

An identity lens requires “seeing” these things differently:

- Science classrooms
- Competence or smartness
- Individual traits and dispositions

Doing so, requires lens-toggling



*Identity Work*

*Authoring  
Identity*

*Making Identity  
Bids*

*Ascribing Identity*

Identities are formed in practice

(Lave and Wenger, 1991)

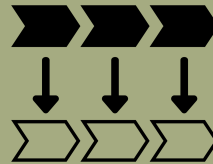
People have a say in who they become, but agency is limited by micro- and macro- historical, institutional, and social structures (Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain, 1998)

Social identification occurs within and is influenced by multiple timescales— in the moment, over months-long periods of time, over years, over generations (Lemke, 2001)

The tools of  
*identity* and  
*culture*  
help us  
recognize:



*Power* and the way it is produced in everyday interactions, norms, and practices



Cultural reproduction *and* production



Spaces of *possibility*, moments of *agency*

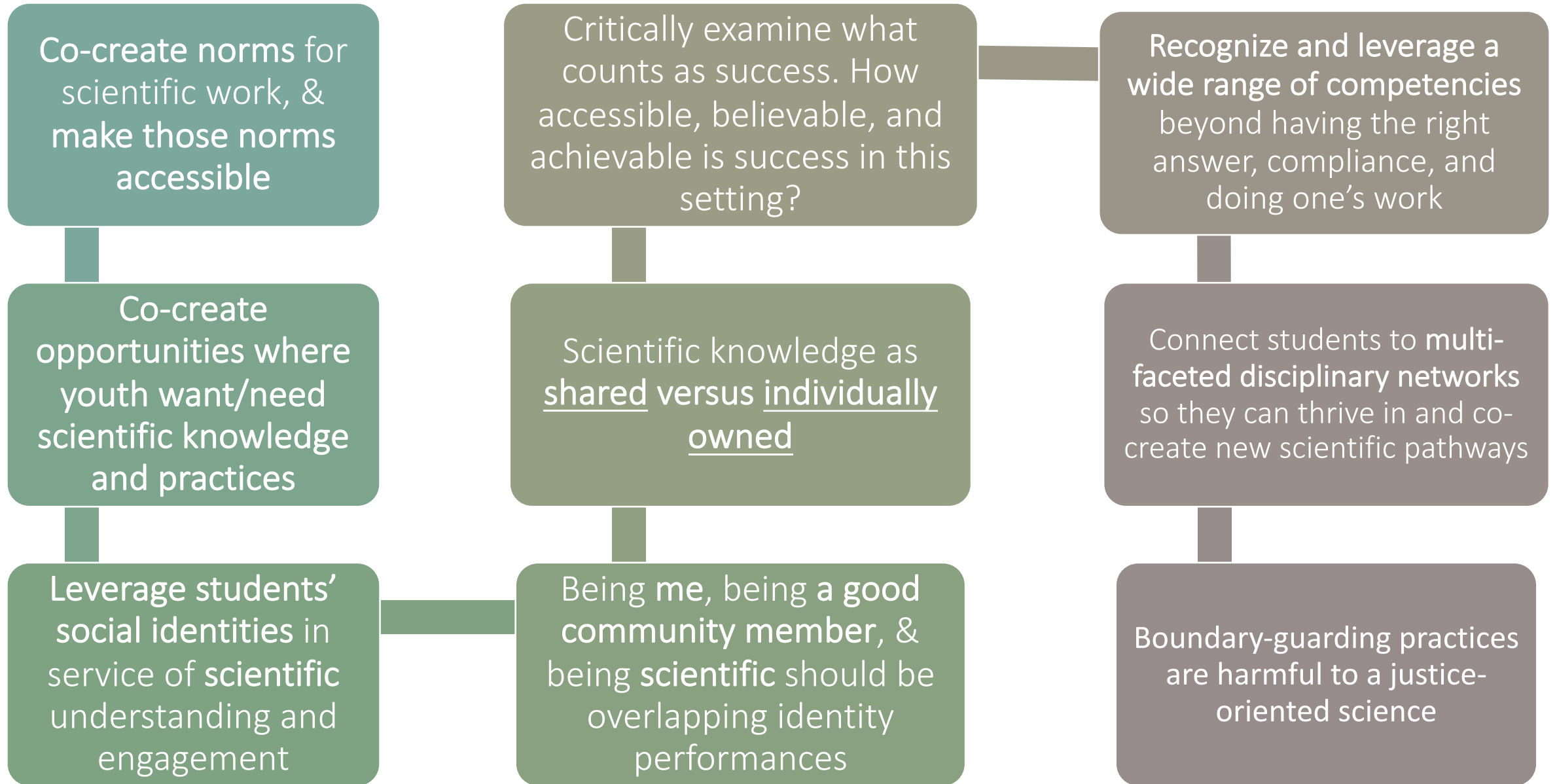


*Improvisation*; individuals are not powerless in the face of seemingly unbearable structures



