

Learning Exchange Reviewing the Research Agenda

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- What **innovations, ideas, opportunities, and/or action steps** received the most support among your group?

A large set of research questions and methods emerged, in many cases with an explicit goal of advancing the field.

One specific idea was to diagnose more carefully what exactly is wrong with mainstream political institutions so that we can decide when we need deliberative alternatives.

- In the probes (suggestions, not mandatory questions), we ask about **language, assessment, and technology**. Please share with us anything regarding these topics that resonated with your group.

Assessment was the main theme. One view was that questions about what works, under what conditions, and why can be broken down into researchable parts and studied (quantitatively or qualitatively), with the gold standard being a randomized experiment. There were some alternative perspectives that emphasized the importance of “craft” (which is not reducible to best practices) or that focused on other questions than what works, when, and why. For instance, what is the personal narrative of an individual scholar who turns to public work? For questions like that, humanistic/descriptive methods would be more appropriate.

- Based on the discussion, what do you think should be the **top priorities** for educators and practitioners?

Probably the most accurate summary of the whole group’s view would be: Lots of research addressing lots of different questions. (No common rank-ordering emerged.)