Postdigital inclusion partnerships:

reimagining HE community engagement through cross-sector dialogue and collective publications
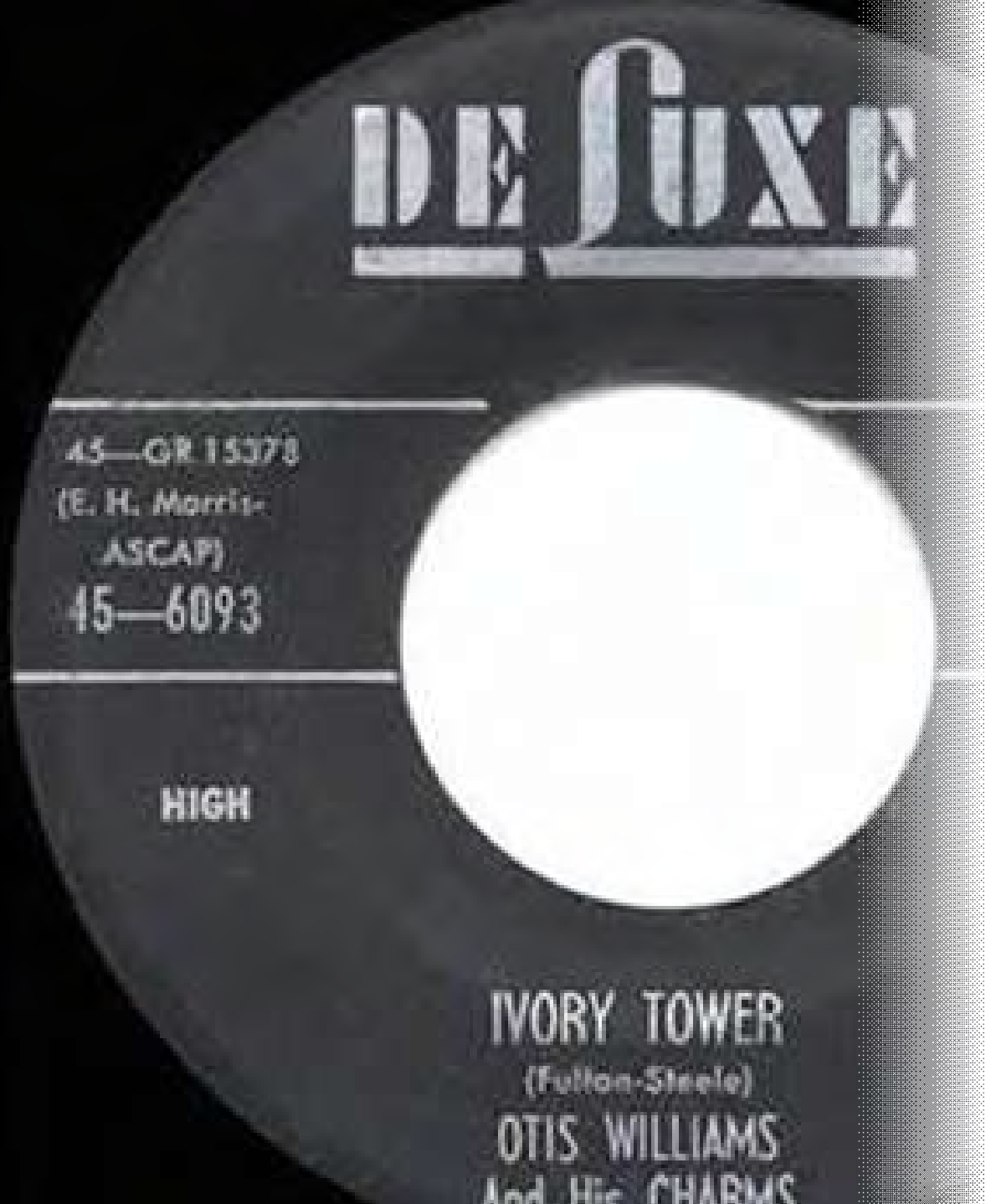
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CENTRE FOR GLOBAL HIGHER EDUCATION

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Changing the knowledge exchange (KE) record in Higher Education (HE)

- In HE an expectation that academics build KE partnerships risks becoming research *on* community partners rather than *with* them

- This may be an old record…but a notion of universities as 'ivory towers' remains the perception from outside, if research partnerships are not reciprocal

- Problem of language – referring to 'non-academic partners'….

A little background music....

