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Engagement logics: How partners for sustainability-oriented innovation manage differences between organizational logics

Rosina Watson [1] | **Hugh N. Wilson** [2] | **Emma K. Macdonald** [3]

[1]Sustainable Business Group, Cranfield School of Management, Bedford, UK

[2]Department of Marketing, Warwick Business School, University of Warwick, Coventry, UK

[3]Stephen Young Institute for International Business, Strathclyde Business School, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, Scotland, UK

Correspondence
Rosina Watson, Sustainable Business Group, Cranfield School of Management, College Road, Cranfield, Bedford MK43 0AL, UK.
Email: rosina.watson@cranfield.ac.uk

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Abstract

Innovation partnerships frequently experience tensions due to differences in partners' organizational logics. The literature recommends that partners adopt collaborative, empathetic mindsets but even so, tensions can threaten outcomes and partnership continuation. Difficulties can be exacerbated when firms engage stakeholder organizations in sustainability-oriented innovation projects, where each partner is seeking their own combination of social, environmental, and economic objectives. This study explores strategic responses to these differences in logics through eight case studies of sustainability-oriented innovation engagements between a focal business and an external organization. The key finding is that partners can respond to their differing logics by shaping a new "engagement logic" that guides members of both (or all) organizations. A logic frame with four value-related dimensions—value salience, instrumentality, temporality, and language—allows a subtly idiosyncratic engagement logic to be created that is acceptable to both parties. This classification of ingredients of a logic frame forms a wider contribution to the institutional-logics literature. A complementary range of logic practices is identified, covering logic emergence, logic enactment, and boundary defining. The engagement logic aids the partnership by contributing to four partnership-level generative outcomes: partnership commitment, capability integration, scope flexibility, and system orientation. A notable finding is the presence of a logic boundary, specified in work, time, and space, enabling the engagement logic to co-exist with organizational logics; a research direction is whether this boundary also exists in logics at organizational and field levels. The study shows partnerships to be a new context within which novel logics can emerge, contributing to an understanding of how logics evolve.

KEYWORDS

cross-sector, innovation, institutional logics, partnership, sustainability

1 | INTRODUCTION

Businesses partner with other organizations for many reasons, from filling skills gaps to increasing market power (Haus-Reve et al., 2019). In particular, sharing resources and capabilities through partnerships has been found to stimulate innovation (Chesbrough & Schwartz, 2007). Partnerships, or "voluntary collaborations between two or more organizations" (Long & Arnold, 1995, p. 6), are important not only for the partners but also for the evolution of socio-technical systems (Seitanidi et al., 2010).

Partnerships are complex to govern, however (Rivera-Santos et al., 2017). They involve organizations voluntarily combining resources that are otherwise separately managed (Lavie, 2006). The partners have their own goals as well as the partnership's common goals (Clarke & MacDonald, 2019). Differences in goals lead to tensions (Rivera-Santos et al., 2017) that can limit outcomes and even cause partnership breakdown (Ashraf et al., 2017). Addressing these tensions requires not only contractual arrangements but also more relational forms of governance, particularly if partners are seeking to continuously innovate together rather than join forces purely to exploit an innovation (Hofman et al., 2017; Pilbeam et al., 2012).

Partnerships intending to deliver sustainability-oriented innovations face further complexity in the differences to be managed. These innovation initiatives aim to achieve multiple and potentially conflicting "triple-bottom-line" (Elkington, 1997) goals: social, environmental, and economic. The partners may prioritize different aspects of the triple bottom line reflecting their different values, thereby frequently exacerbating tensions between them (Watson et al., 2018). Furthermore, deep engagement between the parties is required to create successful sustainability-oriented innovations (Austin & Seitanidi, 2012), further increasing the scope for tensions to emerge. This matters because partnerships for sustainability are recognized as critical to the achievement of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (see SDG 17).

Institutional logics provide a helpful lens for considering the partners' differing perspectives. Logics are "socially constructed rules of action, interaction, and interpretation that guide and constrain individuals and organizations" (York et al., 2016, p. 581). Critical to logics are values: "elemental components of logics" that enable their "synchronization and prioritization" (Lee & Lounsbury, 2015, p. 861). Logics therefore have a logic frame (Brenk et al., 2019) that defines a set of common values, as well as a set of normative enactment practices that apply these values and embeds them culturally

Practitioner points

- In pursuit of sustainability-oriented innovation, organizations collaborate with diverse partners to benefit from their differences.
- However, the differences that make partners attractive are also a source of tension due to differing organizational logics, the socially constructed rules of action that guide organizational culture and employee behaviors.
- Multiple case studies of partnerships for sustainability-oriented innovation show that partners can respond to their differing logics by shaping a common "engagement logic" that provides common rules for all employees involved.
- This engagement logic can help by boosting partner commitment, aiding the synthesis of partners' capabilities, giving the partnership the flexibility to extend its scope, and focusing it on system change.
- To shape such a common logic, partners should explicitly discuss partner's joint and separate goals. The article outlines four "dimensions" that can then help to find common ground.
- Partners should reinforce the shared logic by extolling it internally, ensuring adherence to it, and advocating for it externally.

(Lawrence & Suddaby, 2013). For partners within the same institution, the institutional logic would be expected to provide rules of engagement to guide the behavior of all. Often, however, the whole point of partnering for sustainability-oriented innovation is to access complementary resources from partners with a different institutional heritage (Austin & Seitanidi, 2012), and thus acquire expertise in specific social or environmental issues (Albino et al., 2012). It is known that the resulting differences in logics can be ameliorated through collaborative attitudes such as flexibility (Voltan & de Fuentes, 2016) and goodwill (Sharma & Bansal, 2017). However, despite such partnering principles being widely promulgated to practitioners (Kiron et al., 2015), sustainability partnerships remain challenging (Filho et al., 2024).

Much prior work on sustainable innovation partnerships takes a simple view of each party's logics, assuming, say, that private-sector firms have a mainly "commercial" logic and nonprofits a "social" one (Sharma & Bansal, 2017), when the reality is that partners bring

their own specific organizational logic to the partnership rather than a generic institutional one (Jay, 2013). Businesses may bring rich unique logics as they incorporate different aspects of sustainability into their strategies (Hahn et al., 2015). Our research was therefore motivated by the question: How do partners for sustainability-oriented innovation work together when their organizational logics differ? We explored this question through eight case studies of sustainability-oriented innovation partnerships between a consumer-goods business and an external organization (nonprofit or for-profit).

The key finding from these data is the frequent unanticipated emergence of a new partnership-specific logic. While work on partnerships has encouraged empathy for the other party's logic (Murphy & Arenas, 2011), it tends to be assumed that the parties continue to be separately guided by their own organizational logics (Ashraf et al., 2017). By contrast, we uncover a further means by which partners manage their differences: the creation of a new logic specific to a partnership project or initiative, which we call an *engagement logic*. This term draws on a concept from business relationship literature: interorganizational engagement (or "engagement" for short). We define interorganizational engagement as a mutual commitment to an active relationship with an agreed purpose (adapted from Mollen & Wilson, 2010; Kleinaltenkamp et al., 2019; Wilson, 2019). The engagement logic allows the common purpose to be pursued flexibly and collaboratively. Just as institutional logics comprise both symbolic elements and material practices (York et al., 2016, p. 581), we find that engagement logics are oriented by a logic frame that defines common values, and the logics are maintained by a set of logic-enactment practices.

We contribute to the literature on sustainable innovation partnerships by showing that engagement logics are an additional means through which partnerships can overcome their differences and indeed flourish through them, as we identify four "generative outcomes" of the engagement logic that contribute to partnership goals.

Our second contribution is to literature on the framing of logics. We synthesize and extend prior work to delineate four value-related dimensions of logic frames: value salience, instrumentality, temporality, and language. These allow the emergence of idiosyncratic engagement logics that creatively find common ground between the partners' organizational logics and steer their joint work. These four logic frame dimensions may apply to logics in other contexts too, aiding an understanding of the means by which logic blending and hybridization (Besharov & Smith, 2014) can occur.

Our third contribution is in the concept of the logic boundary. The engagement logic co-exists with organizational logics through an intangible boundary within which the engagement logic applies. This limits the logic's scope in work, space, and time. Again, logic boundaries may prove to exist in contexts other than engagement logics.

Finally, our findings contribute to an understanding of the origins and evolution of logics. Adding to previous work identifying the emergence of logics in settings from fields to specific organizations, we show that interorganizational engagements form a further locus where new logics can emerge. Furthermore, the enactment practice of "logic advocating" suggests that these new logics may in turn contribute to logic evolution elsewhere.

2 | BACKGROUND

We first establish the role of partnerships for innovation, particularly sustainable innovation, before we examine how innovation partners can productively manage their differences. We then look at work that applies an institutional-logics lens to these differences, concluding with the conjecture that new, combined logics could occur within partnerships for sustainable innovation.

2.1 | The role of partnerships in sustainable innovation

Organizations seek innovation partners to share risks, pool resources, and build knowledge (Gillier et al., 2010). Innovation partnerships can generate new products and incremental sales (Haus-Reve et al., 2019; Pemartín et al., 2018), as well as develop skills that enhance future partnering efforts (Belitski et al., 2023; van Beers & Zand, 2014). However, innovation partnerships are "not innovation-enhancing per se"; they have to balance "gains and pains" (Hottenrott & Lopes-Bento, 2016, p. 774). For example, identifying partners with relevant external knowledge entails costs in search and knowledge disclosure (Belitski et al., 2023). Furthermore, investments in partnership coordination are needed to build trust (Haus-Reve et al., 2019; Pemartín et al., 2018), without which levels of innovation are reduced (Hottenrott & Lopes-Bento, 2016).

From a focal firm's perspective, partnerships are a form of stakeholder engagement—defined as organizational practices undertaken to involve stakeholders in a positive manner in organizational activities (Greenwood, 2007)—one such activity being innovation (Ayuso et al., 2011). Engaging stakeholders, including employees, customers, communities, and partners, in innovation processes opens up innovation opportunities (Leonidou et al., 2020) by bringing diverse perspectives,

enriching creativity, and enhancing problem-solving (Payne et al., 2008; West et al., 2014). Stakeholder engagement leads to propositions that better meet market demands and societal expectations (Mitchell et al., 2022; Roberts & Candi, 2014). Furthermore, engaged stakeholders are prepared to invest resources beyond those of a more transactional exchange (Hollebeek et al., 2023).

There is an even greater need for stakeholder engagement in the context of sustainability-oriented innovation (Adams et al., 2016), for two main reasons. First, solutions to multifaceted sustainability problems require the involvement of diverse stakeholders to access expertise in complex social, environmental, and economic issues (Filho et al., 2024; Stephan et al., 2019). Second, partners may help companies to establish legitimacy with customers, communities, or others for their innovation (Mitchell et al., 2022). Overall, there is evidence that sustainability-oriented innovation actually *depends* on stakeholder engagement activities (Adams et al., 2016). For example, the more proactive a firm's environmental strategy, the greater its stakeholder integration capability (Sharma & Vrendenburg, 1998), and this stakeholder integration can in turn increase an organization's environmental innovation capability (Klewitz & Hansen, 2014).

