation and advocacy standards for children and young people with care experience*. Belfast: VOYPIC.