

# Translating knowing that into knowing how: The case of trust in regional network building

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By asking: *Can action research help transmit ordinary, conventional, descriptive-analytic knowledge?*, we set out to explore the complementarity between the descriptive-analytic “knowing that” and the practical “knowing how” knowledge. Drawing on a longitudinal study, the paper shows how a theoretical concept: “trust”, was used as a practical vehicle for facilitating commitment to the network development process. The answer to the question is definitely positive. Moreover, it emerges that the debate on the different forms of knowledge fails to address what it actually means to construct practical orders. Only the embodiment of research knowledge into specific social constructions will demonstrate the potential gains of action.

**Key words:** research roles, action research, regional networks, network development, trust-building

## 1. Different forms of knowledge

As is often noted by representatives of action research, what might be referred to as mainstream social research tends to focus on knowledge concerning patterns and structures, rather than on how these phenomena are created. This resonates with the classical distinction between *episteme* and *techne* and the more recent dichotomy of “knowing that” and “knowing how” (Ryle,