# Plan Overview

A Data Management Plan created using DMPonline

Title: i3o CATALYSE: Catalysing Local Supply Chains through Innovation Cluster Procurement

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Funder: Newcastle University

Template: DCC Template

Project abstract:

The project will use Newcastle Helix as a live pilot to develop and test a practical, evidence-informed approach to inclusive procurement and supply-chain integration. It will begin by analysing procurement and supply-chain data from anchor institutions and major organisations within the Helix to establish where local SME participation is currently occurring and where there may be realistic opportunities to increase it. Alongside this, the project will engage procurement leads, SMEs, and wider local/regional stakeholders through interviews, surveys and roundtables to understand the institutional, procedural, market and cultural barriers that shape access to procurement opportunities.

These quantitative and qualitative findings will be brought together with relevant existing i3o research to co-design an Inclusive Procurement and Supply Chain Framework with practitioners and stakeholders. The framework will be practical and implementation-focused, incorporating a diagnostic self-assessment tool, inclusive procurement checklist/standard, SME engagement protocol and monitoring and evaluation template. It will then be tested through a live action-learning pilot at Newcastle Helix who will work directly with anchor institutions and SMEs to assess what works in practice, identify institutional constraints and refine the framework in response to implementation experience.

The project will conclude by consolidating the learning from the pilot into a final framework and practical guidance, a project report, and a policy brief, supported by regional and national dissemination. The intention is not only to demonstrate what can work within Newcastle Helix, but to produce a practical and transferable approach that can inform other innovation districts and science and technology clusters.

ID: 212493

Start date: 19-10-2026

End date: 27-08-2027

Last modified: 09-10-2026

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# i3o CATALYSE: Catalysing Local Supply Chains through Innovation Cluster Procurement

## Data Collection

What data will you collect or create?

The project will collect and create a combination of quantitative, qualitative and documentary research data to understand procurement and supply-chain participation within Newcastle Helix and to develop and test an Inclusive Procurement and Supply Chain Framework.

The main categories of data will be:

1. Procurement and supply-chain data

Where available and where appropriate permissions are provided, the project will collect data from anchor institutions and organisations within Newcastle Helix relating to:

- procurement expenditure and spend categories;
- contract values and, where relevant, contract size and structure;
- supplier location/geography;
- supplier type and SME status;
- patterns of local supplier participation;
- existing procurement and supplier-engagement processes; and
- other information necessary to identify potential opportunities for increased local SME participation.

The project will seek aggregated or appropriately anonymised data wherever possible rather than unnecessary personal or commercially sensitive information.

2. Stakeholder and interview data

The project will collect qualitative data through semi-structured interviews and discussions with:

- procurement and commercial leads within organisations involved in purchasing;
- SMEs and current or prospective suppliers;
- business intermediaries and relevant local/regional stakeholders; and
- other practitioners with relevant experience of procurement, supply chains and innovation ecosystems.

Interview data may include participants' experiences, perceptions, examples of procurement barriers and enablers, supplier readiness and capability needs, buyer readiness and capability, and suggestions for improving procurement and supply-chain integration.

3. Event, roundtable and workshop data

The project will collect qualitative evidence through existing procurement/business events, stakeholder roundtables, co-design workshops and related engagement activities. This may include:

- written notes;
- workshop outputs;
- anonymised contributions;
- discussion summaries;
- prioritisation exercises;
- feedback on proposed tools and framework components; and
- records of emerging recommendations.

The project will seek to use existing events and networks where possible rather than creating unnecessary additional data-collection burdens for participants.

4. Pilot and action-learning data

During the Newcastle Helix pilot, the project will collect information about the use and feasibility of the framework and its associated tools. This may include:

- feedback from participating organisations;
- observations and implementation notes;
- records of practical barriers and institutional constraints;
- evidence of early outcomes;
- reflections on buyer and supplier readiness/capability; and

- feedback on potential brokerage or digital approaches for connecting local supply with procurement demand.

5. Researcher-created data and outputs

The research team will create:

- cleaned and analysed datasets;
- coding frameworks and thematic analysis;
- anonymised interview and engagement summaries;
- evidence synthesis;
- framework drafts and iterations;
- diagnostic and readiness/capability tools;
- monitoring and evaluation materials;
- research reports;
- policy recommendations; and
- the final Inclusive Procurement and Supply Chain Framework and associated guidance.

The project is not expected to collect special category personal data as part of its core research activities.

How will the data be collected or created?

Data will be collected using proportionate research methods appropriate to the different participant groups.

Procurement and supply-chain data will be requested directly from participating organisations through agreed channels. The project will seek to establish in advance what information can legitimately be shared and whether it requires aggregation, anonymisation or other restrictions.

Qualitative data will be collected through semi-structured interviews, stakeholder discussions, existing procurement/business events, roundtables and co-design workshops. Participants will receive appropriate information about the research and will provide informed consent where required.

Interviews may be audio-recorded only where participants have provided specific consent and where recording is necessary for the research. Otherwise, researchers will make written notes.