We adopt Adams et al.'s (2016) definition of sustainability-oriented innovation as making deliberate changes to products, processes, organizations, and wider systems to deliver environmental and/or social as well as economic value. Adams et al. (2016) define a spectrum of three types of sustainability-oriented innovation: operational-optimization innovations reduce harm through incremental improvements to current products and services; organizational-transformation innovations create market opportunities through novel products, services, or business models; and systems-building innovations involve collaborating beyond the firm to drive system change. These outcomes are influenced by partnership scope: a narrow, discrete project and a prescriptive product-development process are more likely to lead to incremental innovation, while an open-ended, multifaceted initiative is more likely to produce radical, unexpected change (Bodas Freitas & Fontana, 2018) and generate impacts at the field level (Stadtler & Karakulak, 2022).

To gain from investment in collaborating, partners expect to help each other to attain each organization's private goals (Castañer & Oliveira, 2020), including commercial goals and sustainability outcomes such as reduced environmental footprint or increased social value (Watson et al., 2018). Wider relationship and learning benefits can also flow, particularly from cross-sector partnerships (Austin & Seitanidi, 2012; Koschmann et al., 2012). However, achieving productive partnerships is not straightforward, particularly in context of sustainability-oriented innovations where partners are likely embedded in contrasting institutional fields (Le Ber & Branzei, 2010). We next explore the challenge of managing differences between partners.

2.2 | Managing differences in partnerships for sustainability-oriented innovation

Differences between innovation partners present both opportunities and challenges. It is long established that dissimilar organizations can work together to create "collaborative advantage" by sharing heterogeneous resources and capabilities (Huxham, 1993). Collaboration is "a process through which parties who see different aspects of a problem can constructively explore their differences and search for solutions that go beyond their own limited vision of what is possible" (Gray, 1985, p. 5). However, dissimilarity implies differences in goals and priorities, which present particularly stark challenges in sustainable-innovation contexts where organizations with different institutional origins may assess success and failure very differently (Driessen & Hillebrand, 2013), making these partnerships vulnerable to conflict (Le Ber & Branzei, 2010).

To achieve positive outcomes, partners must pay attention to partnership governance. Structural dimensions of governance include decision-making structures and formal agreements. Contracts may incorporate mechanisms aimed at enhancing goal alignment, avoiding misunderstandings about each other's intentions, and signaling commitment, particularly with unfamiliar partners (Hofman et al., 2017). Relational governance dimensions include trust, norms, and patterns of communication (Griffin & Hauser, 1996; Stadtler & Karakulak, 2022). For example, frequent, reciprocal communication, as well as the creation of shared experiences, help to generate trust, support project outcomes, and enhance innovation quality (Pemartín et al., 2018). However, the extent to which partners see the value in investing in such governance mechanisms may depend on the nature of the innovation sought. To achieve an incremental innovation goal, high-frequency interaction may be perceived as unnecessary and time-wasting (Pemartín et al., 2018). On the other hand, when the goal of innovation is to confront systemic sustainability problems, deep engagement with diverse stakeholders may be necessary for bringing in outside learning, addressing problem ambiguity through definitional consensus, identifying and mitigating risks, and better resolving ethical challenges (Mitchell et al., 2022).

Sustainability-oriented innovation partnerships frequently involve organizations with different institutional heritages—for example, a business partnering with a charity or government organization (Watson et al., 2020)—precisely to access complementary resources and perspectives (Austin & Seitanidi, 2012). Institutional theory is therefore a useful lens through which to examine the particular challenges of these collaborations. Institutions have an institutional logic, comprising "both symbolic elements such as shared beliefs, interests, preferences, and goals, and material means, such as practices, governance arrangements, and organizational forms" (York et al., 2016, p. 581). This logic, therefore, influences both the goals that actors find salient and the means selected for achieving them (Thornton, 2002). The literature tends to collectively term the "symbolic elements" as a logic frame (Brenk et al., 2019) or value frame (Clune & O'Dwyer, 2020); this specifies in particular the institution's core values (Lee & Lounsbury, 2015). "Material means" tend to be described through a range of normative practices, known as institutional work, aimed at creating, maintaining, and disrupting institutions (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2013). In the empirical work that follows, we adopt this approach by unpacking how values are integrated into a logic frame, and what normative practices shape and enact it.

The majority of research into logic tensions in partnerships is situated in the context of cross-sector (social) partnerships (Ashraf et al., 2017; Dentoni et al., 2016; Selsky & Parker, 2005; Sharma & Bansal, 2017). Broadly, this literature concludes that *if* cross-sector partners can effectively work together despite their differing logics, then they can combine their complementary resources to address social and environmental challenges which are difficult for each to solve alone (Jamali et al., 2011; Sloan & Oliver, 2013). But, that is a big "if". Ashraf et al.'s (2017) quantitative study establishes that the incompatibility of logics negatively impacts the survival of cross-sector partnerships, with power imbalance intensifying this adverse impact. However, this negative effect is moderated by the partners' dependence on each other's resources, with higher interdependence seemingly compelling partners to compromise even in the face of logic incompatibility. However, scant research exists on how this compromise can be achieved. Voltan and De Fuentes (2016) suggest that organizations demonstrating "a commitment to consistency in the values and goals of who was engaged, and some degree of flexibility in the organizational culture" (p. 463) are best able to deal with conflicting logics in collaborative ventures. Findings in parallel literatures, which use the lenses of paradox theory or social framing processes to examine tensions in cross-sector partnerships, similarly suggest that effective responses start with a willingness to grapple with differences (Le Ber & Branzei, 2010; Sharma & Bansal, 2017). This is highlighted in nascent literature on partnerships in the sustainable-innovation context (Watson et al., 2020). Nonetheless, despite widespread advice to practitioners on how best to handle differences between them, failure rates in sustainability-oriented innovation partnerships remain obstinately high (Stibbe & Prescott, 2020; Hottenrott & Lopes-Bento, 2016; Kiron et al., 2015).

2.3 | From institutional logics to organizational logics

Complicating the picture, each partner may *internally* experience plural, potentially incompatible institutional logics refracted through field-level structures (Greenwood et al., 2011). Logic incompatibility can arise due to differences between the goals and the means associated with logics (Pache & Santos, 2010). Moreover, since goals "reflect [organizational] core values and beliefs," they can be "hard to challenge or modify" (Besharov & Smith, 2014, p. 367), so resulting tensions can be deep-seated and problematic. Much relevant research focuses on entities that straddle organizational fields, known as hybrid organizations, investigating how they integrate multiple institutional logics. For example, private medical companies combine business and medical logics (Reay & Hinings, 2009); microfinance providers combine development and banking logics (Battilana & Dorado, 2010); and public-good and market logics coexist within universities (Upton & Warshaw, 2017).

Even organizations drawing mainly on one institution's logic may be balancing competing institutional demands (Quélin et al., 2017) and is thereby guided by two or more logics. For example, for-profit businesses increasingly strive to temper a classic commercial logic by incorporating social and/or environmental objectives (Hahn et al., 2015). For-profit partners can therefore experience conflicting logics when collaborating to solve social or environmental problems. For example, Stadtler and Van Wassenhove (2016) observed that businesses within a coalition providing logistics support for disaster relief experienced a "co-opetition paradox": they collaborated to create social value but worried about losing competitive advantage by doing so. Hence, even organizations situated in the *same* sector can hold their own hybrid logic, so there is the potential for multiple permutations of tensions when two organizations come together. Research on partnerships for sustainability-oriented innovation has not fully explored these nuances and has tended to assume pure institutional logics (e.g., commercial or social) logics

on each side (Sharma & Bansal, 2017). Hence, our research question: How do partners for sustainability-oriented innovation work together when their organizational logics differ?

How organizations cope *internally* with tensions from such competing logics may shed light on what we might expect when they occur *between* organizations. One broad approach is to decrease the centrality of competing logics (Besharov & Smith, 2014) by structurally separating the logics within an organization through compartmentalization (Gümüsay et al., 2020), perhaps by allocating the opposing poles of a tension to different organizational units (Hahn et al., 2015; Smith & Lewis, 2011). The other broad approach is to blend logics into a new hybrid logic enacted through new prescriptions and practices (Gümüsay et al., 2020). This raises the question: Might partnerships similarly respond to logic incompatibility by logic blending? While this question has not received explicit focus, prior work hints at this possibility, as we consider next.

2.4 | Toward new common logics

We have discussed how new hybrid logics can emerge at organizational level in response to overlapping institutional fields. This phenomenon has also been observed at the level of organizational fields (Glynn & Lounsbury, 2005). For example, York et al. (2016) show how incompatible logics evolved into a hybridized logic in the wind energy field comprising multiple stakeholders, including social organizations, utilities, and policy bodies. They find that even at the field level, new hybrid organizations play a critical role in legitimizing and embedding the new field logic.

A handful of recent studies has hinted at the potential for similar processes of logic innovation and emergence at the level of a partnership. Ordonez-Ponce et al. (2021) found that participants in a large multisector partnership for sustainability were actively "seeking a space outside the limitations of their own organizational contexts, and the attendant institutional value logics that define them, to construct more integrative models" (p. 1196). Their collective focus on a long-term sustainability outcome that would benefit them all became "the glue" that kept diverse partners working together (Ordonez-Ponce et al., 2021). Yin and Jamali (2021) provided evidence that a partnership logic (in the sense of a logic or orientation *in favor of* partnership) is characterized by an "either/and mindset" (p. 690), in which interests are seen as interdependent, and in which multiple goals are pursued as compatible, has greater potential to create value; however, these authors did not explore whether partnership-specific logics emerged from this endeavor to align goals. Dentoni et al.'s (2021) conceptual article argued that "by building narratives that transcend multiple logics, nurturing the emergence of new logics, and renegotiating based on logics, a partnership can foster deeper dialogue among its members, question and rediscuss goals and activities, and change strategic intent when necessary" (p. 1238). However, whether new logics do indeed emerge through partnerships remains to be explored empirically.

In this research, we respond to calls for studies that focus "on the impact of differences in logics between a more diverse set of actors" (Ashraf et al., 2017, p. 818) by applying an institutional-logics lens to the response to differences between partners for sustainability-oriented innovation.

3 | METHOD

A multiple-case study design (Yin, 2014) was used to explore responses to differences in logics in partnerships for sustainability-oriented innovation. Purposive sampling identified eight sustainability-oriented innovation initiatives or engagements between a focal business in the UK consumer-goods sector and another organization (Table 1). Sometimes these innovation engagements were just one project within a wider partnership; in other cases, the project dyad was examined in the context of a wider multi-stakeholder initiative. Cases were selected to represent a range of innovation types, partnership contexts, and nonprofit and for-profit partner types, allowing a variety of combinations of organizational logics to be studied. Diversity was increased by selecting focal businesses from a range of sectors, mitigating for potential isomorphism (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

In each case, primary and secondary data were collected (Table 1). Semi-structured interviews were held with multiple individuals from both partner organizations. Multiple participants improved data reliability, and different perspectives improved the validity of theorizing (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). Participants described the engagement's objectives and motivations, how the project was set up and run, how it evolved, how any challenges were overcome, and what was learned from the engagement. Fifty-five interviews (31 with focal businesses, 18 with partners, 6 with other parties) with 52 individuals (3 of whom were interviewed for two projects), lasting an average of 50 min, were recorded and transcribed. Interview data was enriched with observational data and documentary evidence.

