

**Impact of culture on the results of a tender for  
faculty for a post-graduate education program:  
the role of sense making, expectations and  
networks of potential teachers**

**DR KATALIN PALLAI**

**ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, NUSP**

**AND PROGRAM DIRECTOR OF THE POST-GRADUATE  
PROGRAM FOR INTEGRITY ADVISORS**

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# STARTING POINT

- CEE environment where rules adopted as a result of international normative pressure become „empty shells” – e.g. public tendering
- Deformed implementation in consequence of:
  - web of material and normative interests
  - structural arrangements
- For correct implementation normative constraint is not enough
- Transformative process
  - cognitive and emotional acceptance building
  - structural arrangements supporting the old mechanisms need to be dismantled

# THE STORY OF A TENDER

- Faculty recruitment through competition for the post-graduate program of integrity advisors, at the National University for Public Service, in Hungary
- Why is this a case?
- A tender initiated by a voluntary decision in the environment where:
  - tenders are initiated only due to external normative constraint
  - material and cultural factors drive avoidance
  - when initiated, processes are widely abused

# THE CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE IN INTEGRITY

- Founded in 2013 for strengthening public integrity
  - principled operation
  - open collaborative planning
  - active communication and strategy to build integrity community
  - competitive recruitment
- active network of committed integrity professionals

# NEW CURRICULUM DESIGN FOR THE INTEGRITY ADVISOR PROGRAM

- New professional field
- Decision on shift:
  - from theoretical to practice focused, competence-based education
  - from positivist to a combination of positivist and post-positivist approach (discursive methods)
- Involve faculty in a demanding collaborative process for the design of the profession and the curriculum
- Need for faculty beyond NUSP and related universities
- Tender that breaks with status quo and could trigger opposition

## REGIONAL/ NATIONAL CONTEXT

Corruption tolerant culture

Tenders become empty shells (abuse and technicisation)

Lack of trust in correctness of processes

## INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT -

### NATIONAL UNIVERSITY FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

Low salaries plus access to extra work

Tacit deal between faculty and administration

Extra work opportunities kept mostly for insiders

Weak performance evaluation

### CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE IN INTEGRITY

Mission: build public integrity

Set a model for integrity through:

- Ethos of and operation with integrity and
- active argumentative strategy

# WHY WAS THE TENDER INITIATED?

- CEI's principled operation
- New educational program for integrity advisers
  - For new domain/practice
  - Academic knowledge was not enough
  - Need for commitment for demanding work process
    - Collaborative curriculum development
    - Bigger burden on teachers than the usual
- Aimed at finding appropriate and committed faculty

# OPEN TENDER FOR FACULTY

- Short but intensive advertisement through official and personal channels
- Course proposals + CVs on the basis of a curriculum concept described in the call
- 119 course concepts for 15 subjects
- 47 candidates (13 were members of the previous faculty)
- A Selection Committee selected the new faculty
- Composition of the faculty changed in the targeted direction



