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Green Industrial Futures
Realised.

IDRIC Conference Workshop: Beyond Social Acceptance

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Imogen Rattle, Sarah Mander, Abigail Martin, Diarmaid Clery, Patrick Devine-Wright

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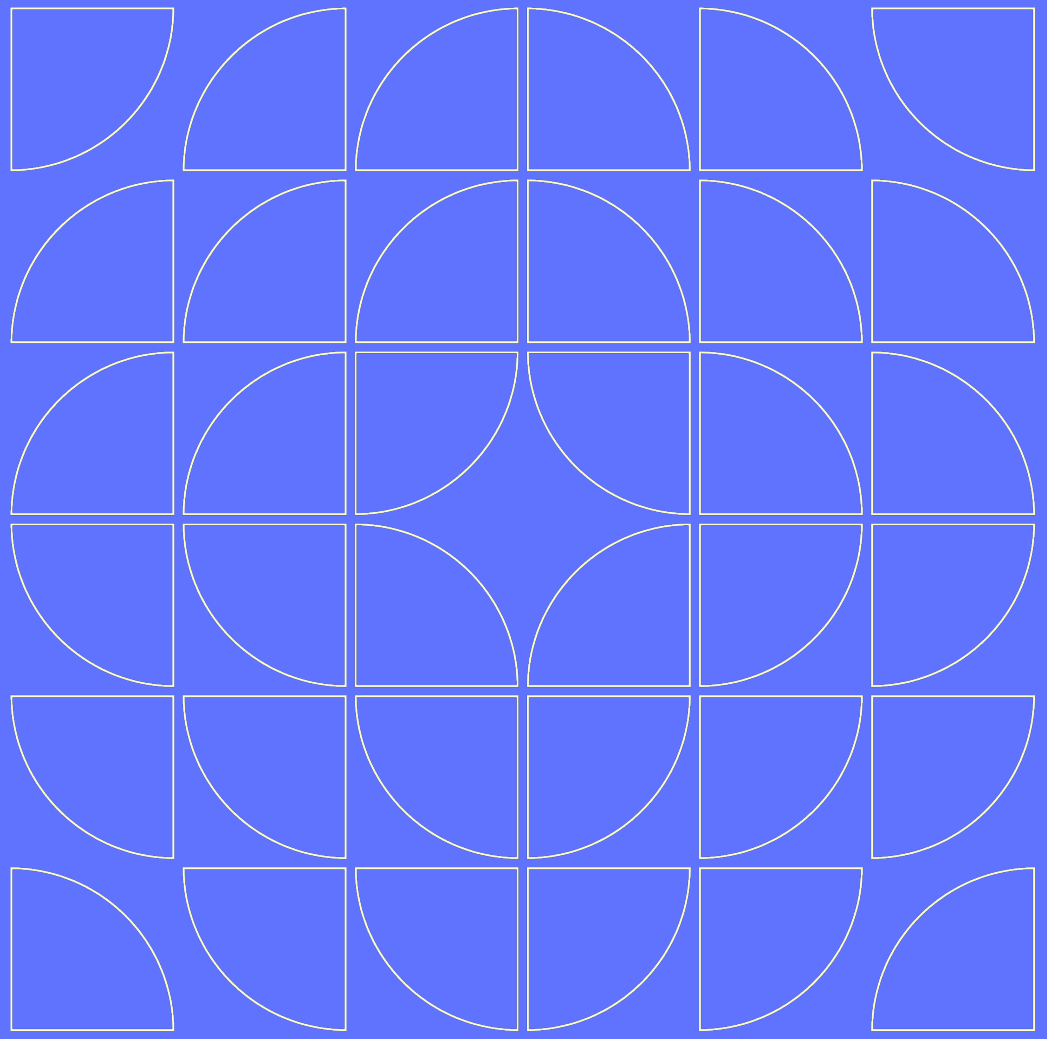