The interview protocol followed standard advice to minimize social desirability bias (Bergen & Labonté, 2020),

TABLE 1 Case data.

CASE (CODE) Focal business Partner	Number of interviews	Partner type	Innovation type[a]	Context[b]	Project description
1. **CLOTHES (CLOTH)**	7	Nonprofit	I	D	*Shwopping*: Customers donate clothing at M&S or Oxfam stores and receive vouchers for M&S purchases. 2–3 m garments donated per annum.
Marks & Spencer (M&S)	4				
Oxfam	3				
2. **GADGETS (GADG)**	5	Nonprofit	I	D	*Gadget trade in*: Retailer Argos worked with nonprofit WRAP to launch trade-in service online and across 800 stores. It allows customers to trade in phones and tablets for an Argos gift card.
Argos	3				
WRAP	2				
3. **BEER (BEER)**	6	For-profit	P	D	*Product & process innovations*: Brewer Adnams develops beers for M&S to support their sustainability targets, and advises M&S on sustainability processes.
Adnams	4				
M&S	2				
4. **FREEZERS (FREZ)**	6	Nonprofit; for-profit	S	M	*Refrigerants Naturally*! Coalition acting against ozone depletion by replacing greenhouse gases in point-of-sale fridges with climate-friendly refrigerants. Members are Unilever, Coca-Cola, Pepsico, Red Bull, Greenpeace, and UN Environment.
Unilever	2				
Greenpeace	2				
Other parties	2				
5. **BEAUTY (BEAU)**	6	Nonprofit; for-profit	S	M	*Beauty & Personal Care*: Walmart, Target, and Forum collaborated to make beauty and personal care more sustainable. Forum worked with manufacturers and retailers to agree an agenda for action, initially developing common criteria for sustainable products.
Walmart	1				
Forum for the Future (Forum)	2				
Other parties	3				
6. **PHONES (PHON)**	11	For-profit	P	M	*Encom Supplier Forum*: An innovation challenge contest provokes consumer device suppliers (e.g., handsets, broadband hubs) to improve sustainability, reducing carbon, cost, and risk.
Encom[c]	8				
Suppliers[c]	2				
Other parties	1				
7. **SPORT (SPRT)**	6	Nonprofit	I	D	*The Supporters' Club* (*TSC*): Encom invites pay-TV Sport subscribers to make monthly donations to TSC. ActiveAid then grants TSC funds to nonprofits that use sport to help disadvantaged youth.
Encom[c]	4				
ActiveAid[c]	2				
8. **HERITAGE (HRTG)**	8	Nonprofit	I	M,D	*Process innovations*: Informal relationship between brewer and preservation society centered on sharing environmental innovations in both organizations (e.g., heat recovery, packaging, waste management).
Adnams	4				
National Trust	4				
Total interviews	55				

[a]I denotes process innovations; P denotes product innovations; S denotes innovation in a wider system.
[b]D denotes a purely dyadic relationship; M denotes a dyad within the context of a multi-stakeholder initiative.
[c]Encom and ActiveAid are pseudonyms. PHONES involved two anonymous suppliers.

a clear danger when sustainability is involved. Questions were open, beginning with a simple request to tell the story of the partnership. Probes used indirect wording when the topic might trigger a socially desirable response (Fisher, 1993): for example, rather than asking "Was the project a success?", interviewees were asked: "How did you judge whether the project was a success or not?" and "What has been the attitude towards this project in your organization more generally?" Less socially desirable positions were normalized (Schwarz & Oyserman, 2001). For instance, to reduce the danger of interviewees expecting to describe desirable partnerships as having a fully common goal and fully collaborative behaviors, interviewees were asked: "Why did you want to work with them? Why did

they want to work with you?" and "How did you generally talk to each other?" Triangulation between interviewees was sought by, for example, asking each partner about the outcome constructs of the other: "How did your partner(s) judge success?" Triangulation between data sources was also used through documentary and observational evidence.

Data were analyzed in NVivo. Analysis moved within and across cases, and between data and extant theory, to develop constructs and their relationships. We began by consolidating the multiple sources into an extensive narrative for each case, written from the perspectives of both the focal business and their partner. Guided by literature, we conducted initial within-case coding by asking respondents about what differences——in values and otherwise——were sources of tension in the project, and how were they dealt with. At the end of this process, we had coded a set of initial concepts within each case. Within-case narratives and findings were validated through follow-up discussions with company representatives.

We then applied analytic induction across cases to test ideas and build theory (Bansal & Roth, 2000; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Cases were analyzed and compared in the order denoted in Table 1, such that contrasting dyads (i.e., different partner type, innovation type, and context) were considered in each step. Starting with Case 1, the first-order concepts coded during the within-case analysis were further analyzed and consolidated into second-order themes (Gioia et al., 2013). Second-order themes were supported or modified by evidence represented by the first-order concepts in Case 2, with new themes being added as needed. This process was repeated for all cases. Having completed all rounds of coding, we compared the emergent data structure with prior findings. Moving between findings and literature, we refined our final set of second-order themes, renaming them if an existing term accurately represented the data, and further distilling themes into aggregate dimensions (Gioia et al., 2013).

The mid-range theory thus developed falls within the meta-theory of institutional logics (Thornton & Ocasio, 2008). Hence, coding was attentive to both the symbolic elements of a logic, represented by a logic frame, and related social practices (York et al., 2016). As a common logic for the partnership emerged as an unexpected response to different organizational logics, coding increasingly focused on this, even as the organization-specific logics were also noted.

Figure 1 shows the resulting final data structure. Interview data provided insights across all aggregate dimensions, particularly explicating dimensions of logic framing. Observations and documentary evidence contributed insight into how logics were shaped and enacted. Documentary evidence augmented interview data, notably in uncovering the use of value language.

4 | FINDINGS: ENGAGEMENT LOGICS

Figure 2 summarizes the findings graphically. Partners for sustainability-oriented innovation exhibit *logic emergence* practices, investigating each other's logics and shaping a common engagement logic informed by balance-of-power considerations and resource interdependence. *Logic framing* practices define a frame that guides members of both partners across four value dimensions: value salience, instrumentality, temporality, and language. *Logic enactment* practices embed the logic, creating adherence to it and advocating it to third parties. Part of the (tacit) logic design is *boundary defining*, through which the limits within which the logic applies are specified. *Engagement outcomes* include organizational and societal outcomes, as well as a set of four outcomes relating to the nature and functioning of the partnership itself, which our evidence suggests are enhanced by the existence of an engagement logic. Consistent with Yin and Jamali (2021), we term these as "generative" outcomes because they are instrumental in the partnership's ability to achieve organizational and societal outcomes both now and into the future. The Supporting Information Appendix illustrates each theme and its underpinning concepts with case data. We next detail the practices, beginning with logic framing.

4.1 | Logic framing

The logic frame orienting the engagement logic is richer than a simple set of values (Lee & Lounsbury, 2015). Instead, it is co-created between partners along four value-related dimensions: value salience, instrumentality, temporality, and language. Partners use these dimensions to navigate to a point of mutual acceptance about common values, how they should be interpreted, when they apply, and how they interrelate. Collectively, these dimensions enable a logic frame to be subtly idiosyncratic, with a potentially unique logic for each engagement. Notably, these value dimensions can also be used to analyze an organization's own logic. Table 2 describes the logic frame in each case across these dimensions, upon which we now expand.

4.1.1 | Value salience

From the data, we define value salience as the relative priority given in an engagement to different values. In our sustainable-innovation context, this can be broadly viewed as the relative priorities of diverse environmental, social, and economic goals. Each case involved two

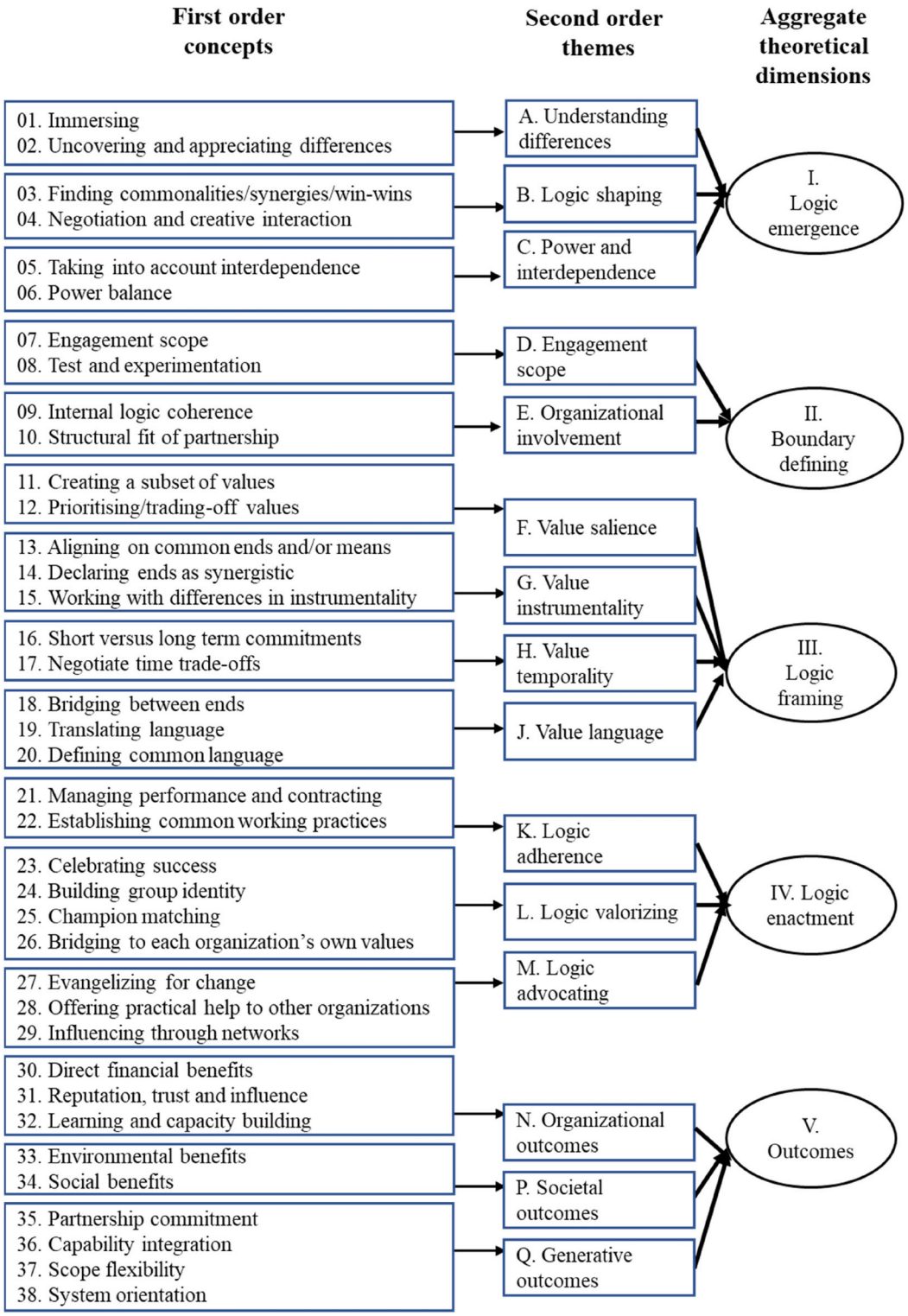

FIGURE 1 Data structure.

organizations engaging in innovations intended to deliver environmental and social value, as well as meeting their respective economic criteria. However, organizations differed on which types of value were more salient. Some variance could be explained by the difference between the market goals of businesses and the public-good goals of nonprofits; however, some for-profits gave more priority than others to social and environmental goals, integrating them more centrally into their business strategies.

