

Designing Meaningful Research

Before you even think about methods, instruments and paradigms consider the following five elements of your design - they provide a solid basis for the methodological and process decisions you will need to make



What is the Purpose and Relevance of your research?

What do you want to find out?
Why is the topic important to you? What need does it fulfill for you, your community or your organisation?
Is it congruent to your values, beliefs and goals?

Impact

Meaningful research has a tangible or intangible impact on yourself, your community or the world itself.

What is the impact you are looking for?
What does this mean in terms of the format of the outputs of the research (publications, workshops, policy docs) and how they are disseminated?



Authenticity

What are you bringing to the research in terms of your own expectations of outcomes or process?
How can you guard against these expectations getting in the way of rigor and trust?
What experiences do you have that will contribute or hinder the research and in which ways?



Depth and Transcendence

Research is a chance to transcend the mundane allowing for exploration of the more profound.

Is your research addressing complexity giving you opportunities for exploration, reflection and growth?
What assumptions have you already made about the concepts you are using in this research and do these need to be examined within the work?



Continuity and Significance to Self

Meaningful things endure over time so do the potential outputs of your research have this potential?

Personal significance concerns how your research is significant to you as an individual and your path in life. How will this research benefit you in terms of learning, knowledge, career and personal goals?