Delivering a Place-based, Just Transition in Industrial Clusters

An Impact Accelerator project with a 3 month duration: October – December 2023

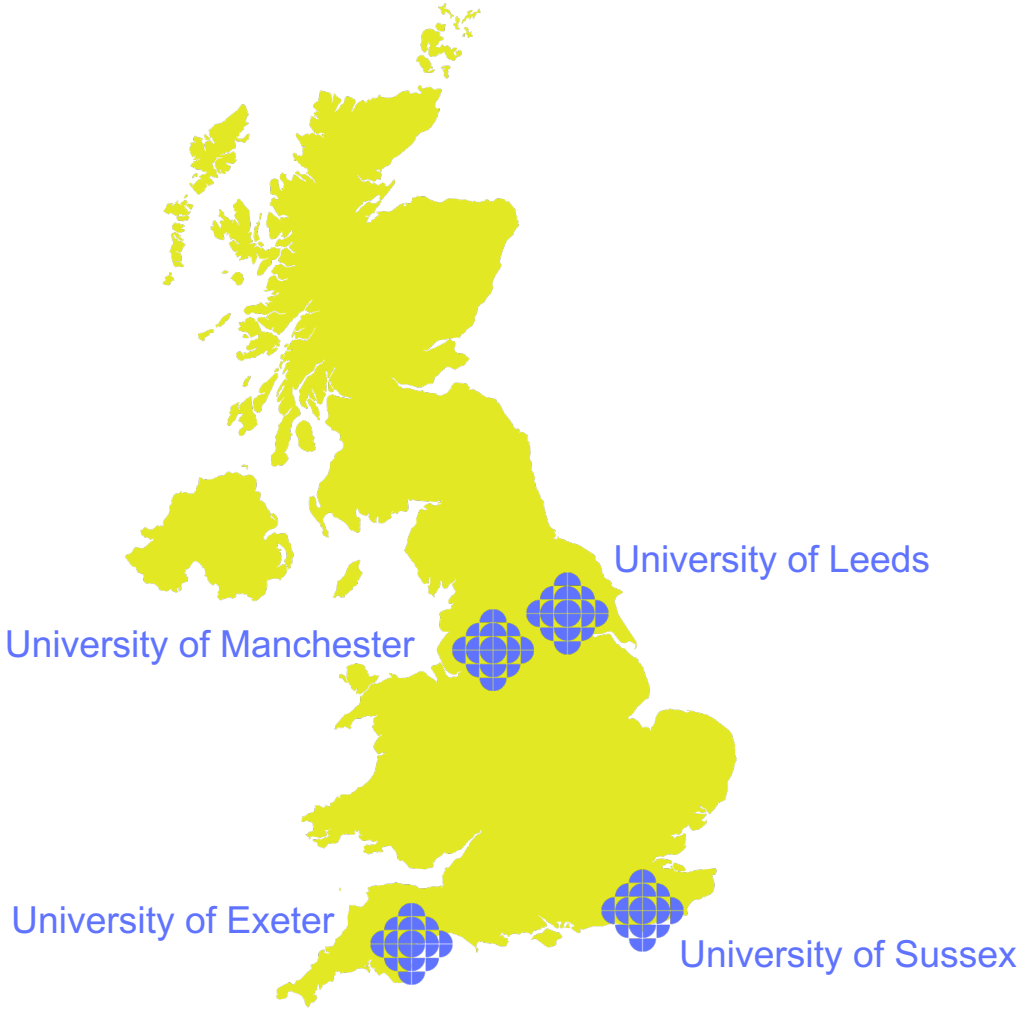
IDRIC (Industrial Decarbonisation Research and Innovation Centre)

- Funded by UKRI along with 6 industrial clusters
- > 80 research projects (until early 2024)

4 partner projects

- *MIP 3.4 Net Zero Sense of Place*
- *MIP 2.4 Just Transitions for Industrial Decarbonisation in the UK*
- *MIP 6.5 Protective Space and Social License to Operate Industrial Decarbonisation*
- *MIP 9.1 Learning from International Experiencing in Decarbonising Industrial Clusters*

❖ 9 researchers from 4 universities



About the project

- **3 key sites in Wales, England and Scotland**
- **7 non-academic partners**

- **Local**:

1) Grangemouth Future Industry Board
2) Cheshire West and Chester Council
3) Milford Haven Port Authority

- **National**:

1) Net Zero Industry Wales

- **Others**:

1) Zero Carbon Humber
2) IDRIC Academic Lead for the Humber Cluster
3) IDRIC Academic Lead for the Southampton Cluste

The Framework for Place-based, Just Net Zero Transitions

Imagining a place-base just transition

This framework seeks to provide actionable knowledge on the delivery of a place-based just transition in industrial clusters.