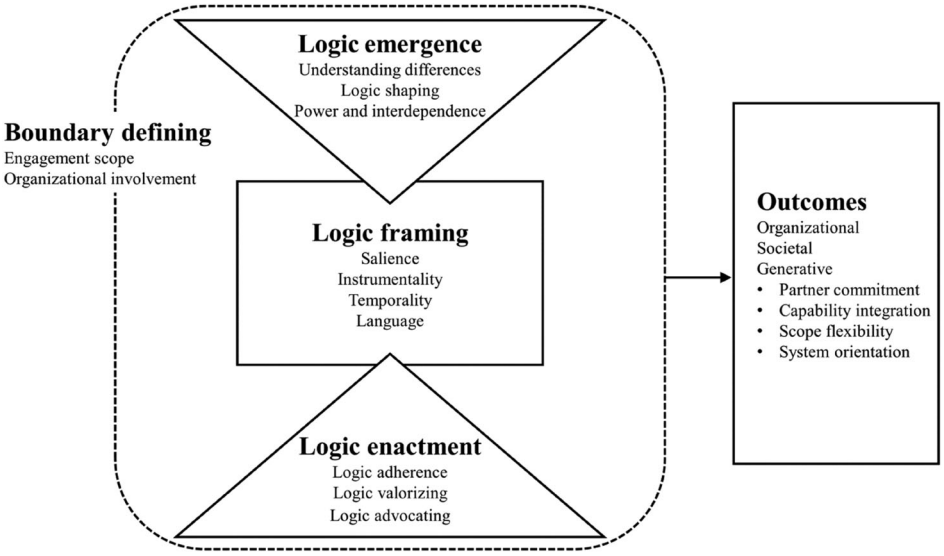

FIGURE 2 Engagement logics—A conceptual framework.

This first dimension of an engagement logic frame therefore represents a blend of these values, some of which are common to both partners and some of which are selectively prioritized. The shape of the values subset was influenced by each partner's goals for the engagement. For example, the goals of retailer Marks and Spencer (M&S) for the CLOTHES project (see project descriptions in Table 1) were threefold: to achieve economic benefit by increasing footfall and sales; to enhance brand sustainability credentials; and to gain demonstrable environmental benefits by diverting end-of-life clothing from landfill. For the aid agency partner (Oxfam), the project aimed for economic benefits by selling the collected clothing to fund Oxfam's poverty-relief projects. In this case, there was evidence of tension between the salience of environmental value (M&S) versus social value (Oxfam):

> "Sometimes our purposes might be slightly different in the sense that yes, in the end we all want the same thing. But *our* [M&S's] purpose is to collect as many garments as possible... If it ends up raising money for Oxfam, even better. But for us the most important thing is clothes not going to landfill"[1]
>
> (CLOTH_Bus2)

This tension was reconciled through an engagement logic that included and advocated both types of value, as was evident from customer communications:

> "Shwopping is about bringing an unwanted item of clothing into an M&S store each time you come to buy something new... Absolutely nothing goes to landfill and Oxfam will use the money raised to help end extreme poverty around the world"
>
> (M&S website, 10 May 2019)

So, the nature of the value creation (economic, environmental, social) that is considered salient in a partnership initiative forms the first dimension of the partners' logic frame. However, this logic frame is more than a set of prioritized values. A second dimension relating to the instrumentality of these outcomes adds important nuance, as we consider next.

4.1.2 | Value instrumentality

Engagement logics, and indeed partners' organizational logics, also differed in the extent to which social and/or environmental goals were an end in themselves or a means of capturing economic value. At brewery Adnams, there was a belief that "doing good" (social and environmental value) tended to lead to "doing well" (economic value), and that "sustainability is good business" (HRTG_Bus3). Their partner, nonprofit preservation society The National Trust, described them as: "open, honest people that are trying to make the world a better place and selling beer" (HRTG_Nonp4). In contrast, in the

[1]Data sources denoted by codes as follows: The code begins with the abbreviated case name in capital letters. For interview quotes, this is followed by a code denoting the participant's organization ("Bus" is the focal business, "Nonp" a nonprofit partner, "Forp" a for-profit partner, "Other" is other party in a multi-stakeholder project), then a number identifying the individual participant. "Doc" denotes documentary evidence. "Obs" denotes evidence from researcher observation.

TABLE 2 Logic framing.

Case	Value salience	Value instrumentality	Value temporality	Value language
CLOTHES	Equality between environmental and social objectives: diverting clothing from landfill and fundraising.	The project as a means to achieve both partners' goals through a supplier-like relationship.	Open-ended, exclusive relationship; no formal or envisaged end-date.	"Win–win". Partners recognized and valued each other's complementary assets and capabilities.
GADGETS	Economically viable trade-in service at scale, with additional environmental benefits.	A customer service goal providing proof of concept to engage other partners & scale environmental impact	Short-term consultancy-type arrangement (albeit government funded).	"Success stories" and "quick wins." WRAP valued as credible experts, Argos for their market access.
BEER	Environmental improvement, innovation, brand reputation; sustainability issues as pre-competitive.	Sustainability is a useful lens for collaboration and innovation, which in turn drive business benefit.	Evolving from transactional to a longer-term partnership, to support shared long-term goals.	Building a relationship "beyond buying and selling" (BEER_Bus2) (and reporting).
FREEZERS	Reducing environmental damage and enhancing reputation.	Limited interrelationship between environmental and financial goals; environmental solutions did not materially affect core business.	Long term: the coalition ran until the problem was solved. Mutual long-term commitment from specific individuals.	Courage to "make the world better" (FREZ_Nonp1) "Out of confrontation can arise cooperation" (FREZ_Nonp2).
BEAUTY	Addressing changing customer demand regarding product impact on health and environment.	Reducing sector's negative impacts maintains license to operate for businesses.	An exploratory first step: "picking wins" on the way toward wider-reaching collaboration in the sector.	Intention to resolve the competing "ideologies" (BEAU_Bus1) of ingredient assessment: risk versus hazard.
PHONES	Efficiency; cost reduction through innovation.	Sustainability as a lens for innovation and cost reduction: "nakedly commercial" goals (PHON_Other1).	Innovations aimed at short-term "low hanging fruit", but philosophy of continuous improvement.	"Assessment framework" to aid "benchmarks" and "examples of best practice".
SPORT	Fundraising to support social objectives	Engaging customers in Encom's social action acts to create brand affinity.	Limited to 3-year contract term; ActiveAid team recruited on short-term contracts.	Partners remain in their own "boxes" (SPORT_Bus2), both wanting to do things their own way.
HERITAGE	Reducing carbon emissions through technical and process innovation.	Environmental sustainability supports economic sustainability; equally, economic sustainability instrumental for societal and environmental ends.	Long-term horizon for partners and partnership; contrast in pace of decision making: the National Trust a "slow tanker" (HRTG_Np3).	"Sustainability is good business" (HRTG_Bus3). Using financial language to make the case for environmental investments.

PHONES partnership, the sustainability objectives needed financial justification on a case-by-case basis, as an Encom manager explained:

> I don't think we've got a case where anyone has taken everything on board wholeheartedly and said, "Yeah, absolutely, we're going to do all this because it's the right thing to do." Where we've had success is where people have said "actually, some of these things are reasonably straightforward to do, it's not going to impact quality or the service we want to provide. And there's going to be a financial benefit"
>
> (PHON_Bus7)

Among the nonprofits, some, such as WRAP, saw the achievement of financial goals as instrumental to

achieving social or environmental objectives, while others had to be vigilant that financial goals did not dilute their social or environmental objectives. For example, when Greenpeace worked with partners such as Unilever to tackle ozone-depleting refrigerants (FREEZERS), their financial policies helped them hold firm to their environmental goals:

> Greenpeace have an absolute golden rule, no corporate money. Anything. We couldn't take airplane flights, we couldn't take hotel rooms. Nothing. Nothing, nothing, nothing, nothing, nothing, and honestly, I think it made our relationships much clearer. We were there to change them, and they were there to see if they could work with us to change
>
> (FREZ_Nonp1)

Differences in the instrumentality of environmental and social values could be reconciled by the recognition of a common *end* arising from project objectives. For example, HERITAGE helped both Adnams and the National Trust achieve carbon reduction through energy innovations. Alternatively, some partners established common *means* for achieving different ends. For example, the GADGETS partners implemented a national retail trade-in scheme for consumer electronics, although for nonprofit WRAP this was a means of achieving environmental impact versus the commercial benefits sought by retailer Argos:

> looking at it from a business case point of view, how we [Argos] can get new customers in, lock them in, give them a gift voucher for their product and then they'd spend more
>
> (GADG_Bus1)

In a third approach to value instrumentality, partnerships could incorporate two different ends if these were perceived as synergistic. An example is BEAUTY, where retailer Walmart and Forum for the Future (Forum), a nonprofit sustainability consultancy, created a coalition of suppliers of beauty and personal care products, with the aim of improving the sector's overall environmental sustainability. Whereas Walmart's motivation was to maintain financial success by responding to changing consumer needs, Forum's aim was to reduce the sector's negative impacts on the environment and health. Forum judged that to achieve scale in this system-change endeavor, they needed to demonstrate its economic viability to high-profile market players. These ends were understood to be synergistic, and each was incorporated into the engagement logic espoused by project members.

4.1.3 | Value temporality

A third dimension that partners played with to find a mutually acceptable logic frame related to the timing of goal achievement. A longer-term engagement seemed to allow for more commonalities to be found between partners' objectives, since this could accommodate the delivery of both organizations' objectives over time. Though profit driven, Adnams and Unilever both took a longer-term perspective on business performance and tended also toward longer-term engagements:

> Adnams: "We're an old business and a family business. So, sustainability is really fundamentally important; you can't be 145 without having an eye to the long term"
>
> (HRTG_Bus2)

> Unilever: "We're better than most in how we invested to shape the long term"
>
> (FREZ_Bus1)

Similarly, M&S's long-term commitment to its sustainability program and its key collaborations, despite fluctuations in business performance, was widely cited as helping to accommodate the diverse goals of the partners. In BEER, Adnams and M&S employees contrasted their short-term buyer–supplier transactional engagement—"the buying and selling of things" (BEER_Bus2)—with their longer-term environmentally-focused engagement oriented around the common goals of environmental sustainability and brand building.

