



Interactions between higher education institutions and the regional not-for-profit sector

Comparative Case Study for HEInnovate

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Table of Contents

- 1.1 On social entrepreneurship _____ 3
- 1.2 The aim of this comparative case study _____ 3
- 1.3 Inspiration fiches _____ 5
- 1.4 Description of social entrepreneurship activity in the three cases _____ 7
 - 1.4.1 University of Innsbruck, Austria _____ 7
 - 1.4.2 Dublin City University, Ireland _____ 8
 - 1.4.3 IPVC, Portugal _____ 10
- 1.5 Comparison of the three cases _____ 12
 - 1.5.1 Introduction _____ 12
 - 1.5.2 Factors obstructing the development of networks with the social sector _____ 13
 - 1.5.3 Factors supporting collaboration with the social sector _____ 14
- 1.6 4. Lessons learned _____ 15

1.1 On social entrepreneurship

Higher education institutions (HEIs) typically partner with non-profit organisations in their local area in a number of ways. These partnerships can be mutually beneficial for both HEIs and non-profits, as they can help to meet the needs of the local community, promote social impact, and advance the missions of both types of organisations.

Some common ways include:

1. Service learning programs: HEIs often offer service learning opportunities for students, where they can apply their academic knowledge to real-world problems and contribute to the local community through partnerships with non-profit organisations.
2. Research collaborations: Non-profits and HEIs can collaborate on research projects that address community-based problems and produce evidence-based solutions.
3. Internships and volunteering: HEIs can provide students with opportunities to work with non-profit organisations through internships and volunteer work, allowing students to gain hands-on experience and make meaningful contributions to the community.
4. Joint events and programs: HEIs and non-profits can co-host events and programs that educate the community on pressing social issues, such as poverty, homelessness, and inequality.
5. Capacity building: Non-profits can benefit from the expertise of HEI faculty and staff, who can provide training and support to help non-profits build their capacity and improve their operations.

Overall, the role of higher education in social entrepreneurship is to create a supportive ecosystem for socially-driven ventures and to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and network needed to make a positive impact in the world.

HEIs are a force for social transformation. They are often one of the major employers in a locality and their existence will impact on the local economy and social wellbeing. The objective of a HEI in research, teaching, industrial and community collaboration is the improvement of society and the quality of life.¹

This comparative case study looks at how Dublin City University (DCU, in Ireland), the University of Innsbruck (IBUK, in Austria) and the Polytechnic Institute of Viana do Castelo (IPVC, in Portugal) have developed their networks with the non-profit (say, social) sector with the aim of encouraging social entrepreneurship, particularly among their students.

1.2 The aim of this comparative case study

In our comparative case study we zoom in on the interventions that the three HEIs (DCU, UIBK, UPVC) have implemented to encourage their interaction with the social sector. Interventions are understood as implementing a new structure or process in the HEI, or changing its existing structures and processes.

Our case study builds on the work carried out as part of an Erasmus+ project that goes by the name of BeyondScale.² BeyondScale seeks to establish a community of practice of HEIs and policy makers to strengthen the organisational capacity of HEIs to play a stronger role in their surrounding economies. HEIs from Austria, Bulgaria, Ireland, the Netherlands and Portugal were participating in BeyondScale, and the experiences of three of these HEIs (DCU, UIBK and UPVC) provided the 'raw material' for this case study.

¹ See: https://www.kauffman.org/wp-content/uploads/2008/11/planck_book_110408.pdf

² See: <https://www.beyondscale.eu/>

Based on the BeyondScale project partners' activities in the project, we collected information on how they integrate social entrepreneurship elements in their curricula or on how they developed relationships with external stakeholders from the not-for-profit sector in their immediate environment. And, more generally, how they are promoting their institution's community engagement and furthering the social entrepreneurship agenda. We focus on some of the common, typical interventions that the three HEIs undertook for stimulating social entrepreneurship and social innovation in their institutions and region. Some of these typical interventions were shown above and we will describe them more in detail using an analytical framework introduced below.