# RESEARACH

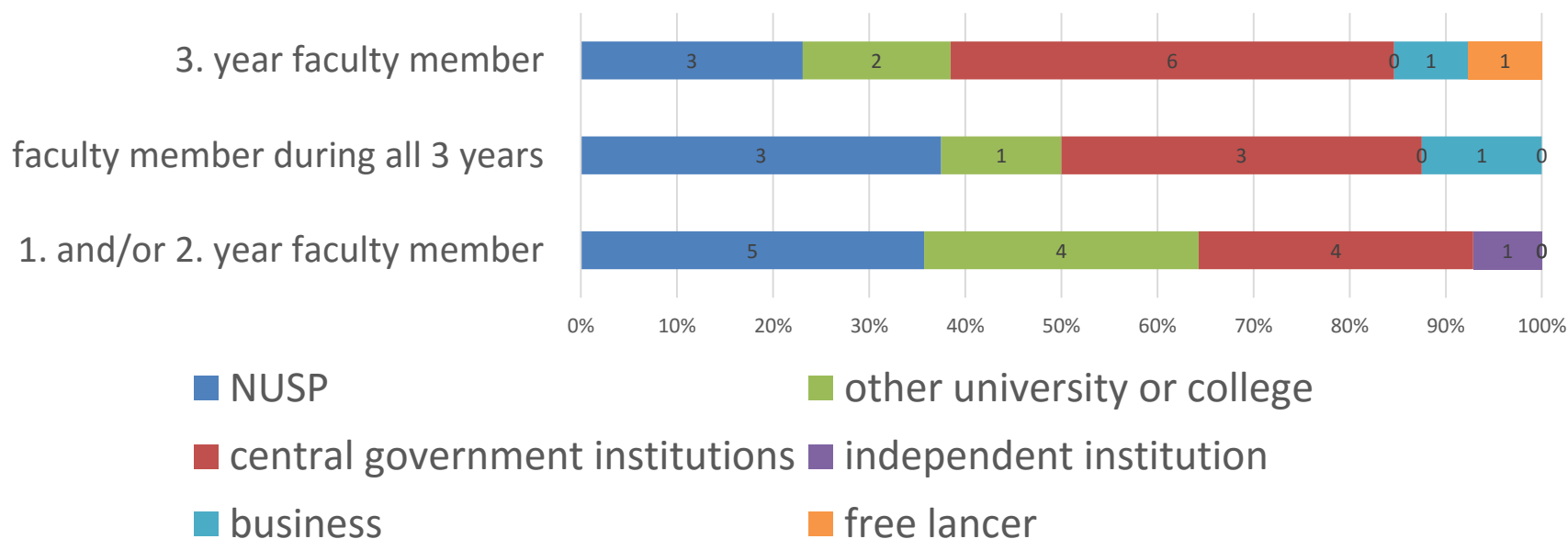
- Questions:
  - Could the tender be effective in such an („anti-tender”) environment?
  - How stakeholders experienced the process?
  - What impacted stakeholders experience?
- Hypothesis:
  - Image of and trust in tenderer mattered: could impact stakeholders perception and behavior
  - Stakeholders screened information about the process through their culture, beliefs and attitudes
  - Not only the professional competence but culture of potential candidates also mattered

# THE RESEARCH

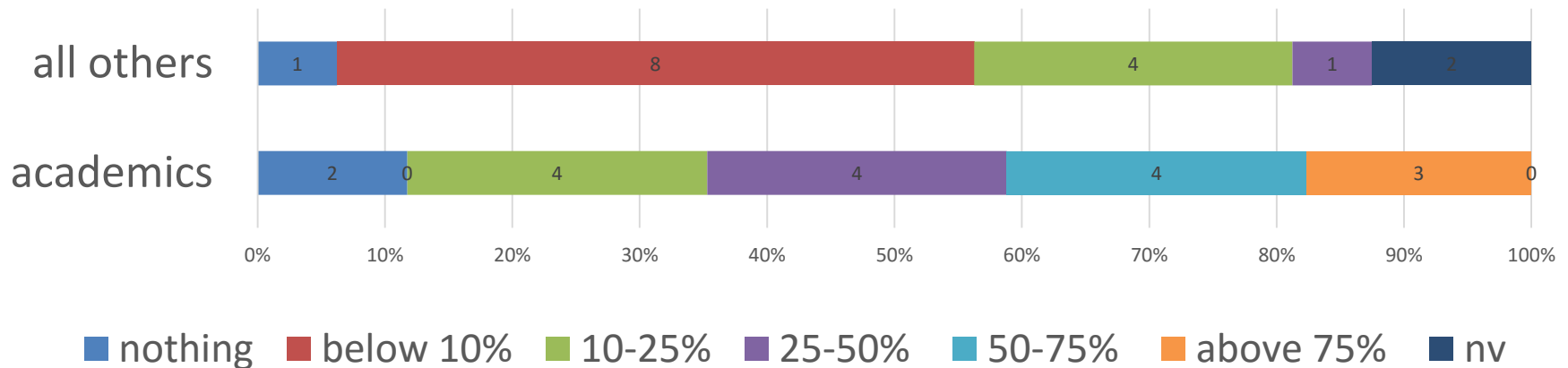
	1. only previous faculty	2. common faculty	3. new faculty	4. took part without success	5. invited but did not take part in the tender
Cluster participants identified and contacted in the research	24	10	15	22	25 contacted
answered the questionnaire	14	8	13	13	10
responded that did not take part in the tender	9				10
Interviewed		5	9		
refused to answer the questionnaire but reached for oral response	5				

