working together apart

Find yourself running a partnership or group work project where the participants can't physically be together? Expand your knowledge, increase your confidence and write a practical project plan to get you started.

This resource is part of the working together apart online course. The course explores how we can work together as a mixed group of decision makers, staff members, and people with lived experience, when it is not practical for you to all be in the same room. It reframes some of our previous Iriss tools exploring ideas of co-production and partnership working in the social services sector.

Iriss

Project Values

What does success of the project look like?
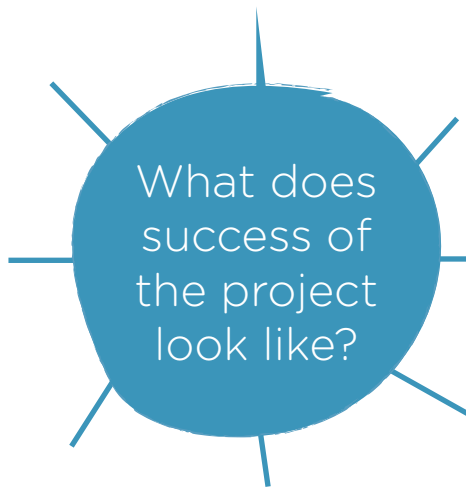
Key Values

What makes your project unique?

Iriss

Expressing your values

When we are working on projects that will be remote, it is really important to consider how we can make them stand out.

Can you describe your project in three sentences?

Project Name Ideas

What communication platforms do you plan to use to let people know about your project?

What colours do you associate with your project and why?

_____

_____

_____

_____

This tool was developed by Iriss as part of the Working Together Apart online course. For more information please visit www.iriss.org.uk

Iriss

Drivers: gaps, strengths, risks

Work through the following conversation prompts with your project team or on your own.

What policies and legislation impact on the project?

Different people may have different drivers and expectations for developing a project. How can you ensure these are shared, understood and agreed?

What gaps, needs, barriers or challenges does your work seek to respond to?

Iriss

Asset Bank

What resources do you have already to support your remote project idea?

Technical skills + resources	Support Networks	Tools	Learning opportunities	Time and money

You might have noticed that people are missing from this exercise. People are often the most important asset in a project, so we have dedicated a tool to them.

This tool was developed by Iriss as part of the Working Together Apart online course. For more information please visit www.iriss.org.uk

Iriss

Power dynamics

ALWAYS

PEOPLE WHO GET A SAY

NEVER

PEOPLE WHO ARE IMPACTED

ALWAYS
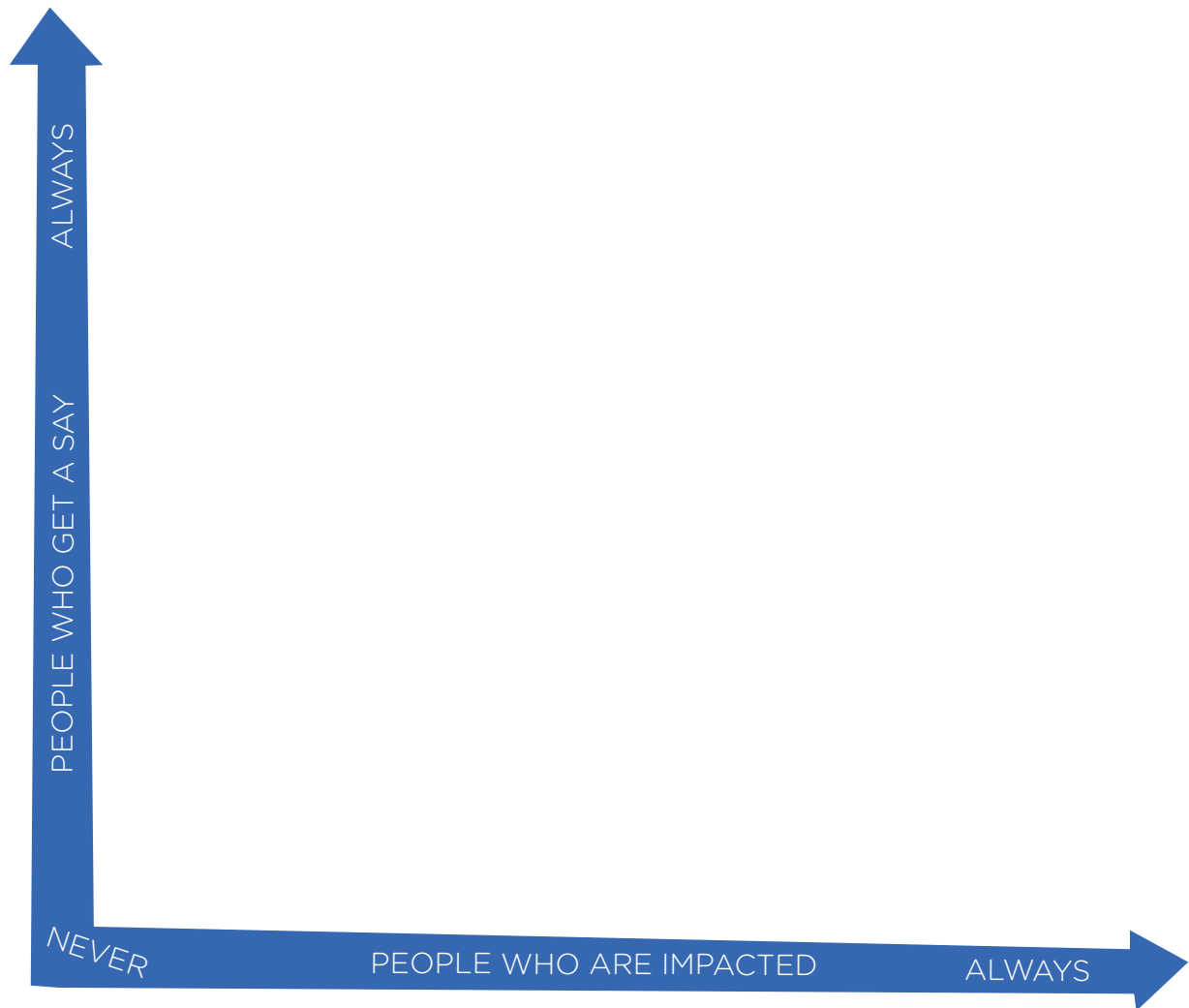
In terms of your project focus, who tends to be impacted by decisions that are made, and who tends to make those decisions?

