**Mastering Complex Research Projects**

The visual notes have been created within a template which utilises the University of Liverpool’s ‘Making an Impact 2022’ and the Academy’s colour schemes of dark purple, a golden orange and accents of pink, green and blue. The bottom of the note includes a colourful banner incorporating the Making an Impact 2022 visual which includes bright colourful triangles. The Academy which has a purple background and a colourful pyramid of stripes. A second Academy banner focussed on Researcher Development which has a white banner with an image made up of four colourful petals (purple, pink, green and orange) It states “positive and inclusive research culture”. The final banner is the logo of the University of Liverpool featuring a blue shield with three doves and a book in the centre. Underneath this runs the social media information:

www.liverpool.ac.uk/researcher/making-impact

#unilivimpact22

@LivResearcher

@LivUniAcademy

And the words “illustrated by @swantonsketches”

The title of the podcast “Mastering Complex Research Projects: How to Enthuse your Key Stakeholders For Impact” is presented in the top banner which also includes a drawing of a radio microphone with waves coming out representing the podcast format.

Underneath this is a purple monochrome portrait of the podcast participant Natacha Wilson from Cambridge Insights. The podcast content is visualised in the space below the portrait.

At the top of the visual note is an orange banner containing a definition for the term stakeholder “any individual or group connected to your project”

On the left hand side underneath Natacha’s portrait is a drawing of different coloured stick people connected by different coloured lines. Next to this drawing are the words “connecting stakeholders early in project supports agility” An arrow leads from the drawing to another orange container. This one reads “Questions to ask yourself” and underneath with orange question marks as bullets are the following questions:

* Who are your project stakeholders?
* How do they see your project
* What is their level of influence or impact (are they allies, blockers etc)?
* How might you need to adapt your communication approach?

To the right of this final bullet point is an arrow written in pink with the words “including over time” pointing to a drawing of a calendar

Below the questions is a drawing of the same stick-people network as presented above but smaller and in a grey thought bubble with the word “FOG” covering the network. Next to this are the words “Avoiding the ‘fog effect’… do not make assumptions that stakeholders understand your project…avoid jargon”

Returning to the top of the visual note is a drawing of yellow toolbox which has [www.mindtool.com](http://www.mindtool.com) written on the side. Underneath is written “Stakeholder mapping tools (eg. Johnson and Scholes) can inform your engagement strategy.

To the right is a drawing of a map. There is a vertical line with arrows at each end representing the impact axis and a vertical line with arrows at each end representing the influence axis. There are images of stick people in each of the four quadrants created by the intercrossing axis. There is a green star positioned in the quadrant representing stakeholders with the highest impact and highest influence. Text is linked to this quadrant “These stakeholders all have high impact and influence on your project and should be the focus of active engagement/communication. “

Below this is written “Other stakeholder still require engagement but other approaches may be more suitable”

To the left of the quadrant is the image of a figure taking a photo of the mapping. On the figure’s back is written “Take snapshots to revisit mapping at key project milestones”

To the right is an orange container which includes the words “Four top tips!”

1. Seek to understand others BEFORE seeking to be understood. (illustrated by two heads – the pink one on the left has jumbled white lines representing their linking. The line joins the purple head on the right who’s brain is represented by a clear, organised structure)
2. Manage expectations (consider including in contracts) (illustrated by drawing representing a contract with the word “I will do…. You will do….”
3. Celebrate success and say thank you (illustrated by three stick people with their hands raised in celebration)
4. Encourage stakeholders to talk with each other (illustrated by three overlapping speech bubbles with a lightbulb drawn in the centre in the overlap).