# **THE RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH**

# COMPOSITION OF FACULTY ACCORDING TO THEIR MAIN JOBS

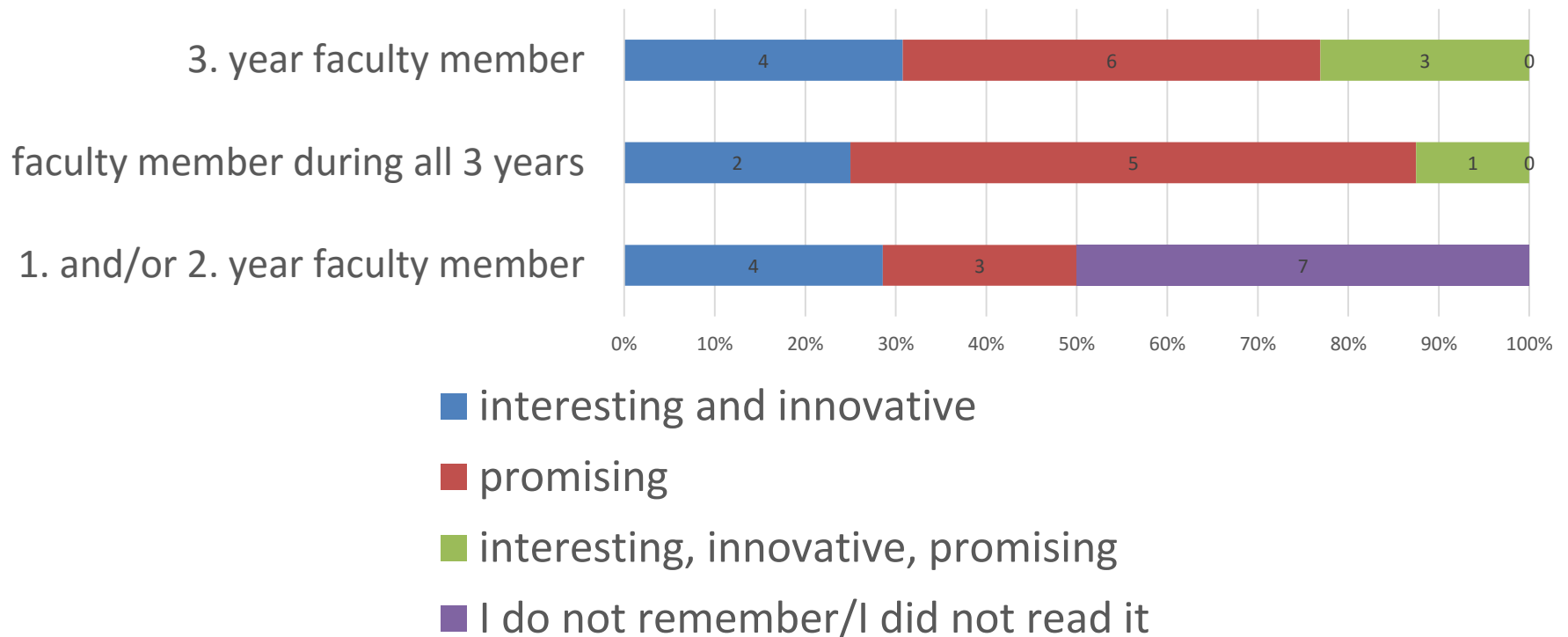


# SHARE OF TOTAL INCOME (%) EARNED FROM PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE MAIN JOB



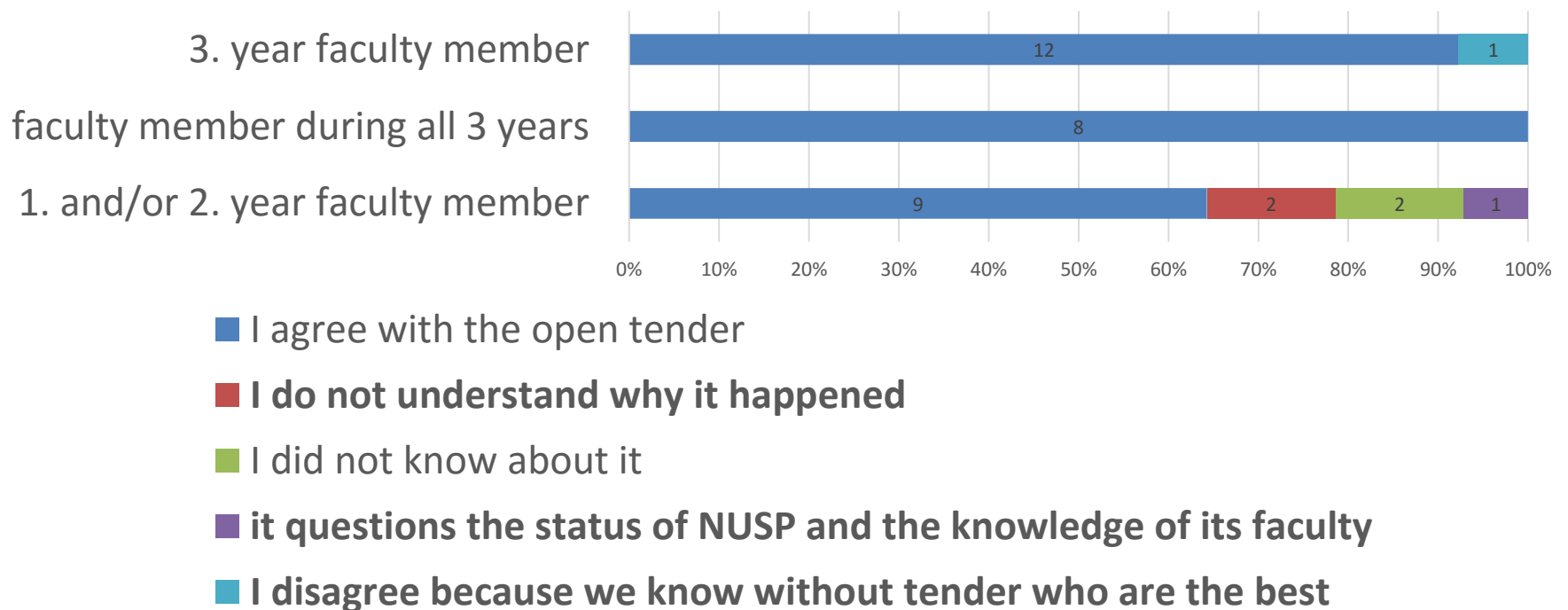
