

Where Can International HTA Collaboration Add Value? The Experience of NICE

Zoe Garrett¹

¹ National Institute for Health and Care Excellence

Background

Collaboration can enable Health Technology Assessment (HTA) organisations to work more efficiently by making better use of their resources, sharing expertise and improving the quality of their work. Collaboration and partnership working are part of the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence’s (NICE) transformation plan supporting the organisation to focus on what matters most, create advice that is useful and useable and to learn from data and implementation. To support this transformation NICE implemented processes to understand existing international activity and to support further activity aligned to its objectives.

Collaboration in NICE

Collaboration in NICE is decentralized and takes place in many NICE teams.

There are 4 key strands of international collaborative activity:

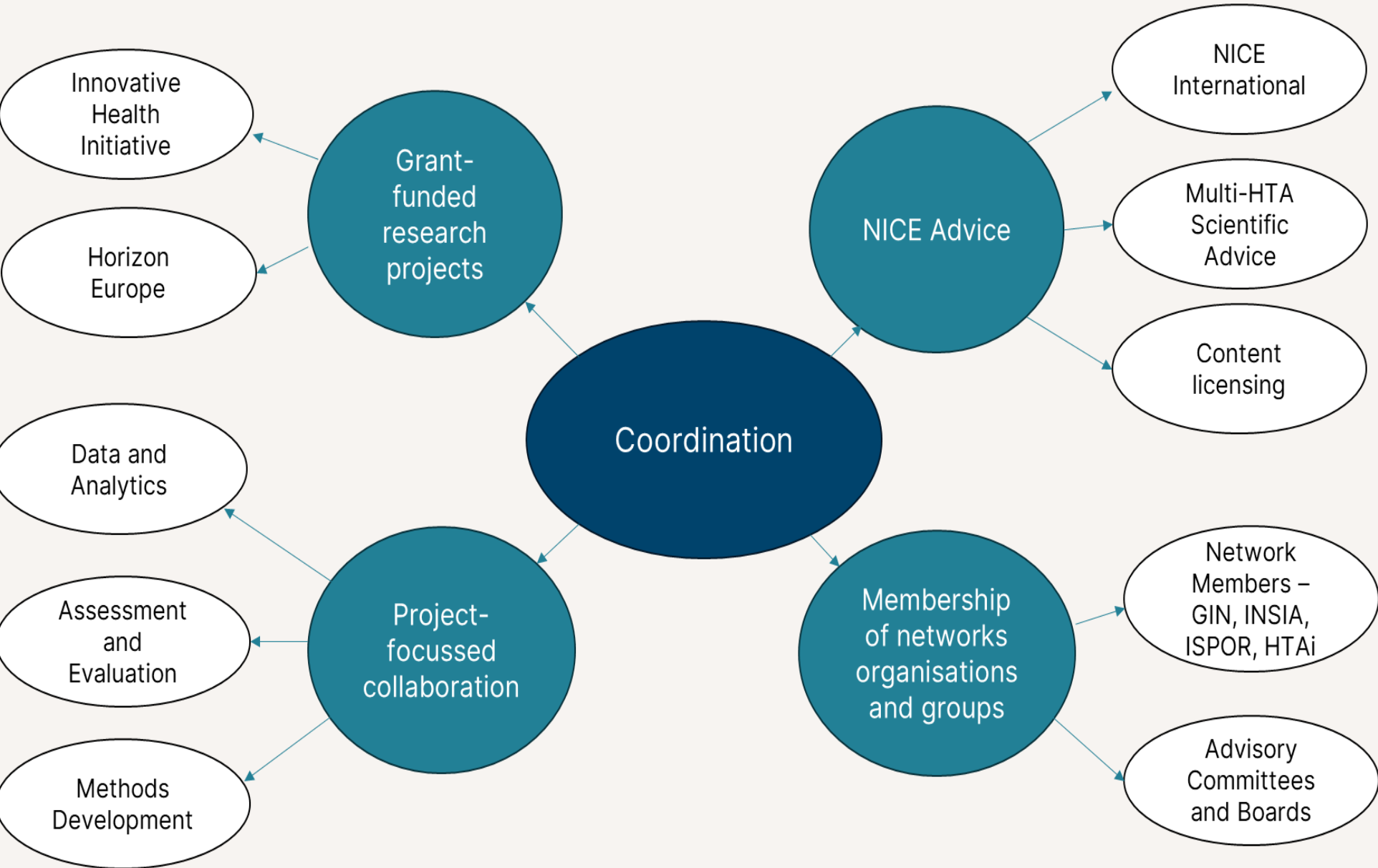
1. NICE Advice fee-for-service activity (1)
2. NICE involvement in international networks, organizations and groups
3. Grant-funded research projects (2)
4. Project-focused collaboration

Figure 1 describes these strands of activity

Cross-Institute coordination of collaboration is provided by:

1. An international strategy (3)
2. A record of international relationships
3. A cross-Institute meeting group to coordinate and share activity
4. Resource for NICE teams who need collaboration advice and project support