- **Place-based:** recognising that technology deployment is a place-making process and local, impacting host communities and shaping sense of place.
- **Just transition:** highlighting the interrelation between public support for ID projects and local concerns over socio-economic inequalities and environmental injustices experienced by current and future generations that are impacted by industrial activities.

Underlying principles

- Prioritising the need for a place-sensitive mindset in policymaking and cluster development that sees host communities, including any vulnerable groups, as stakeholder partners
- Identifying local demands/claims for environmental, social, and economic justice for current and future generations in host communities, concerning 3 interdependent justice dimensions (procedural, recognitional, distributional)

Framework overview

What is it for?

- To inform delivery of the double policy goals for sustainable industrial and local development.
- To facilitate place-sensitive, just approaches to ID
- To open up space for genuine community engagement in the ID process
- To ensure decarbonisation plans fit with the social, cultural and bio-physical context of the place
- To help empower host communities and workers build a thriving future & capture the benefits of ID
- To build trust between industry/government/community and more reciprocal relationships.

Who needs to take action?

- Who takes the lead varies in different contexts: an organisation that has local and expert knowledge, actively participates in decarbonising local industry, and has some responsibility to residents.
- **A collaborative processes**, involving combined efforts from industry, cluster developers, local authorities, host communities, and other relevant organisations.