- more than 60% of academics earn above 25% of their income from activities apart from their main jobs,
- and the remaining 40% supplement their income by more than 50%
- only 11-14 % of the extra work is obtained without personal ties

# CONCEPT FOR THE NEW CURRICULUM



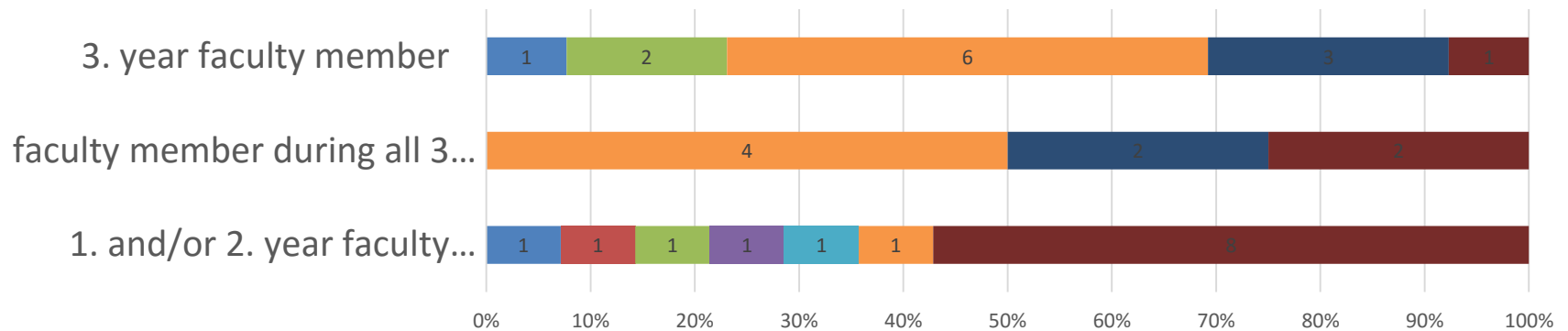
**Out of 57 respondents no one expressed any kind of disagreement**