1) The EPSRC funded 'Data and Disadvantage' Project (2020/21) was 1 of 2 Human Data Interaction Network Plus projects with global and local cross-sector partners

Human Data Interaction asks:
- How much Agency do each of us have concerning data?
- How Legible are our interactions with data?
- How Negotiable are our interactions with data?
- Should we, or can we, resist some data interactions?

Our first event : a dialogue with, charities, businesses, councils and educators on the challenges of regional skills plans for digital inclusion that also empower data decisions for individuals

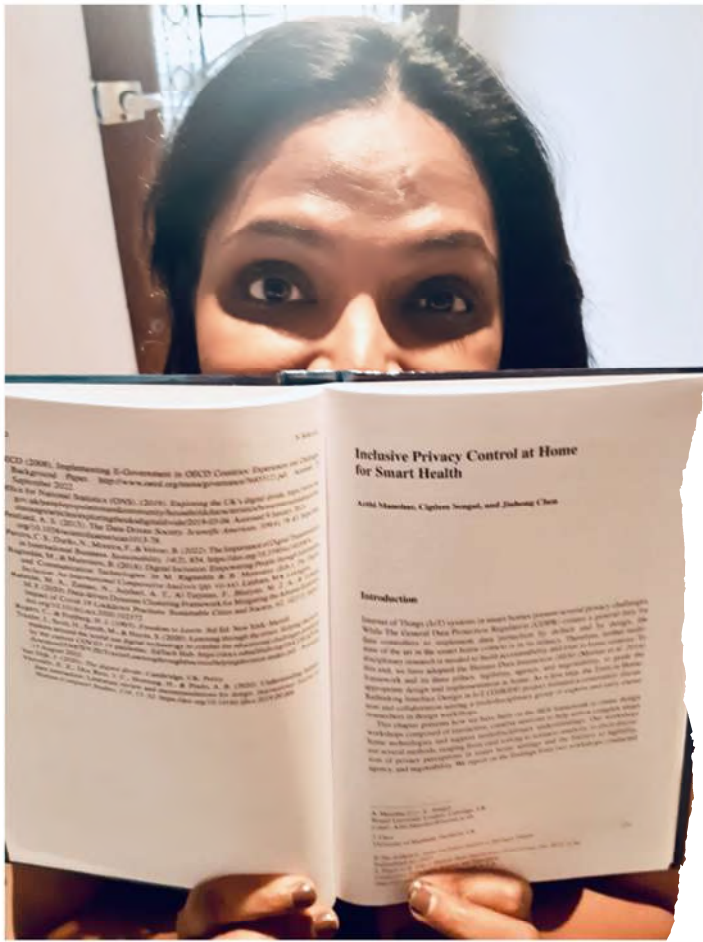Our second event: a What-if Situation Room explored lessons beyond Covid-19

A policy briefing was generated from these (entirely online) events

Taking 'the music' from the first project into the second...to develop our 'playlist'

2) The EPSRC funded 'Extending Human Data Interaction Theory' Project built on our cross-sector networks from the 'Data and Disadvantage' project, to develop and co-write a Springer book:

Human Data Interaction, Disadvantage and Skills in the Community: Enabling Cross-Sector Environments For Postdigital Inclusion

Further Links:
A showcase of these 2 HDI projects

Connecting Cross-sector Community Voices: Data, Disadvantage, and Postdigital Inclusion (Hayes, Connor, Johnson & Jopling, 2021)

Here are some of the 15 contributions to the final 'soundtrack'

100% Digitally Included Wolverhampton Julie Bentley, Wolverhampton Council

Inclusive Privacy Control in Smart Homes Arthi Manohar, Cigdem Sengul and Jiahong Chen

Digital Inclusion Towards e-Governance Nadia Refat, Mohammad Patwary, & MD Arafatur Rahman

Using Smart Glasses in Further Education Debbie Grace, Anne Scrimshaw & Ben Haddock

Primary School Reading Diaries and Digital Trespass Karl Royle & Gavin Hawkins, Squirrel Learning

The Ethics of the Personal Digital Twin Alex Cole, Tin Smart Social

The Datafication of our Youngest Children, David Meechan, University of Wolverhampton

Human Data Interactions in Digital Modes of Eye Care, Nikolay Boychev, Katrina Schmid & Sven Jonuscheit

Digital Exclusion and the Data Creation Gap: Uche Ogwude, Aston University

'Something Important is going on with data' Caroline Kuhn & Juliana Elisa Raffaghelli

