CAN ENERGY PROJECTS BE OVER-EVALUATED?

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OUTLINE

1. Literature Review
2. Prospering from the Energy Revolution
3. Features of Over-Evaluation
4. What to do about it
LITERATURE REVIEW... WHAT THERE IS

1. Project reports

2. Meta-Reviews

3. Guidance and best practice
PROSPERING FROM THE ENERGY REVOLUTION

Demonstrators
- Energy Superhub Oxford
- ReFLEX Oxford

Future Designs
- Bristol Energy
- BankEnergy
- Cheshire Energy Hub

Innovation Development
- Oxford nanoSystems
- inventev
- Nemein

Research Programme
- EnergyREV

Programme Integration Services
- CATAPULT Energy Systems

Funding:
- £40m
- £30m
- £10m
- £22m
EVALUATION

Monitoring, Stage Gates etc

“Synthesising knowledge within and beyond PFER”

“Helping PFER overcome barriers and create insights”

“Assessing the impacts the PFER Challenge has made”

“Monitoring and reporting of social and environmental impacts”
APPROACH AND METHODS

• Genuinely explorative, deliberately provocative
• Interviewed project partners and funders
• Caveats: early stage findings, small sample
Features of Over-evaluation

Too Many Cooks

Too Much Consultation

Over-Evaluation

Too Much Data
**Too Many Cooks**

**Downsides and Risks**

- Overlapping scope
- Need for additional coordination and comms
- Misunderstandings
- Data sharing concerns and IP

**Upsides and Opportunities**

- Diverse skills, methods and approaches
- Different audiences
- Mutual scrutiny
- Agility – reflecting projects themselves
Too Much Consultation

Downsides and Risks

- Consultation fatigue

Upsides and Opportunities

- Potential for verification and triangulation
- Multiple approaches raises profile of project
- Multiple surveys reveal subtly different responses
Too Much Data

Downsides and Risks

• Unwieldy, requiring meticulous data management
• If data are not strategically valued by partners, data mgmt. will suffer and data gathering is wasted effort

Upsides and Opportunities

• No harm in collecting data?
• Might have future uses
WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT

1. Stick to having single evaluators?
   • But... programmes are becoming more complex, requiring diverse skills, perspectives, addressing different audiences

2. Think carefully at the outset
   • Set clear remits and goals, but allow for flexibility

3. Effective communications, transparency, data sharing
   • Not easy. Balance of enforced communications (e.g. timetabled meetings) and being agile (meetings should have value)

4. Decide what data are essential vs nice-to-have.
   • What is their purpose? Do they have strategic value?
SUMMARY

• Under-evaluation remains a much bigger problem
  • But... the features of over-evaluation may become more commonplace

• No literature exists, but surely the phenomenon is not new

• ‘Over-evaluation’ has a number of positive implications