# WHAT DID YOU THINK ABOUT THE TENDER?



**Out of 57 respondents only 5 expressed any kind of disagreement**

# WHY DID YOU TAKE PART IN THE TENDER?

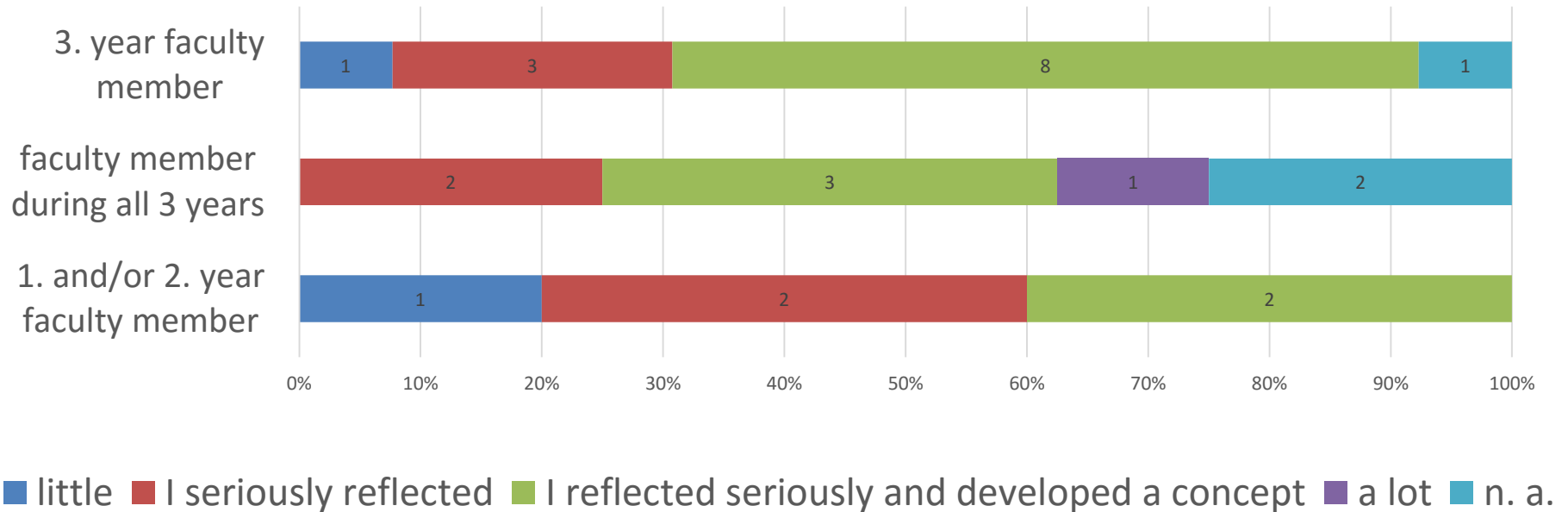


- good challenge, clear objectives
- I saw my role in the concept
- I have the necessary expertise
- I trusted the correctness of the process
- contribute to public integrity
- I did not know about it
- Good challenge+necessary expertise+trust
- no answer

**NOBODY CHOSE THE OPTION „FINANCIAL REASON“**



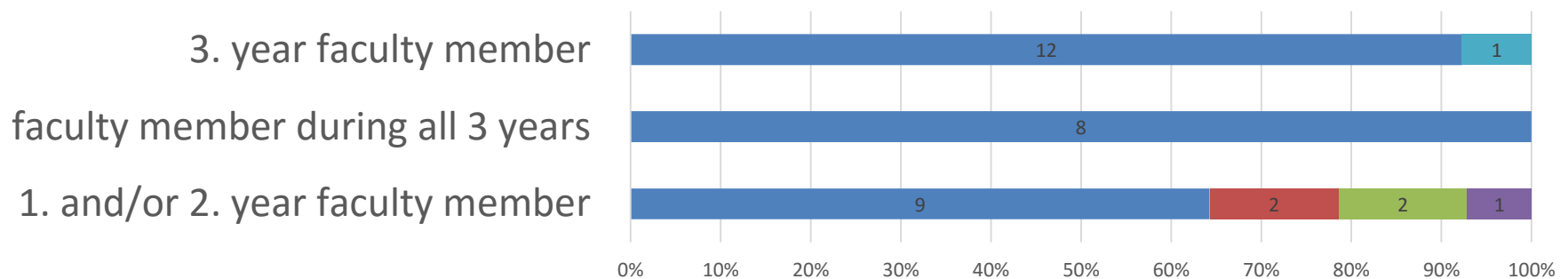
# HOW MUCH DID YOU WORK ON THE CONCEPT YOU COMPETED WITH?



