

**world
view**

WORLDVIEW WAVE 5

Exploring Irish Attitudes Towards
Imagery

dóchas

The Irish Association
of Non-Governmental
Development Organisations



Irish Aid

An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

DEVELOPMENT
ENGAGEMENT
LAB

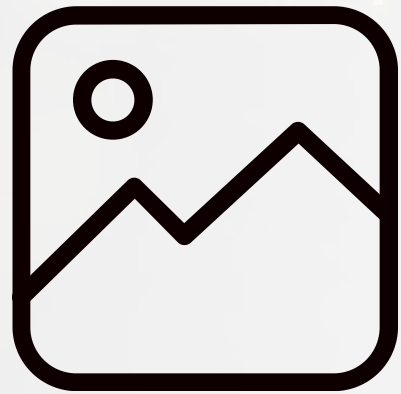


B&A

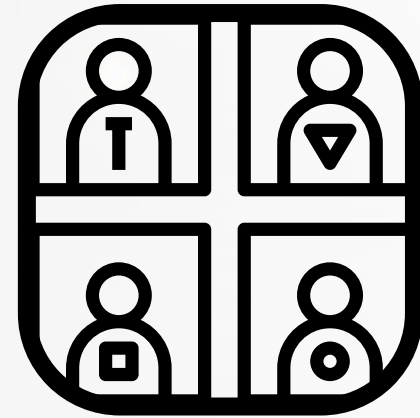
ABOUT THE RESEARCH

Explored:

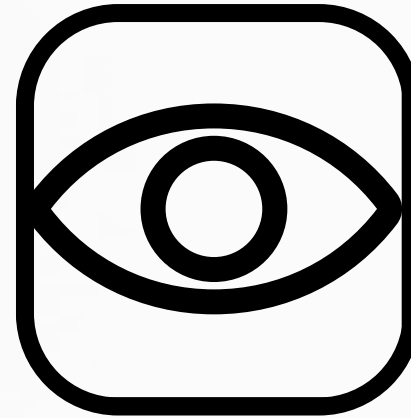
- Which images **motivate** respondents to **engage** in an appeal
- What **emotions** do images **trigger** and how does that matter for engagement



141 from 11
members
submitted



70 selected for a
range of different
attributes - gender,
age, emotion, eye
contact etc

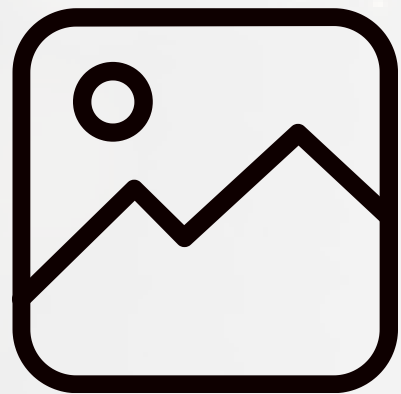


Each image was
seen between 175-
179 times

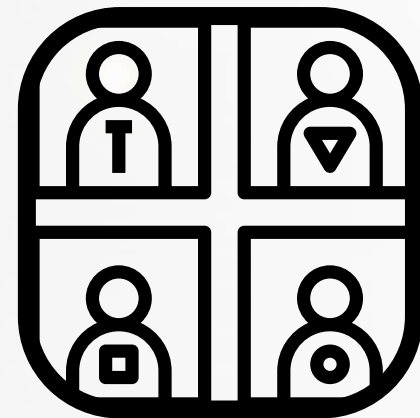
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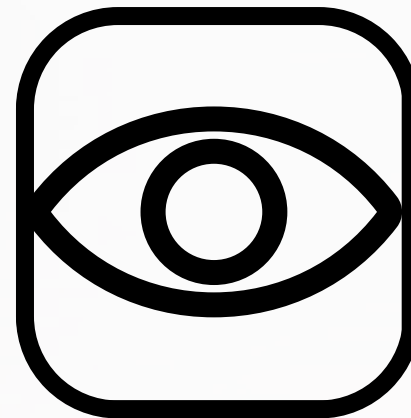
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OVERARCHING THEMES