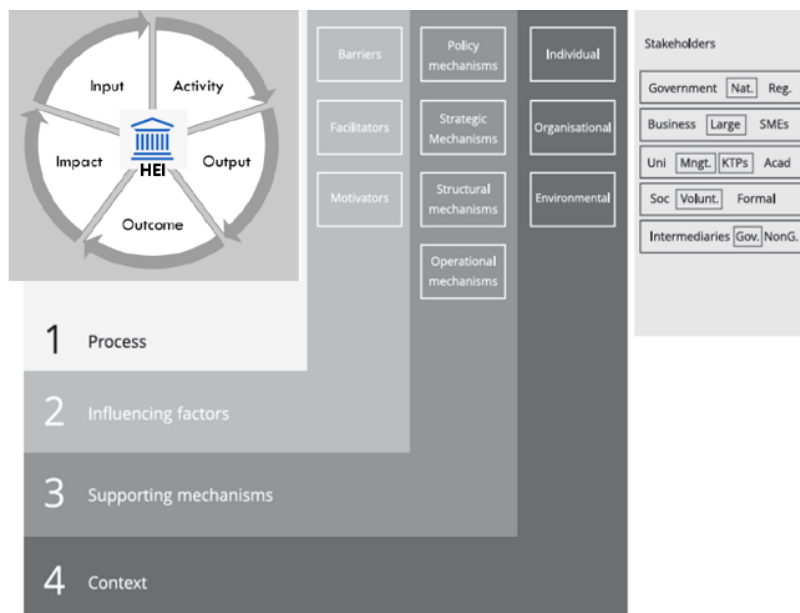
In the comparative case study we focus on processes of organisational change – on transformational processes. We make use of the analytical framework shown in Figure 1 below. The framework was originally developed by Davey et al. (2019) to study how university-business collaborations are established. Its general categories and elements match well with other transformational processes of HEIs. The framework points to four layers (process, influencing factors, supporting mechanisms, context) and the role of stakeholders in the study of transformation processes. Our case study takes this perspective to describe how the three HEIs have dealt with barriers and motivators, what support mechanisms they introduced, et cetera. Ultimately, comparing the three cases we hope to extract what other HEIs can learn from the three HEIs and their transformation process.

Central to the analytical framework is the *process* dimension, which relates to the change process. This process is operationalised as a simple activity chain. It distinguishes between inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impact. The process can be regarded as a cycle because organisational change is usually not just a sequence of different activities, but often its actual outcome and impact will lead to further action in the institution. This dynamic process is embedded in three further dimensions (or layers) the *influencing factors* at the second level, the *supporting mechanisms* on the third level, and the *context* - on the fourth level.

The second layer of influencing factors signifies the immediate environment in which the process takes place. At this level, various barriers, facilitators, and motivators influence the activity chain and pull it in one or the other direction. The (third) level of supporting mechanisms relates to the institution's enabling environment that includes the policies that frame rather than directly influence the steps in the change process.

Finally, the fourth dimension stands for the wider context in which the process is situated. It includes factors that are not under the institution's direct control, such as the individual characteristics and preferences of the actors involved or circumstances in the socio-economic environment of the HEI. In addition, the framework also looks at different categories of stakeholders that can have a role in the change process. Stakeholders are linked to very different organisations in the institution's environment.

Figure 1: Analytical Framework



Source: Source: Davey, T. et al. (2018): *The state of university-business cooperation in Europe. Final report.* Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, p. 26

1.3 Inspiration fiches

The BeyondScale project produced so-called *Inspiration fiches* dedicated in particular to social entrepreneurship. This particular type of entrepreneurship is part of the HEInnovate dimension 'Preparing and Supporting Entrepreneurs'. This case study provides information on strategies, policies and initiatives undertaken by HEIs to address social entrepreneurship and social innovation. It is based on (practical) HEInnovate and BeyondScale experiences and the academic literature on transformation processes in higher education.