7 key themes of the framework

Start: 1 premise theme

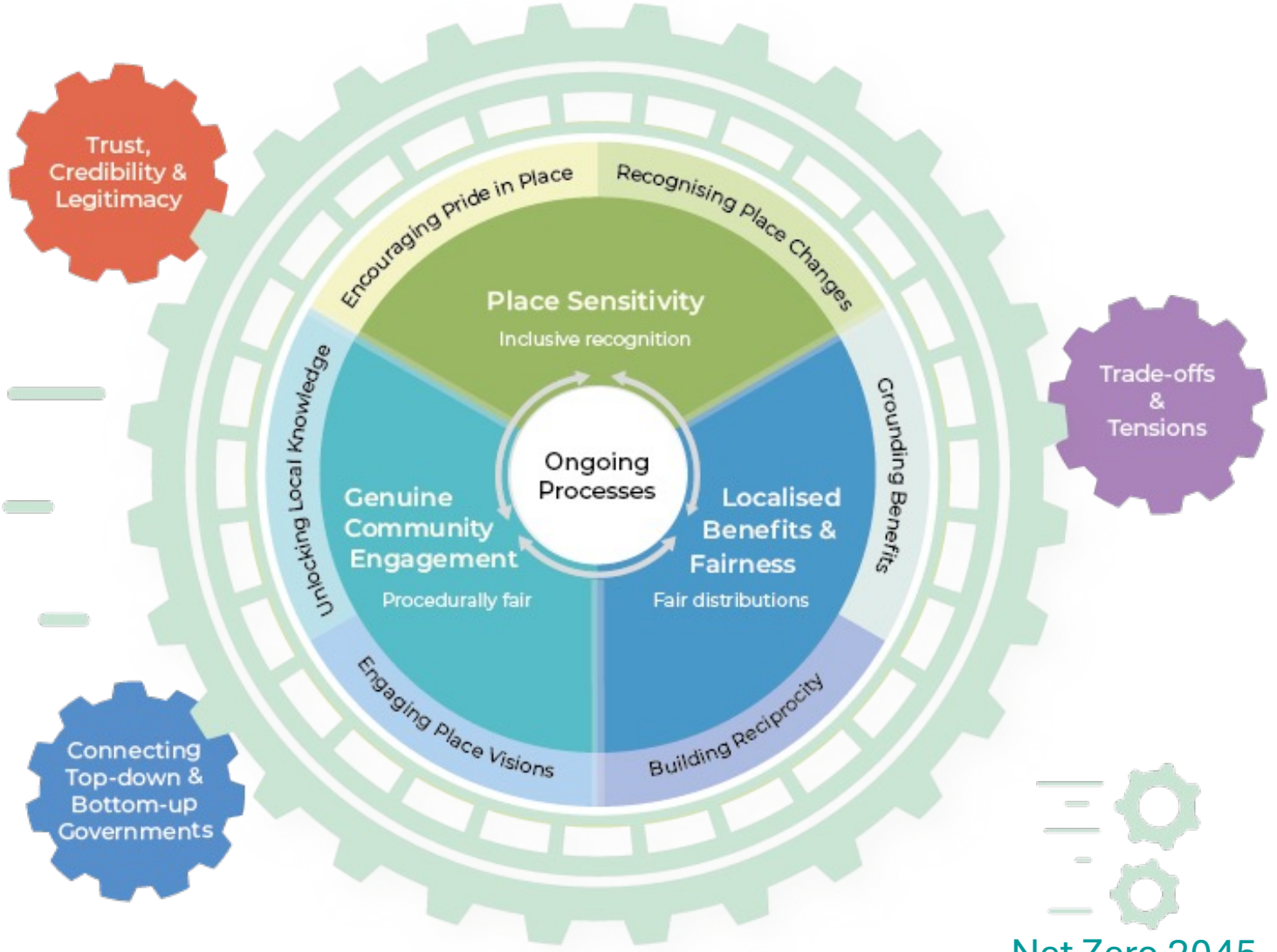
1. Ongoing processes

2. Core: 3 justice-related themes

3. Place sensitivity
4. Genuine community engagement
5. Tangible benefits & fairness

Context: 3 general themes

1. Trust, credibility, and Legitimacy
2. Connecting top-down & bottom-up governments
3. Trade-offs & tensions



Theme 1: Ongoing processes

Industrial clusters (ICs) are continuously unfolding over time and place.

Understanding that ID highlights how technology deployment is also an act of place-making that brings the needs and concerns of local communities and affected groups into view. The pursuit of justice as a process as well as an outcome of technology deployment.

Sub-themes:

- Evolution of IC
- Life cycle of IC
- Maintaining social license to operate for IC

Implication:

- Process-oriented thinking is necessary for every stage of policymaking and governance about ID.
- Taking community engagement as an ongoing process that needs to be conducted, maintained and adapted alongside the changes and different stages of the development ICs.

Theme 2: Place sensitivity

Deployment of ID technologies involves fitting into – and reshaping – the social and bio-physical environment of a place.

New and existing industry has impacts on people's emotional bonds and experiences with the place. These will influence their perceptions and reactions toward ID.

- Justice dimension: directly associated with **recognitional justice**, including recognising place-based culture, local histories, local communities' experiences with industry (including past/existing harms and risks).

- Place dimensions:

- **Engaging pride in place**: to recognise various sense of place among industry and community stakeholders (e.g. meanings and feelings that residents assigned to the place) and explore whether ID technologies can fit into and reshape existing sense of place.
- **Recognising place changes**: to recognise the social and material consequences of past and existing industrial activities in the place (both positive and negative, that shape the changing community-industry relationship), and how ID may unfold as a new wave of the ongoing place-making process.

Theme 3: Genuine community engagement

Community engagement is not one-way communication that focuses on messaging and educating residents.

Rather, it is to create opportunities and space for mutual learning among all stakeholders, where conflicts and differences between the parties can be respected and openly discussed as inspirations for innovative and collective solutions to challenges of ID.

- Justice dimension: directly associated with procedural justice, regarding the inclusion of the voices and knowledge of host communities, who should be taken as equal partners of industry/government stakeholders to enhance mutual connections and social learning.
- Place dimensions:

- **Unlocking place knowledge**: to value and integrate local knowledge about the social and natural environment into decarbonisation plans, and enable mutual social learning between stakeholders and different kinds of knowledge (e.g. place-based, scientific, expert).
- **Engaging place visions**: to draw on host communities' envisioned place futures (both ideal and feared) to inform cluster and place visioning across government levels.

Theme 4: Localised benefits & fairness

Specific measures are needed to translate ID's general benefits into tangible improvement in community wellbeing, especially in deprived areas.

A holist perspective is also required to consider the allocation of its costs across places.

