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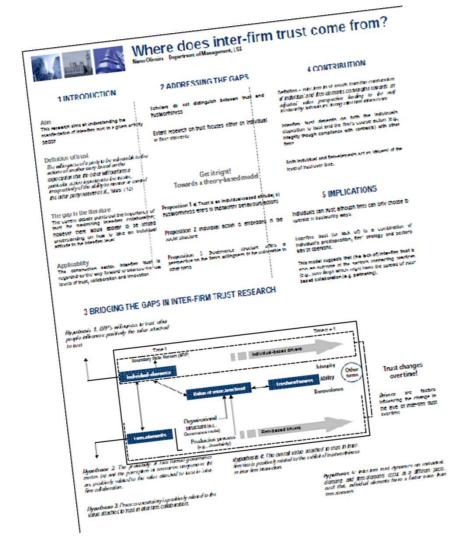


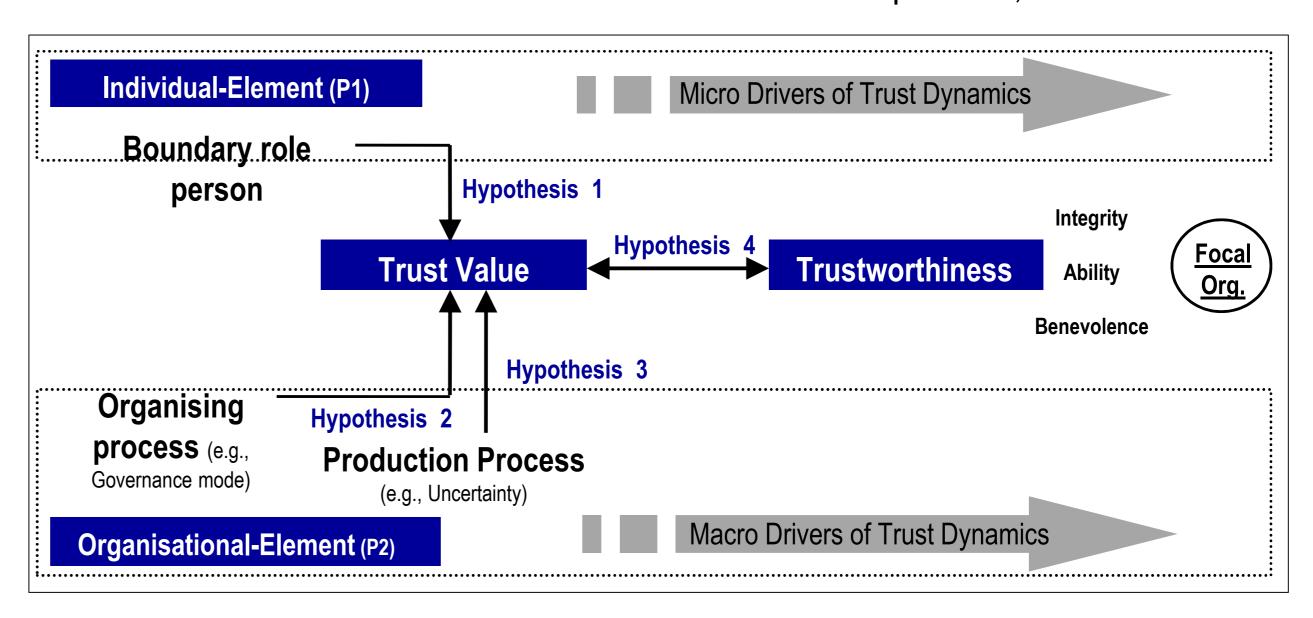


Where does inter-organisational trust come from? - An empirical analysis

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1. Last Year's Poster



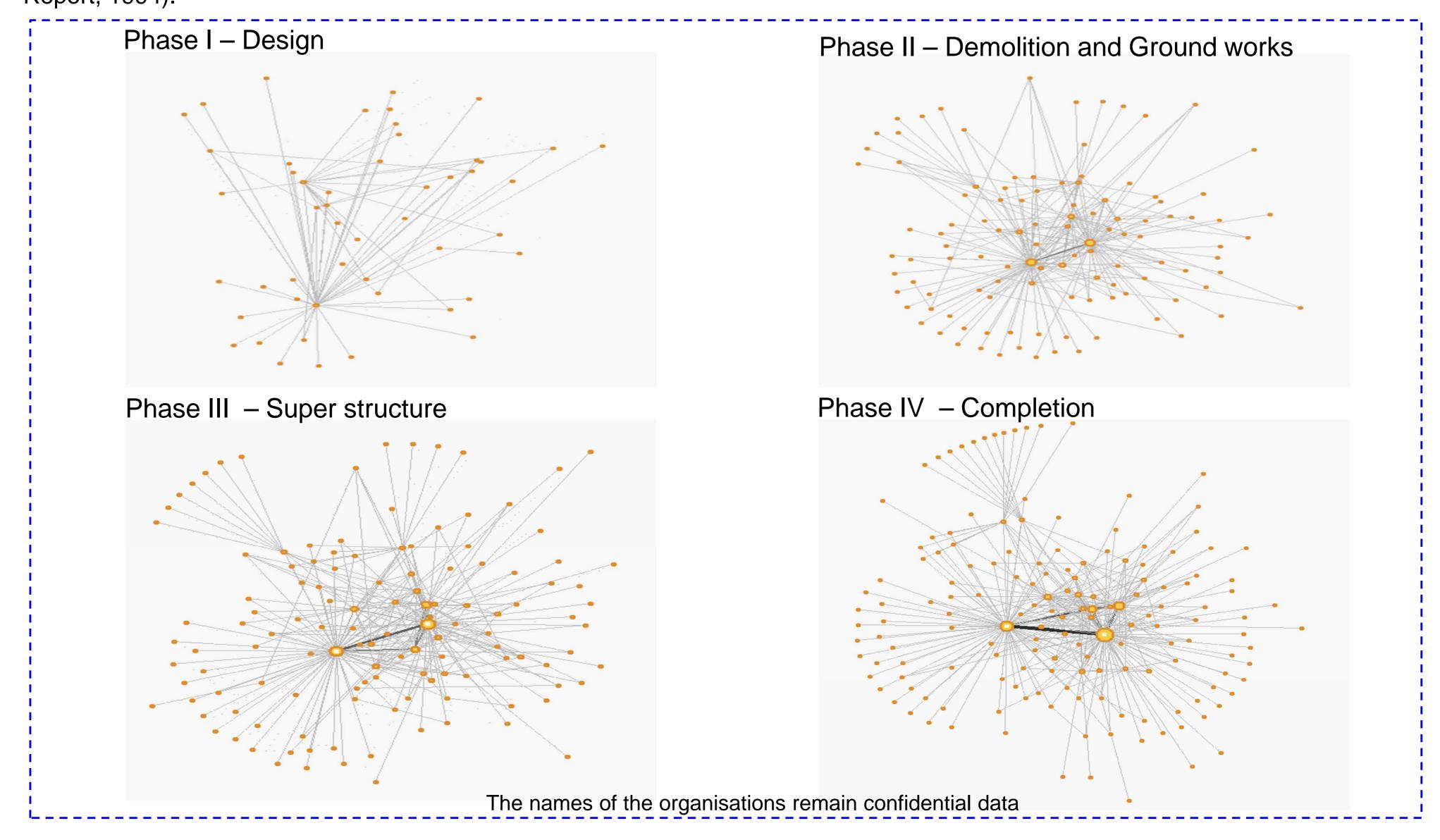


<u>A research journey</u>: In last year's poster, I developed a definition of 'inter-organisational trust' which I use, here, to explore empirically the foundations of inter-organisational networks (IO-N) trust. In comparison to last year's poster, I found that 'inter-organisational trust' is also strongly intertwined with the IO-N configuration and its evolution.

2. Method & Findings

<u>Literature gap</u>: Extant research has extensively reported the importance of trust for organisation' sustainability and performance (Gulati, 1995: Searle, *et al.*, 2011): although we still have little understanding on how inter-organisational trust develops (or contracts) over time. Thus, this research aims to address this gap in the literature.

Method: Longitudinal inductive case study. I develop a novel approach to gather data on IO-N from meeting minutes and reports for 163 UK-based organisations collaborating in a building project over a 3-year period. I use social network analysis techniques (Wasserman & Faust 1994) to unveil both the form and dynamics of the 'muddle of relationships' among organisations (see Latham's Report, 1994).



3. Discussion & Practical Implications

- + Organisation-level elements are pivotal to foster trust, as network evolution is substantially shaped by firm' strategy and variables of the production process as opposed to individual predispositions exclusively
- + Trust among central organisations experiences great change throughout the IO-N evolution mainly during swifts between production phases.
- + As for managerial and policy implications, individual behavioural change can foster trust in the short-term; although a long-term approach to trust has to focus on firms' contracting strategies among organisations. I think, this research is relevant to the debate that is going on to improve performance in the UK's building industry; for example, to meet environmental sustainability targets.