Researchers will use agreed templates for interview notes, workshop records, data requests and pilot observations to promote consistency.

Where data are collected from organisations, the research team will avoid requesting information that is not necessary for the research objectives. Participants will be asked not to disclose confidential commercial information or personal data relating to third parties unless there is an appropriate basis for doing so.

Quantitative data will be cleaned and analysed using appropriate research software. Qualitative data will be organised and analysed thematically, with identifiable information removed or pseudonymised where appropriate.

The project will maintain a clear distinction between raw/source data, working files, processed/anonymised research data and final outputs.

## Documentation and Metadata

What documentation and metadata will accompany the data?

Research data will be accompanied by sufficient documentation to explain its origin, context, structure and use.

This will include, as appropriate:

- a description of the project and research objectives;
- data-collection dates and methods;
- descriptions of datasets and variables;
- information about the organisations or participant groups from which data were obtained, subject to confidentiality requirements;
- data dictionaries and coding frameworks for quantitative datasets;
- interview and workshop protocols;
- consent and participant information materials;
- information about anonymisation or pseudonymisation procedures;
- explanations of data cleaning and transformation;

- versions of analytical files where necessary to understand the development of findings;
- records of relevant permissions, data-sharing agreements or restrictions

For quantitative procurement data, metadata will record the meaning of variables, units, time periods, geographical definitions and any transformations or aggregation undertaken.

For qualitative data, documentation will record the collection method, participant category, date and relevant contextual information without unnecessarily identifying individuals.

Version control will be used for key research documents and analytical outputs so that the provenance of important findings can be established.

## Ethics and Legal Compliance

How will you manage any ethical issues?

The project will follow Newcastle University ethical guidance and will obtain any required ethics approval before collecting personal or participant research data.

Participation in interviews, workshops and other research activities will be voluntary. Participants will receive an appropriate Participant Information Sheet and will provide informed consent where required.

Participants will be informed about:

- the purpose of the project;
- what participation involves;
- how their information will be used;
- how confidentiality will be managed;
- whether participation will involve recording;
- their right to decline to answer questions; and
- the circumstances and point up to which they can withdraw their data.

The project will take particular care with commercially sensitive information. Participants will not be expected to disclose confidential information, commercially sensitive contract details or information they are not authorised to share.

Because the project concerns a relatively defined local ecosystem, complete anonymity may not always be possible where a participant's role or an organisation's circumstances are distinctive. The research team will therefore avoid unnecessary identifying detail and will discuss attribution with participants where relevant.

Where findings are reported, the default approach will be to use aggregated or anonymised information unless explicit permission has been obtained for attribution.

Personal data will be collected only where necessary for the research and will be handled in accordance with applicable data-protection legislation and the responsible institution's policies.

The project will also consider the ethical implications of any future brokerage or digital matching solution. Research participation will not imply consent to subsequent commercial use of participants' information, and any separate development or data-sharing activity will require appropriate permissions and governance.

How will you manage copyright and Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) issues?

The project will respect copyright and other intellectual property rights associated with data, documents, procurement information, software, frameworks and other materials used or created during the research.

Where data or documents are supplied by participating organisations, the project will clarify any conditions governing their use and will not redistribute material where the project does not have permission to do so.

Participants will retain ownership of materials they provide unless a separate agreement states otherwise.

The project team will establish ownership and permitted use of new materials created through the research, including:

- the Inclusive Procurement and Supply Chain Framework;
- diagnostic and readiness/capability tools;
- guidance;
- datasets;
- analytical materials; and
- any potential prototype or brokerage solution.

Where project outputs are intended to be openly shared, the team will ensure that they do not reproduce third-party copyrighted or confidential material without permission.

Any potential commercial or licensing opportunity arising from a diagnostic, brokerage or digital solution will be considered separately and subject to the relevant institutional IPR and commercialisation policies.

## Storage and Backup

How will the data be stored and backed up during the research?

Research data will be stored on secure, institutionally approved systems rather than personal devices or unapproved cloud-storage services.

Where available, the project will use the institution's approved secure research storage environment, with appropriate backup arrangements and access controls.

Working datasets, interview notes, consent records and analysis files will be stored within appropriately structured project folders. Raw data will be retained separately from cleaned, anonymised and analytical datasets where appropriate.

Data stored on laptops or other portable devices will be encrypted and devices will be protected by appropriate passwords and institutional security controls.

The project will maintain appropriate backups of active research data in accordance with institutional policy. Backups will be protected to the same standard as the primary data wherever possible.

Physical documents, if generated, will be kept securely and transferred to the appropriate secure digital storage system where practical.

How will you manage access and security?

Access will be restricted to members of the authorised research team who require the data for their role.

Access to identifiable participant information will be more restricted than access to anonymised research materials.

Where external partners or collaborators require access to project data, this will only occur where appropriate permissions, agreements and data-protection arrangements are in place.

The project will use:

- institutionally approved authentication;
- password protection;
- encryption where appropriate;
- role-based access controls;
- secure institutional storage;
- appropriate backup arrangements; and
- controlled sharing of files with external participants and partners.