1

PROGRESS

2

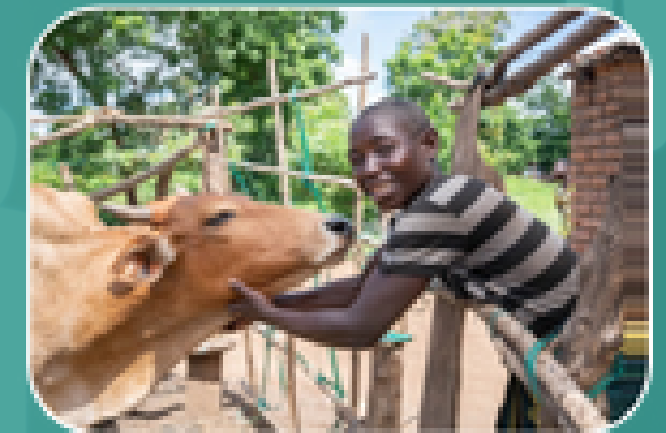
AGENCY

3

TRANSPARENCY

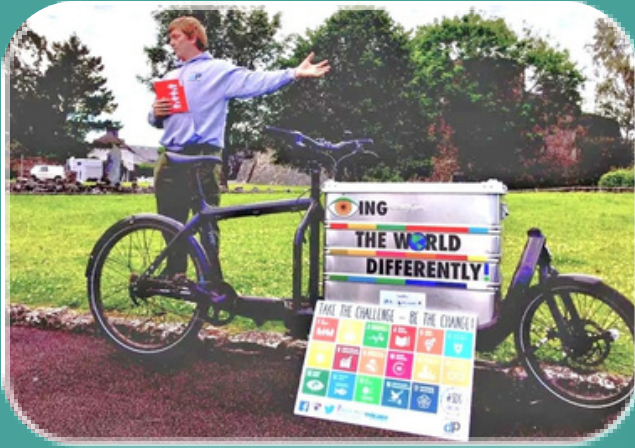
SURVEY IMAGE INSIGHTS

TOP 10 IMAGES – MOST SELECTED FOR FINDING OUT MORE INFORMATION



SURVEY IMAGE INSIGHTS

BOTTOM 10 IMAGES – LEAST SELECTED FOR FINDING OUT MORE INFORMATION



INCREASING IMAGE ENGAGEMENT

1

Images that elicit more extreme emotional responses are more likely to generate engagement.

2

Both positive (activated & deactivated) and negative (activated) images

3

The top images selected nearly always involved children: half feature crisis/extreme need, and half are hopeful or show progress.



Global Citizens, Multilateralists, and Community Champions are most likely to engage

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LEAST EFFECTIVE IMAGES INCLUDED:

1

Organisation's members

2

Adults and rarely include young and/or distressed children

3

'Empowered' women/girls

?

