

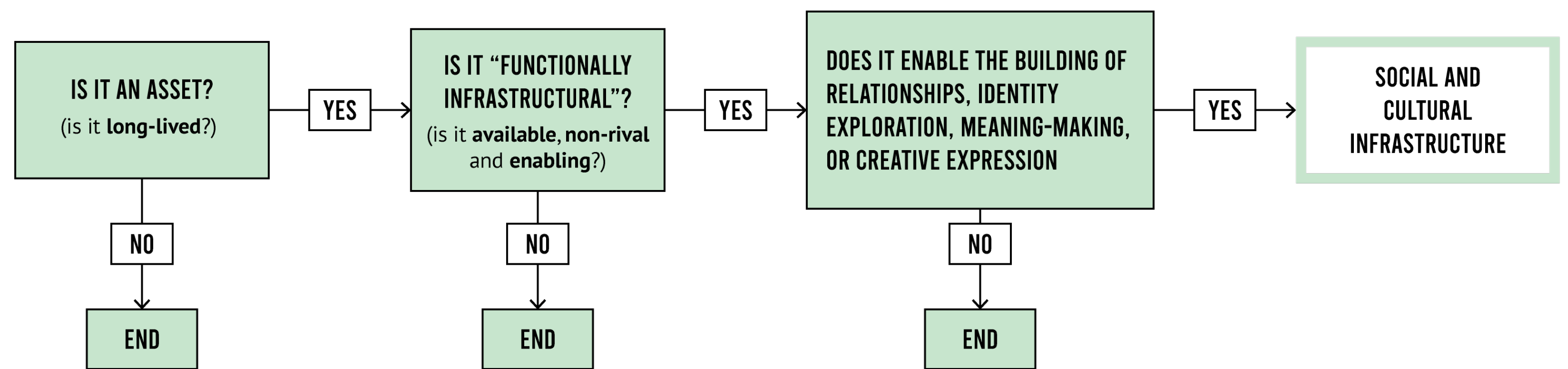
The measurement of social and cultural infrastructure

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Social and cultural infrastructure (SCI) plays a critical, yet often unnoticed, role in the lives of communities. Yet despite the concept gaining traction in policy and research circles in recent years, until now there has been no consistent approach to measuring it. Funded by the British Academy, this project develops a novel approach to the measurement of SCI.

How to define social and cultural infrastructure?

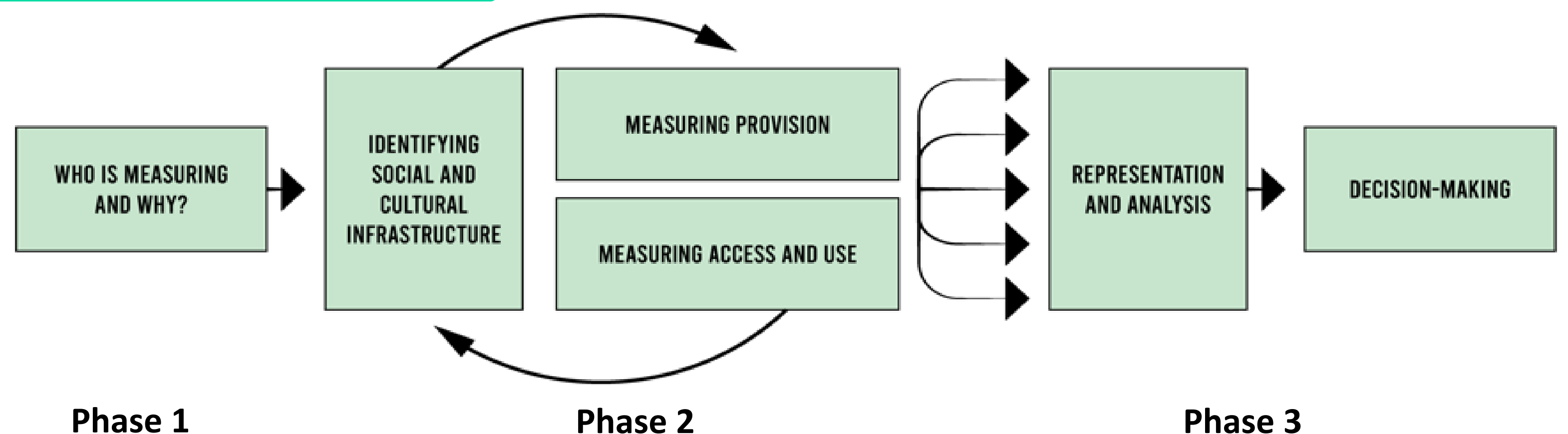
In response to existing definitional challenges, we have developed a set of **characteristics** to define SCI. This approach is grounded in the definition of infrastructure while also considering the distinctive properties of social and cultural provision.



How to measure social and cultural infrastructure?

Our measurement framework involves **three distinct – though not necessarily sequential – phases**:

- (1) Establishing purpose
- (2) Identifying and measuring
- (3) Analysis and decision-making



Strengths of the framework

Infrastructural approach

Rooted in the theory and language of infrastructure and encourages stakeholders to think about how SCI interacts with other types of infrastructure.

Transparency

Designed to ensure greater transparency in the measurement process e.g. who is measuring, what data is used, and how this contributes to decisions.

Flexibility

Usable by a range of stakeholders and/or different policy goals at a variety of scales. It does not prescribe a rigid definition of SCI, allowing a wider pool of assets to be considered.

Range of perspectives and data

Encourages its users to consider a wide range of perspectives (from technical experts to local communities) and evidence (e.g. numerical data and storytelling, and peer research).

Putting the framework into action

SCI is directly relevant to a range of policy objectives at different levels of governance, from economic growth to housebuilding, and will be useful for a range of stakeholders, including:

- (1) Central government
- (2) Regional government and combined authorities
- (3) Local authorities
- (4) Community organisations
- (5) Funders (e.g. Arts Council England)
- (6) Institutions (e.g. universities, sports clubs)
- (7) Private sector (e.g. asset owners and developers)

