

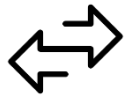
The access and participation landscape

Data, evaluation and evidence

Eliza Kozman (Deputy Director, Research)

January 2020

Who we are



Independent hub for higher education professionals to access research, toolkits, evaluation techniques and more to help widen participation and improve equality within the sector.



Set up by a consortium of King's College London, Nottingham Trent University and the Behavioural Insights Team.



An affiliate What Works Centre, and part of the UK Government's What Works Movement.



Funded by the Office for Students from 2019 to 2022.

Our vision and mission

Our vision is to eliminate equality gaps in higher education within 20 years.

Our mission is to improve lives through evidence-based practice in higher education.



Our model

Consortium

- King's College London
- Nottingham Trent University
- Behavioural Insights Team (BIT)

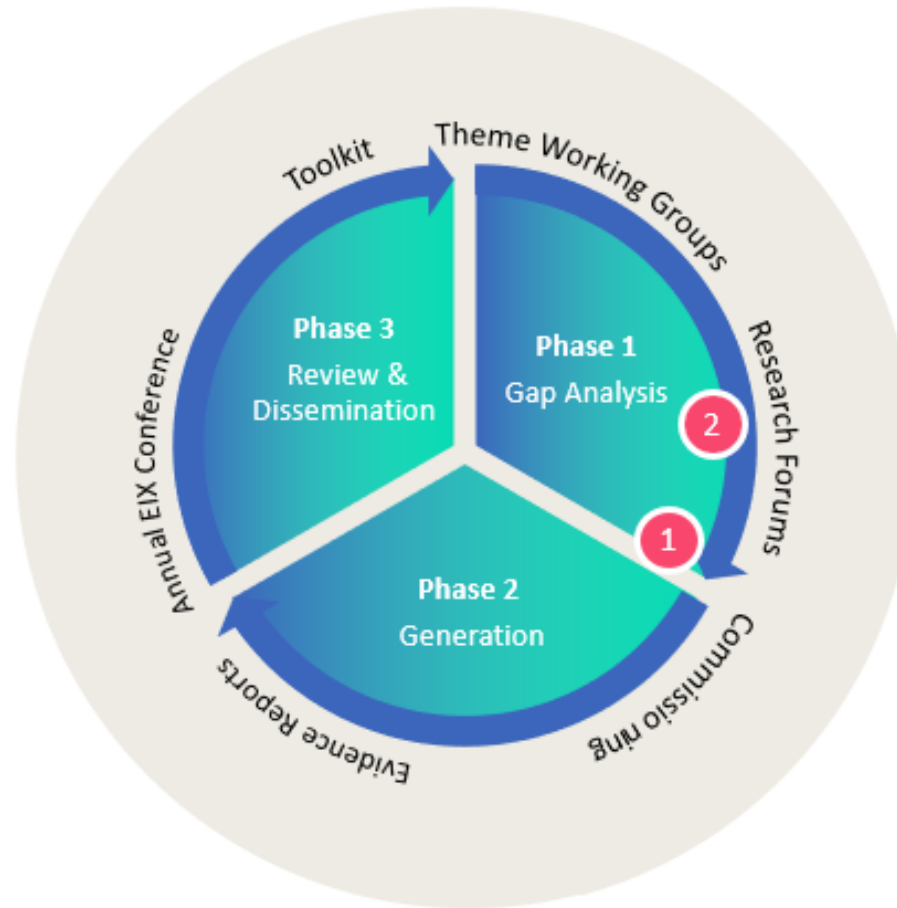
Partners

- Education Policy Institute (EPI)
- Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT)
- Coventry University
- The Bridge Group

Advisory groups

- Theme Working Groups
- Academic Advisory Group
- Evaluation Advisory Group
- Sector Network

