UCD 'Avocado' of Public Engagement Activities

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A working group of faculty and staff at the University College Dublin, Ireland (UCD) collaborated for three years to better define public engagement at their research university, understand the publicly engaged activities that were occurring there, and create a community of practice centered on public engagement.

Recognizing that they first needed to develop a shared understanding of what public engagement actually involves at UCD, the working group reviewed existing definitions of public engagement across a number of institutions and created their own framework for public engagement at UCD, what they call an "avocado" of public engagement. Their "avocado" reflects the wide variety of publicly engaged activities that occur at UCD while incorporating elements of participation as described by frameworks such as the International Association of Public Participation's Spectrum of Public Participation. The working group then used their own framework to undertake a census of engaged activities on campus and conducted a number of collaborative workshops to better understand the existing strengths and needs of the public engagement community on their campus.

UCD's approach to developing their framework mirrors a similar approach undertaken to understand public engagement at the University of Michigan through the Conceptualizing Public Engagement series (2018-2019), which resulted in the Michigan Public Engagement Framework (MPEF).

How might you situate your own public engagement activities within the UCD avocado?

References:

- Ní Shúilleabháin, A., McAuliffe, F., & Ní Shé, É.N. (2021). 'Bottoms up': A case study on integrating public engagement within a university culture. *Research for All*, 5(2). https://doi.org/10.14324/RFA.05.2.12
- Ní Shúilleabháin, A., Boyd, A., McAuliffe, F., & Ní Shé, É. (2018). Defining and Supporting Public Engagement at University College Dublin: Summary Report. http://hdl.handle.net/10197/10656

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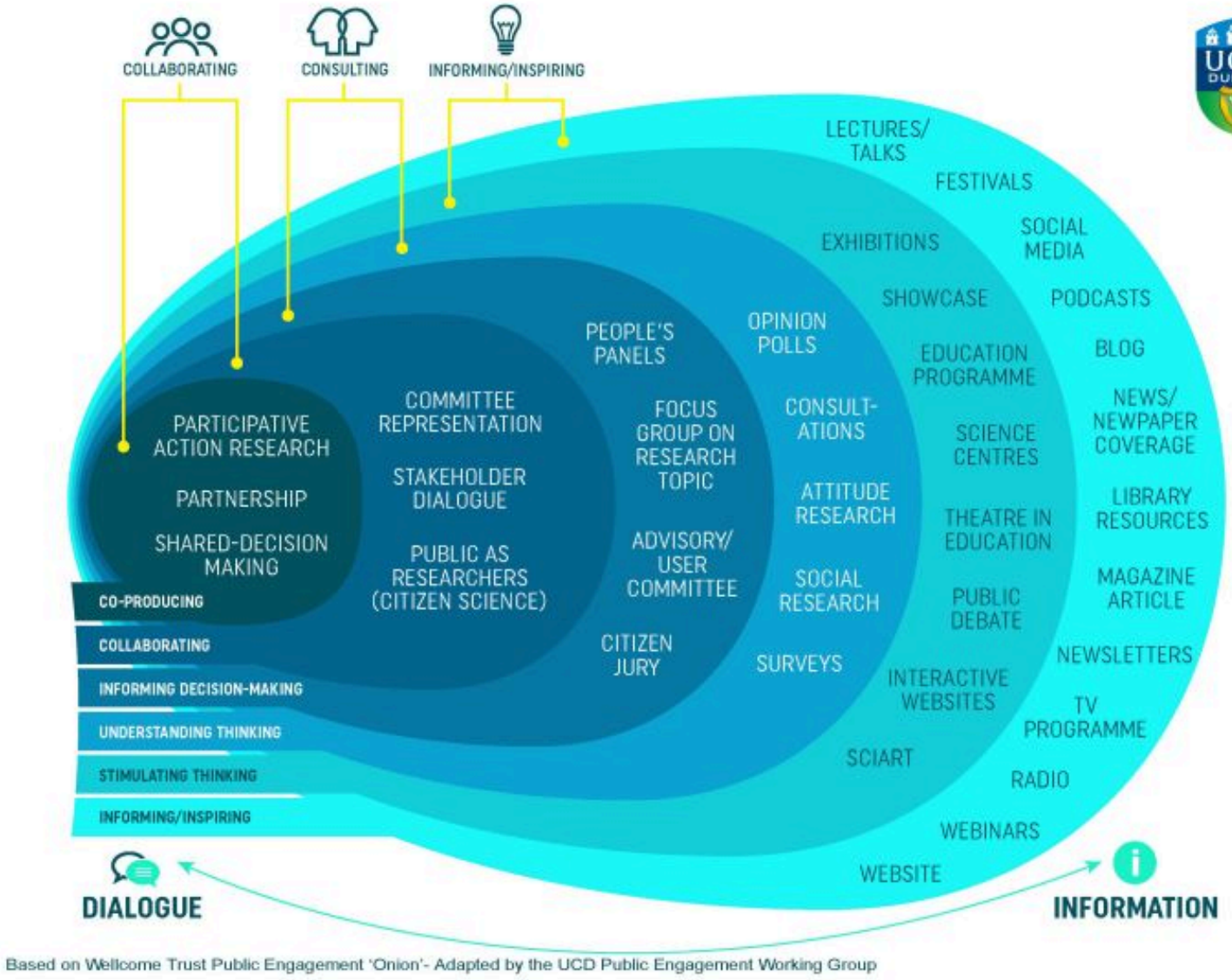

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