



# **The Key Factors Behind Effective Use of University Laboratories**

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# Objective of the research

- to identify the **user-centered** key factors of effective laboratory use in universities
- long term mission: to study user-centered laboratory and campus development holistic way
  - > to support collaborative workplace management practises via research



# Research questions

- 1: What are the key factors for effective use of university laboratories (-> user-dominant perspective) ?
- 2: What is behind key factors (in details) ?
- 3: What was felt critical for effective use of laboratories in users mind / and what was not ?



# Method

- qualitative research/user-centered approach
- empirical data was collected from three Finnish campus renovation projects 2011-2013 (natural science labs)
- 9 individual interviews, 16 group interviews, 14 thematic workshops, three web based surveys, observation, benchmark
- inductive content analysis was used to build pre-conceptual model of the phenomenon

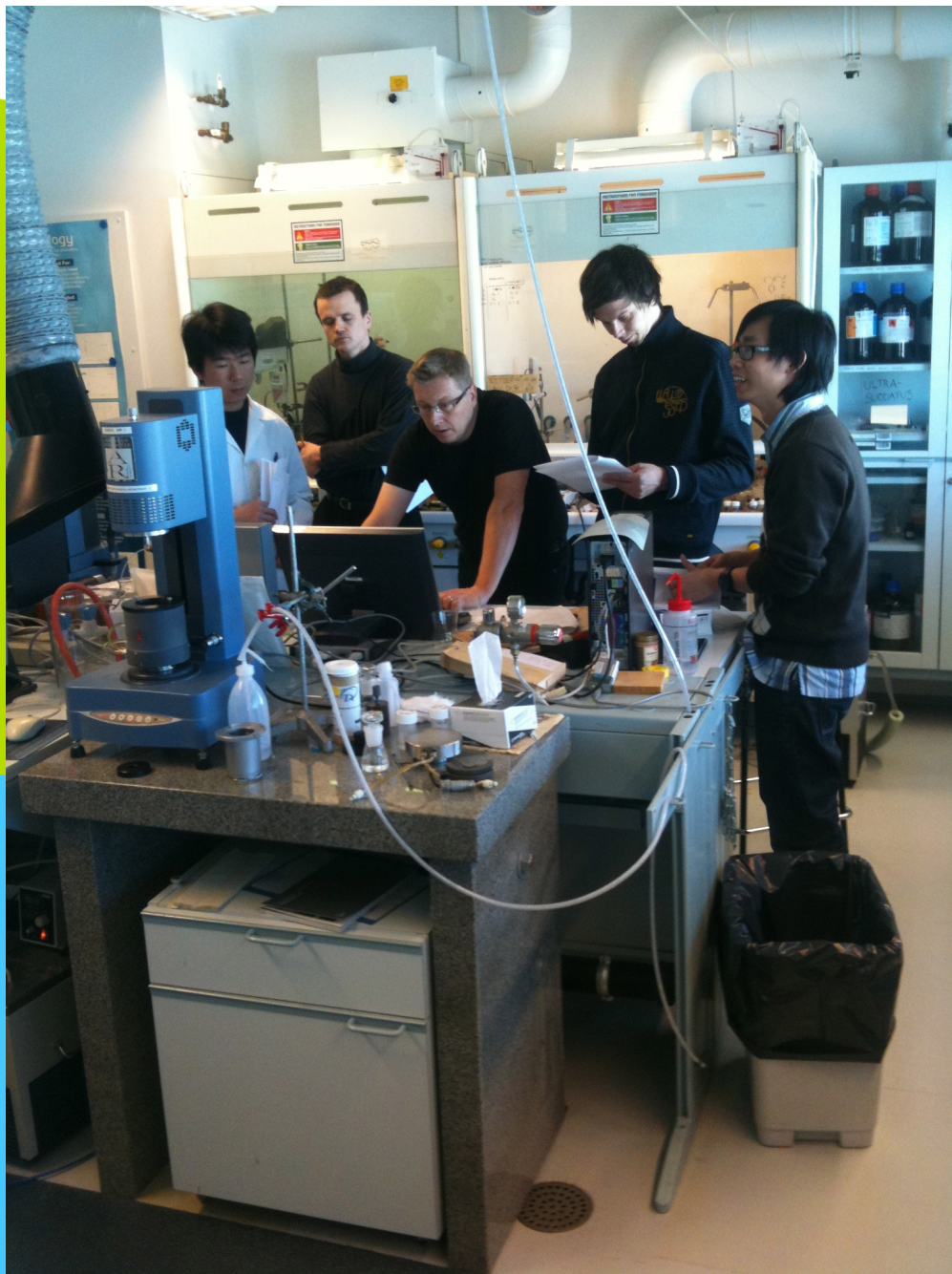


# Results 1 (pre-concept)

- key factors for effective use of university laboratories based on this study (not in priority order):
  1. The ways of using the labs (-> ways of working)
  2. Security
  3. Spaces
  4. Equipment
  5. Tools
  6. ICT-systems
  7. Logistics
  8. Sample management
  9. Laboratory support services
  10. Administrative services
  11. Space services (FM/CREM)
  12. Other services (campus/business/wpm...)







# Results 1 (in clusters)

- key factors for effective use of university laboratories based on this study (nature of the factors):

1. The ways of working in the labs	core work
2. Security	tools
3. Spaces	
4. Equipment	
5. Tools	
6. ICT-systems	
7. Logistics	services
8. Sample management	
9. Laboratory support services	
10. Administrative services	
11. Space services (FM/CREM)	
12. Other services (campus/business/wpm...)	



