Research Project Lifecycle

Lead Researcher: Tori Olphin, MBE (t.olphin@thamesvalley.police.uk)

Allowing effective research and implementation to be conducted in the Public Sector

THAMES VALLEY VIOLENCE PREVENTION PARTNERSHIP

Common Issues

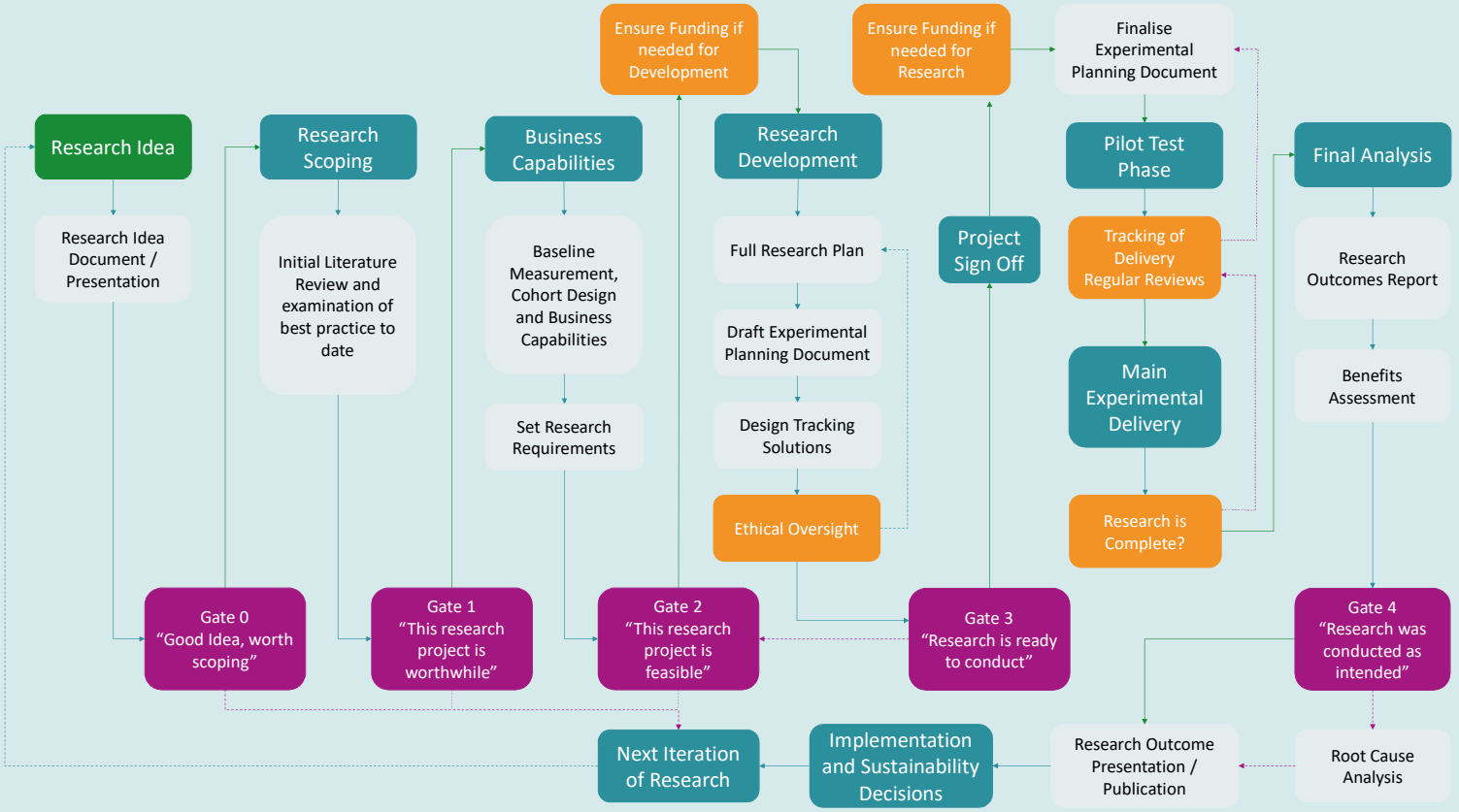
Public sector organisations often struggle to produce high quality research, with common issues being present:

- Short funding deadlines lead to less planning
- Analysis not planned before implementation
- Lack of tracking of delivery
- Fear of running randomised trials
- Control groups are usually not pre-planned
- Counterfactual not identified
- No baseline measurements taken
- Eligibility criteria not easily identified
- Group sizes not based on prior evidence

What was going wrong?

These factors led to unwanted outcomes. These outcomes are present in the vast majority of public sector implementation and research projects:

- Not being able to say what works, or what effect has been had for the money/resource
- Asking for someone to evaluate something after it has already been finished
- Issues with interventions not being picked up until later
- Clashes between interventions
- Rushed implementation
- Inefficient or insufficient levels of resourcing



What does this do?

The research project lifecycle provides a structure which allows for an organised approach to: **encouraging testing of new ideas**, **reviewing available evidence**, utilising strong data science to ensure that an **appropriate cohort exists** to deliver an intervention to, with **sufficient resource** to deliver it, and that **research is planned out in advance**, and **evaluated as intended**

It is a project management approach to ensuring that research and implementation projects are delivered as intended and produce the desired impact

Our experiences

Using the Research Project Lifecycle in Thames Valley has allowed us to run **6 randomised controlled trials**, alongside **in excess of 15 other research projects** of various types (*Data analysis projects, Rapid Evidence Reviews, Natural Experiments and Quasi-experimental designs*)

This methodology makes it possible to **run research as intended**, and **problem solve implementation before it begins**, **reducing problems** and **ensuring that impact is maximised** for the public we serve

WHAT WORKS

Reference: Olphin, T.P.A. (2023). *Research Project Lifecycle: A Structured Approach to Conducting Research in the Public Sector.* Reading, UK: Thames Valley Violence Reduction Unit