



## THINC-NICE Learning Series

# Simplifying implementation science theories, models, and frameworks

In this workshop, we explored:

- The fundamental differences between theories, models, frameworks, and approaches (TMFAs)
- Practical guidance on making sense of TMFAs, understanding how they complement each other, and selecting the most appropriate one(s) for your specific needs
- Real-world examples of how projects are successfully applying TMFAs in their implementation work

## Definitions

- **Theories** describe causal **mechanisms of change** and predict outcomes following certain activities (e.g., COM-B Theory, Normalization Process Theory)
- **Models (or process models)** specify the **stages** in a process — these are often iterative (e.g., Implementation Mapping, Knowledge-to-Action, Getting to Outcomes)
- **Frameworks** help identify key **factors** that may influence the implementation process or its outcomes (e.g., Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research, RE-AIM)
- **Approaches** are a catch-all term describing **tools and strategies** used in the implementation process (ERIC list of implementation strategies, Proctor's taxonomy of implementation outcomes)

## Functions and purpose of TMFAs

Before applying a TMFA, it's important to understand what it is designed to do. Regularly reflecting on the function and intent of each TMFA can help you become more effective at selecting and applying them in your work. When presented with a TMFA, ask yourself:

- What would be the point of using this TMFA?
- When could it be used?
- Is it similar to another TMFA that I am more familiar with?

## Combining TMFAs

Rarely a single TMFA will meet all your implementation needs, but you can combine them. Fully integrating TMFAs across all stages of implementation involves:

- Selecting a process model that outlines the stages of your initiative; then
- Identifying additional TMFAs that align with the purpose of each step and can support or reinforce your process.

## Selecting TMFAs for your grant-funded work

When preparing funding applications or publications, it can be overwhelming to list all the TMFAs used throughout your project. Focus on highlighting only a few TMFAs that directly support your overarching research goals.

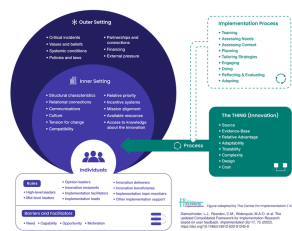
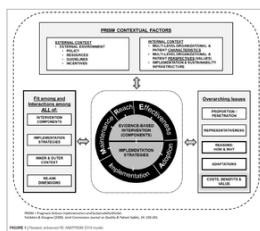
Other TMFAs can still be used, - these often function as sensemaking or structuring tools, or help you enact secondary objectives of the research. They do not necessarily need to be fully described in grants in particular.