Access equality for Children and young people Melanie Wilson, Nottingham University

Postdigital Science and Education

Sarah Hayes · Michael Jopling · Stuart Connor · Matthew Johnson *Editors*

Human Data Interaction, Disadvantage and Skills in the Community

Enabling Cross-Sector Environments for Postdigital Inclusion

The book provides a dynamic, cross-sectional, multidisciplinary perspective and dialogue to illuminate the challenges humans face in their interactions with data in their individual postdigital contexts in local communities. It offers unique insights from real cases, collaborations, and projects to extend existing academic theories and frameworks, applied to human data interactions, disadvantage, and digital skills. The book takes the novel approach of establishing co-authorship between cross-sector practitioners from the wider community (such as local authorities, councils, policy makers, small businesses, charities, education and skills providers, and other stakeholders) with international academics and researchers who write about humans, digital skills, and data. This develops an enabling cross-sector environment throughout the book that not only furthers broader understandings concerning data, disadvantage and digital skills in postdigital society, but also shares a template to support others who may wish to adopt this approach to co-authorship and knowledge exchange.

The book revisits the Human Data Interaction (HDI) framework (Mortier, Haddadi, Henderson, McAuley, and Crowcroft 2014) through many diverse cross-sectoral perspectives. These are co-authored under the HDI framework's key tenets of: agency, legibility, negotiability and resistance. These tenets form the main sections of the book, with chapters examining these concepts through both interdisciplinary academic literature and cross-sector dialogue with individuals and agencies from the wider community who work with diverse and often disadvantaged groups.

ISBN 978-3-031-31874-0

▶ springer.com

Postdigital Science and Education

Sarah Hayes
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Stuart Connor
Matthew Johnson *Editors*

Human Data Interaction, Disadvantage and Skills in the Community

Enabling Cross-Sector Environments for Postdigital Inclusion

Springer

Springer   springer.com

Process

Demystified to encourage a range of community perspectives: theory + practice
Limits of control (maintaining and abandoning)

Highly iterative:

- open invitation to this dialogue participants to submit chapter idea

- tailored support & feedback

- review/revision & integration into/application of extended HDI framework

- more feedback and revisions/remixes

For more on this process see:
Hayes, S., Jopling, M., Connor, S., Johnson, M., & Riordan, S. (2024). 'Making you Aware of your Own Breathing': Human Data Interaction, Disadvantage and Skills in the Community. *Postdigital Science and Education*. https://doi.org/10.1007/s42438-023-00446-0.

Mixtape

Views were presented, questioned, edited, reviewed, remixed, and refined.

"A greatest hits LP consisting entirely of new songs" (Alwakeel, 2022)
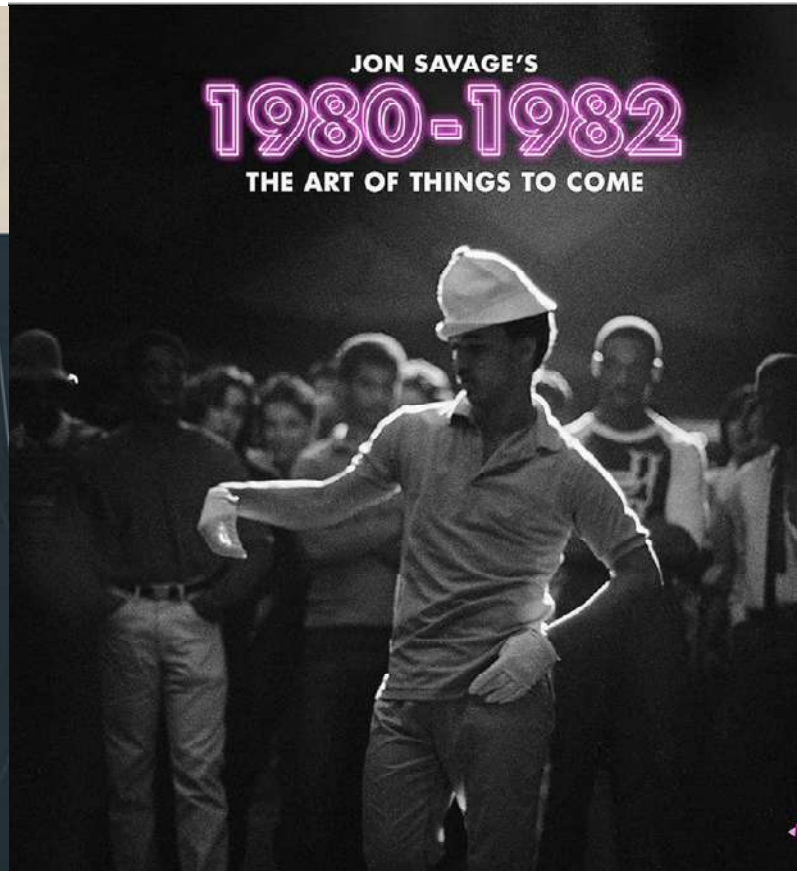
Would we do it again? (a few lessons learned)

Supporting colleagues not used to writing requires more and different kinds of support.

