

Science Europe Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC)
SYMPOSIUM – Brussels, 17th November

*“Building a Scientific Narrative on Impact and
Societal Value of Science”*

Overview and Objectives

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#SEimpact

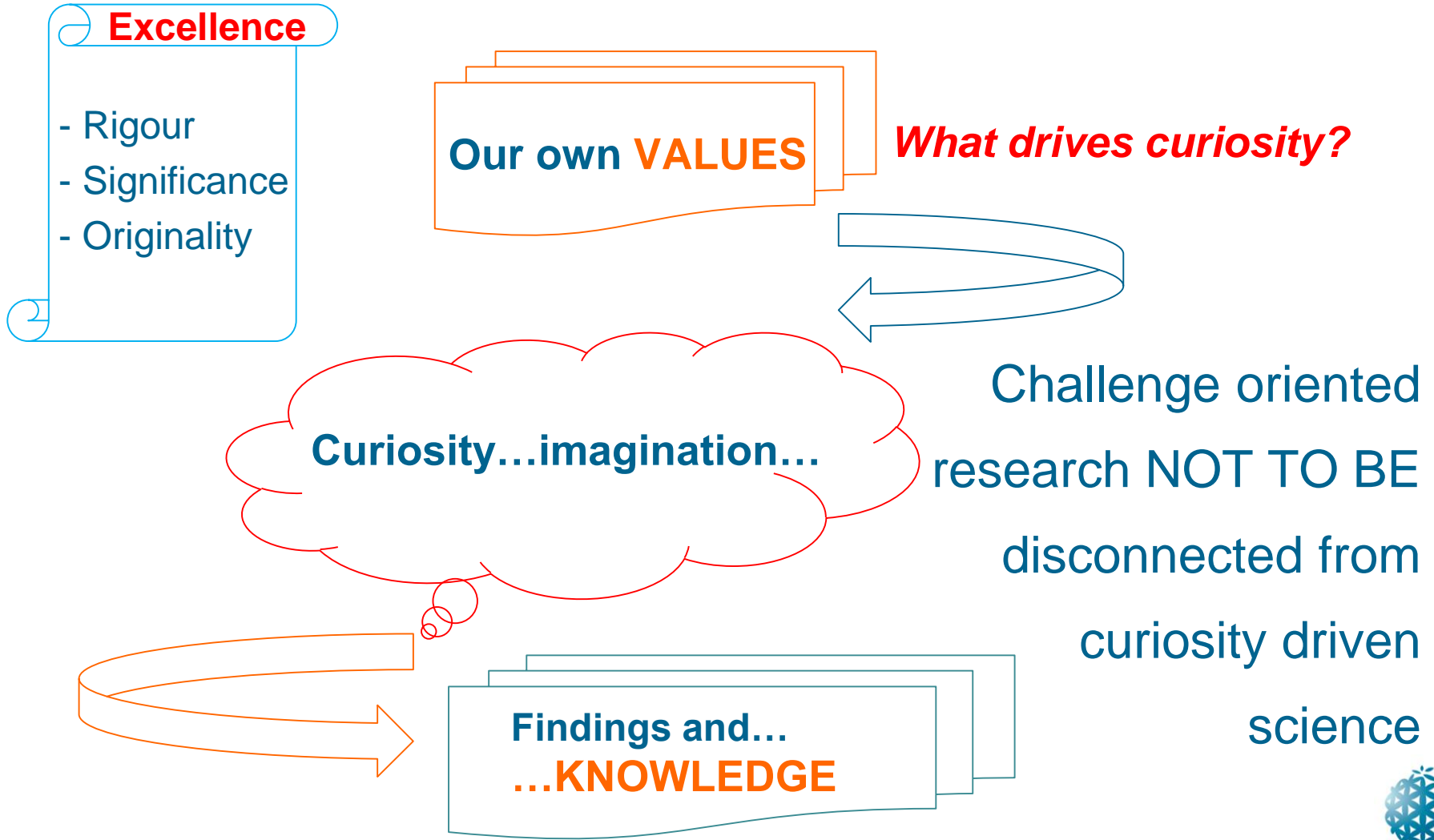


“Excellence is not an isolated action, but something which is repeated until it becomes unconscious habit”
(Aristotle)

Aristotle’s writings on **LOGIC**:
The reasoning process for gaining knowledge; unconscious order of questions repeated over time to achieve understanding of an object.

