

Using metaphors - a method for encouraging participants to share their experiences.

Worksheet.

Use these metaphors to visualise, draw, and reflect on your research process to other participants.

Activity 1

Draw or sketch a river that represents your project or research data history, focusing on approximately the most recent 12 months. (If you are primarily planning, you could represent the emergence of the project ideas and your current methods.)

Elements of rivers that might be helpful:

- *Tributaries* and *confluences* could show joining up of influences.
- *Rapids* and *whirlpools* might show times of disruption (particularly relevant?)
- *Eddies* and *shoals* might be slower times.
- *Meanders* and *waterfalls* can show changes in direction and speed.

Activity 2

Using your diagram or sketch to help, respond to these questions. You might choose to annotate your sketch or write a little text.

1. Focusing on a theme (for example, “working with secondary data and/or covid-19 data”), how has the pandemic – or other uncertainties in your process - affected your approach to research (methods) or work?
2. How have you adapted your research?
3. Why have you settled on particular approaches (instead of others)?
4. What considerations would you advise others to be aware of?
 - a. As they think through their methodological options?
 - b. As they carry out alternative methods?
5. How do you imagine your research projects will progress over the next 1-4 years?

Below is a list of metaphors, and key-words describing research process.

River	Journey	Output	'Under the surface'	Obstacles
Moored boat	Plan	Uncertainties	Innovation	Creative
Meanders	Decisions	Iterations	Pressure	Collaboration
Waterfalls	Literature reviews	Navigate	Results	Support
Eddies	Methodology	Context	Funding	Comfortable
Confluences	Ethics	Dried-out land	Adaptation	Well-being.
Whirlpools	Data generation	Reflection	Flexibility	
Anchor				

Full resource: <https://www.ncrm.ac.uk/resources/online/all/?id=20803>

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