- Justice dimension: directly associated with distributional justice, concerning a fair allocation of benefits and costs of ID that help address regional inequalities.
- Place dimensions:

- **Grounding benefits**: to localise the benefits of ID in ways that help address – or at least, not exacerbate – local concerns (industry-related and beyond) and support host communities to improve their quality of life.
- **Building reciprocity**: to reduce the perceived gap between what are taken from and given back by industry to host communities and place, whereby build a more reciprocal community-industry relationship.

Theme 5: Trust, credibility, and legitimacy

Trust is vital for public acceptance and support for the cluster approach and selected technologies.

This involves demonstrating to the public the legitimacy as well as the technical and economic credibility of these proposed solutions and visions. Moreover, host communities' levels of trust in ID proposals and claimed benefits are influenced by past and existing relationships with industry and need to be maintained constantly.

- Sub-themes: On cluster approach & technologies, Trusted intermediaries, Expectation management and delivery.
- Suggestions:

- Need to understand the level of trust that host communities hold for industry and ID projects and address the factors and concerns behind it.
- Need to clarify risks and benefits of innovative technologies to appear credible and build legitimacy.
- Need to identify factors that influence trust in policy- and decision-making beyond the local levels, and to allow space for local voices to engage with or feedback on these processes and outcomes.

Theme 6: Connecting top-down & bottom-up governments

Each IC requires an innovative and flexible governance structure that accommodates the existing political structure and resources in the place.

A multi-level perspective is needed for a collaborative governance process, which recognises that ID activities at the local level can inform and are influenced by decision-making at the national level as well as being conditioned by international factors (e.g. international supply chains).

- Sub-themes: Accountability & ownership, Financing & resources, Political structure- changes and differences between nations, Party politics and policy uncertainty.

- Suggestions:

- Require a national government framework that gives space to local government to have agency in ID.
- Governance of ID need to be transparent about who is responsible for which part of the process, the mechanisms and resources available, and the challenges they face. It is also important to explore how government organisations across levels, industry, and communities can work collectively to enable an effective multi-level governance of ID.
- Must be flexible and adaptive over time across scales from local to national, as the governance of ICs/ID is an ongoing process that must be responsive to public concerns to maintain public support.

Theme 7: Trade-offs & tensions

ID process is accompanied by various trade-offs and tensions resulting from the competition between different priorities, interests, and worldviews.

The point is not to build consensus among all stakeholders, but to recognise and respect their differences and to take the diversity as a strength (e.g. an opportunity for mutual understanding, social learning, and creative solution making) to make ID more resilient and inclusive.