Figure 1: Collaboration at NICE



Outcomes and impact

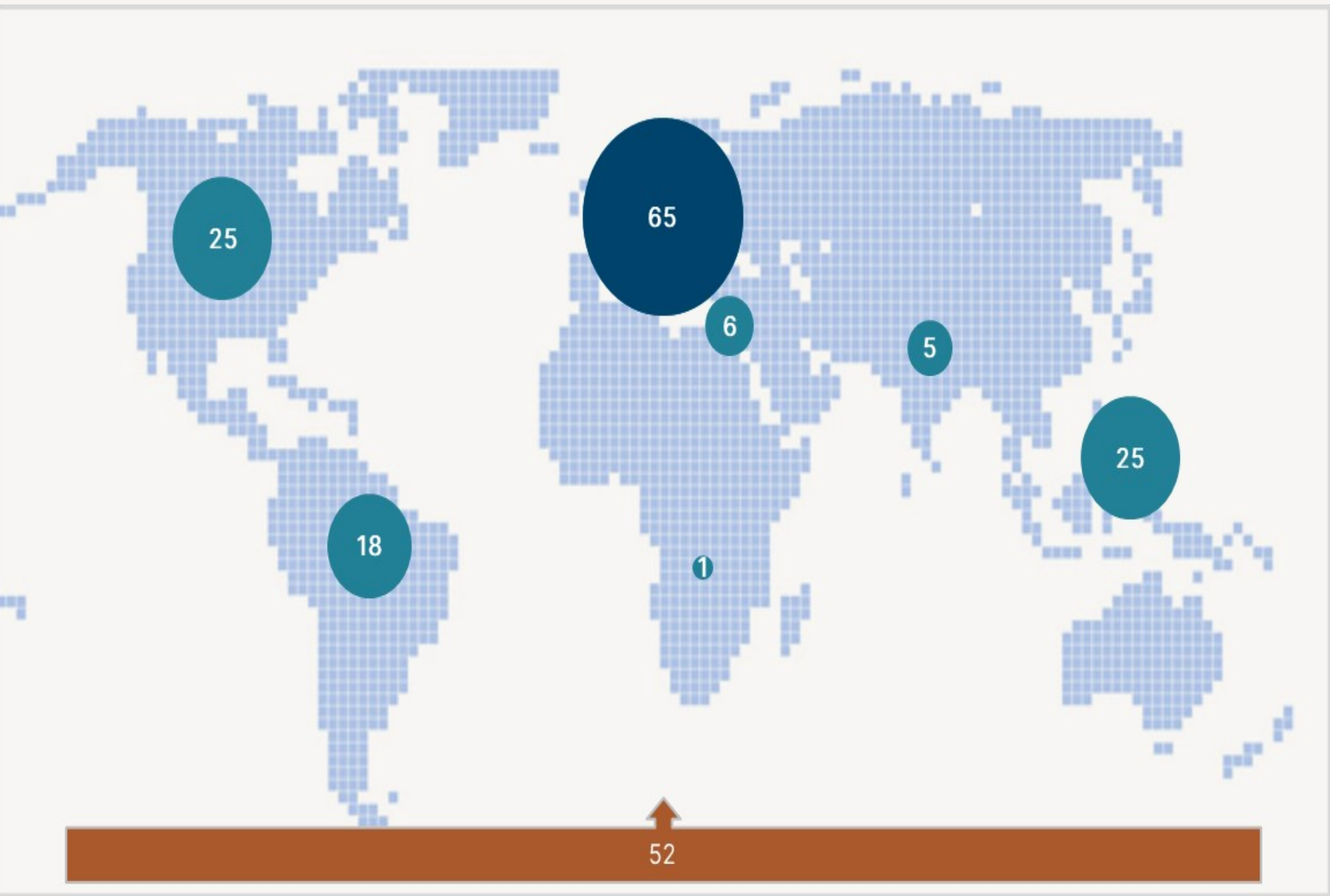
As of August 2023, there are 197 active international relationships (figure 2). 69 of these were NICE International activities to support countries to improve their nation's health and wellbeing. 33% of the total relationships were European relationships and 26% were relationships with partners from multiple continents.

Outside of NICE International activity, collaboration in science and methods, scientific advice and evidence generation are more established than collaboration in assessment and evaluation (figure 3).

Collaborative activity aligns to NICE strategic objectives relating to:

- Developing innovative methods
- Creating proportionate advice processes
- Using real-world evidence
- Building beneficial partnerships

Figure 2: Collaboration partners



What we learnt

Collaboration allows NICE to benefit from the knowledge held in other agencies and learn from their experiences.

A decentralized model supports staff to include collaboration in their team activities but requires a centralised coordination function to ensure a joined-up approach and strategic oversight of activity.

To facilitate collaboration:

- Identify the opportunities for, and value of, collaboration early on in a project and embed during project planning.
- Consider which organisations and partners are the most appropriate collaborator for projects.
- Think flexibility when choosing the partnership model including models of exchange, cooperation and collaboration.

Figure 3: Areas of collaboration

Topic identification	Collaboration with UK system partners Exploratory international work
Methods development	Portfolio of European grant-funded projects Inclusion of collaboration in methods projects
Scientific advice	Multi-HTA scientific advice with CADTH New NICE Advice activity in surrogate outcomes
Evaluation and Assessment	Clinical guidelines collaboration Limited collaboration with UK system partners Exploration with HTA agencies in Australia, NZ and Canada
Data and Analytics	Use of real-world evidence to fill evidence gaps and provide data needed for decision making

Example: Collaborative surrogate outcomes project

When new drugs are approved, they don’t always have all the evidence for their longer-term effects available. When we understand the relationship between short-term effects, and long-term outcomes, we can use models to make predictions about the long-term health effects. The challenges of making predictions about long-term health effects based on short term outcomes is not unique to NICE, it is a challenge shared with many HTA organisations. NICE is working with a group of HTA organisations to develop more guidance on the use of surrogate outcomes when analysing cost-effectiveness and is developing a multi-HTA scientific advice procedure that offers advice on the proposed use of new surrogate outcomes in analysing cost-effectiveness. The outcomes of these projects will help pharmaceutical companies understand how surrogate outcomes should be used when analysing cost-effectiveness of the drugs they are developing (4).