Transformation at the crossroads

Creating spaces for transformations in research and practice
Trans-disciplinary research

- **Purposive** – positive change within a wicked situation is an explicit goal
- **Holistic** – engages with past, present and future of whole systems, transgresses disciplinary and governance boundaries
- **Participatory**, multi-stakeholder – integrates diverse perspectives (beyond academia), sees more of the whole picture, encourages ownership of and equitable benefit from responses
- **Innovative and experimental** – tests ideas through real-world interventions and action
- **Dynamic** – the research plan adapts to the changing context and new knowledge
Key points

• Crossing disciplinary and sectoral boundaries is crucial for transformative research and practice but can be challenging and disorienting for those involved

• We have found that the conscious design of “crossroads” where scholars and practitioners can come together is crucial for transformative practice

• A crossroads is a space where individual learning journeys intersect and there is an opportunity for collective learning to take place
Learning journeys and crossroads

- **Research Project**
- **Writing Project**
- **Kitchen Conversations**
- **Retreat**

**TIME**

- **R1**
- **R2**
- **R3**

- **Formal initiatives**
- **Informal initiatives**

UTS
Example: Annual retreat

• Annual off-campus event to build our community of scholars and pursue collective learning
• Community of practice
• Cultivates ‘Aha! Moments’ – new insights or conceptual innovations that land through dialogue and being in community
• Source of energy for returning to individual learning journeys
Example: Collaborative housing

• Shaping crossroads that invite participation to an extent that participants are comfortable with

• While full collaboration of all stakeholders in research is an ideal, the practice is often limited by willingness to commit time

• A nested participation structure can accommodate different degrees of willingness to commit time

• Expanding crossroads
Discussion

Does the ‘crossroads’ metaphor help you to think about design of transformative research spaces? What are your own crossroads?