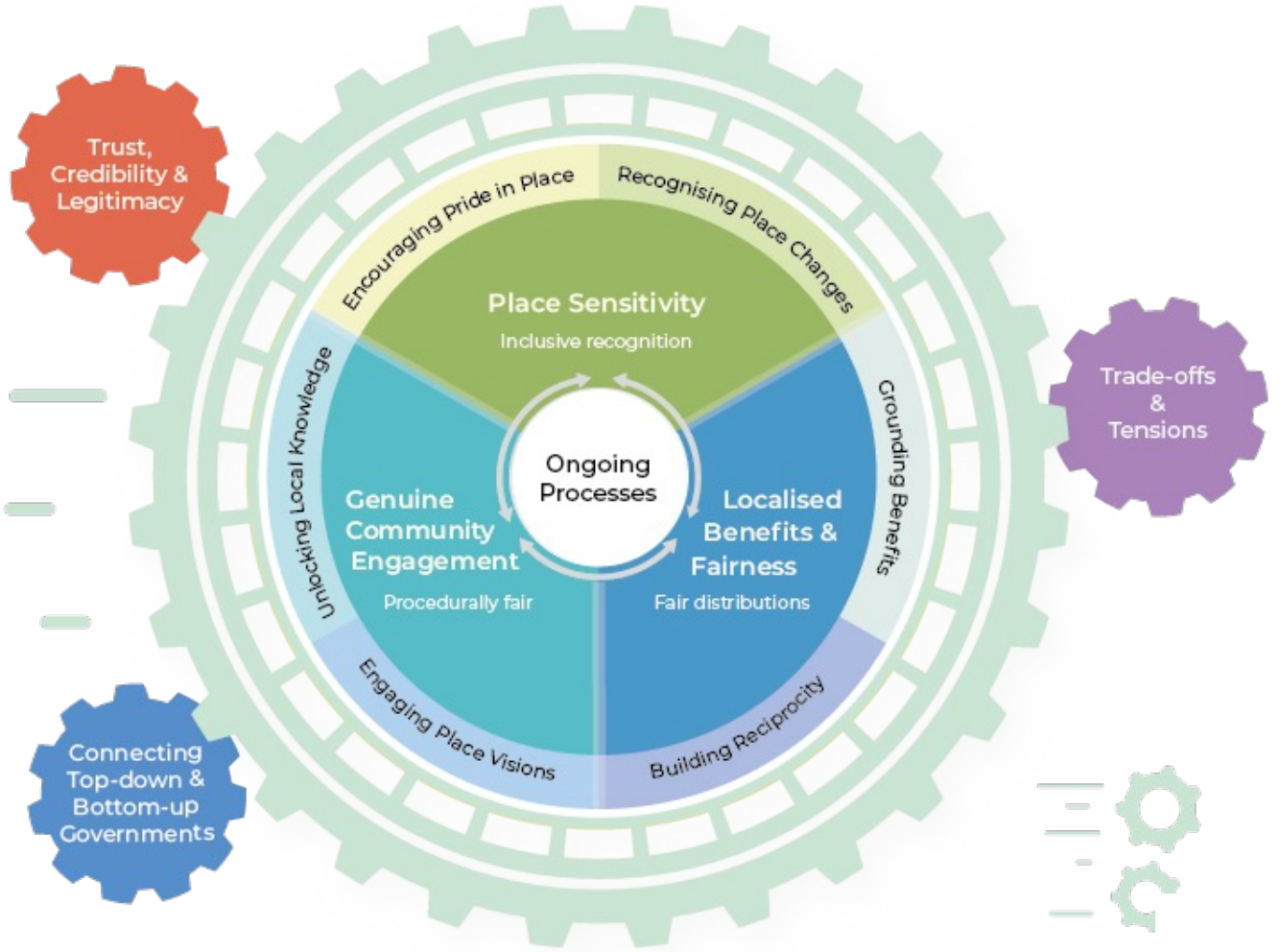
- Sub-themes: Acceleration vs. inclusivity, Navigating trade-offs between justice and other notions of equity & inclusivity, Priority conflicts between actors/sectors and across scales, Competition vs. collaboration.
- Suggestions:

- Need to identify the potential trade-offs and tensions in different dimensions and those between/within different sectors and groups of stakeholders.
- Need to attend to the power relations between them (e.g. policy objectives of central government, regional goals, and host communities' place visions) so that the needs of the vulnerable and marginalised will not be sacrificed and their concerns will not be overlooked in the process of ID.