**Where can
we take this?**

RESULTS

FACTORS INFLUENCING REACTIONS TO IMAGES

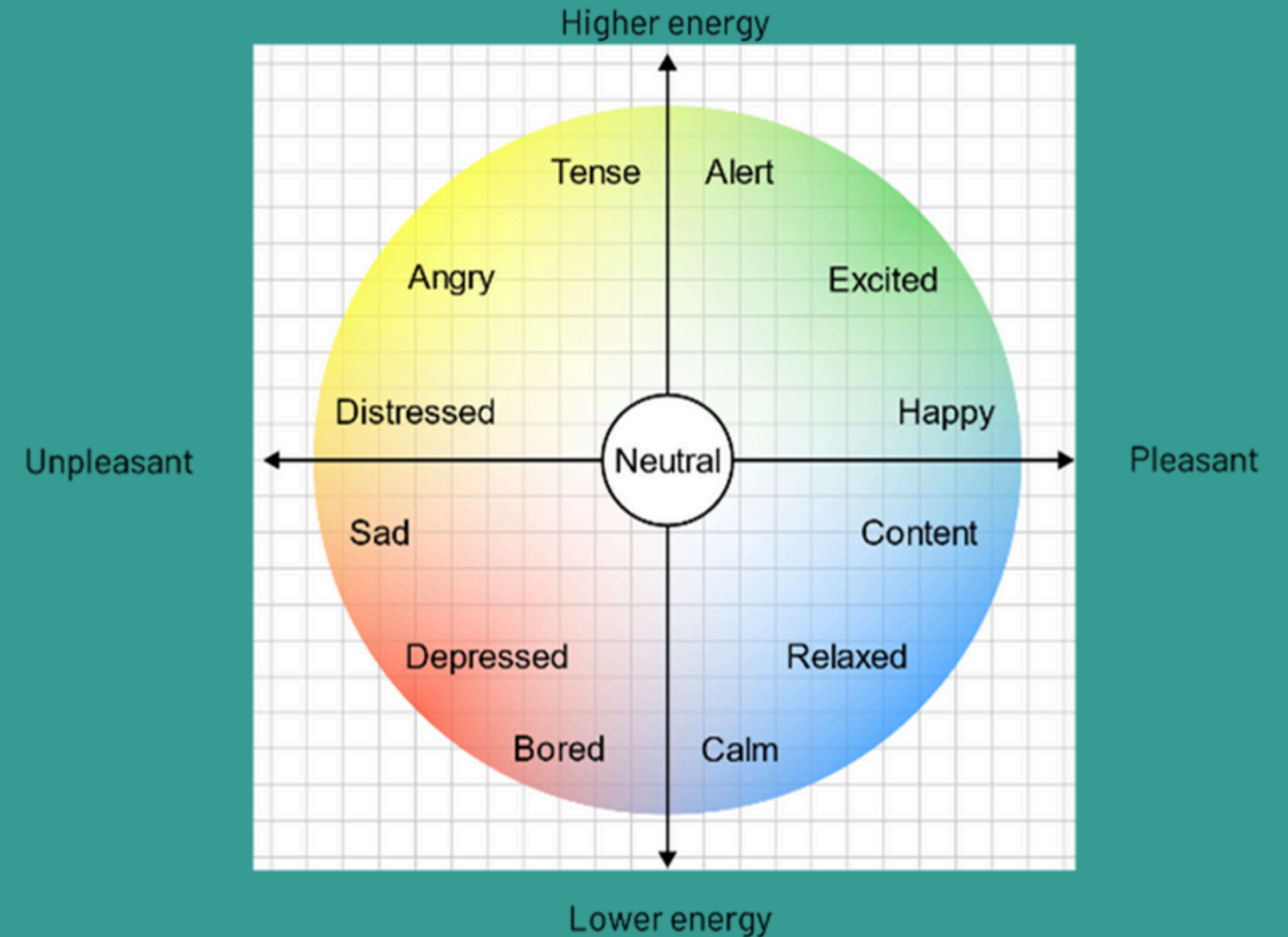


FOCUS GROUPS

EMOTIONAL CIRCUMPLEX

With each image, respondents were encouraged to look at the screen and then note down their emotional response before discussing their feedback in the group.

Thus, we captured (as far as possible) their 'system one' or gut reactions at a personal level before exploring other layers of reactions and interpretations (system two) through group discussions.



UNPACKING THE KEY FACTORS

IMPACT

Immediacy of the image in arresting attention can make a big difference to reactions

- Most are exposed to a lot of visual content daily and have become adept at quickly screening out images that do not reach a certain level of impact.

Essentially, impact tends to be generated by the sense of **drama** portrayed in combination with the sense of **novelty** of the image

- Will this image standout from other images?
- Does this image portray something new?



UNPACKING THE KEY FACTORS

PROTAGONIST MEANING

A lot of these images draw attention to an individual protagonist

- Sometimes juxtaposed with others or in a particular relationship with their environment.

