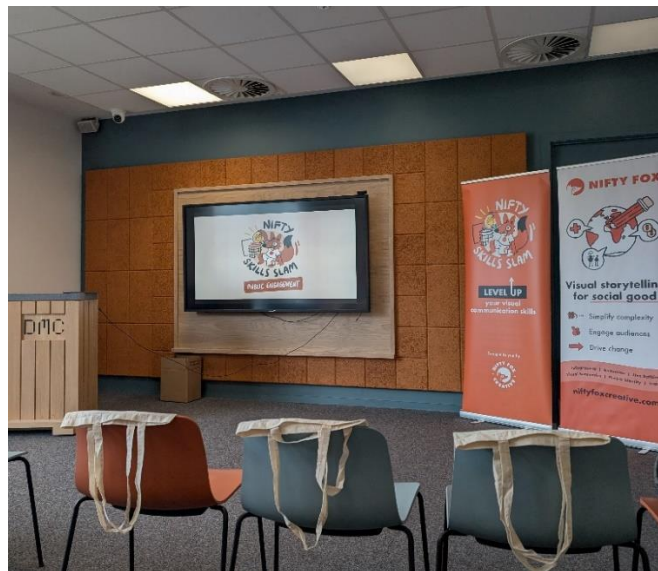


NIFTY SKILLS SLAM!

Two members of the CoGDeV Lab attended the NIFTY SKILLS SLAM, a workshop on how to “level up communication and public engagement skills” organized by [Nifty Fox](#)

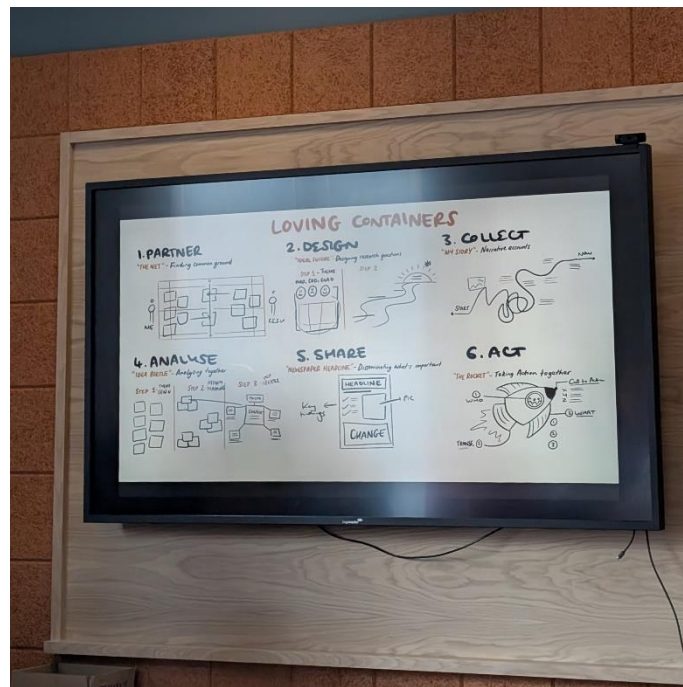


On Thursday 13th March 2025, Rachel Baxter (Project Officer) and Camilla Orefice (Visiting Postgraduate Researcher) travelled to Barnsley to attend the NIFTY SKILLS SLAM! The event was as fun as it was insightful and focused on the skills and techniques for creating and delivering co-production and engagement workshops. The day was spent exploring how visual tools can be used to engage an audience and ensure an interactive and collaborative output from workshops and events. We also heard from a panel of marketing and academic experts, who shared their experiences and tips for engaging the public in research.

Here are our top tips for co-production:

- 1) Research should not just be directed *at* an audience but created *with* them.
- 2) The success of an event depends not just on the content but on the comfort of the attendees so they are receptive to the content. Planning should include providing for:
 - a. Basic needs: food, shelter, toilets (it is indeed difficult to commit to a scientific event when your stomach is rumbling or the queue for the toilet is longer than the line for the event itself);
 - b. Psychological needs: feeling safe both physically and emotionally;
 - c. The need to belong, which can be addressed by making people feel welcome, introducing an ice breaker activity and ensuring the event is accessible to all individuals;

- d. The need to cultivate self-esteem, self-worth, and accomplishment. These can be supported by allowing everyone to express themselves and creating opportunities for a "wow" moment of shared experience.
- 3) Although not many of us would describe ourselves as great drawers, sketching for visual communication is a skill that the vast majority of people can master. It is 'Making Marks with Meaning'. We learnt that the visual alphabet is composed of just six elements that can be combined in unlimited ways to convey our message. There is really no need to sketch perfectly, as written labels can always come to the rescue. Aim for 'Progress not Perfection'.



A (visual, of course) synthesis of the steps of effective co-production creation.