In contrast, temporal choices made in the two cases involving Encom constrained outcomes. In PHONES, Encom's Supplier Forum aimed to engender continuous improvement in the environmental performance of its consumer–product suppliers through product and service innovation. However, this long-term goal was in tension with the short-term purchase contracts offered to suppliers, so the engagement logic therefore had a short-term orientation. This contributed to the project creating only modest incremental innovations described as "low-hanging fruit" (PHON_Forp2). In SPORT, Encom's pay-TV sports channels innovated with sports charity ActiveAid so that customers could regularly donate to sports-for-good charities and view the positive impacts of those donations reported on TV. However, a 3-year contract governed the engagement and ActiveAid employees were on short fixed-term contracts, thus orienting the engagement logic toward the short-term objective of raising money for the charity. This severely limited the opportunities for Encom to meet its private longer-term goals of building its consumer brand and consumer relationships.

4.1.4 | Value language

Our data suggest a clear role for language in shaping a common logic frame by helping to define a shared partnership narrative that integrates the goals of each partner. In some instances, the joint team adopted the language of one partner; for example, in GADGETS, nonprofit WRAP learned to speak retailer Argos's language:

> "the project worked because we knew them so well... we knew the language to use and not to use... if you can write another chapter or another paragraph that fits seamlessly into the sustainability report, you know that organization really well"
>
> (GADG_Nonp1)

Symbolic language helped this partnership to convey the inclusion of financial ends in the engagement logic, as in WRAP staff reflecting on the joint team's access to their partner's commercial inner sanctum represented by "the top floor" (GADG_Nonp1). In other instances, common language arose organically. In the long-running FREEZERS project, the same individuals built mutual understanding over many years to the point that they "could speak shorthand together" (FREZ_Nonp1). A formal project output provided common value language in BEAUTY, namely a sustainability assessment tool for the product category.

In some cases, language helped to transcend trade-offs between sustainability and economic goals. Sustainability issues could be articulated as a technical or innovation challenge. For example, the PHONES "innovation challenge" rhetorically positioned more sustainable projects as demonstrating supplier innovativeness to the buying organization, Encom. Similarly, language around the "business case" seemed to flexibly bridge sustainability and economic goals. In GADGETS, the "business case" was a classic formal document that financially justified sustainability initiatives, whereas in HERITAGE, "business case" referred to an article of faith that sustainability and financial results were synergistic, and therefore both could be presented as ends in the engagement logic:

> this common language [allows us] to say that environmentalists can talk to operational people and financial people, to say that we aren't just tree huggers, we're not just doing this to save the planet. We are, but it actually makes business sense
>
> (HRTG_Bus3)

Individuals participating in sustainable-innovation engagements learned to translate the project's value-related language into that of their organization. In GADGETS, for example, WRAP's project manager consciously switched from the commercial language used to frame the engagement logic to the environmental language that framed WRAP's own logic.

An engagement logic frame, then, is structured by partners settling on mutually acceptable positions on the values prioritized (salience), how they relate to each other (instrumentality), the timescales by which goals are to be met (temporality), and how values are communicated (language). The frame is co-created through partners exploring each other's positions to find commonality, compromise, or synergy, as we turn to next.

4.2 | Logic emergence

Engagement logics emerge through three practices (Table 3), as we describe below.

4.2.1 | Understanding differences

A key practice involved in logic emergence was for partners to explore and acknowledge the tension-creating differences between them:

> We had to spend a year privately behind the scenes, this sort of dating dance, because our people were very nervous about Oxfam. There was a need to have reassurance in terms of brand for Oxfam and in terms of execution for M&S. We spent a year shuttling back and forth
>
> (CLOTH_Bus1)

Participants reported several approaches to this exploration of differences. Individuals with cross-sector experience were helpful, and some were specifically recruited for the project. Individuals who understood their partner and could therefore represent their needs within their own organizations were sometimes referred to as "ambassadors" (GADG_Nonp2):

> She [Argos employee] was instrumental [...] being an ambassador. She was basically a member of our team going off selling the trade-in scheme throughout numerous different teams within Argos and then tweaking things
>
> (GADG_Nonp2)

TABLE 3 Logic emergence and boundary defining.

Case	Logic emergence	Boundary defining
CLOTHES	The partnership was preceded by a 1-year "dating dance" (CLOT_Bus1) to uncover values and sources of tension. Partners created opportunities to immerse themselves in the other's world.	A key initiative of M&S's Plan-A sustainability strategy and partnership addressing end-of-life textiles. M&S's relationship historically with fundraising and campaigning teams moved to Oxfam trading division for this project.
GADGETS	Argos possessed scale and customer reach but lacked WRAP's specialist sustainability knowledge. WRAP strived to align with Argos's "business case" logic for sustainability, their corporate logic, language, and ways of working.	Narrow focus constrained project to testing a trade-in proposition for mobiles and laptops at scale. Aimed to deliver an early success story but missed opportunity to launch and roll out the service to further product categories.
BEER	Adnams' sector leadership in sustainability and willingness to share afforded them influence with M&S. The relationship evolved beyond the "buying and selling of things" (BEER_Bus2) to a wider engagement on the logic that environmental performance drives quality and enhances brand.	Working together on specific innovations broadened the scope of the relationship from the purely commercial. The involvement of a range of diverse internal teams enabled more innovative problem solving.
FREEZERS	Partners united around sharing technical solutions and holding each other accountable for implementation. Greenpeace shifted source of power from campaigning to contributing key technology to the partnership.	Bounded by its specific focus on point-of-sale refrigeration. The partners collaborated on this issue even as Greenpeace campaigned against Unilever on other environmental issues.
BEAUTY	Motivated by customer demands, Walmart leveraged market power to convene competitors across the beauty care landscape. "Seeing the system" was used to encourage players to understand others' interdependent roles.	Initial wide scope of improving the sustainability of the beauty care system; narrowed to the collectively identified objective of creating a common sustainability measure for products.
PHONES	Focused on win–win environmental gains that achieve business benefits (i.e., cost reductions and more purchases from Encom) via co-innovation. Tension arose over protection of intellectual property and short-term contracts.	Innovations seen as a technical or engineering problem-solving challenge. Using sustainability as a lens for innovation achieved broader involvement of suppliers' internal teams in sustainability concerns.
SPORT	Logic remained one of philanthropic giving, despite Encom's aspirations for the project to build and differentiate Encom's brand. Both partners felt the other had the power in the relationship. Limited effort to understand each other's goals.	The initiative was treated as a product line. The engagement was bounded by the delivery of contractual commitments.
HERITAGE	Sense of equal partnership through their managing quality heritage brands. Shared belief in collaboration to solve sustainability issues. Shared logic that environmental sustainability equates to economic sustainability longer term.	Shared logic and approach to sustainability and "looking out for each other" (HRTG_Nonp4) extended widely and deeply into both organizations.

In PHONES and BEAUTY, third-party intermediaries acted as mediators, providing a more systemic view of where partners could find commonality of goals; in an Encom manager's words, they worked to "introduce the bigger picture about trying to innovate in the space" (PHON_Bus6).

Another common theme was that immersion in the world of the partner, especially through access to physical spaces, helped create understanding "of the value drivers for both sides" (CLOTH_Bus4). M&S staff in CLOTHES spent time at Oxfam's charity stores, second-hand clothing sortation facilities, and emergency-aid warehouses, and Oxfam employees interacted with customers in the M&S stores. In HERITAGE, individuals spoke of the value of visiting each other's sites and meeting their teams as a source of mutual understanding. Two commonly mentioned capabilities supporting this understanding of differences were listening and empathizing, as this participant explained:

> listening is really important to make sure we're not only coming in with our perspective, we're understanding the needs and objectives of the other stakeholders
>
> (BEAU_Other2)

4.2.2 | Logic shaping

Uncovering these differences enabled partners to co-create a common vision of long-term success. This involved negotiation and creative interaction to find a

mutually acceptable position along the four value dimensions discussed above. In CLOTHES, the value language dimension was evident in the customer messaging developed by M&S's marketing team. This initially used language relating to the scheme's environmental benefits, but Oxfam's marketing director convinced them that adding the language of social benefit would broaden the campaign's appeal. The marketing teams subsequently incorporated both social and environmental dimensions in their talk and work more intuitively.

Agreeing a logic frame could involve trade-offs between the goals of the engagement and those of the organizations. For example, WRAP accepted the prioritization of Argos' financial and consumer metrics because the project would provide a proof of concept that they could replicate with other partners, paving the way for more radical environmentally oriented innovation. This process of co-creation was facilitated by partners recognizing ways in which their respective organizational logics were compatible. The engagement logic created for BEER foregrounded environmental improvements, because for both Adnams and M&S, environmental performance was linked to communicating product quality and enhancing their brands. In addition to this environmental engagement, the partners also engaged in buyer–seller activities in which economic objectives were salient for both parties.

4.2.3 | Power and interdependence

Logic shaping was affected by the extent to which partners needed the other's resources. In CLOTHES, for example, M&S and Oxfam evolved a blended social and environmental logic because both partners were strongly convinced of the value of the other's assets and capabilities. The shaping of an engagement logic was also influenced by the relative power of the partners, which could determine which partner's goals were prioritized. For example, in GADGETS, nonprofit WRAP accepted that the commercial goals of high-profile retailer Argos would dominate. In SPORT, both partners perceived themselves as lacking power, reducing the effectiveness of the partnership. Encom believed that ActiveAid was unresponsive to its needs because they were prioritizing another relationship, while ActiveAid was unwilling to invest resource in innovation, fearing that Encom might abandon them for another nonprofit before their investment reaped benefits. This mutually perceived lack of power, coupled with logic incompatibility, saw the SPORT engagement default to a logic of philanthropic giving, with Encom's original project aspirations of aiding brand differentiation and deriving commercial benefit never being fully realized.

4.3 | Boundary defining

Interorganizational engagements are not generally bounded by a formal shared organizational structure, and not all partner employees participate. This raises the question of how widely the engagement logic applies. We found that partnerships define a less tangible boundary within which it applies. The boundary has three aspects: work (the joint work within the logic's scope), time (limiting the logic's duration, or flexing it over time), and space (notably concerning organizational structure). Table 3 illustrates how boundary defining played out across cases. The boundary created a separation between the engagement and the respective partners such that the blended engagement logic could co-exist alongside the organizations' own logics.