# ABOUT THE TENDER

- *“The tender was important not only as a functional tool but a **necessary component of such a public integrity project.**”* (Tornai 2015: 7)
- *“The tender was important as it **signals the change in culture and can contribute to the change of the context.**”* (Tornai 2015: 7)
- *“The tender was important because it **brought together good and committed faculty**”* (remark in the questionnaire)
- *“It was a **source of motivation for us who live in an environment with weak values.**”* (Tornai 2015: 7)

# WHAT DID YOU THINK ABOUT THE TENDER?



■ I agree with the open tender

■ I do not understand why it happened

■ I did not know about it

■ it questions the status of NUSP and the knowledge of its faculty

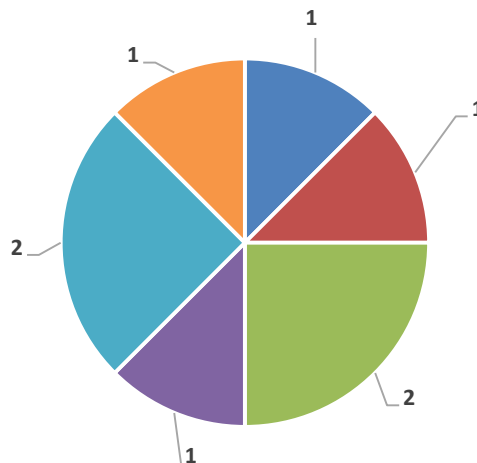
■ I disagree because we know without tender who are the best

**Out of 57 respondents only 5 expressed any kind of disagreement**

# REASONS OF OLD FACULTY FOR NON PARTICIPATING IN THE TENDER

Participation of old faculty:

- **50% of old NUSP**
- 70% of civil servants
- 100 % of the rest



- I did not receive the call
- **I did not know about the call**
- I did not have the necessary expertise for the new topics/I did not see my role in the concept
- I did not want to work on the tender material
- **personal reason**
- I have enough work

# THE RESEARCH

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refused to answer the questionnaire but reached for oral response	5 (+2)				

**MAX 30%  
OF OLD FACULTY**

# OPPINION OF OPPOSERS

## REPRESENTING MAXIMUM 30 % OF OLD FACULTY

- *“If I am invited I come but I do not take part in tenders.”* (personal communication)
- *“The tender was inappropriate as **it questioned our competence**. I should be invited on the basis of my previous performance.”* (personal communication) – an argument repeated by all in this group.
- *“We believed the tender was a **strategy to squeeze us out from the program**.”* (personal communication)
- *“I do not write a concept for a tender, as **I have no time** for it. I was involved in **many parallel jobs** and had no time to think.”* (personal communication)
- *“I do not write a concept when I am not sure that I will implement it. How would I know whether others would not **steal my ideas**?”* (personal communication)
- *“I did not want to get in **confrontation with my colleagues** who were all opposed.”* (personal communication)
- *“Horrible idea. If we had filled up the questionnaire it would have **become visible** that 90% of our revenue came from extra work. I do not want to give ground for the university to burden more on us for the same salaries.”* (personal communication)

# WAS THE TENDER SUCCESSFUL?

- Changed composition of the faculty intended direction
- Recruited committed faculty with expertise
- Contributed to CEI model and impact of its „presence”
- Together with prior presence of CEI:
  - many accepted the tender and took seriously
  - many were willing to forego material interests for ethos
  - even emotional and symbolic meaning attached
  - lower participation among academia
  - perception of one NUSP group remained fixed in old pattern