The point of working together is to assess the balance of power and find ways of addressing it in your process.

Are you concerned about how power will be shared in the group? What kind of things do you think might have an influence on power?

What can you put in place to develop shared policies and procedures which are responsive and evolving?

Iriss

Who is who?

Idea investors

People who are already on board with the project. This may just be you at this stage!

Potential Partners

People who you think will be interested in the project, and who your idea investors have a personal link to.

Super Strangers

People you know you don't know, but you know need to be involved if you are to co-produce successfully!

Iriss

Addressing power imbalance

Looking back at your power balance graph, think about the types of people you have identified who are often impacted by decisions but don't get a say about them.

Push yourself to think about people who are often overlooked- have you considered how you will include Black and Minority Ethnic people, disabled people, working class people, LGBTQI+ people, carers and younger/older people in your co-production process?

Who?				
What do they bring?				
What do they get out of it?				
What could stop them from participating? Identify barriers to inclusion & ideas for overcoming them				

This tool was developed by Iriss as part of the Working Together Apart online course. For more information please visit www.iriss.org.uk

Iriss

Trust builder

Effective group working is about relationships and trust. This is even more crucial if you will be working remotely.

What common bonds and values are shared across the group?

What do you think will help develop and support positive relationships and trust across the group?

What does leadership look and feel like in the group and in a remote context?
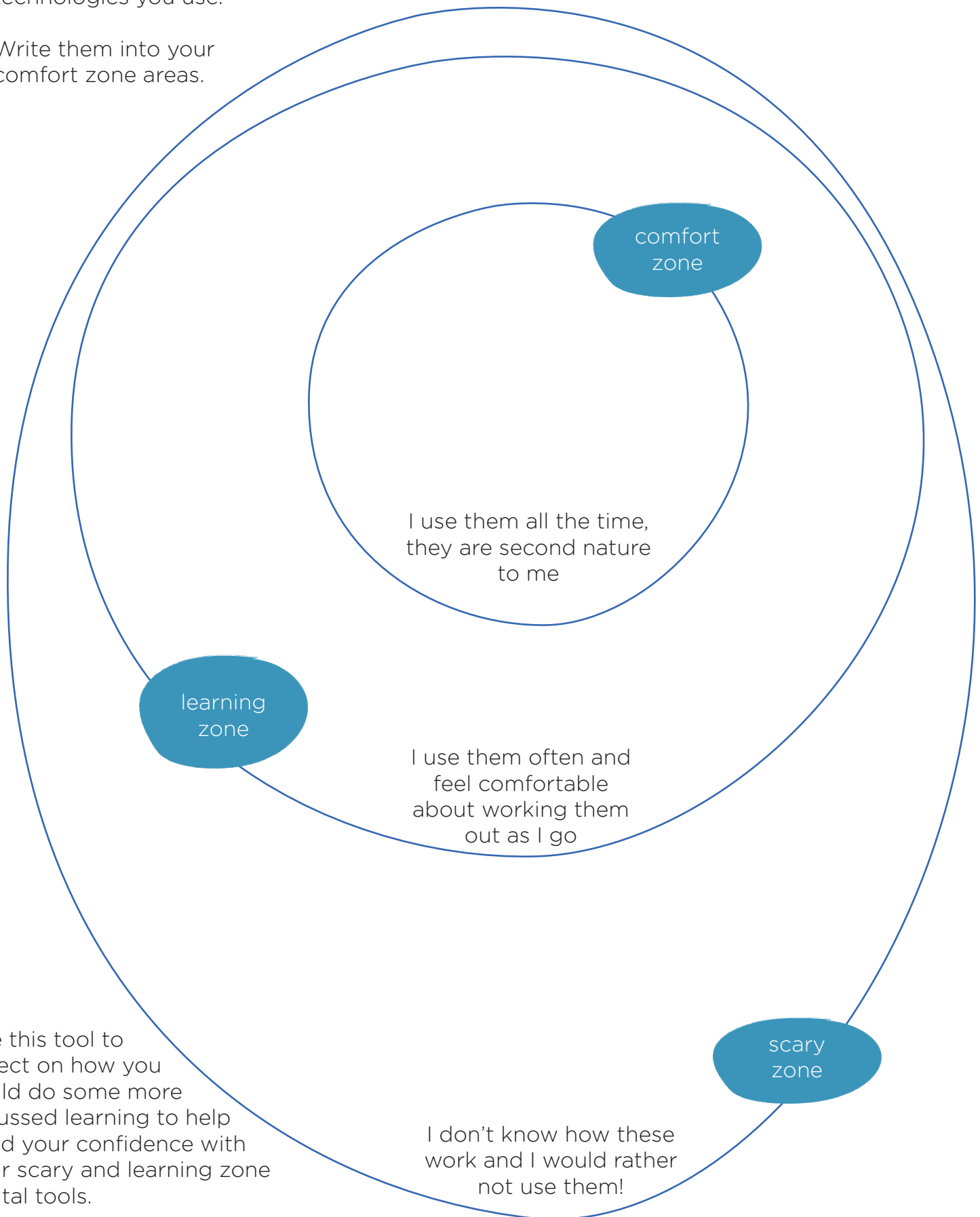
Iriss

Staying Connected

There are hundreds of different digital tools that you can use to facilitate your remote project and stay connected. From day-to-day social media that many people will use such as Facebook or Instagram, WhatsApp, email and specific project management tools such as Slack and Zoom. Which of these will you use at the different stages of your project? Include more traditional resources such as phone calls and letters, if they are applicable.