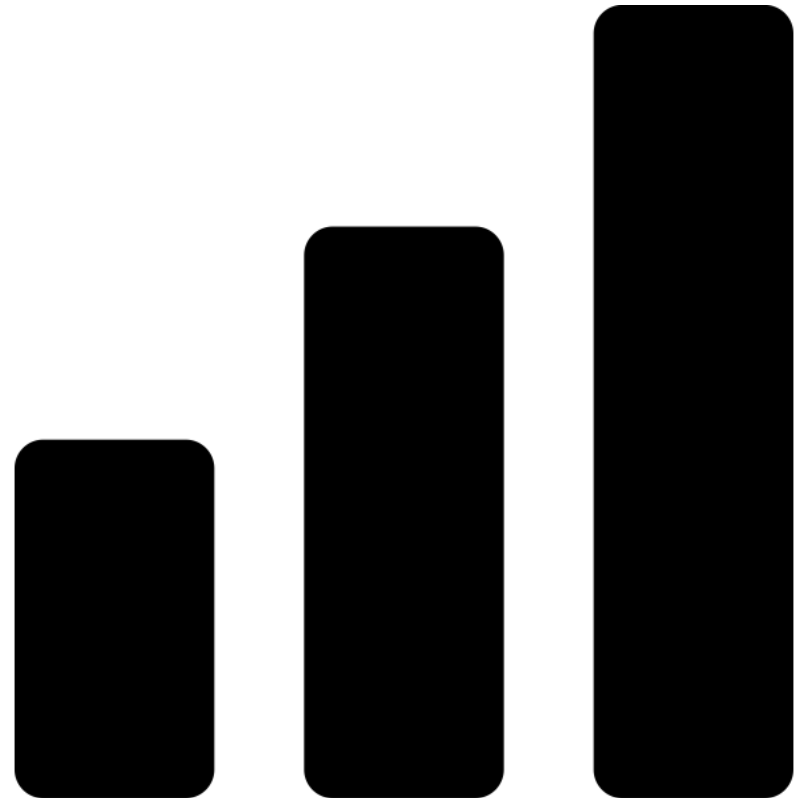
Our evidence cycle



Phase 1: Gaps Analysis

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- What do (and don't) we know?
- Where are the gaps in the evidence?



HEAT data analysis

- Link between outreach participation and:
 - Participation in outreach and **KS4 Attainment**
 - Participation in outreach and **HE Progression**
 - Participation in outreach and **progression to high, medium and low tariff HEIs**

HEAT data analysis – taster of results

- More **intensive outreach** correlates with higher attainment.
- Participation in **summer schools** is correlated with higher attainment.
- Analysis of participation in **mentoring schemes** has mixed results.

EPI evidence review

Student financial support

- High-cost intervention with a small but positive effect on enrolment.
- Most existing studies measuring its impact have been conducted outside of the UK.

Mentoring and counselling support

- Positively associated with young people's aspirations and understanding.
- Little evidence of impact on enrolment.

IAG

- Low-cost but has limited effect.
- Best when tailored to the individual needs of students, starting early in the student life cycle, and as part of existing careers advice.