## Deep Dive: Frameworks Covered

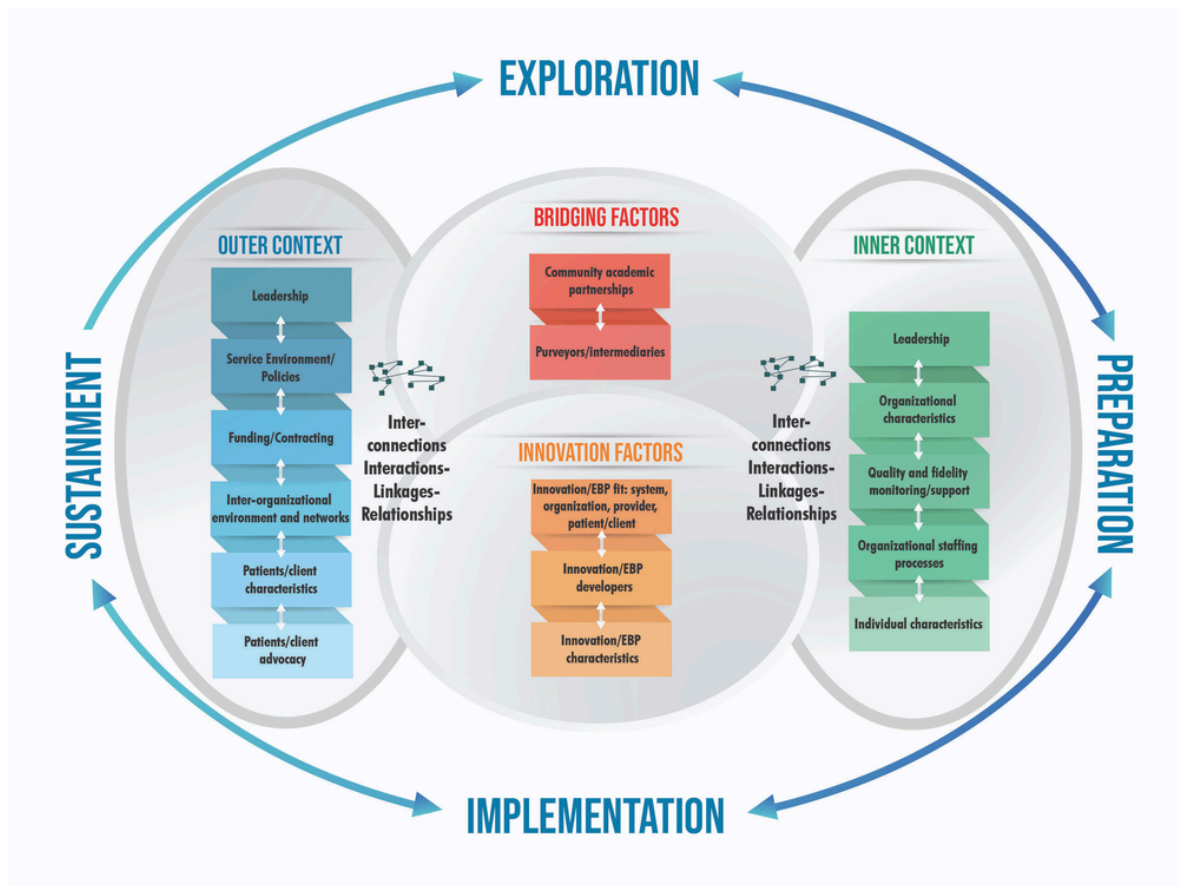


This session explored three widely used frameworks to support implementation planning, evaluation, and sustainability.

Click in a framework to see full image and reference.

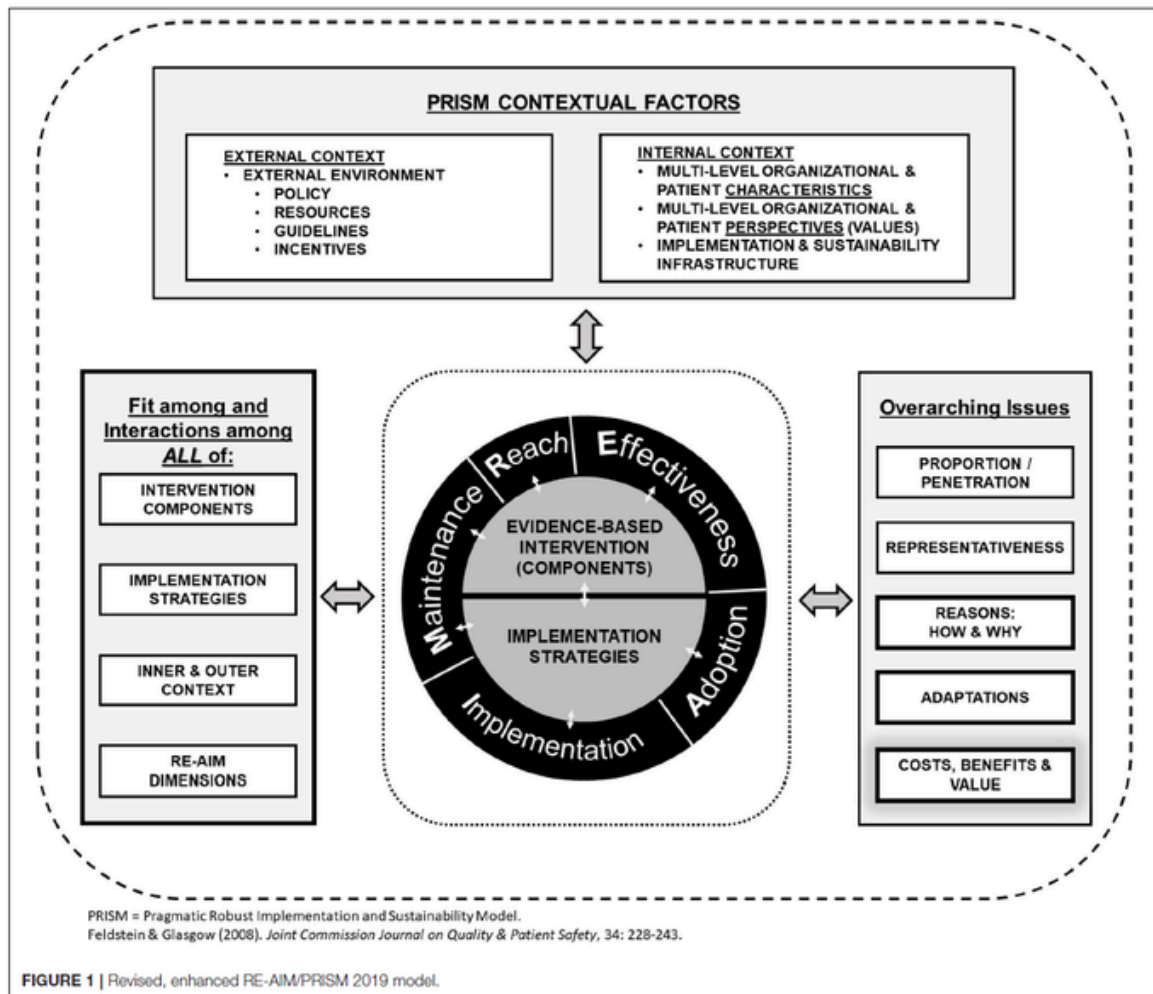


## Exploration, Preparation, Implementation, Sustainment (EPIS)



**Reference:** Moullin, J.C., Dickson, K.S., Stadnick, N.A. et al. Systematic review of the Exploration, Preparation, Implementation, Sustainment (EPIS) framework. *Implementation Sci* 14, 1 (2019). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13012-018-0842-6>