4.3.1 | Work and time as boundary components

The scope of work to which the engagement logic applied was not just a function of the work that would best achieve the partnership objectives: it was also concerned with finding a scope within which the creation of a mutually acceptable logic was possible. In some projects, this scope was necessarily narrow. In FREEZERS, Unilever and Greenpeace focused solely on reducing the environmental impact of point-of-sale refrigeration equipment. This helped the engagement to coalesce around a simple project mission despite radical differences in organizational logics. In BEAUTY, Walmart and non-profit Forum created a shared understanding of the wider system before narrowing the work scope to defining a common measurement framework for the sustainability of beauty products:

> it helps to... see the map, see what the landscape is and understand where the commonalities are, like where the best opportunities are for working together and lean on those.
>
> (BEAU_Other4)

On some occasions, a clear engagement logic formed a strong enough foundation for an engagement's scope to flex over time. The engagement logic in HERITAGE was about Adnams and the National Trust supporting each other to reduce their environmental footprint to ensure the long-term resilience of both. This logic extended beyond the boundary of the specific innovations that began the engagement, to a broader intention to innovate together. Similarly, the scope of FREEZERS widened from reducing negative environmental impacts in the

partners' own operations, to successfully advocating for change in global regulations—though still in the specific domain of refrigerants. In other cases, the engagement scope narrowed so that it could adequately bound an engagement logic. For example, in GADGETS, WRAP initially scoped their engagement with Argos to include trade-in services for a wide range of consumer electronic products; however, the partners ultimately found commonality by narrowing the focus to phones and laptops only.

4.3.2 | Space: The structural extent of organizational involvement

A third aspect of the logic boundary was the bounds of the shared logic in terms of organizational structure and people. A factor influencing this structural scoping appeared to be how widely the engagement logic could realistically be followed in each organization. Where a business had an organizational logic incorporating public-good goals, an engagement logic blending social/environmental and commercial goals might have wider sympathy, allowing a broader structural scope. For example, the engagement logic in CLOTHES concerned a unique proposition for consumers that represented a triple-win: for the environment, for the recipients of Oxfam's aid programs, and for the partners' finances. This logic was broadly supported throughout M&S even when business conditions were difficult, thanks to the M&S Plan-A sustainability program, which "underpins everything the organization does" (CLOTH_Bus3). In SPORT, by contrast, the rationale for engaging with a nonprofit varied significantly across Encom departments. For the commercial team, the aim was growing revenues; for the PR team, it was enhancing the brand; while the sustainability team sought to drive social improvements. This internal tension limited the boundary of the engagement logic to the individuals most directly involved in the engagement, with a Encom project member recounting how he continuously had to sell the benefits of the engagement to different internal stakeholders, using framing tailored to the multiple internal logics:

> It takes a long time to go around to all the different parties and bring them up to speed, bring them up to speed, bring them up to speed; you go all the way around. It's a bit like [painting] the Forth Bridge [a large UK bridge which is continuously in need of repainting]
>
> (SPORT_Bus4)

How an innovation project structurally reported into each partner's organization also seemed to affect the logic boundary. In M&S, the matrixed structure of the Plan-A sustainability team led Oxfam to feel that there were advocates for CLOTHES throughout the organization, and the fact that the project reported into Oxfam's more commercially-oriented Trading Division provided a natural synergy on economic goals within the whole of that division. By contrast, the SPORT initiative reported into three different Encom functions over 3 years (sustainability, commercial, then public relations), contributing to the narrow structural boundary within Encom.

4.4 | Logic enactment

So far, we have outlined the dimensions of an engagement logic and how it is shaped between partners within a defined boundary. We now relate how partners enact or embed their engagement logic; see Table 4 for examples. As with institutional work at the organizational level, we find that interorganizational engagement logics are maintained through adherence to rules, structures, and working practices (*adherence*), and through sharing success stories and creating group identities (*valorizing*) (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2013). We add that partners endeavor to promulgate their engagement logics by *advocating* externally.

4.4.1 | Logic adherence

Partners encouraged logic adherence through a variety of joint practices. The use of common success measures for joint goals and each partner's private goals alike reinforced an engagement logic. For example, in BEER, Adnams completed onerous sustainability reporting against M&S's Plan-A targets to demonstrate progress, and spoke positively about how these measures underpinned the sustainable-innovation engagement. The nature of partnership contracts (where they existed) could also influence logic adherence. In CLOTHES, for example, the contract's open-ended timescale allowed the relationship to be framed against a long-term horizon. More informal common working practices were also evident: for example, some nonprofits adopted their business partners' ways of working, such as formalizing meeting agendas and increasing the use of spreadsheets. Protecting partners' private goals could help develop confidence in and adherence to the common engagement logic; for example, in PHONES, an independent intermediary ensured that innovations proposed to Encom by one supplier were not shared with other suppliers participating in the Supplier Forum.

TABLE 4 Logic enactment.

Case	Logic adherence	Logic valorizing	Logic advocacy
CLOTHES	Oxfam Trading division measured against M&S targets as well as their own, and "commercialized" their approach—M&S' matrixed Plan-A team ensured internal consistency.	The partners focused on their similarities in customer base, retail store presence, and brand attributes conveying quality and "doing the right thing"	–
GADGETS	WRAP accepted that Argos's financial and consumer metrics had to be met for the project to be successful, and emulated its business partners within commercially-driven projects.	Individuals with cross-sector experience acted as "ambassadors" to their partners. WRAP "translated" project benefits into environmental terms in own organization.	WRAP alone advocated for similar projects with other business partners.
BEER	M&S measured Adnams against their supplier scorecard. The involvement of M&S technicians as well as buyers helped enable innovation.	Communicating shared success stories supported the engagement logic. Cultures were aligned through shared focus on quality and embedding sustainability.	Adnams shared knowledge with other M&S suppliers through supplier workshops and case studies.
FREEZERS	A neutral secretariat organization coordinated target setting and reporting, and established common working practices.	A strong group identity was established over time between individuals who shared a personal mission to make a difference on this issue.	The engagement logic formally shifted from focusing on internal progress to advocating for wider change.
BEAUTY	The nonprofit partner facilitated the coalition and established ways of working, with an emphasis on creating mutual understanding between diverse organizations.	Group identity was built by articulating a shared long-term goal, "a North Star". There was acceptance that diverse partners could take different paths to achieving this.	The partnership's common assessment metric was handed to larger network, The Sustainability Consortium.
PHONES	Supplier environmental improvement was scored but supply contracts and IP practice did not fully evolve to support environmental innovation by suppliers.	The innovation logic was reinforced by recognizing and celebrating success. Commitment by senior individuals critical for the project's success.	The forum shared case studies and examples of best practices between supplier members.
SPORT	A formal relationship governed by a 3-year contract. The project's reporting lines into Encom changed three times.	The project team created their own identity; however, the project was not always well integrated into their own organizations.	–
HERITAGE	An informal relationship characterized by openness and a willingness to give without knowing what you might get in return. A "friendship" cemented by personal relationships.	The engagement logic was reinforced by both partners through storytelling about the partnership and its successes.	Learning from the partnership was shared with nonprofit members of the Fit for the Future network.

4.4.2 | Logic valorizing

We observed a range of practices, such as celebrating success and telling success stories, that presented a vision of what "good" looked like. These played a role in embedding the logic frame culturally. As a Greenpeace participant in FREEZERS explained:

> The people in RefNat [Refrigerants Naturally] became like a gang who knew each other, trusted each other
>
> (FREZ_Nonp1)

In some cases, "champions" from each partner who shared a passion for the engagement seemed instrumental in valorizing its logic. For example, Greenpeace International's Solution Director and Coca-Cola's CEO collaborated at a Consumer Goods Forum conference to persuade 400 companies to commit to eliminate HFCs from all new refrigeration equipment (FREEZERS). An engagement logic could be valorized by highlighting the relationship between it and each partner's logic. For example, Adnams and M&S both linked BEER with their brand values of quality and sustainability. Linking the engagement logic with an organization's sustainability strategy, such as M&S's Plan-A and Encom's Net Zero programs, was a way of doing this.

4.4.3 | Logic advocating

Engagement logics were also enacted through the partners' advocating for change to other organizations. For example, in the later period of FREEZERS, the logic's

scope extended from implementing change within the partners to evangelizing for change in other companies and in government regulation. In other instances, this advocacy extended to practical help to other organizations; for example, off the back of the BEER engagement, Adnams agreed to share their experience of improving environmental performance with other M&S suppliers, while BEAUTY's sustainability assessment framework for beauty products was made available to organizations across the sector. Sometimes, partners extended the influence of their logic through networks; for example, Adnams built on their HERITAGE partnership by joining the National Trust-sponsored "Fit for the Future" network, set up to provide nonprofits with support and best-practice examples to improve their environmental performance.

4.5 | Engagement outcomes

Finally, we explore the set of outcomes that partners sought from their joint innovation projects, and the role the common engagement logic played in realizing those outcomes, which are summarized in Table 5. To aid interpretation, the table orders the cases according to the approximate extent to which they exhibited a stronger engagement logic (interpreted as one that is more widely bounded and more clearly embedded through enactment practices). Table 5 also indicates the nature of the sustainability-oriented innovation achieved by each partnership using Adams et al. (2016) typology introduced earlier.

4.5.1 | Organizational and societal outcomes

As might be expected, partners sought a rich set of outcomes intended to benefit their own organizations as well as achieve positive impacts on wider society. Organizational outcomes included direct financial benefits from costs savings and efficiencies, increased sales, revenues, footfall, and market share, and indirect benefits from improved reputation, trust, and influence. Learning and capacity-building outcomes were also evidenced. Societal outcomes included environmental benefits from reductions in energy consumption, carbon emissions, waste, and raw materials, as well as social benefits such as poverty relief and supporting disadvantaged people.

4.5.2 | Generative outcomes

Our data also suggest that a common engagement logic can contribute to four intermediate outcomes at the level of the partnership itself. We term these "generative" outcomes because they underpin the partnership's ability to generate organizational and societal benefits from innovations.

The first is *partnership commitment*: a mutual commitment to the partnership, built on confidence in the partnership succeeding and enduring. M&S and Oxfam remained committed to the CLOTHES initiative for over 10 years despite considerable turbulence due to unrelated commercial and reputational problems. Both put significant resources into the project (marketing, PR, logistics, staff time) without recourse to detailed contracts. The clarity and mutual appeal of the partnership's triple-bottom-line logic, which was evidently synergistic with Oxfam's social focus and M&S's environmental goals, gave both partners confidence:

> Shwopping will never go away from M&S because it's intrinsic to what we do, and the relationship build is quite unique with Oxfam. The uniqueness of the relationship is that both sides are working towards common goals. There are so many ways you can cut the benefits: footfall, voucher redemption, less to landfill, charity fundraising
>
> (CLOTH_Bus3)

A counterexample is Encom and ActiveAid's SPORT partnership. Encom's aspiration was to create a new customer proposition that combined watching football with giving to charity, but rather than crafting a common (football/charity) logic, each partner stuck to their own logic:

> We are quite football/football, and they are quite charity/charity
>
> (SPRT_Bus1)

> We ended up fighting all the time about what we stood for and how we stood for it
>
> (SPRT_Bus2)

This absence of a common logic engendered low partnership commitment:

> with the power of both huge organizations not necessarily feeling like they're going in the same direction
>
> (SPRT_Nonp2)

A second related generative outcome is *capability integration*: the extent to which the partnership can design and implement innovations that draw on the capabilities of

TABLE 5 Outcomes.