Thus, reactions are often largely influenced by perceptions of the protagonist's **situation**, or their **relationship** with others.

In particular, respondents react strongly to a sense of a protagonist's:

- Vulnerability
- Jeopardy
- Emotional state



UNPACKING THE KEY FACTORS

VIEWER CONNECTION

It is clear that some images connect more strongly than others.

At times, respondents almost immediately reference their reactions in terms of similar experiences in their own life.

This **relatability** can operate at an almost unconscious / gut level or can emerge more slowly from consideration and comparison.



UNPACKING THE KEY FACTORS

STORY TELLING POWER

As respondents discuss their reactions it is evident that some images ‘unfold’ with more sense of a background story than others.

Thus, a story that is expressed with **clarity** tends to have more effect (particularly if it can be interpreted as connecting to a current international issue).

In a similar way the ‘story’ may have a **symbolic meaning** that is more or less engaging (motherhood, sibling care, etc.).



UNPACKING THE KEY FACTORS

AUTHENTICITY OF SCENARIO

At the most obvious level is the sense that an image is a **'candid moment'** from someone's life or a more **'staged arrangement'**.

Note, there can also be a rapid negative response when respondents feel there is a deliberate intention to **manipulate** their reaction

- A highly emotive scene that has been engineering for effect.

A perceived link to an active news story also supports a sense of **authenticity** and **recency**.

Keep in mind that people are 'trained' by daily experience to discern the difference between photoshopped/AI generated images and reality.



UNPACKING THE KEY FACTORS

PHOTOGRAPHIC FIDELITY

The simple quality of a photo has an influence on reactions

- Is the protagonist easy or difficult to make out from the background detail?
- Is there dramatic use of colour or a more neutral tone?
- Is the viewer drawn into the scene by the protagonist's eye contact?

The images with more emotional impact are often also simply better quality photos.



PROVOCATION TO SUPPORT INTERNATIONAL AID

NEGATIVE EMOTION TRIGGERS

- Emotional connection to protagonist (especially a child) and their experience.
- Clear sense there is a way to help their predicament.
- Linking the problem shown to bigger issue/injustice (and anger about this).

POSITIVE EMOTION TRIGGERS

- Evidence of positive impact of aid (before and after).
- Concrete and proportionate so it is also relatable and authentic (helps diffuse concerns that money will not reach recipient).
- Linked to bigger story (long term resilience etc and sense of hope about this).

PROVOCATION TO SUPPORT INTERNATIONAL AID

Linking emotions to a bigger issue can help.

However 'Big issues' can actually act as a source of inaction/ hopelessness if they are expressed without connection to possible ways to help.

