

Title of the Working Group	Evaluation of 'innovation' projects and partnerships: challenges, practical experiences and methodological innovations
Convenor 1 (name and affiliation)	Susanne v. Münchhausen (susanne.vonmuenchhausen@hnee.de) - Eberswalde University for Sustainable Development (HNEE), Germany
Convenor 2 (name and affiliation)	Mark Riley - University of Liverpool, UK (Mark.Riley@liverpool.ac.uk)
Convenor 3 (name and affiliation)	Anna M. Häring (anna.haering@hnee.de) - Eberswalde University for Sustainable Development (HNEE), Germany
<i>more convenors if necessary (add new rows)</i>	Lee-Ann Sutherland - James Hutton Institute, Aberdeen, Scotland, UK (Lee-Ann.Sutherland@hutton.ac.uk)
Contact (email of person who will receive the paper submissions)	
Topic (150-350 words)	<p>The objective of this working group is to provide space for critical reflection and discussion on the research and evaluation methods approaches being trialled and (re)considered by those undertaking social science research in rural contexts. The working group involves two streams: methods for evaluating innovation projects, and new and refined methods of undertaking rural research more broadly.</p> <p>Stream A) Fostering cooperative innovation has arguably become a key priority in research and rural development policies. Such schemes aim at improving income and employment in rural areas, productivity, food safety, social cohesion, protection of natural resources, biodiversity, and animal welfare. Whilst there is an emerging literature on scheme design as well as the (un)successful enrolment of multiple partners, much less attention has been paid towards evaluating the outcomes and 'successes' of these schemes. As a result of innovation projects' multiple goals, there is no 'one fits all' approach to monitoring their development and outcomes; this requires an extension and reworking of existing methodological approaches and techniques. This stream calls for papers which report on their attempts at, and challenges of, monitoring and evaluating innovation projects. Questions might include: what methods can we use to identify 'effective' innovation projects and groups? what results are available, so far, from the monitoring and evaluation of innovation groups and what might we learn from their approaches?</p> <p>Stream B) Whilst the rural social science literature demonstrates a wide and exciting range of methods in use, the discussion of their application in practice – that is, the 'doing' of rural research – is less common. Not all methodological innovation need be about 'new' methods and approaches, but might encompass a reworking and refinement of more longstanding ones. The stream invites reflections on a range of methodological approaches and contributors' own experiences of working with these. Subjects might include, but are not limited to: how technological advances have changed the social science methods we use; co-producing research; embedding new methods in social theory; positionality and research; problems and potential of the research interview; working with mixed methods; methodological approaches in interdisciplinary research; working with/against the archive; visual methods applications; the 'reflexive' turn in the research encounter.</p>
Format/methodology (30-100 words)	Stream A will consist of two parts. In the first part, the authors will briefly present their papers (5-10 minutes each). These presentations will serve as input statements for the panel discussion. The panel discussion will form the second, main, part of the working group. We will invite six authors – based on their different areas of expertise - to act as panel discussants where will we reflect on the session contributions to outline future directions for research. The outcome of the panel discussion will be documented and circulated among

	participants. A final discussion paper will be published. Stream B will follow the standard 15 minute presentation format.
References (if needed)	