Flexibility to work differently with different authors, a lot of hidden labour…

- Writers external to academia are *less* precious about support than we expected.
- Writers in academia can be *more* precious about support than might be expected.
- Consider offering an additional support layer to all writers before writing the collective book/paper.
  - Like studio rehearsals, build in peer support (alongside peer review).

- Bands form, and re-form, cross-collaborations that mix it up
- Academic networks evolve too with global, cross-sector and interdisciplinary partners
- Opportunities to connect writing together across:
  - HE, FE, schools, disciplines, countries, businesses community groups, policy makers

Next slide, next steps:

taking academic collective writing projects into new compilations

Petar Jandrić
Xudong Zhu *Editors*

Knowledge Socialism

The Rise of Peer Production:
Collegiality, Collaboration, and Collective Intelligence

Without actually meaning to ☺....our approach connects with a Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF) metric:

The **'co-authorship with non-academic partners'** category.

See David Kernohan's KEF23 interactive metrics table on WonkHE

- But this raises further questions on how KEF data is collected/what data means to each of us (see Forum on Information and Democracy

- Our approach developed organically with our cross-sector partners

- **At no point did we see them as 'non-academic' partners**

Which leads us to discuss our current international cross-sector project: *Postdigital Citizen Science & Humanities*

Petar Jandrić, Zagreb University of Applied Sciences, Croatia

Sarah Hayes, Bath Spa University

Cheryl Brown, University of Canterbury, New Zealand,

Michael Jopling, University of Brighton

Sara Tolbert, University of Canterbury, NZ

What do we understand about the roles of **citizen researchers** across the globe?

Few of society's modern, hybrid, **'postdigital' challenges** sit neatly under one discipline or sector…

So researchers pictured here explored dialogue with citizen scientists *and* those in citizen/digital humanities

Which still seem to operate as separate fields of research in postdigital society

Language and labels can be divisive, so we wondered how citizen researchers identify their own roles?

How did this collaboration begin?

- We published a collective paper to get a sense of the field:

[Postdigital Citizen Science: Mapping the Field](#)

Jandrić, P., Tolbert, S., Hayes, S. & Jopling, M. (2023)

We asked:

