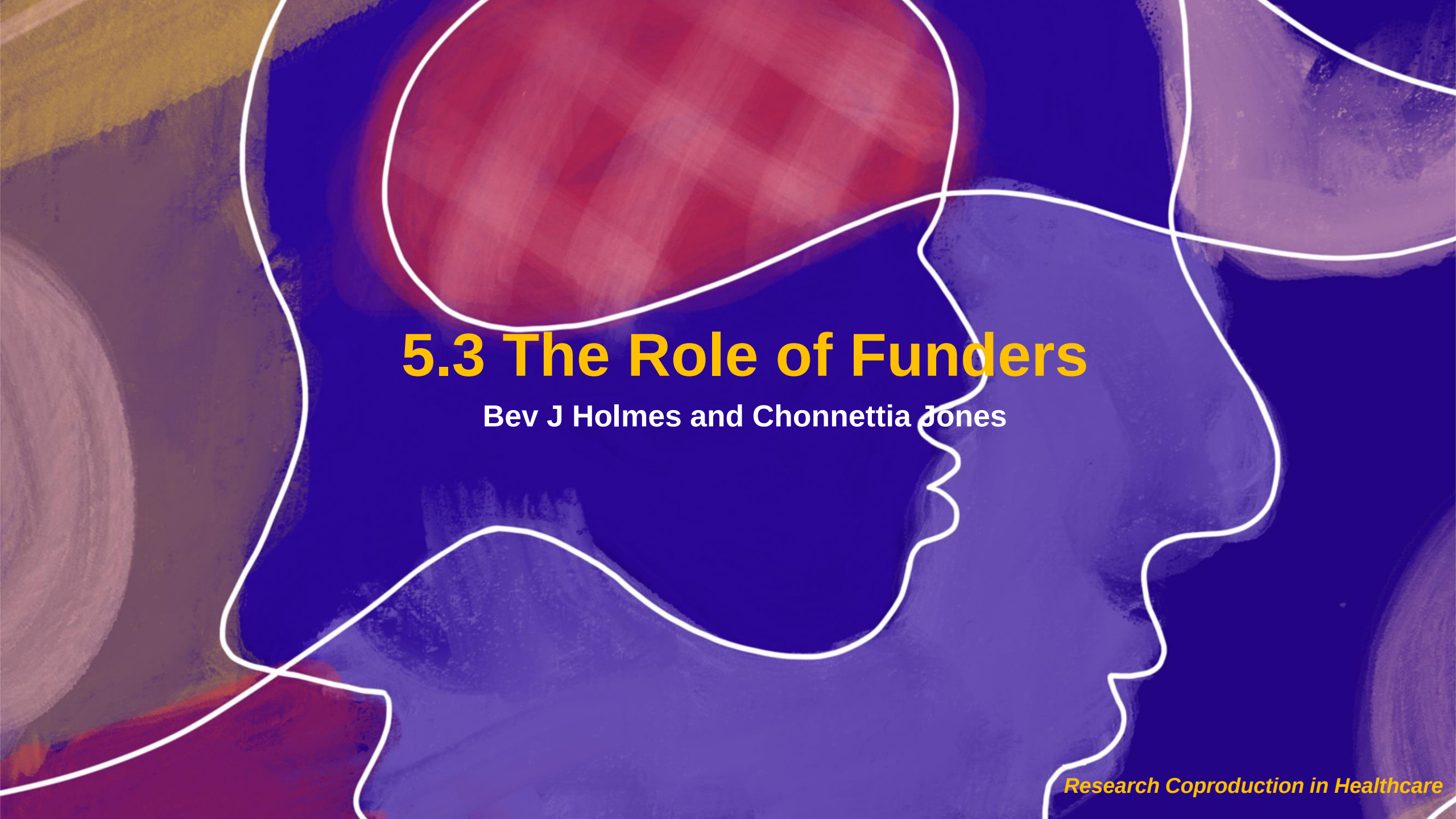




5.3 The Role of Funders

Bev J Holmes and Chonnetia Jones

Overview

- If coproduction is to achieve its potential, institutional changes are needed to reflect the embeddedness of science within society.
- Among these institutions are research funders, which can help link research and action through coproduction.
- Despite the benefits of coproduction, the implications for organizational strategy and funding practice are significant.
- Funders should carefully consider the commitments necessary, their specific role, and their intended outcomes.
- Beyond programs, funders can play an important role in influencing system change to support coproduction.

Program level considerations for funders

Funders can support coproduction in programming by:

- Designing programs that incentivize true and equitable partnerships and allow for adequate time and resourcing for partnership building.
- Ensuring robust application review, with panel leads carefully chosen and supported, and panel members involving experts in participatory processes and potential knowledge users.
- Offering project facilitation support, and/or coproduction training for research teams.
- Promoting learning by encouraging research teams to reflect on lessons and failures in progress reports and adjusting plans as appropriate.
- Inviting independent evaluation of their own research coproduction activities.

System level considerations for funders

Funders can support coproduction at the system level by:

- Advocating for and advancing work on measures of research impact appropriate for coproduction.
- Recognizing researchers for investing time in relationship-building.
- Collaborating with other funders to advance coproduction and learn from each other.
- Studying and publishing on their coproduction efforts.

Key Learning Points

- Funders should support coproduction through programs, *and* advocate for system change to support coproduction.
- Funders must be clear on coproduction requirements in funding calls, and sensible and strategic in what is asked and expected of awardees.
- Equity, diversity and inclusion are critical in all coproduction work.
- Funders should evaluate their coproduction programs and activities.
- A significant opportunity is adding to the sparse literature on funders and coproduction.