

# Enhancing Knowledge Co-production Between Neurodivergent Young People & Academic Researchers to Enrich Experimental Neuroscience



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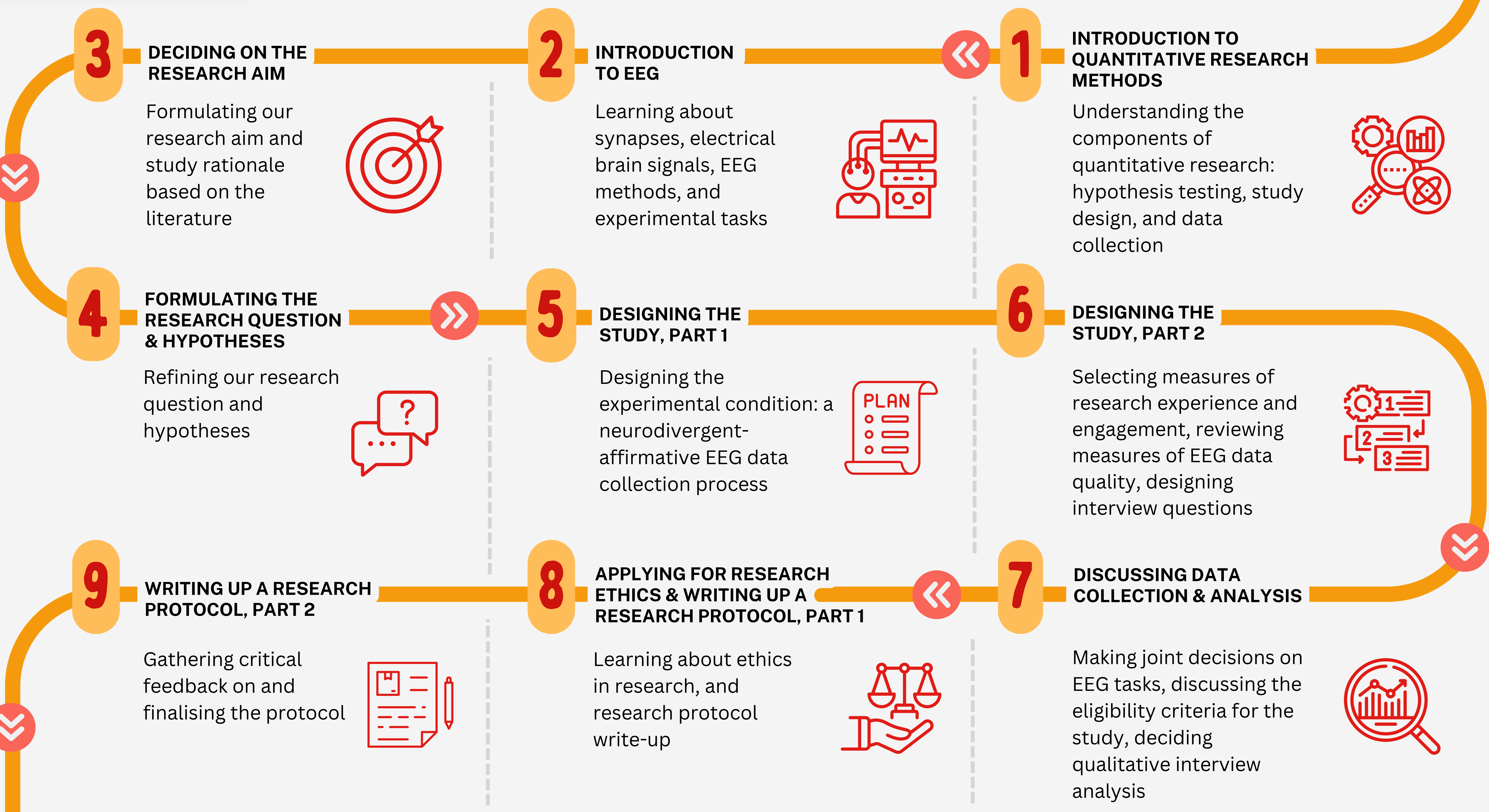
## INTRODUCTION:

- Basic experimental science traditionally lacks a participatory research (PR) element.
- The RE-STAR project establishes new ground by co-designing an electroencephalography (EEG) study with neurodivergent young people who have a diagnosis of autism and/or ADHD.
- Here we describe first phase project progress, which aimed to develop an ethically approved research protocol for the study.

## METHODS:

- 9 weekly online research planning meetings and workshops
- 2 academic and 5 RE-STAR Youth Researcher Panel (Y-RP) researchers
- Reflective journaling and live reflective sessions throughout

## PROJECT TIMELINE:



## REFLECTIVE THEMES:

<b>WHAT MAKES IT WORK</b>	<b>FACILITATION /SUPPORT</b> "...And the academic team facilitates that well." (YRP-R)	<b>FREE EXPRESSION</b> "I feel free to express my ideas with the team." (YRP-R)
	<b>EQUITABLE WORK</b> "I feel respected and included and like my contributions do matter, which is standard for RE-STAR..." (YRP-R)	<b>FAMILIARITY</b> "...We've met and collaborated before, this experience has been very positive for me." (YRP-R)
<b>POWER DYNAMICS</b>	<b>POWER DYNAMICS</b> "I still don't consider myself to be on equal footing to the academic researchers, but I'm not sure that's ever really achievable in this kind of work." (YRP-R)	
<b>VALUE OF PR</b>	<b>EXCHANGE OF KNOWLEDGE/ EXPERIENCE</b> "I have gained more insights about the reflections of the young people [...] i.e., the mental load of having a dual role of being a learner and a teacher [...] definitely resonate with my experience." (Academic-R)	<b>SCIENTIFIC CONTRIBUTION</b> "All of the PR team members shared good ideas about the study that will impact its design." (YRP-R)
	<b>CHALLENGES</b>	<b>DIFFERENT KNOWLEDGE BASE</b> "I have got confused a few times what our aims are and what we are meant to be researching [...] with timeframe things can get lost in conversation." (YRP-R)
<b>REWARDING EXPERIENCE</b>	<b>FULFILMENT</b> "I found it very fulfilling, by the end I felt well integrated into the team and like my contributions were helping." (YRP-R)	<b>ENJOYMENT</b> "I really enjoy being part of this group. As a researcher I find the collaboration very fruitful." (YRP-R)

## CONCLUSION:

- The study has been fully approved on 26/10/2023 by the KCL Health Faculties Research Ethics Subcommittee (HR/DP-23/24-39713)
- Co-production research has enriched the development of our EEG study.
- YRP members will be involved fully as co-researchers through their participation in the data collection, analysis, and dissemination phase of the study.



FEEDBACK?

**\*\*The RE-STAR Participatory Research Team is:** Maciej Matejko, Dorian Poulton, Luke Harvey-Nguyen, Tiegan Boyens, Isabel Jackson (independent youth researchers), Edmund Sonuga-Barke, Susie Chandler, Eloise Funnell and Steve Lukito (KCL); Georgia Pavlopoulou (Anna Freud Centre and UCL), Sylvan Baker & Lauren Low (Royal Central School of Speech and Drama).