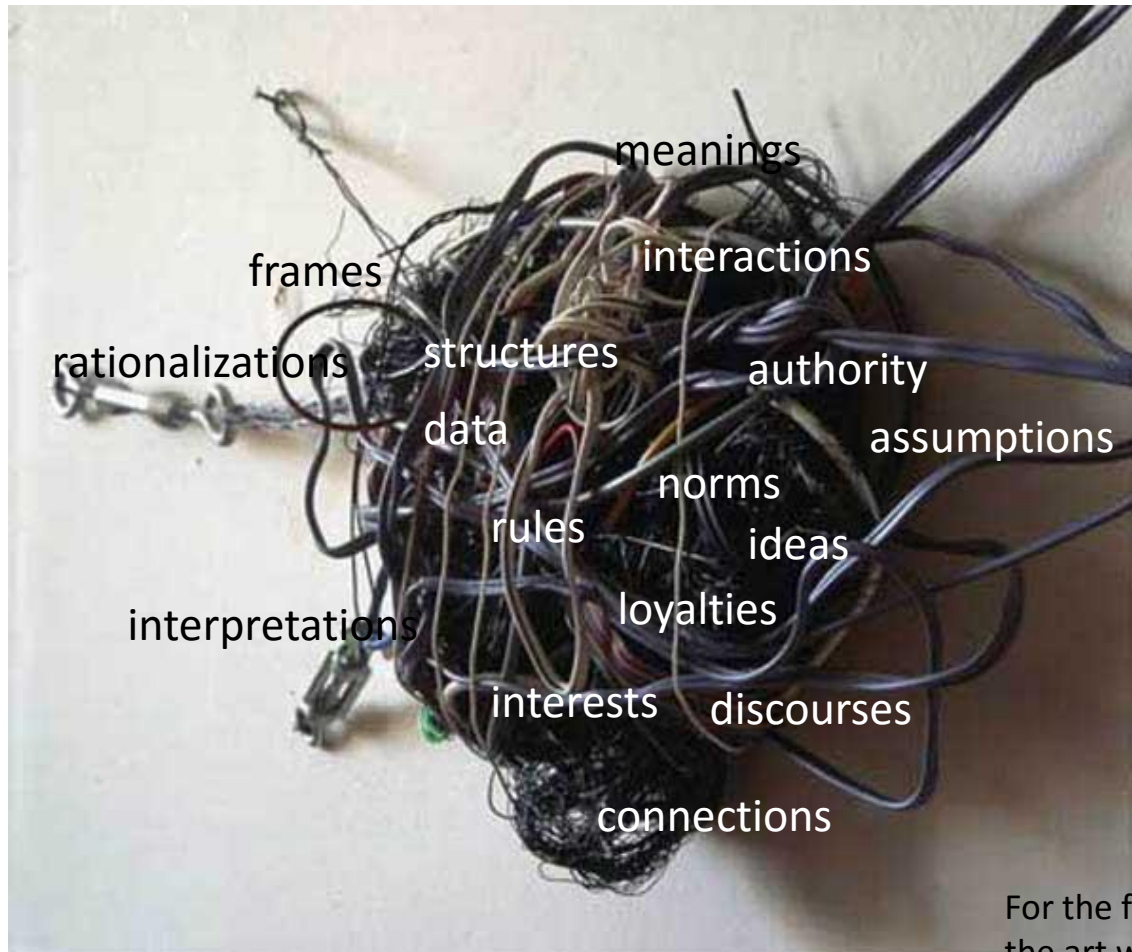
# WHY COULD IT WORK?

## ROLE OF LEADERSHIP AND COMMITMENT

- *“Finally a post-graduate program shifted the focus towards practice and gave the opportunity to share what I know and believe in.”* (personal communication)
- *“I wanted to be part of this, as I **felt the energy and commitment** of the leadership to finally change a wrong practice and initiate committed education”* (personal communication)
- *“The tender and the process **proves for me that I am not alone with my principles**”* (Tornai 2015: 6)
- *“The process **promised a motivating and reinforcing environment**”* (Tornai 2015: 6)
- *“we experienced in all interviewed persons **commitment and intent to connect** to the evolving shared knowledge.”* Tornai (2015: 7)



# INTEGRITY DEFICITS IN A „STRETCHED TANGLE”



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For the figure the picture of  
the art work of Roza el Hassan:  
Stretched tangle, 1995. was used