Excellence
at the basis of acquisition of knowledge

Beyond Excellence...Societal Values



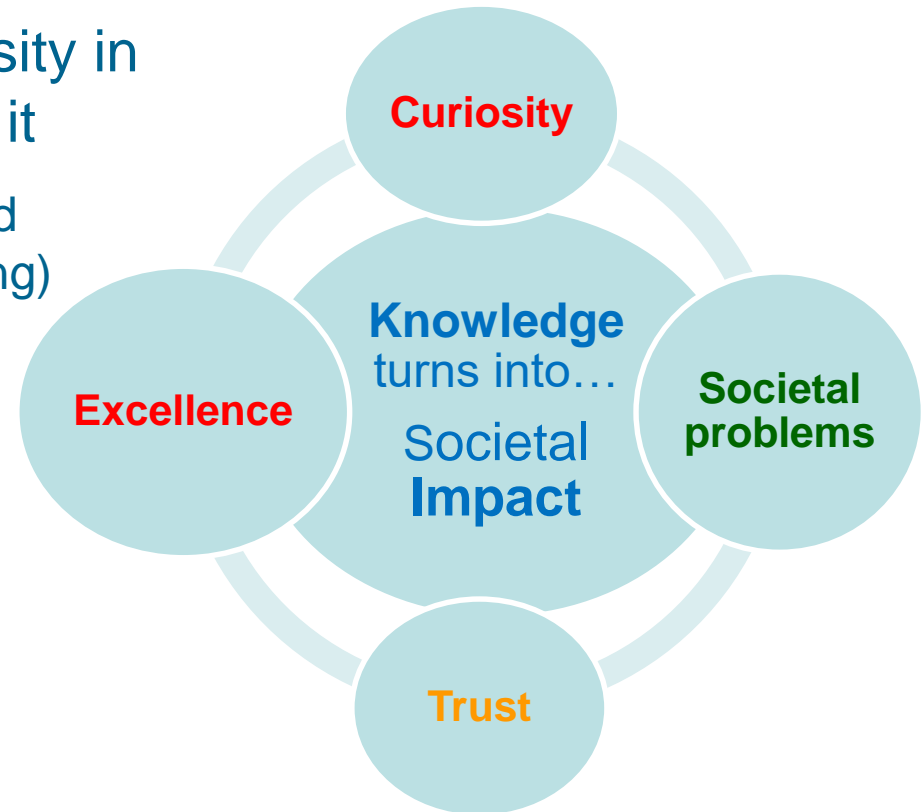
Societal Impact and Value of Science: no struggle for a single definition

Main objective:

understanding impact in its diversity in order to look for it and recognise it

(before it can be assessed, rewarded and supported in research policies and funding)

- ▶ From knowledge to societal value = **not a linear process**
- ▶ Between Fundamental and Applied Research = **two way contribution**
- ▶ Essential to understand the **notion of value** of science to assess societal impact



How did we get here? And where we 'hope' to go...

- ▶ **Disciplinary topics** within individual **Scientific Committees**
- ▶ **Transversal topics** of **interdisciplinary** relevance
- ▶ **Societal Impact** as an '**urgent**' matter of science policy of key importance to research in all disciplines
- ▶ **Need for interdisciplinary discussion** – the **SAC narrative**: common ground for a large spectrum of perspectives
- ▶ **Objective**: **to be continued...**

SYMPOSIUM'S Structure and Themes

- ▶ From the **SAC's narrative** - *Opening Session; Case studies*
- ▶ Session 1: **intrinsic value of fundamental research** and its *long term effects*
- ▶ Session 2: the **process of knowledge co-creation**, the new dynamics of *translational research*, and the importance of *mutual trust*
- ▶ Session 3: **how to assess** *societal value of science*
- ▶ Roundtable Discussion: **orienting policy makers** to designing coherent strategies for *sharing responsibilities and building trust between scientists and society*

SCIENTISTS & POLITICIANS AS 'STORY-TELLERS'

- Music - Acoustics
- Computer science -
The Internet of Things
- Environmental sciences - Hydrology
- Agricultural sciences - Biomedical effects



Importance of communicating research and 'popularising' science vs Challenge of Science advice to Policy: are governments listening?

Risk of policy-makers' misuse of findings to legitimise political narratives

From Findings:

1. Democracies are not peaceful, they do fight wars.
2. Democracies do not fight each other (= "democratic peace")

To political distortions:

1. Assuming that democracies are inherently peaceful (=not evidence-based)
2. Legitimising wars for "regime change"



“The greatest enemy of knowledge is not ignorance,
it is the illusion of knowledge”
(Stephen Hawking)

Thank you for your attention!