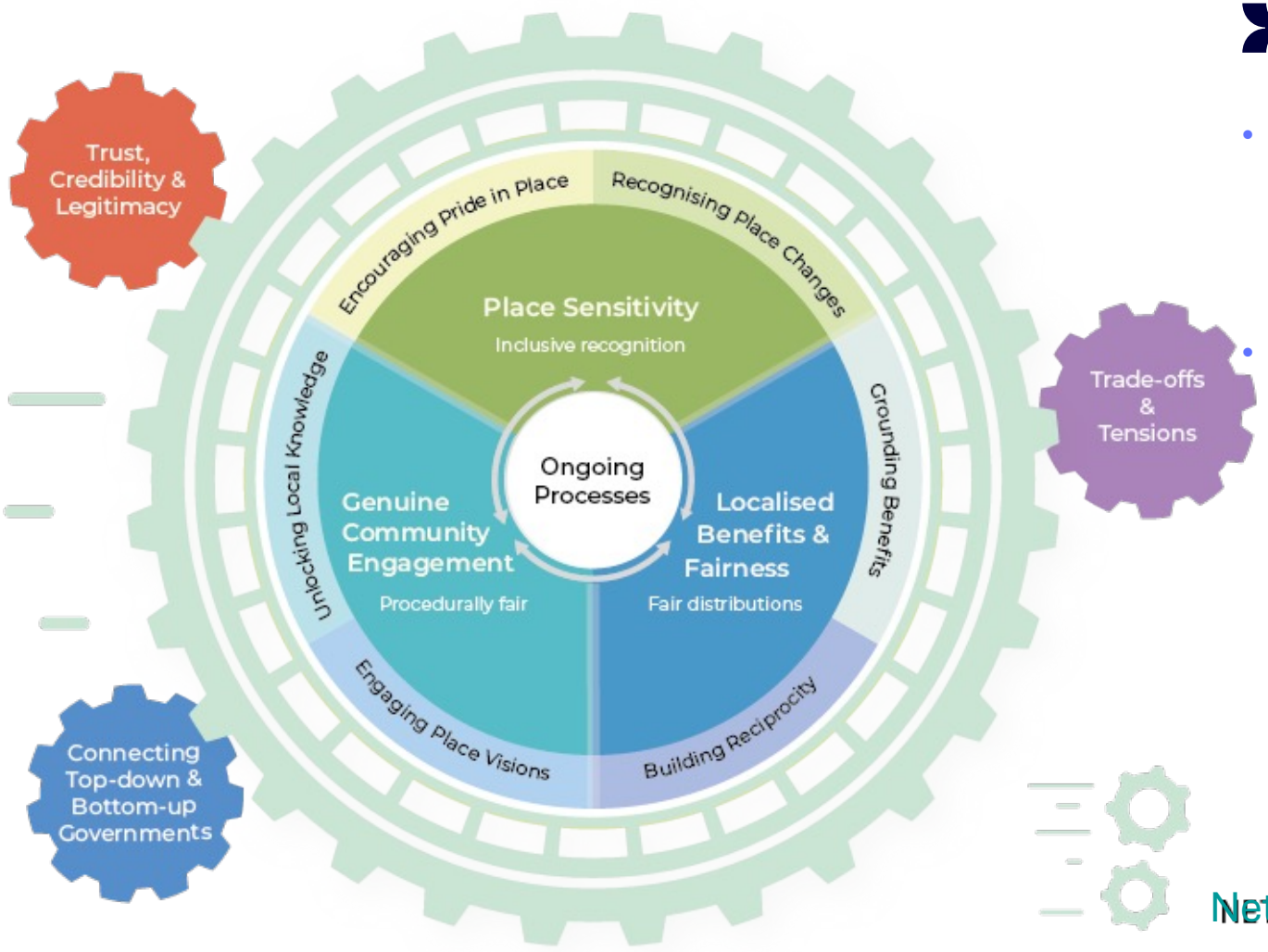
Small group discussion prompts

1/3. Identifying organisational leaders for implementing the PBJT framework

- Who has the capacity (i.e. resources, credibility, trust, legitimacy) to deliver practical steps to implement this framework on the ground?
- Who could best steward the concerted actions required to join local actions with national policy & regulation?