# PROBLEM AND SOLUTION

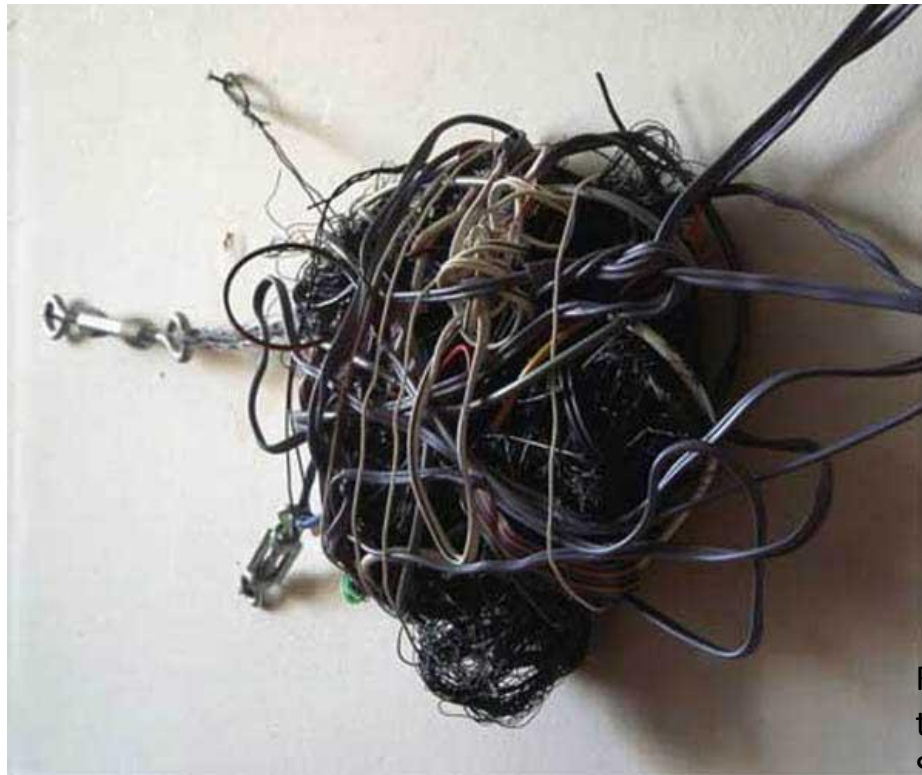
- Normalized practices that clash with democratic norms
- Acting with democratic integrity in a corruption tolerant culture can:
  - clash with deep rooted **structural arrangements**
  - become a **collective action problem**
- **Wicked problem** that betray formal power, fast technical fixes and positivist technocratic solutions
  - Changing rules is not enough - neither external, nor top down,
  - Collectively trusted, intrinsic process is necessary.

# WHY COULD IT WORK?

## ROLE OF LEADERSHIP AND COMMITMENT

- People actively connected to CEI could understand the tender and were willing to forego some of their interests
  - *“Personal integrity and commitment of the leadership was so credible that when NUSP started to support the process I joined.”* (written note)
  - *“I entered, as I liked the approach, philosophy and the professionalism. Then the committed environment lured me in.”* (written note)
- The tendering rules worked because credible people began to give relevance to them
- Even when key material factors cannot be changed, principled commitment and consistent argumentative work can still bring some results.
  - **EVEN MORE THAN PRESSURE ALONE**

# IMPORTANCE OF THE ARGUMENTATIVE STRATEGY FOR „UNTANGLING THE TANGLE”



For the figure the picture of the art work of Roza el Hassan: Stretched tangle, 1995. was used

# THE POWER OF THE ARGUMENTATIVE PROCESS

- Prior principled presence actively communicated
  - can create a common reading of events, purposes, principles, and even expectations
  - can engender “shared memories of the future” that prepare stakeholders to understand the new pattern when it appears
- Breaking the „status quo” can be successful
- strengths and direction of further impact depends on the number, position and relations of those who “get infected”

# To LEAD TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE

- **Processual approach** instead of rationalist planning
- Initiating **energy for change processes** (agents, coalitions)
  - „conversations” that have communicative force
  - coordinative, constitutive and communicative discourse
  - discursive production of a new reality
- Change in sense making can **create space for dismantling distorted structural arrangements**