Mission-oriented research and practice

Recent experiences at Monash University

Prof. Rob Raven, Monash University, Australia

International Mission conference, Aalborg University, Copenhagen, November 24 2025
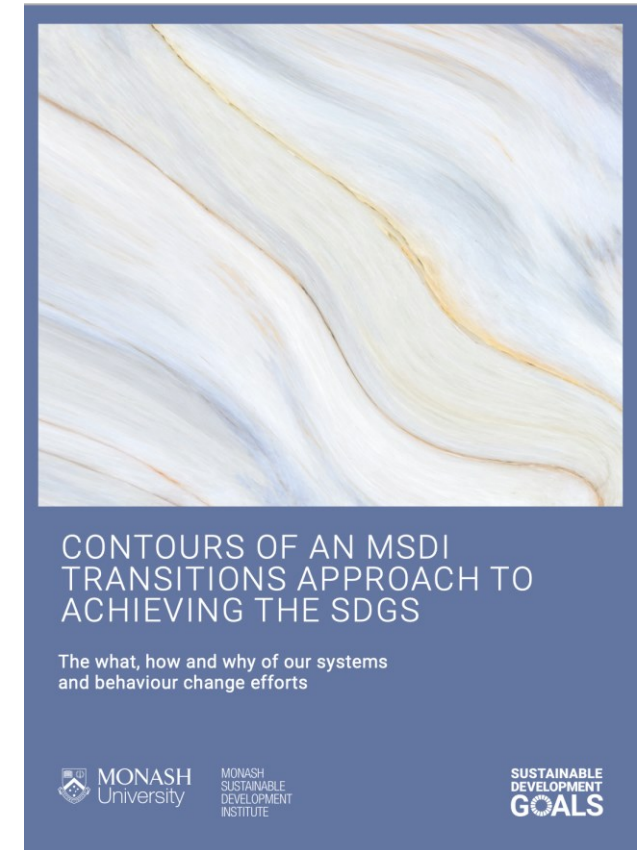
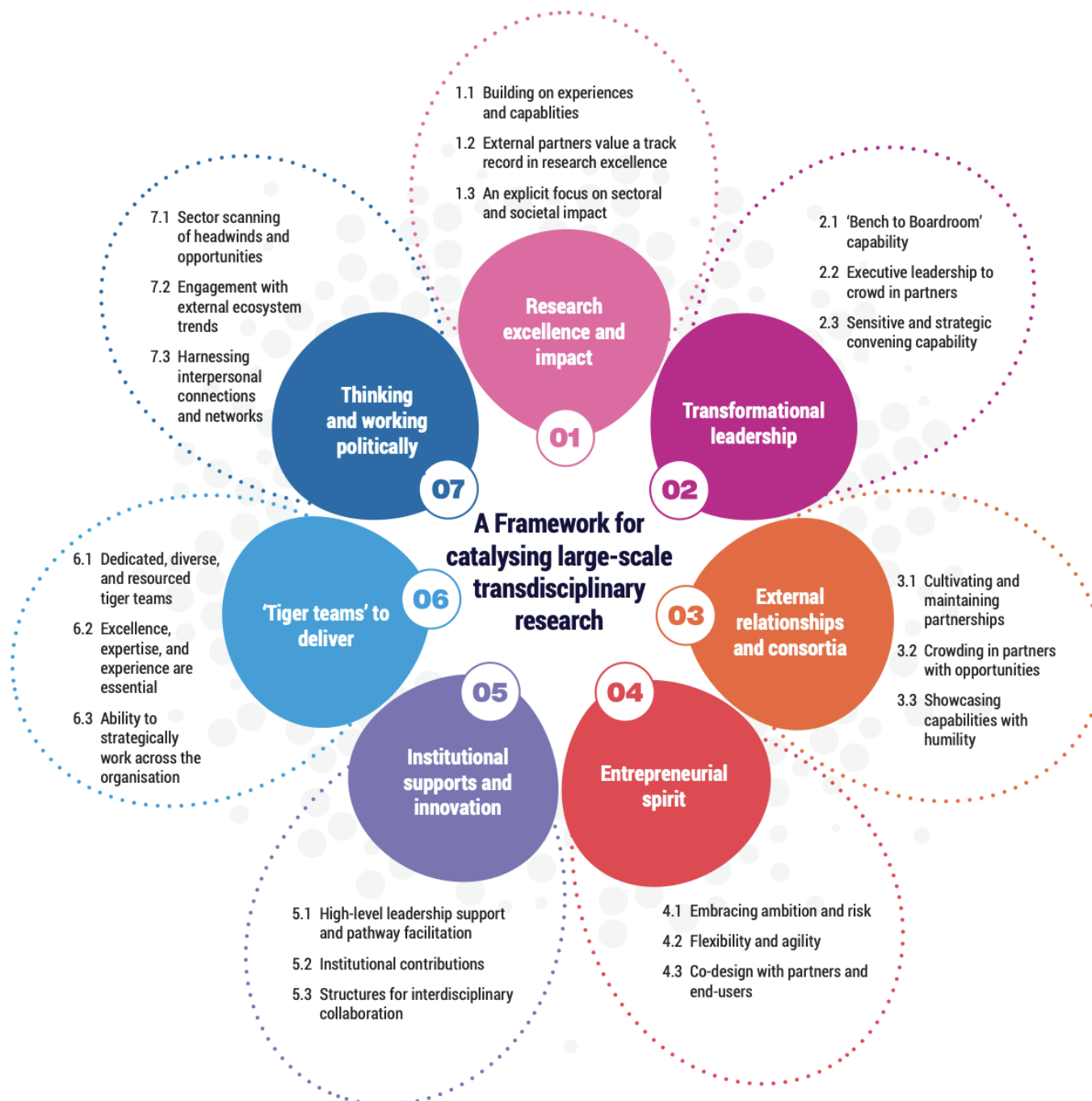# Implementing research missions at the…