In the academic literature, one can find various definitions and understandings of social entrepreneurship. While there is some variation, all definitions state the following characteristics as central to social entrepreneurship:

- Innovative use and combination of resources to pursue opportunities for catalysing social change or addressing social needs
- Creating social value and stimulating changes in the social sector; also sustaining social value
- The generation and development of resources and innovations to stimulate social change

While these criteria mostly point to what entrepreneurial behaviour could involve, a culture of social entrepreneurship in HEIs consists foremost of values that support staff, students, and other relevant stakeholders to function as social entrepreneurs. However, these values can have different orientations which can range from the idea of a philanthropic HEI to a university where social entrepreneurship is also primarily seen as a special form of entrepreneurship that focuses on the beneficial realisation of ideas in the social sector. Besides social entrepreneurship other terms, such as civic engagement, community engagement or civic university are used to point to this activity area of higher education institutions.

While HEIs have become more familiar with the entrepreneurial agenda in recent years, practitioners report that social entrepreneurship is frequently perceived as an alien concept, particularly in the social sciences and arts and humanities. Contributing to social value creation and social change opposes traditional values of these disciplines to some extent. Often, these

disciplines understand their role as observing society and social change from a neutral and outside position, rather than being actively involved or contributing to these processes.

These differences in perception can bring about tension in staff and students as social entrepreneurship values do not match well with traditional disciplinary values.

Hazelkorn (2016)³ distinguishes three indicative institutional models that prevail in HEIs and among others also point to the values that are underlying these models:

- Social justice model: “emphasises students, service learning and community empowerment.” In the social justice model, the collaboration with (socially excluded) communities, their empowerment and to have an impact are at the heart of activities. In this model, the focus is more on teaching
- Economic development model: This model is more oriented towards knowledge transfer and creating innovations that support (regional) stakeholders in solving problems or furthering social change. Thus, here the focus is on research
- Public good model: This model would aim to embed social engagement in HEIs' activity areas. The model assumes that these institutions are strongly embedded in their closer and wider environment and engage in vivid relationships (with regional) public and social sector organisations. This collaboration would permeate all activities, contributing to the public good and social change would be their central focus

These three models can help HEIs to select a structured approach and more particular interventions for engaging in social entrepreneurship. In the remainder of this text, we focus on the following questions around creating a social entrepreneurship culture in the three HEIs:

- How did the HEI do this? What steps were taken in detail?
- What practices/processes can we discern from the cases?
- What factors can hinder the development of a network with the social sector?
- What factors can stimulate collaboration with the social sector?

³ Hazelkorn, E. (2016): Contemporary debates part 2: initiatives, governance, and organisational structures. In J. B. Goddard, Ellen Hazelkorn, Louise Kempton, Paul Vallance (Eds.): *The civic university. The policy and leadership challenges*. Cheltenham UK: Edward Elgar Publishing, pp. 65–93.

1.4 Description of social entrepreneurship activity in the three cases

1.4.1 University of Innsbruck, Austria

The University of Innsbruck is a medium-sized research university in the West of Austria, providing education, research and service to society in a broad range of disciplinary areas. In 2019, around 27,000 students were enrolled at the UIBK; further, around 4,700 academic degrees were awarded. The University has established several departments and centres that engage in entrepreneurship and knowledge transfer. These foremost serve the more technical, engineering and natural sciences and have already established good contacts with the local industry sector. In their outbound activity for the BeyondScale project, the UIBK aims to also establish and extend its network with the Social or Not-for-Profit sector. The institution is in particular interested in creating skills in students that are needed for jobs in these sectors. The institution's knowledge and experience about these skills and competencies is low, and it aims to increase and strengthen relationships with the sector. In doing so, the UIBK aims to collect more information about skill demands in this sector, raise awareness among students and graduates about this sector, and promote stronger links between the sector and the UIBK.