Case	SOI[a]	Generative outcomes	Organizational outcomes	Societal outcomes
Band A: *Absence of engagement logic*				
SPORT	1	–	*ActiveAid*: fundraising; public awareness; experience of developing year-round funding models. *Encom*: brand value; competitor differentiation.	Support for disadvantaged young people.
Band B: *Weaker engagement logic* (*narrowly bounded and/or partially enacted*)				
PHONES	1	–	*Encom*: product and service innovations; brand reputation and protection. *Suppliers*: cost savings; increased business; employer reputation; increased sustainability awareness and skills; increased innovation capacity.	Reduced resource and energy consumption/ carbon emissions.
GADGETS	2	–	*Argos*: cost savings; increased sales and revenue; attracting and retaining customers; publicity; improved reputation; competitor and technical insight into the take-back market. *WRAP*: commercial proof of concept for take-back model; learning about commercial partnerships.	Resource recovery; establishing viability of circular business models.
BEAUTY	1 (3)	*System orientation*: sustainability assessment framework made available to organizations across the sector	*Walmart*: reputational value; shaping legislation; meeting customer demand; aligning and simplifying data; trust-based relationships with brands. *Forum*: building relationships and understanding across the sector ecosystem; sharing experience and expertise; changing mindsets of individuals.	Reduction in sector's negative impacts on the environment and health.
Band C: *Stronger engagement logic* (*widely bounded and/or consistently enacted*)				
BEER	2–3	*Scope flexibility*: initially focused on product innovation, expanding to knowledge sharing with other M&S beverage suppliers. *System orientation*: Adnams shared best practice to help improve the sustainability performance of other beverage suppliers.	*Adnams*: scale to market for innovations; increased business; reduced costs; brand exposure; reputation for sustainability leadership; continuous improvement. *M&S*: supply chain risk management; product innovation; competitor differentiation; cost savings; improved reputation; sustainability best practice.	Reduced resource and energy consumption/ carbon emissions.
CLOTHES	2–3	*Partnership commitment*: long-term commitment despite both partners' commercial and reputational challenges. *Capability integration*: an evolving configuration of physical assets, customer bases, market reach, and social capital to create a unique proposition.	*M&S*: footfall; revenue; staff engagement; improved reputation; legitimacy; learning about "unconventional" partnerships. *Oxfam*: footfall; fundraising (though sales); public awareness; economies of scale through textile sorting centers; learning about working with corporates.	Reduce waste textiles to landfill; poverty relief.
HERITAGE	2–3	*Capability integration*: identified value-creating opportunities for each other, drawing on their respective strengths. *Scope flexibility*: flexible partnership governance enabling a series of carbon reducing innovations. *System orientation*: sharing of learning with other non-profits.	*Adnams*: reduced costs; inspiration; increased sales. *National Trust*: inspiration; learning about building a business case for investments. *Both*: moral support; learning from each other; sharing intellectual property.	Reduce resource and energy consumption/ carbon emissions.
FREEZERS	3 (1)	*Partnership commitment*: long-term commitment to eliminating HFC emissions. *Scope flexibility*: widened from reducing negative environmental impacts	*Unilever*: Lower costs; reduced reputational risk; legitimacy; learning to manage relationships outside direct control; collaborative approach to	Reduce emissions of HFCs; reduced energy consumption/carbon emissions.

(Continues)

TABLE 5 (Continued)

Case	SOI[a]	Generative outcomes	Organizational outcomes	Societal outcomes
		in members' own operations, to advocating for change in global regulations. *System orientation*: advocacy for wider change; proof of the possible to others.	tackling wider environmental issues. *Greenpeace*: bringing alternative technology to market at scale; learning how to collaborate ethically with corporations.	

[a]Sustainability-Oriented Innovation (SOI) type achieved (intended in brackets if different); Adams et al., 2016: 1 = Operational optimization; 2 = Organizational transformation; 3 = System transformation.

both. The CLOTHES partnership exemplifies this. As already discussed, as part of the logic emergence practices, people on both sides of the partnership invested time in getting to know the other organization, for example by visiting each other's stores and facilities. This meant that Oxfam and M&S interviewees understood the contributions that they and their partner could make to the partnership—marketing, the ability to activate volunteers, and their respective physical infrastructure (shops, sortation centers)—with this constellation of resources evolving over time. For example, donated clothes could initially only be dropped off in Oxfam stores, but later a drop-off facility was also offered in M&S stores. Interviewees were also clear about the value that each partner derived from their partnership:

> I think we have a very good understanding of the value drivers for both sides
> (CLOTH_Bus3)

The engagement logic, then, enacted through common triple-bottom-line targets, helped partners to spot opportunities for drawing on each other's strengths in ways that would contribute to the partnership's common goals. This was also evident with National Trust and Adnams' employees (HERITAGE). Guided by an engagement logic built on a foundation of deep mutual understanding, they discerned value-creation opportunities for each other without asking:

> then with no outcome as an objective, you soon start harvesting outcomes because you're in... People keep thinking about you when something else is going on
> (HRTG_Nonp2)

The third generative outcome is *scope flexibility*: the extent to which the partnership can modify or extend its scope beyond the initial innovation project. We have seen how an engagement logic orients partners toward common goals, which may represent common ends, common means, or synergistic ends. The pursuit of these goals can enable a joint project's scope to flex over time, as illustrated in the HERITAGE case (Adnams and National Trust). The governance of this partnership was informal, based on relationships between like-minded individuals, oriented around a shared longer-term logic that "doing good" results in "doing well". This logic facilitated a wide range of emergent decarbonizing innovations, from lightweighting of beer bottles to energy efficiency measures.

A second case exhibiting scope flexibility also involved Adnams, this time in a partnership with M&S (BEER), characterized by a shared logic that sustainability is a useful lens for innovation that drives differentiation and competitive advantage. The partnership evolved from focusing on product development (new, more sustainably produced beers) to a wider relationship, in which M&S relied on Adnams to educate other food and beverage suppliers on more sustainable practices through their Plan-A supplier forums, and reciprocating by increasingly selecting Adnams as an innovation partner.

The final generative outcome is *system orientation*. We have seen that in some cases the engagement logic motivated partners to look for opportunities to enact their shared values by advocating for system change beyond the boundaries of their joint project. For example, the engagement logic of the FREEZERS coalition, structured around the goal of reducing ozone-layer depletion, was forged in the project's initial stages when the partners jointly developed and rolled out freezer units that did not use environmentally damaging refrigerant gases. However, the strength of their shared ambition went on to fuel significant joint efforts to lobby for change in other companies, in state-level legislation, and in international agreements.

By contrast, the BEAUTY coalition, anchored by Walmart and Forum for the Future was set up to improve the sustainability of the beauty and personal care sector. However, this aspiration was not underpinned by a common logic that could motivate such system orientation. Whilst Forum's objective was certainly to improve the sustainability of the wider system, Walmart was motivated by a need to respond to customer concerns and changing demands. The common logic that emerged was therefore about being sufficiently sustainable to maintain a license to operate, and the innovation supported by this

logic was a common sustainability assessment framework for organizations across the sector. Despite the narrower focus, Forum continued to participate because the project represented a step toward their wider goal.

In sum, the cases suggest four respects in which the presence of an engagement logic is helpful to innovation partnerships and their ability to deliver successful, and in some cases systemic, innovations. The common logic can enhance partnership commitment, aid capability integration, add flexibility to the partnership's scope, and encourage system orientation.

5 | DISCUSSION

5.1 | Engagement logics: making innovation partnerships work

Our first contribution is to literature on innovation partnerships, and partnerships for sustainability-oriented innovation in particular, through the uncovering of engagement logics. Prior work has established that partnerships can innovate by combining their distinct resources, capabilities, and perspectives (de Marchi, 2012; Watson et al., 2020), but that incompatibility of logics is a problem, particularly in the sustainable-innovation context (Ashraf et al., 2017). Research has suggested several attributes that give partners a better chance of successfully navigating their competing logics, such as empathy (Watson et al., 2020), flexibility in organizational culture (Voltan & de Fuentes, 2016), and a partnership mindset in which interests are seen as interdependent (Yin & Jamali, 2021). While each of these partnership attributes is indeed present in our data, we add to this literature by showing a further mechanism for achieving successful collaborations despite partner differences: the co-creation of a new common logic. We term this an engagement logic because it is specific to the project that partners are working on, rather than necessarily applying to everything the organizations do together.

The frame for this logic is crafted along four value-related dimensions: value salience, instrumentality, temporality, and language. The logic frame emerges through the partnership practices of uncovering and empathizing with each other's underlying motivations, and negotiating a mutually acceptable position. Negotiation is influenced by the partners' perceptions of their dependence on each other's resources, as well as their power balance. The logic applies within an intangible boundary, which creates a separation between the engagement and the respective partner organizations, so the blended engagement logic can co-exist alongside the organizations' own logics.

Partners engage in enactment practices to embed, reinforce, and even advocate for their common logic. Lawrence and Suddaby (2013) suggest that "very few institutions have such powerful reproductive mechanisms that no ongoing maintenance is required" (p. 229). We find that this observation also applies to partnerships that need to maintain their logic. The presence of these practices—logic emergence, framing, and enactment—shows how the partners are evolving not just a set of common values but a logic. Just as an institutional logic comprises both symbolic elements and material means (York et al., 2016), an engagement logic is oriented by a logic frame, and it is shaped and maintained through a range of enactment practices.

The engagement logic does the same job in partnerships that organizational logics do in single organizations: guiding a set of diverse people working together toward a shared objective. We unpack the role of engagement logics by identifying four "generative outcomes," respects in which the presence of the logic can enhance the functioning of sustainable innovation partnerships and their ability to derive organizational and societal benefits from joint innovations. The engagement logic can act to enhance partnership commitment, aid capability integration, add flexibility to the partnership's scope, and encourage system orientation.

We also make three contributions to the institutional-logics literature, as we discuss next.

5.2 | The dimensionality of logic frames

Prior research on partnerships has tended to oversimplify the distinction between the market logic of private-sector organizations and the public-good logic of nonprofits. We find that each partner brings a complex blend of economic (market), social, and environmental (public good) values and practices into partnerships. The logic tensions inherent within for-profit organizations as they incorporate sustainability into their strategies may surface more starkly when they engage in partnerships seeking triple-bottom-line outcomes. It is non-trivial for partners to find sufficient intersection between these logics. We observe partners navigating toward a point of mutual acceptance along four value-related dimensions to evolve a new logic frame that interrelates a prioritized subset of values.

These four dimensions—value salience, instrumentality, temporality, and language—add considerable flexibility to the design of this common logic frame. Prior work often names logics according to a salient value, such as "social" (Ashraf et al., 2017; Yin & Jamali, 2021). Although we find that salience is indeed a dimension of

the logic frame, so are value temporality, language, and instrumentality. These dimensions synthesize and extend prior work. First, value temporality captures the trade-offs that partners can make between competing goals over time. Institutional theory scholars suggest that within organizations, time can help to organize logics, enabling actors to suspend or sidestep conflict (Raaijmakers et al., 2015). We find that interorganizational engagement logics also have a temporal aspect that can facilitate or exacerbate trade-offs between partners' goals.