EPI evidence review

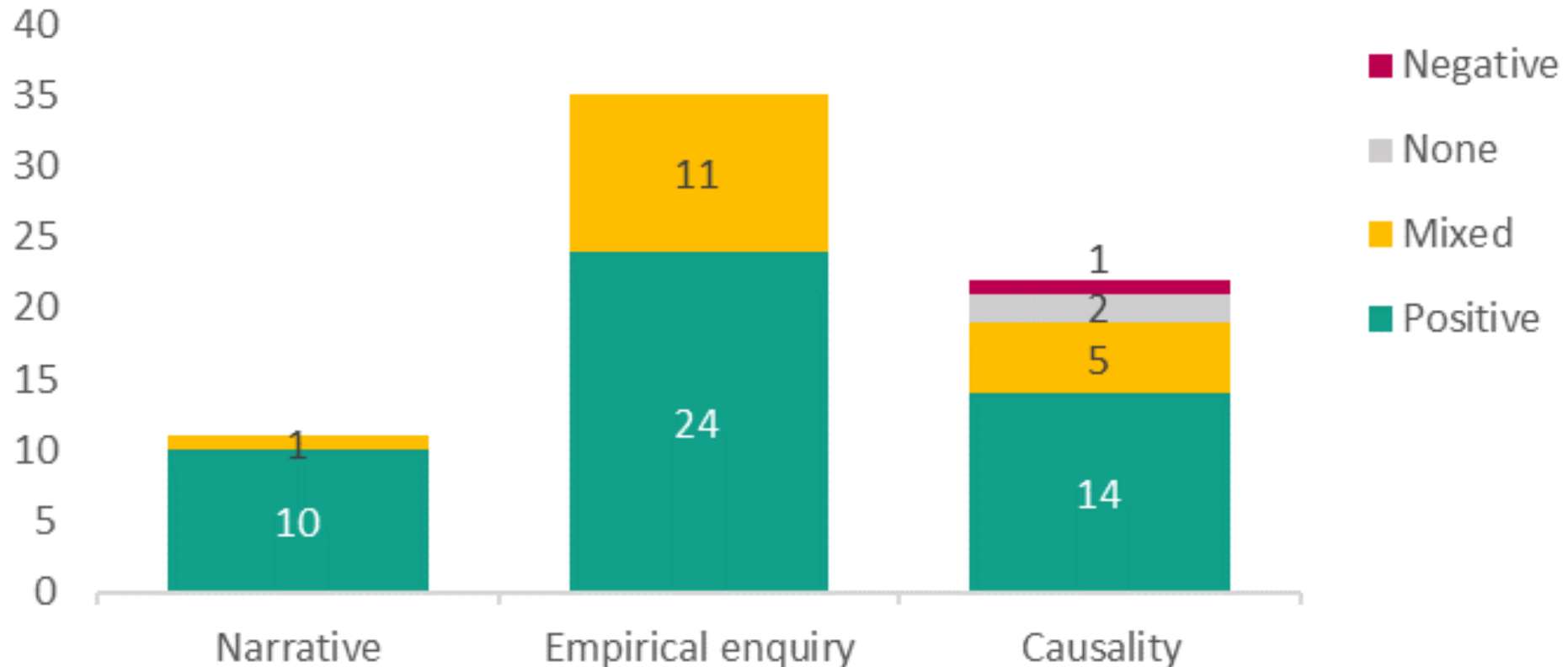
Summer schools

- High-cost associated with improved student aspirations and enrolment.
- Limited evidence of causality: it is possible that other factors may be leading to improved outcomes, beyond the summer schools.

Multi-intervention outreach

- Most evaluated intervention.
- Considerable impact on student aspirations, and some increases in other outcomes.
- Difficult to disentangle the individual components of these programmes.

Evidence types in the review



What does the data tell us?

- Not enough causal evidence.
- **Type 2** not **Type 3** evidence (cannot control for selection bias - e.g. student motivation - with aggregate tracking set but may be able to with local analysis).
- Often focuses on ‘aspirations’ or attitudes, not enrolment.



	Description
Type 1: Narrative	The evaluation provides a narrative and a coherent theory of change to motivate its selection of outreach activities in the context of a coherent outreach strategy
Type 2: Empirical Research	The evaluation collects data on outcomes and impact and reports evidence that those receiving an intervention have better results, though this does not establish any direct causal effect
Type 3: Causality	The evaluation methodology provides evidence of a causal effect of an intervention

Phase 2: Generation

Phase 2: Funding round (open now)

Summer schools

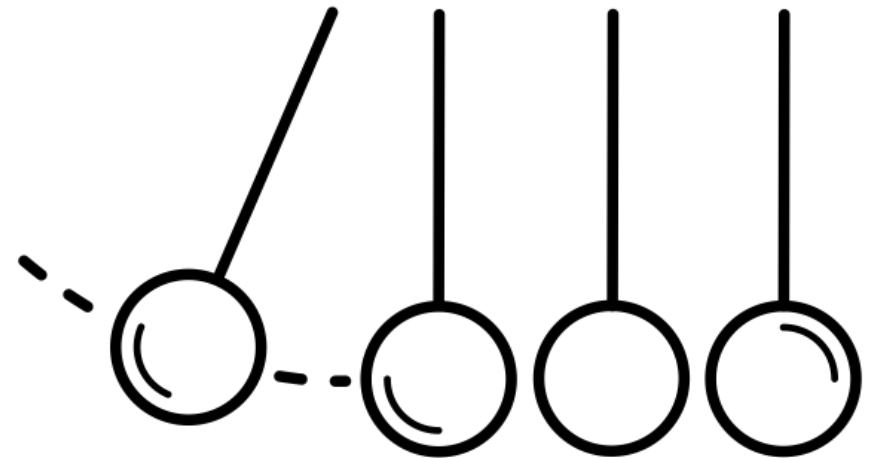
- Pre- and post-16
- Randomised evaluation

Multi-intervention outreach and mentoring

- Feasibility evaluation
- Work with us to determine the best way of evaluating these activities

What will this data tell us?

- Whether there is a causal impact of WP activities.
- In other words, whether the activities under consideration are having the impact we expect.



Phase 3: Review and Dissemination

Tools to help interpret data and evidence



TASO Transforming Access
and Student Outcomes
in Higher Education

Summer school

Summer schools are a commonly used activity for widening participation in UK higher education. They aim to demystify elite universities and to equip students with the knowledge and insight to make high quality applications to prestigious universities.

In summary

- We have more and better data than ever before.
- Different data tells us different things – much existing analysis is correlational.
- TASO will aim to help the sector produce more causal evidence which tracks to short- and long-term outcomes.
- Our work covers both access and success.
- We would value your input – join our Sector Network!

Thank you

Eliza.Kozman@kcl.ac.uk
www.taso-he.org