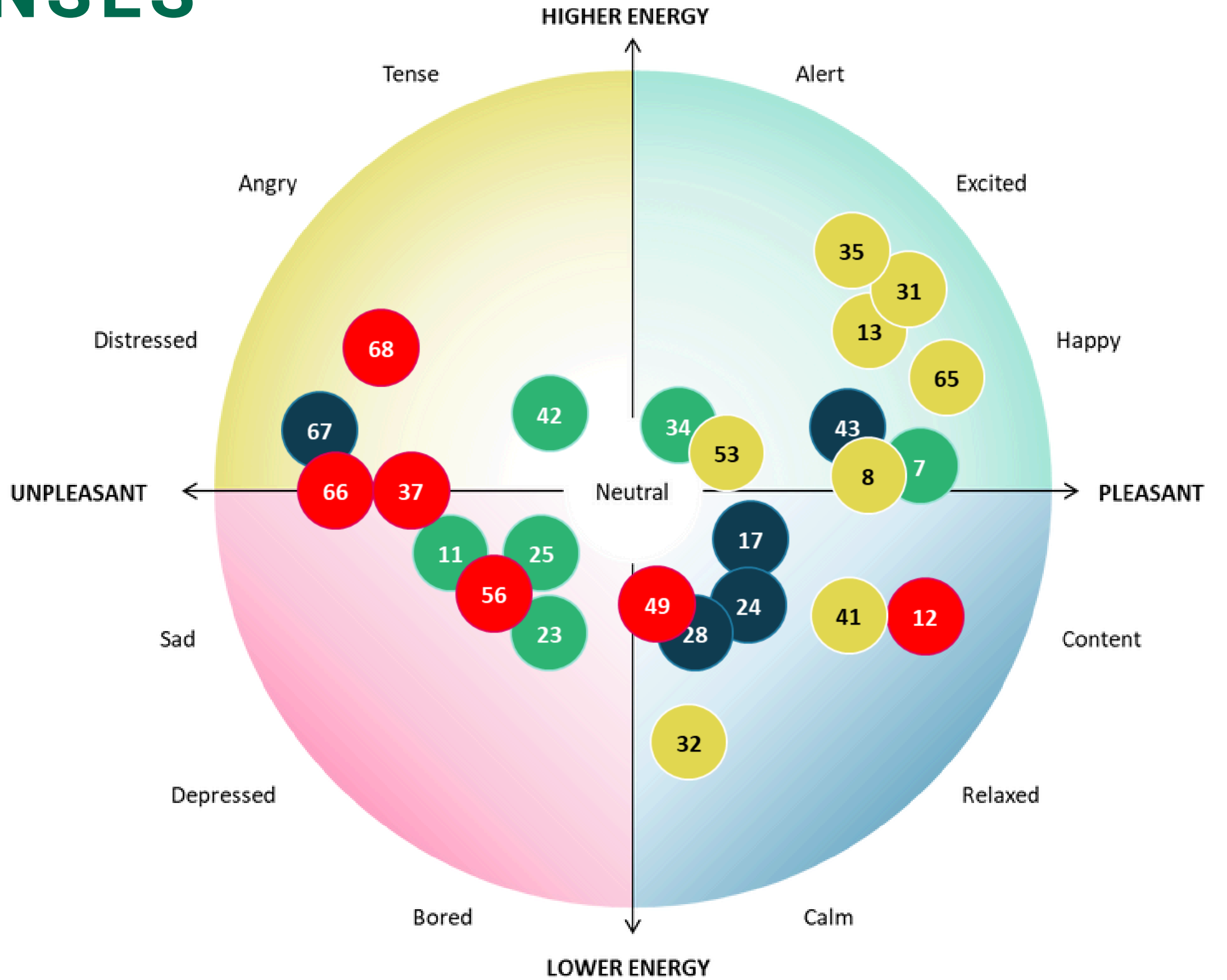
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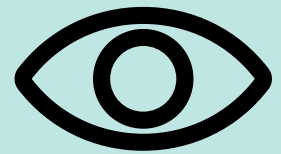
EMOTIONAL RESPONSES TO ALL IMAGES



CONCLUSION



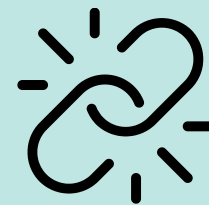
Images the Irish public find effective include:



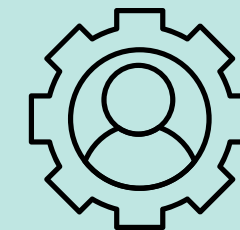
**Direct eye
contact**



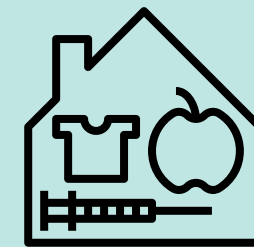
**Clarity to story
but depth to
unpack**



**Connection to
contemporary
narrative**



**Clear role for
the viewer**



**Sense of need
or vulnerability**

VIEW THE LATEST WAVE 5 RESULTS:



VIEW THE NOVEL IMAGERY RESEARCH:



world
view

THANK YOU

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WORLDVIEW PROJECT MANAGER