- *What is postdigital citizen science?*
- *Who (or what!) is the postdigital citizen scientist?*
- *How to conduct postdigital citizen science?*
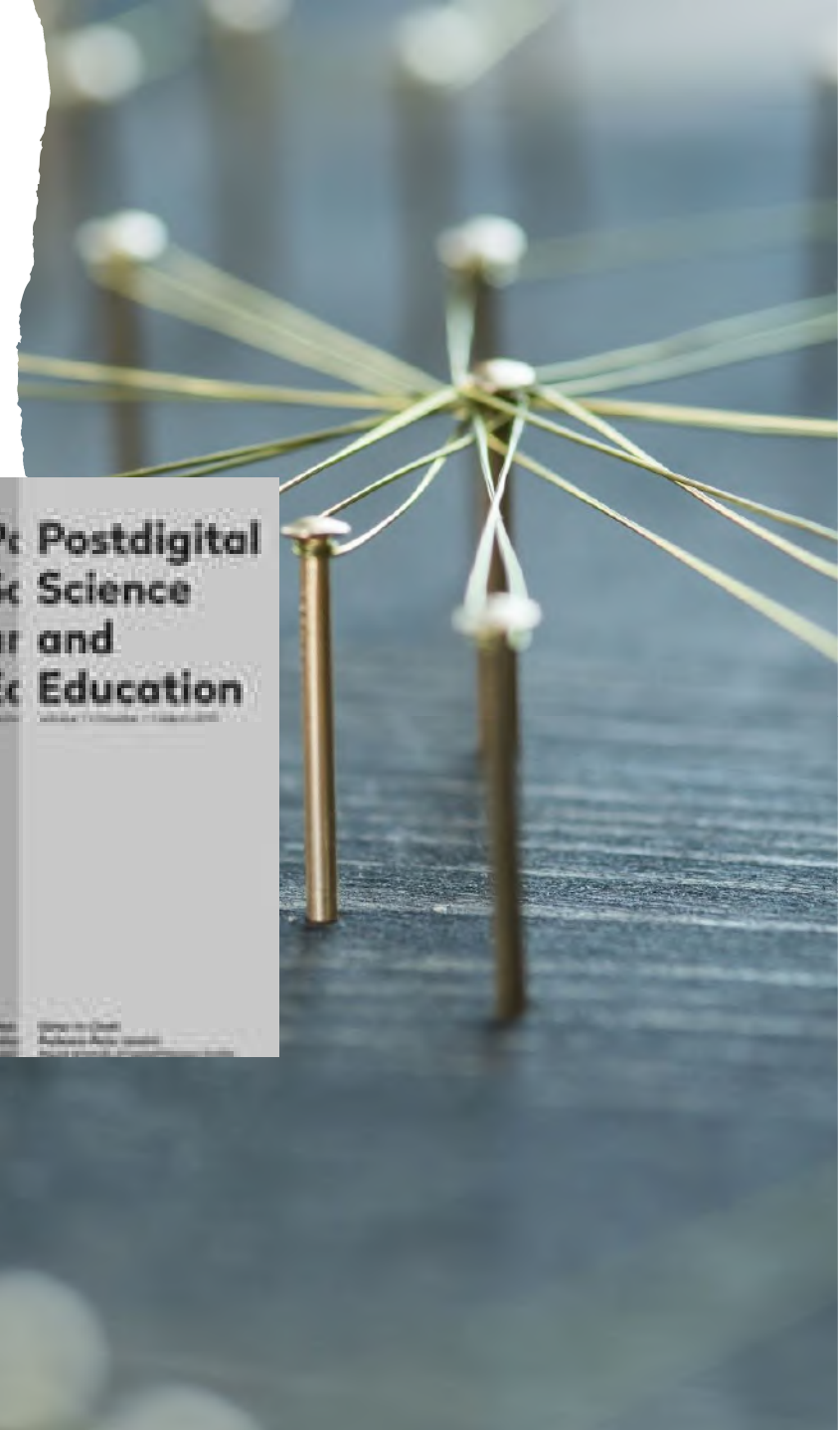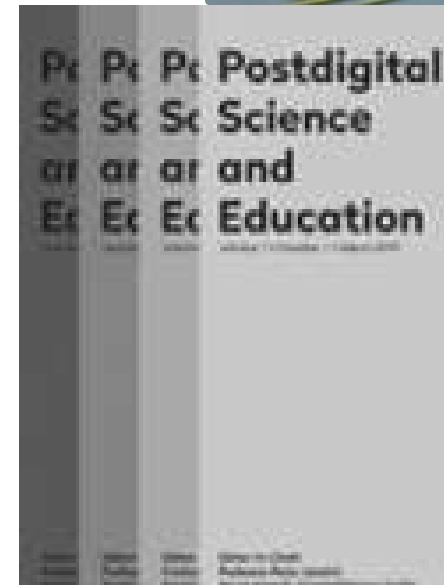
We then wrote collectively with 19 international authors to provide a multiple lens:

Postdigital Citizen Science and Humanities: A Theoretical Kaleidoscope (2024) (Open Access)

- Michael Jopling; Georgina Tuari Stewart; Shane Orchard; Juha Suoranta; Sara Tolbert; Laurène Cheilan; Fei Yan; Catherine Price; Sarah Hayes; Howard Scott; Annabel Latham; Ibrar Bhatt; Vyacheslav Dodonov; Adam Matthews; Rami Muhtaseb; Sarah Earle; Linda La Velle; Ben Simmons and Zoe Clarke; Alison MacKenzie and Mohamed Owaineh; Benjamin Green.

- This collective article presents a theoretical kaleidoscope to examine and critique citizen science and humanities in postdigital contexts and from postdigital perspectives.

- 19 short theoretical and experiential contributions include perspectives on: Indigenous and local knowledge, technology, and children and young people as citizen researchers.

- Both postdigital and citizen research are founded on and committed to collaboration, dialogue and co-creation, as well as challenging the approaches of traditional academic research.