Personal data and identifiable research materials will not be transferred using unsecured channels.

A separate key linking participant identities to pseudonymised research data will be stored securely and separately from the research data wherever pseudonymisation is used.

## Selection and Preservation

Which data are of long-term value and should be retained, shared, and/or preserved?

The project will distinguish between data that have long-term research or public value and data that should be securely deleted once they are no longer required.

Potentially valuable for longer-term retention include:

- cleaned and appropriately anonymised procurement/supply-chain datasets, where permissions allow;

- aggregated evidence on SME participation and procurement patterns;
- anonymised qualitative findings;
- coding frameworks and methodological documentation;
- the final Inclusive Procurement and Supply Chain Framework;
- diagnostic and readiness/capability tools;
- monitoring and evaluation templates;
- project documentation necessary to understand the provenance and interpretation of the research findings; and
- final reports and policy outputs.

Raw interview recordings, identifiable transcripts/notes, contact lists and other personal data will not normally be retained indefinitely. They will be retained only for the period justified by the research, institutional policy and the approved ethics/data-management arrangements.

Commercially confidential procurement data will not be deposited in an open repository unless the relevant organisation has explicitly authorised this and appropriate safeguards are in place.

What is the long-term preservation plan for the dataset?

At the end of the active research phase, the research team will review all project data and classify it for:

1. long-term preservation;
2. restricted retention; or
3. secure deletion.

The final research dataset selected for preservation will be cleaned, appropriately anonymised where possible, documented and accompanied by metadata.

Where institutional arrangements permit, the final dataset and associated documentation will be deposited in an appropriate institutional or recognised research data repository.

If open sharing is not appropriate because of confidentiality, commercial sensitivity or personal-data considerations, the project will preserve a controlled-access version or retain an appropriate research record without making the underlying sensitive data publicly available.

The final framework, guidance and other non-sensitive outputs will be preserved separately and made available through appropriate institutional or project dissemination channels.

The precise repository and retention period will be confirmed in accordance with the policies of the lead institution.

## Data Sharing

How will you share the data?

The project will aim to maximise responsible reuse of research outputs while protecting participants, organisations and commercially sensitive information.

The following outputs are expected to be suitable for public dissemination:

- the final Inclusive Procurement and Supply Chain Framework;
- practical guidance and tools;
- policy brief;
- project report;
- methodological information;
- aggregated findings;
- anonymised/aggregated evidence where appropriate; and
- other non-confidential project outputs.

These may be shared through research repositories, project events, publications, policy networks and relevant regional and national dissemination channels.

Where an anonymised dataset is suitable for sharing, it may be deposited in an appropriate research data repository with accompanying metadata and documentation.

Are any restrictions on data sharing required?

Some project data will require restrictions because it may contain:

- personal data;
- commercially sensitive procurement information;
- confidential information supplied by participating organisations;
- information that could indirectly identify participants or organisations; or
- third-party information for which the project does not have redistribution rights.

Such information will not be made openly available unless there is an appropriate legal, ethical and contractual basis for doing so.
Where possible, the project will address these restrictions through:

- aggregation;
- anonymisation;
- pseudonymisation;
- removal of commercially sensitive fields;
- controlled access;
- data-sharing agreements; and/or
- sharing of derived findings rather than raw data.

The project will not share participant contact details with external organisations for commercial or marketing purposes.
Participation in the project will not constitute consent for participants' information to be transferred into any future commercial brokerage or digital matching system. Any such use would require separate consideration, appropriate permissions and compliance with relevant data-protection and IPR requirements.

## Responsibilities and Resources

Who will be responsible for data management?

Overall responsibility for data management will sit with the project's lead researcher/principal investigator: Dr Luke Green.
The project team will have defined responsibilities for different aspects of data management.
Luke Green will have responsibility for research data collection, organisation, analysis and research documentation, including procurement/supply-chain data and qualitative research materials.
Ben Fisher will be responsible for data arising from the live Helix pilot and action-learning activities, ensuring that information collected through pilot implementation is appropriately recorded and transferred into the project's agreed research-storage arrangements.
Emma Frost and Prof Louise Kempton will support appropriate use of findings, documentation, dissemination and policy outputs.
Where data are supplied by external organisations, the project team will ensure that any agreed conditions governing their use are recorded and followed.

What resources will you require to deliver your plan?

The project will require:

- secure institutional research-data storage;
- appropriate automated or managed backup provision;
- secure access-controlled systems for personal and research data;
- software for qualitative and quantitative analysis, as appropriate;
- secure tools for recording and transcribing interviews if recording is undertaken;
- appropriate data-collection and consent documentation;
- time for data cleaning, anonymisation, documentation and quality assurance;
- institutional data-protection and research-governance support;
- appropriate repository provision for long-term preservation; and
- advice on IPR and commercialisation if a brokerage, diagnostic or digital prototype develops into a potential commercial

opportunity.

No substantial additional specialist infrastructure is anticipated beyond the institution's existing research-data management, information-governance and secure-storage arrangements, subject to confirmation by the lead institution.