… organisational level…

… infrastructural level…

… practice level…

A Framework for catalysing large-scale transdisciplinary research

01 Research excellence and impact
- 1.1 Building on experiences and capablities
- 1.2 External partners value a track record in research excellence
- 1.3 An explicit focus on sectoral and societal impact

02 Transformational leadership
- 2.1 'Bench to Boardroom' capability
- 2.2 Executive leadership to crowd in partners
- 2.3 Sensitive and strategic convening capability

03 External relationships and consortia
- 3.1 Cultivating and maintaining partnerships
- 3.2 Crowding in partners with opportunities
- 3.3 Showcasing capabilities with humility

04 Entrepreneurial spirit
- 4.1 Embracing ambition and risk
- 4.2 Flexibility and agility
- 4.3 Co-design with partners and end-users

05 Institutional supports and innovation
- 5.1 High-level leadership support and pathway facilitation
- 5.2 Institutional contributions
- 5.3 Structures for interdisciplinary collaboration

06 'Tiger teams' to deliver
- 6.1 Dedicated, diverse, and resourced tiger teams
- 6.2 Excellence, expertise, and experience are essential
- 6.3 Ability to strategically work across the organisation

07 Thinking and working politically
- 7.1 Sector scanning of headwinds and opportunities
- 7.2 Engagement with external ecosystem trends
- 7.3 Harnessing interpersonal connections and networks

rise — Revitalising Informal Settlements and their Environments

World Mosquito Program — World Mosquito Program

INHALED OXYTOCIN — Inhaled Oxytocin

Climateworks Centre — Climateworks Centre

Woodside — Woodside Monash Partnershtip

ASPREE — ASPirin in Reducing Events in the Elderly (ASPREE)