Planning	Recruiting	Facilitating	Evaluating	Sharing

Iriss

Digital comfort zone

Think about the digital technologies you use.

Write them into your comfort zone areas.

comfort zone

I use them all the time, they are second nature to me

learning zone

I use them often and feel comfortable about working them out as I go

scary zone

I don't know how these work and I would rather not use them!

Use this tool to reflect on how you could do some more focussed learning to help build your confidence with your scary and learning zone digital tools.

Iriss

Create a Cultural Probe

What do you want to discover?

Draw some ideas

What creative activities can you include?

letter   camera   photos   journal

activity   collage   mapping   lists

game   drawing   voice recording

jokes   demands   stickers   diagrams

rules   currency   video   body scan

What resources will you need?

Iriss

Session plan

Session Number:

Session Focus:

Who will be there?

Who is taking on key roles?

Time	Activity and notes

Iriss

Exploring evaluation

What tools will the project use to record and measure impact?

How can you ensure learning from 'failure' is captured?

How can these be developed around practice rather than dictating or restricting it?

What reporting requirements are there in the project?

Who is responsible for these?

Iriss

Exploring evaluation

How can learning and evidence be used to sustain the work of the project?

Information about the impact of support on people's lives and their personal outcomes can often take the form of qualitative data. What are the experiences across the group of recording and using qualitative data?

How will this be used to inform service design and delivery?

What resources can you produce to share learning with others? E.g. case studies, reflective logs, stories, pictures, blog posts

Iriss

Project Planning Timeline

Using the timeline tool, visually map out what you will need to do, when, and what resources you will need to do it.

Start	What are the milestones and the steps between them?	What resources will you need?
DISCOVER research the subject		
DEFINE initial ideas		
DEVELOP and test ideas		
DELIVER the best ideas		
End		

Iriss