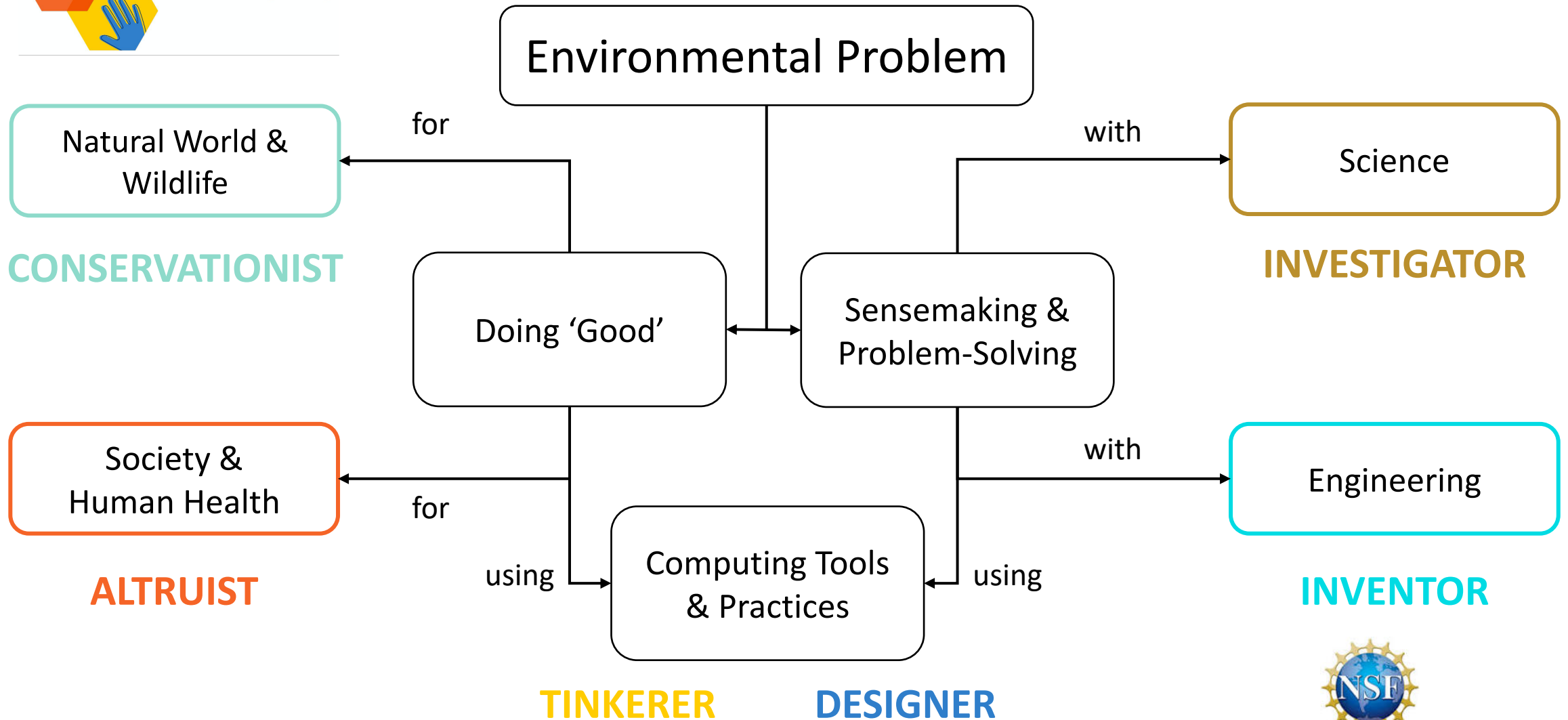
How **compelling**, imaginable and **achievable** are the meanings of promising 'science person' for different youth in a given setting?

# What practices and principles cultivate robust disciplinary identity work for diverse youth? (from Carlone's group)





We care, conserve, tinker, design, investigate, & invent



Studying identity and culture in tandem has taught our team that:

- Achievement  $\neq$  equity
- Positive attitudes  $\neq$  equity
- Strong scientific proclivities  $\neq$  easier scientific trajectories
- Smart, science girls and boys likely experience school science differently. For some, it is downright difficult and painful.
- “Unthinkable science” can engage students meaningfully, which raises questions about a too-local science



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