Small group discussion prompts



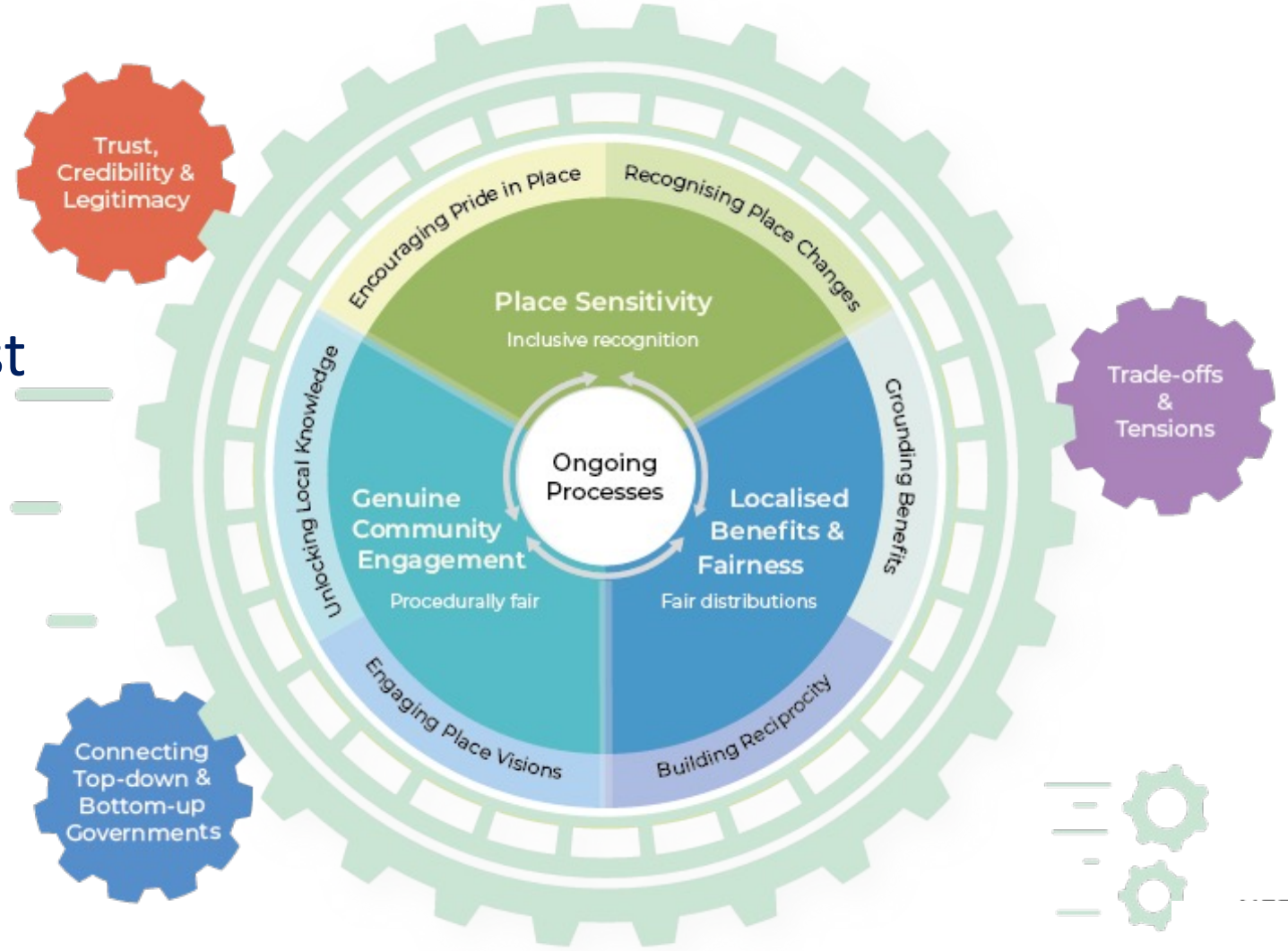
2/3. Managing trade-offs & tensions

- How should the framework balance the different views & objectives of residents, workers, and firms in a particular cluster?
- How should the framework balance the need for more robust engagement to achieve place-based just transitions, with the need for rapid deployment timescales to achieve Net Zero?

Small group discussion prompts

3/3: Roles of IDRIC Researchers & Partners

- What is the role of industry in just transitions & place-making via industrial decarbonisation?
- How can researchers contribute actionable knowledge to support action(s) in a particular area identified by the framework?



6 key recommendations to government and industry

1) Start from the perspective of places and host communities where technology deployment is planned.
2) Provide integrated, responsive, and accessible information.
3) Support diverse forms of public participation in formulating net zero narratives, plans, and policies.
4) Take an evidence-based approach to community engagement.
5) Deliver positive impacts for the wellbeing of host communities and workers.
6) Rebuild trust.

Any comments or feedback?

- All these themes need to be taken as interlinked elements and to be considered continuously alongside the ID process
- 3 justice-related core themes: can be seen as steps that need to be taken to deliver a place-based just transition.
- 3 general themes: can be seen as set the stage, linked to the broader social, economic, and political contexts that could affect the result of ID, and represents a type of challenge, which, when properly addressed, can become a strength, and facilitates the delivery of a place-based just transition
- To find out further info about the project:
- IA 3.1: Delivering a place-based just transition in industrial clusters | IDRIC
- Email: p.g.devine-wright@exeter.ac.uk