The activity started in early 2020 as part of UIBK engagements in the BeyondScale project. During this step the University worked closely together with Dublin City University that also planned to strengthen its relationship with the social sector, promote entrepreneurship in the social sciences and humanities, and aimed at integrating social entrepreneurship in their curricula. In the kick-off phase of the activity, UIBK established, as a first step, contacts with social organisations from its regional/closer environment. These contacts were found through a screening, in which the most important social organisations and contact persons were identified. The majority of these contacts were new to the UIBK, only a few organisations or their contact persons were known by the staff before. The contacted organisations welcomed the University's request for starting and establishing contacts and collaborating and agreed to participate in a bilateral meeting.

Besides getting to know each other, these meetings aimed to discuss how the social organisations perceive the UIBK delivery/provision of research and teaching, and its performance in the area of third mission.

The bilateral talks were structured with the help of statements from the dimension 'knowledge exchange and collaboration' of the HEInnovate self-assessment tool. For each of the statements, the project staff formulated a few additional questions that collected more detailed information on the organisations' perceptions and evaluations of UIBK performance. The statements and the additional questions provided the interview guide for the bilateral meeting. During the conversation, which was conducted in an online-meeting, the interview partners could see the statements on their screens and were able to see what answers were filled in the questionnaire.

Following up the bilateral meeting, UIBK summarised and analysed the conversations and populated a value proposition canvas with these results. This step provided the UIBK with a clear insight into what the social organisations expect as a service, where they are frequently disappointed of the current service, and what factors hinder the social organisation from collaborating more closely with the University. The bilateral talks revealed that social organisations expect the supply of graduates that match their requirements better, as well as opportunities to collaborate with the University in social innovation and research, also to improve their standing and recognition in society. Mostly, the social organisation found that the current services of the University would not match their expectations to a high extent. Finding highly qualified graduates often turns out to be very difficult and costly. Further, the collaboration with the University often does not even start as the organisations cannot identify responsible contact persons easily. Research collaboration or making use of research is

frequently hindered by high costs. On their side, the social organisations found that they often lack sufficient resources to approach universities for collaboration, also to maintain and nurture these relationships. In addition, there was the assumption prevailing that university support would lack sufficient practical relevance for their work of the social organisations which was also perceived as a lack of knowledge at their side.

On the other side, the canvas helped the UIBK to reflect on what services are already available and which new services could be implemented to meet the requests from the social sector organisations better. Also, factors that hinder the delivery of and make these services relevant to the social organisations were identified. In their analysis the University found some already existing services that could solve the social organisations' problems of finding adequate personnel and finding contact persons at the University. Firstly, the University offers recruitment support through its career service and job portal which was hardly known or used by the organisations. Also, the transfer office was seen as a contact point that should also address the social sector. However, for both services easier access and more clear and accessible information need to be available.

Besides finding out these major hindrances, the bilateral talks also stimulated the development of more concrete areas for cooperation which could be picked up in the future. Mostly these ideas are aimed at making either the UIBK better known for its services in the social sector, but also to raise awareness among staff and students about the social sector organisations. Therefore, suggestions for future collaboration were mostly about workshops, lectures, podium discussions, or the implementation of student internships in the sectors. Also, opportunities for research collaboration were mentioned such as the provision of data on social problems, labour market data which could feed research on social problems and support the social organisations in reporting on pressing issues in their engagement based on a scientifically sound analysis.

While these ideas might feed the future collaboration, the UIBK also implemented a more short-term oriented action plan to remedy current challenges. The action plan was aimed at opening the job portal for the social organisations free of charge. Normally, potential employers must pay for the use of the platform when advertising vacancies or searching for graduates. For the social organisations, the free access is a good support for their search for highly qualified personnel, and also makes them more familiar with the range of skill sets of graduates. A second task is to continuously monitor the social sector, establish new contacts with social organisations and to nurture the already existing contacts. Finally, two more specific collaborations were envisaged: It was agreed to gauge some opportunities for collaborative projects with the data available to social organisations.

1.4.2 Dublin City University, Ireland

The Dublin City University (DCU) is a relatively young university in Ireland as it was founded in 1981. DCU has been growing in the recent years and additional faculties were integrated in the University. Currently, DCU covers a wide range of disciplinary areas, and offers more than 200 academic programmes at all higher education levels. In 2019, more than 16,000 students were enrolled from which more than 22% were international students. DCU is also a vibrant research university, which is reflected in its excellent performance in international rankings such as THE-ranking.