We suggest that **postdigital transformations in contemporary societies are both changing citizen science and humanities and making it more important**.
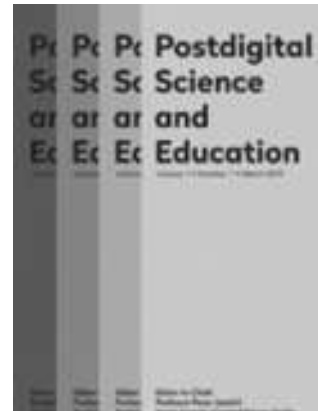
...so to better understand Citizen Research we ran a pilot study with a very diverse group in the stunning city of Zagreb!

- a photography theorist and ghetto activist
- a museum curator and researcher in art history
- a lighthouse specialist in marine biodiversity
- an architect who monitors dry-stone structures
- a citizen researcher in meteorology
- an urban vertical gardener
- a library citizen science researcher
- a pilot and air archaeologist
- a specialist in table tennis to improve health conditions
- a human/environmental rights political ecologist.

We were equal participants/researchers in a rich 'postdigital dialogue' (Jandrić, et. al, 2019)

So what insights did this reveal?

# What themes emerged from the postdigital dialogue with citizen researchers in Zagreb?

Just how intermingled physical and digital citizen research concerns are across disciplines/sectors, requiring a '**science in the service of humanity'** approach if technology is to be a global social good.

However, challenges that prevent this include:

- Power dynamics in knowledge exchange and between disciplines

- A lack of equity with university researchers

- Funding and affiliation challenges

- Slow academic publishing concerns and exclusion

Fascinating insights from this 'postdigital dialogue' about citizen research are being developed into **a forthcoming collectively authored paper**.
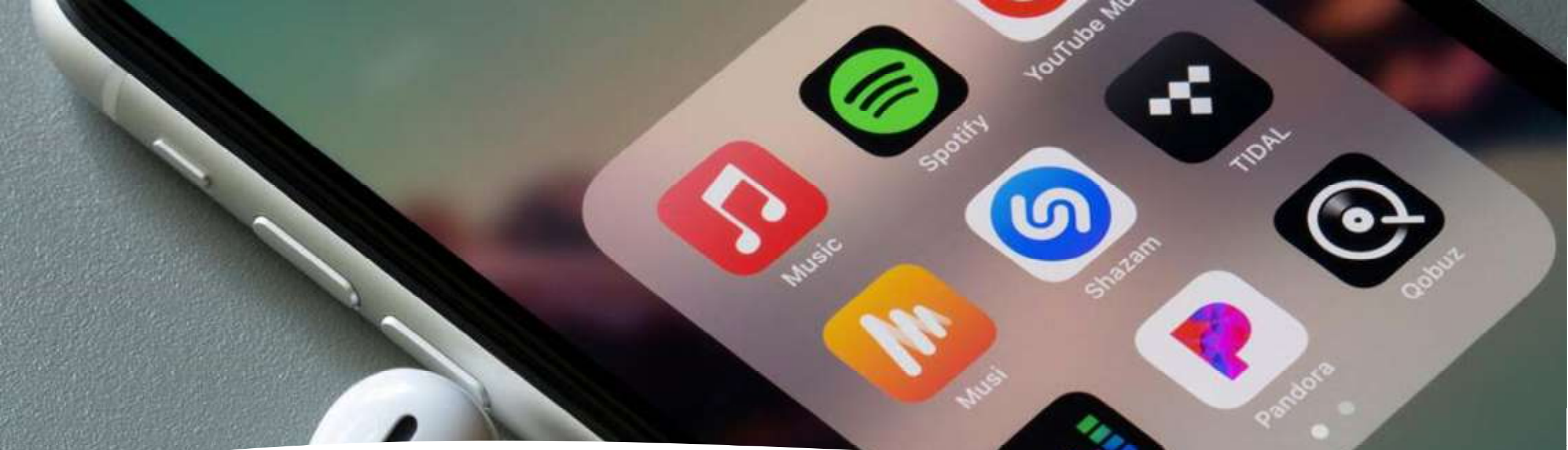
Citizen research: some implications for HE/community engagement

- Increases diversity but challenges existing HE structures and processes.

- Need to increase spread: citizen research is established in science, but less so social sciences or humanities.

- Language and terminology matter – e.g. in relation to citizen/participatory sciences, "non-academic" actors and the nature/location of community.

- Opportunities are opened up by posthuman/postdigital perspectives – changes the nature of collaboration and engagement.

- HE as broker/distributor (spotify) rather than owner/distributor of research (EMI).

Thanks for listening!

We would love to hear your thoughts

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