Second, value language enables the bridging or transcending of differences in logics, as well as creating a narrative for the new combined logic which supports its ongoing maintenance. This echoes Cornelissen et al. (2015) recognition of communication as "formative of institutional reality" (p. 11), and contributes to Suddaby's (2010) call for researchers "to analyze the role of language in institutional processes and effects" (p. 17).

Third, the concept of value instrumentality adds to this prior work by capturing the interplay between means and ends that is evidenced in a blended engagement logic. This builds on organizational-level studies that suggest values can occur within a means-end hierarchy (Kraatz & Block, 2008; Pache & Santos, 2010).

Collectively, our classification of logic frame dimensions provides a useful, granular perspective on the nature of the new logics that can emerge when two contrasting logics come together. Research at organizational and field levels (Glynn & Lounsbury, 2005; Gümüsay et al., 2020) has shown that the resulting logic blend can favor one of the original logics more than the other (assimilation), or that the means of one logic can be subsumed to the ends of the other (hybridization). Our research identifies four ingredients that can be mixed to allow for such innovations in logic frames.

5.3 | The logic boundary

A further contribution to the institutional logics literature is the existence and nature of a logic boundary, an important design feature in the case of engagement logics. An engagement logic is not delimited by an organizational boundary but by an intangible boundary that may evolve over time. The boundary has three components: work (the work to which the logic applies), space (the organizational units and individuals within its scope), and time (the time period within which the logic applies). This scope is determined not just by the work to be done, but also by the need to ensure that the engagement logic can co-exist with the separate organizational logics and thereby avoid excessive tensions. We saw some evidence that when the values of an organization's logic are consistently shared and enacted by organizational members, then the boundary within which an engagement logic applies within that organization can be broadened, enabling richer co-innovation to occur. Other work suggests that the more multiple logics are integrated into the core functioning of an organization, the greater the potential for conflict (Besharov & Smith, 2014). This has been found to be the case when commercial organizations attempt to incorporate social and environmental objectives into their commercial strategies (Hahn et al., 2015). When it comes to interorganizational relationships, however, we found that the organizations that successfully integrate sustainability into their core strategy and operations create more scope for commonality and shared interest with diverse partners, and thus evolve more widely bounded engagement logics.

An engagement logic, then, combines elements of blending *and* compartmentalization——two key ways in which hybrid organizations address tensions. In defining a common logic, partners "decrease their incompatibility by blending [their logics] in new, synthetic prescriptions, practices, or arrangements" (Gümüsay et al., 2020, p. 124). At the same time, by defining a boundary for this shared logic, allowing it to co-exist with their own respective organizational logics, they "decrease the centrality of competing logics by structurally separating their enactments in dedicated compartments" (Gümüsay et al., 2020, p. 124).

To the literature on business relationships, the need to define a logic boundary adds a further aspect of resource integration, the process by which partners select and combine resources such as processes, assets, and people (Macdonald et al., 2016). We find that these resources also include organizational logics, and as with other resources, key decisions include how they are combined and within what scope this integrated logic applies.

5.4 | The origin and evolution of logics

Finally, our findings contribute to an understanding of how new logics are born. Research has evidenced both macro-level field logics (York et al., 2016) and micro-level organizational logics (Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Pache & Santos, 2010) emerging as a response to institutional complexity and hybridity. This study adds interorganizational engagements as a further, meso-level context in which new logics can emerge. Stakeholder engagements, like organizations and fields, can be the origin of new hybridized logics. A distinguishing feature of logics is that practices for their emergence can be discerned. At the field level, logics endogenous to a field emerge when exogenous logics are shaped through field-level practices (Lounsbury et al., 2003; York et al., 2016). Similarly, at

the level of partnerships, we found that engagement logics emerge through three "logic emergence" practices.

Furthermore, we found that the enactment practice of logic advocating, whereby partnership members sell the benefits of their logic to third parties, as well as offering them practical support with embedding it, suggests a mechanism by which the new logic may in turn influence the logics of other entities, from organizations and partnerships to fields. This demonstrates a new category of institutional work (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2013), which contributes to our understanding of logic evolution and dissemination.

6 | MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 | Use logic frames to find common ground on goals

Organizations may find it helpful to have explicit conversations with prospective partners about their joint and separate goals, using the four value-related dimensions to creatively combine them to define a mutually acceptable logic frame for their joint innovation. For example, partners might explore whether they have shared goals. Where goals differ, they may be able to articulate synergy between slightly different goals; alternatively, they may be able to agree that although their goals are significantly different, they can still find a common path to achieving them. Or they may find agreement on goals, but have to accept that the delivery of some may take longer than others.

6.2 | Embrace diversity for value-creating innovation

Companies should learn to see differences between themselves and potential partners not as barriers to effectiveness but rather as something to embrace as a source of creative tension. This can be helped by hiring individuals with lived experience across diverse sectors, and by giving employees the opportunity to gather experiences through volunteering, secondments, or close involvement in partnership projects. A shared logic is shaped through a mutual understanding of what each partner values, and what each can bring to the party. It enables partners to integrate their respective capabilities, resources, and expertise to create more organizational and societal value for all.

6.3 | Design partnerships to balance focus and flexibility

Partnering organizations should also pay attention to the scope (boundary) of the work they do together. A principal determinant of this scope is the degree to which the wider organization understands the partnership's intended benefits and why these justify the investment of time and resources. There is a balance to be found between focus and flexibility, and partners should align their ambitions with the scope of what the shared logic can sustain, to ensure long-term partner commitment. However, once a common logic is established, partners can look out for opportunities for innovation projects to evolve, or for multiple innovations to blossom under the same umbrella partnership. When it comes to governance, partners should guard against designing out innovation through restrictive or short-term contracts, and continue to pay attention to more relational forms of governance to enable continuous innovation.

6.4 | Reinforce the partnership through its shared logic

When it comes to keeping an engagement logic alive at the heart of a partnership, communicating success can really help, whether this is in the form of reporting against quantitative targets, or celebrating success stories. This helps create a shared vision of what good looks like and maintains motivation. Creating a strong identity among project participants can provide powerful glue for the partnership, but partnership teams need to be careful not to exclude organizational colleagues from involvement. For their part, organizations need to avoid foisting all responsibility for outcomes on the project team alone and should instead recognize the project's contribution to broader strategy. A strong and established engagement logic may even provide a foundation for partners to advocate for system change beyond the boundaries of their initial innovation project by initiating broader collaborations or engaging with other influential system members.

7 | RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

We evidence a new locus for the evolution of new logics: the innovation partnership. Our elucidation of the four value-related dimensions constituting a logic frame offers insight into areas of conflict and choice around which a new logic can emerge. The novel concept of value instrumentality offers useful potential as a design choice in the process of blending existing logics to create new ones. Further research should check the extent to which the four dimensions equally capture logic frames at field and organizational level.

A further extension could be to examine how the logic of one partnership can affect adjacent organizations and partnerships and thereby influence a wider field

logic. This could happen through mimetic mechanisms or, as our evidence of logic advocating practices hints, through more intentional efforts to "export" an engagement logic to others. This raises the question of whether an innovation partnership has greater potential than a single organization or trade body to advocate effectively for system-level change.

Research of this nature would be immediately relevant in today's world, with the logic-frame dimensions allowing us to analyze the innovation in logics which is unfolding as institutions grapple with their place in the world, balancing responsibilities to investors and shareholders (whose priorities are also changing) with wider demands of stakeholders concerned for society and the planet. A good example is the investment field (Clune & O'Dwyer, 2020), in which measures to put social and environmental accountability alongside financial returns are being rapidly adopted. It would also be fruitful to unpack logic evolution in the context of social enterprise, particularly the growing cohort of benefit corporations—businesses that make explicit in their Articles of Association a blended logic of profit making in the service of a higher societal purpose. A third promising context for research is state-level or regional-level legislative change, such as how firms' logics are responding to the new reporting standards in the EU and elsewhere that are making the results of their decisions about how to balance financial and sustainability outcomes yet more visible.

The novel concept of logic boundaries inspires further research questions, such as whether and how this concept applies at the level of organizational and field logics. For example, if a company's employees volunteer for an environmental charity, or nonprofit employees are seconded into a company to work on environmental innovation, what logic guides them? How do people think about compartmentalization across the three boundary dimensions of work, space, and time? Further research building on our emerging insights into the determinants of a logic boundary across these levels would also be fruitful.

A notable avenue for further research is the extent to which engagement logics also occur outside the sustainability context: while differences in partner logics are often acute in sustainability-focused collaborations, given the prominence of cross-sector partnerships in that context, they are still theoretically plausible outside that context.

A significant limitation to our cross-sectional study is its inability to look at how engagement logics evolve over time as partnerships mature. We have seen that an engagement logic produces generative outcomes that would be expected to enable partnerships to deliver enhanced innovation outcomes over time. A longitudinal study would allow exploration of the impact of these generative outcomes. Notably, does a joint logic's benefits for partnership commitment result in more durable, long-lasting partnerships? Does an engagement logic achieve more innovative outcomes through capability integration, providing a joint constellation of capabilities that is more difficult to copy and can therefore drive competitive advantage? Does an engagement logic drive systemic innovation due to enhanced system orientation of the partnership? Such longitudinal studies could test our tentative suggestion (see Table 5) that generative capabilities enable more complex and systemic forms of sustainability-oriented innovation, which in turn are likely to drive increased societal impact.

Finally, an unexpected finding from our research was to uncover logic tensions *within* the organizations that we studied, as well as between them (see Section 4.3.2 on the boundary dimension of space). Further research exploring the interaction between logic tensions within organizations and their (potentially multiple) engagement logics with partners would inform whether such engagement logics could ultimately influence the evolution of a company's own idiosyncratic organizational logic.

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ORCID

Rosina Watson https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2920-7246
Hugh N. Wilson https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9740-5201
Emma K. Macdonald https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9139-5030

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AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES

Rosina Watson is Associate Professor of Sustainability at Cranfield School of Management, UK, and Head of the School's Sustainable Business Group. She was formerly Head of Corporate Responsibility at Home Retail Group, following 15 years in finance, strategy, and commercial roles at Shell, ITV, Carphone Warehouse, and Home Retail Group. She now directs a specialist part-time MSc in Sustainability. She has

published research on sustainable innovation in the Journal of Product Innovation Management, Journal of Business Research, and Journal of Cleaner Production.

Hugh N. Wilson is a Professor of Marketing at Warwick Business School, UK. He began his career in marketing and technology roles with IBM, Xerox, and NCR. He now works on sustainability in marketing, innovation, entrepreneurship, and policy. He has written for Journal of Marketing, Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, Journal of Service Research and Harvard Business Review, among other publications. As co-chair of Warwick's sustainability working group, he aims to help transform his school into a sustainable organization.

Emma K. Macdonald is Charles Huang Chair in International Business at Strathclyde Business School, Scotland. She is Director of the Stephen Young Institute for International Business. Her research focuses on international and sustainable business, innovation, and marketing. Her work has been published in Journal of Marketing, Journal of Product Innovation Management, Journal of Service Research, Journal of Retailing, Industrial Marketing Management, and Harvard Business Review.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Additional supporting information can be found online in the Supporting Information section at the end of this article.

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