# Results 1

- Some factors can be seen as part of the core work or services depending on university policies and practises
- Benchmark: In private sector buying services (like the whole laboratory as a service) is more common than in universities





# Results 2 (some details)

- One of the teaching laboratories was used 50 hours a year. No coordination to curriculum. No collaboration with other units -> very expensive spaces (same time more research laboratory spaces was needed but were not possible to get).
- The number of staff and people working in the campuses varied 25-35 % depending on who was answering. When measuring the utilization rate and the costs of the spaces the impact of inaccurate numbers makes campus development work difficult.

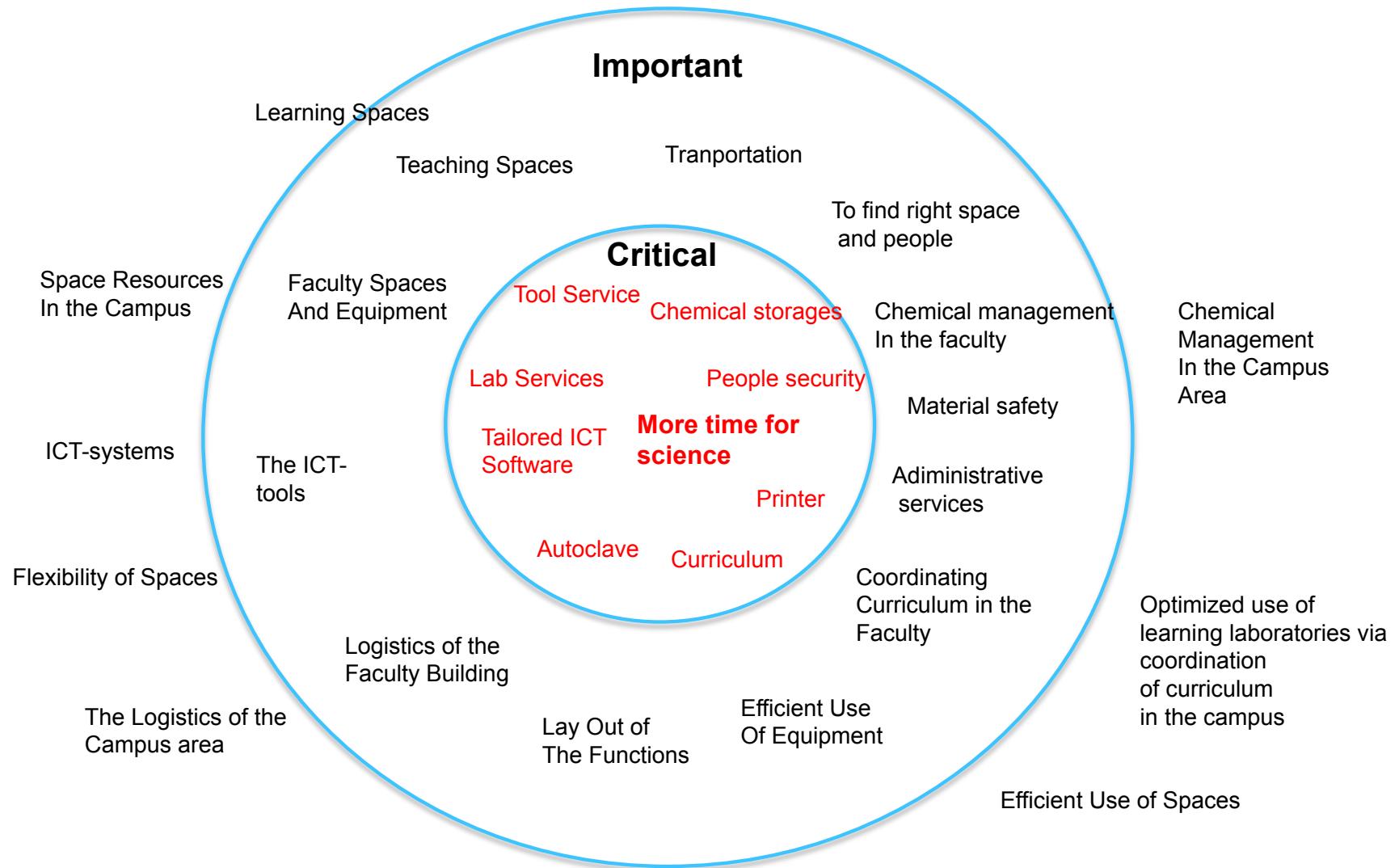


# Results 3 (what's in mind)

- **Time management** and practical every day matters are in the top of laboratory users mind
- More time consuming but critical issues for work performance are felt important
- Big scale/very much time consuming and complex non-scientific matters are seldom in mind (not found from the data) -> challenge to FM/CREM projects



## Not-in-mind







# Practical Implications

- Better (mutual) understanding of laboratory users demands supports efficient collaboration between stakeholders when developing campuses
- Research offers "new" demand for project management:  
-> time management from the user perspective
- For FM/CREM industry the pre-concept of the lab-user demands offers possibilities to develop better focused and balanced services for laboratory workplaces





# Conclusions/Discussion

- The key factors of efficient use of laboratories as a holistic system are not very well known
- Laboratory as an instrument impacts directly to the quality of teaching, learning and science
- More research and pilot projects are needed: the concept of effective use of laboratories does not deliver value for users (directly)
  - > the details "in the end of the path" are crucial for the users and science/business