## Reach, Effectiveness, Adoption, Implementation, Maintenance/ Sustainability (RE-AIM)



**Reference:** Glasgow RE, Harden SM, Gaglio B, Rabin B, Smith ML, Porter GC, Ory MG and Estabrooks PA (2019) RE-AIM Planning and Evaluation Framework: Adapting to New Science and Practice With a 20-Year Review. *Front. Public Health* 7:64. doi: [10.3389/fpubh.2019.00064](https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2019.00064)

# Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research (CFIR)

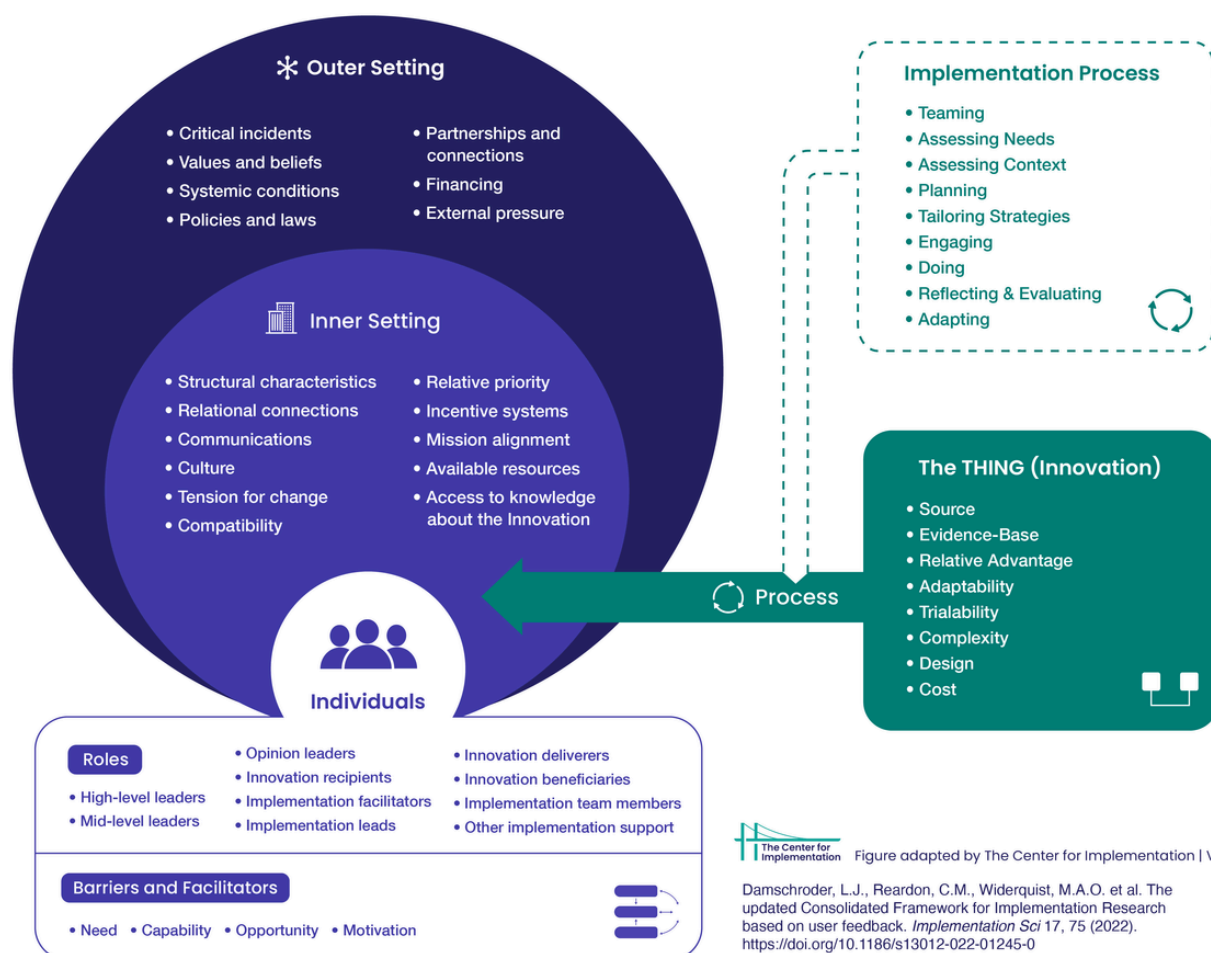


Figure adapted by The Center for Implementation | V2024.01

Damschroder, L.J., Reardon, C.M., Widerquist, M.A.O. et al. The updated Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research based on user feedback. *Implementation Sci* 17, 75 (2022). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13012-022-01245-0>

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