M3CS — Monash Centre for Consciousness and Contemplative Studies
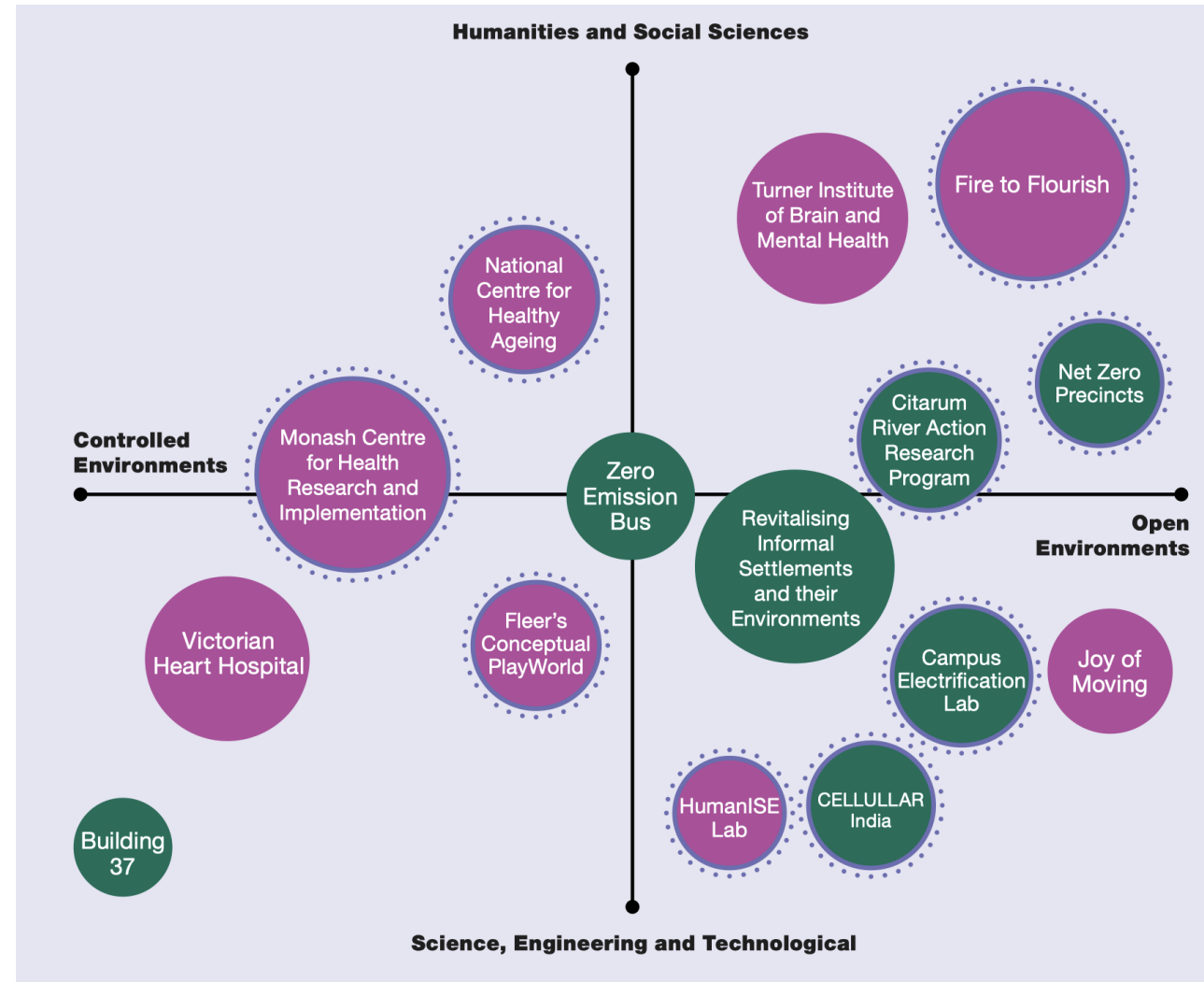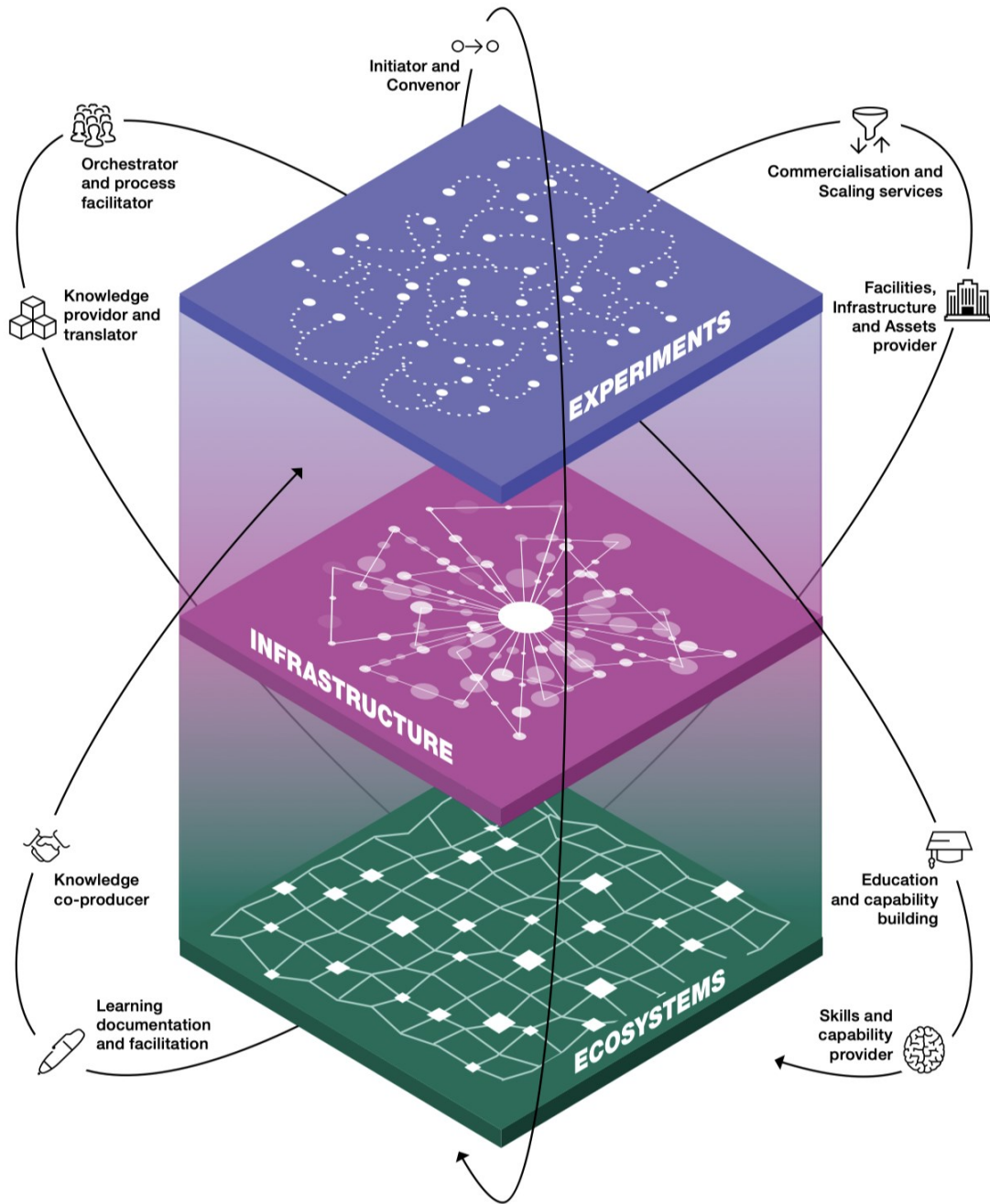
PAIR The Australia-Indonesia Centre — Partnership for Australia-Indonesia Research

