



**„Reinvent the Wheel? Making use of
endogenous, research-immanent mechanisms
of excellence and quality control”**

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Why does the Jacobs Foundation Need Research? The Basic Concepts of Our Work

Value Chain Paradigm:

- **Innovative research & pilot interventions and their application**
- **Aiming at model building and roll-out**

Networking and Effective Communication

- **Supporting Productive Youth Development by advocacy and agenda setting.**

Actively Sponsored Partnerships:

- **Outsourcing projects to operational organisations**

In General, There are Four Modes of Knowledge Development for Foundations

Conduct own research

- **Institutional: research centers or specialized units**
- **Personal: affiliated researchers**

Commission research

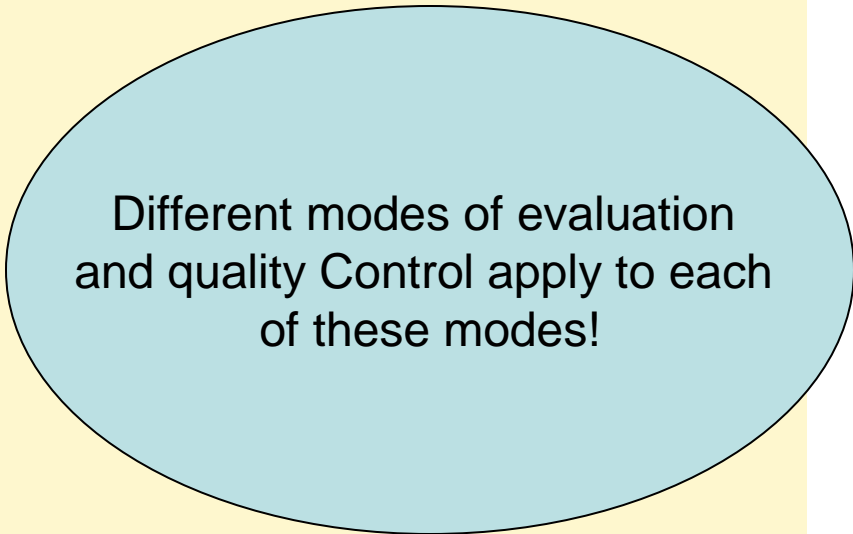
- **renowned researchers**
- **expert panels**

Synthesize existing knowledge

- **own staff**
- **commissioned expertises**
- **expert panels**

Support independent academic research

- **responsive vs. programmatic approach**
- **institutional support**

A light blue oval with a black border, containing text that states: 'Different modes of evaluation and quality Control apply to each of these modes!'.

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Pros and Cons: *Conduct own research*

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- **Institutional:** research centers or specialized units, either at universities or in-house
- **Personal:** affiliated researchers or own research staff

Commission research

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- expert panels

Synthesize evidence

- own staff
- commission
- expert panels

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PRO

- targeted
- fast and flexible
- internal control and assesment

CONTRA

- no competition
- no scientific quality control
- no dissemination within community
- expensive

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Commission research

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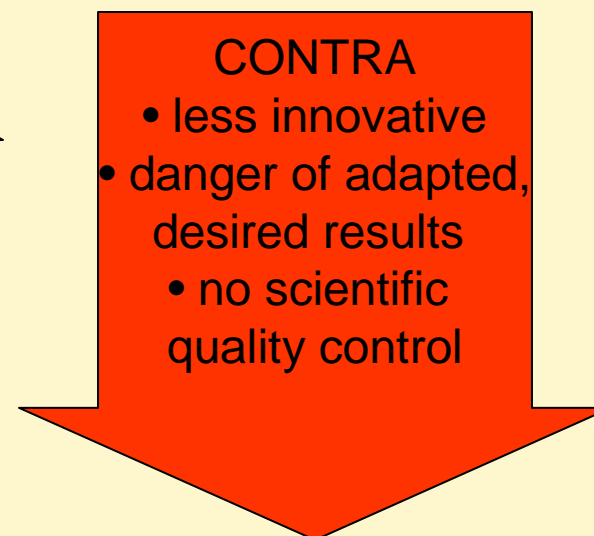
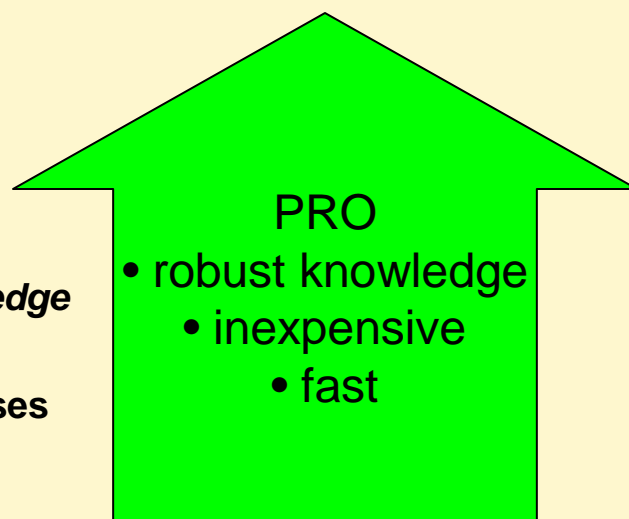
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PRO

- innovative, high quality research
- scientific quality control
- dissemination within community

CONTRA

- not targeted
- often slow
- results may differ from expectation
- results not marketable

Our Approach to Knowledge Development: Making use of endogenous processes of science

Independent, Curiosity Driven Research as Basis for Excellence

- Research developed out of curiosity under “laissez faire” conditions is more successful than commissioned research (cf. Terence Kealey “The economic laws of research”)
- Institutional autonomy crucial for successful research

Socially Robust Knowledge as Basis for Implementation

- Research results have to survive on the “Agora” to become “socially robust” (cf. Helga Nowotny et al : “Rethinking Science: Knowledge and the Public”)
- Brand new research results are not per se better than older research (which is difficult to explain to Foundation Trustees...)

A Mixed Approach

- Synthesizing existing knowledge must be the first step, other elements depend on the aims of the Foundation and on the topic
- The endogenous, research-immanent mechanisms of excellence and quality control must be utilized by foundations

**Foundations do not have to reinvent science and research –
and they do not have to reinvent evaluation!**

- Tendency to control and to insource research is detrimental to the scientific system which needs competition and pluralism of approaches as driving forces
- The tendencies toward risk-avoidance, ever more means of quality control, and the almost uncontrolled growth of reporting requirements often proliferated by foundations have negative consequences: mediocre, risk-avoiding research and (often fraudulent) evasion strategies
- A well designed ex-ante review process as well as careful and systematic evaluation – which must be designed and organized as a learning process – are the only ways to ensure the necessary amount of risk-taking in research funding organizations
- It has taken public funding agencies decades to learn that strict controlling of research does NOT lead to better outcome, Foundations should not make the same mistake

Lots of open questions – lots of opportunities!

- Should foundations coordinate their review processes (with each other, but also with public funding agencies, e.g. JF – SNF)?
- How do we avoid duplication of reviews and how do we handle repeated submissions?
- Where do we get the expertise?
- How do we convince the Trustees to support an independent review process (reduced degrees of freedom)?
- Long-term vs. short term outcome: how do we sensitize trustees?
- Do we need a best-practice manual of evaluation in European research funding foundations?

**Thank you...any questions?
Don't hesitate to contact me!**

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