NCHA — National Centre for Healthy Ageing

SAEF Securing Antarctica's Environmental Future — Securing Antarctica's Environmental Future

FIRE to FLOURISH — Fire to Flourish

building 4.0 crc — Building 4.0 CRC

Left diagram

Initiator and Convenor

Orchestrator and process facilitator

Knowledge provider and translator

Commercialisation and Scaling services

Facilities, Infrastructure and Assets provider

EXPERIMENTS

INFRASTRUCTURE

ECOSYSTEMS

Knowledge co-producer

Learning documentation and facilitation

Education and capability building

Skills and capability provider

Right diagram

Humanities and Social Sciences

Controlled Environments

Open Environments

Science, Engineering and Technological

National Centre for Healthy Ageing

Turner Institute of Brain and Mental Health

Fire to Flourish

Net Zero Precincts

Monash Centre for Health Research and Implementation

Zero Emission Bus

Citarum River Action Research Program

Revitalising Informal Settlements and their Environments

Victorian Heart Hospital

Fleer's Conceptual PlayWorld

Campus Electrification Lab

Joy of Moving

HumanISE Lab

CELLULLAR India

Building 37

Cluster 1: Sense-making & Visioning

Phase	Description
1. Identify emerging opportunities & challenges	Horizon scanning , challenge mapping, problem framing
2. Understand and engage the system	Map actors, interests, behaviours, flows, feedback loops, innovations
3. Strengthen partnerships and collaborative networks	Mobilise and broker relationships, align interests
4. Create shared visions for change	Co-develop inspiring and plausible futures

Cluster 2: Action & Experimentation

Phase	Description
5. Empower and activate change agents	Identify, bring together and empower individuals and groups who can catalyse change
6. Design for learning, impact and scale-up	Theories of change, monitoring and evaluation tools.
7. Foster innovation, experimentation and behaviour change	Run experiments to learn from technological, behavioural, market or policy interventions and innovations

Cluster 3: Embedding & Scaling

Phase	Description
8. Adaptively govern, implement, evaluate and learn	Deploy agile governance and feedback mechanisms
9. Build long-term business models & capability	Security continuity and resource flows
10. Embed and institutionalise	Lock-in change via policy, norms, standards

Thank you!

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LinkedIN