DCU has already established good working relationships and created a well-integrated ecosystem for entrepreneurship and innovation. While entrepreneurship education is offered in academic programmes at all faculties, exchange and collaboration mostly concentrate on the for-profit sector. However, to also make entrepreneurship education more relevant for the not-for-profit or social sector, DCU wants to gauge in its BeyondScale activity, the current quality of collaboration with this sector and assess "how well creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship behaviour are embedded in higher education". The DCU expects that

learning about the needs and demands of the sector will benefit academic programmes that aim to prepare students for social innovation and engagement in this sector.

For its BeyondScale activity the DCU aimed to establish collaboration with organisations from the social sector, foremost to create opportunities for students to learn and engage in this sector. As a first step in this activity, the DCU organised a workshop with representatives from social organisations and academic staff members to learn about their perception and evaluation of the DCU regards the establishment of (research-) collaborations and learning and engagement opportunities for students. The workshop had several objectives: to establish and strengthen contacts with the social sector, to learn about the needs of these organisations and their perception of the DCU, and to identify opportunities for collaboration.

When inviting representatives from social organisations, the DCU did not have to start from scratch. It already had loose contact with most of the invited social organisations. For the preparation of the workshop the DCU also organised bilateral meetings with the social organisations to present their planned activity and inform them about the purpose and aims of the workshop. In addition, the DCU sent an information package to each participant. The package included the workshop schedule and further information on the workshop participants.

During the workshop, the participants discussed a few, selected statements from 'Knowledge Exchange and Collaboration' dimension of the HEInnovate self-assessment tool. To structure this discussion DCU used the Value Proposition Canvas and was able to reveal what services and jobs representatives expect from it, what major 'pains' were standing in the way of a fruitful collaboration, and what 'gains' the social organisations anticipate when cooperating with the DCU. The social organisations see the DCU as a good partner to provide support to sustain their social impact through research, and for their capacity building. They are in particular interested in the knowledge generation of the DCU and the qualifications of graduates to support their functioning. However, the organisations find this support difficult to achieve. As major barriers the organisations mentioned aspects such as bureaucracy or difficulties in finding the right contact persons at university. Further, the HEI's perception of the social sector, as being less successful compared to other sectors, not generating income but other forms of value were mentioned. The organisations also pointed that the current skills training would prepare students more frequently for other than the social sector. A shortage of funding was also mentioned. Nonetheless, the social organisations also associate several benefits with the collaboration with the HEI. These mostly relate to the high-quality knowledge that the DCU generates in its research activities. When collaborating with the DCU in research activities, the social organisations expect more academic rigour for their projects with which they can enhance their public image. Also, collaborating with the DCU can empower people working in the social organisations who might feel more recognised by this.

The DCU also assessed that it can provide several services and thus respond to the needs of the social organisations. It also found research and the training of graduates as important services. The provision of workshops for training and capacity building for the organisations was seen as a further opportunity for collaboration. Against this background, the DCU proposed several potential activities with which it can support the social sector. These included, among others, research support for community hubs, establishing knowledge that is relevant for the social sector, the secondment of students to the social sector for internships, adapting skills training of students with regard to the sector's needs, and also providing other forms of consultancy and training for the sector.

Overall, the DCU was able to deduce from the workshop a few areas and jobs in which opportunities for (interdisciplinary) collaboration could arise. However, the workshop also pointed out that the DCU needs to learn or gain more knowledge about the social sector.

Following-up the workshop the DCU analysed the gained information and selected as a start one area for its engagement: in line with its original plans, further actions were concluded for adapting entrepreneurship education to the social sectors and helping social organisations find qualified staff. To this end, the DCU arranged meetings with three senior managers or human resource officers and leaders of education modules at DCU to discuss how the modules could collaborate with the social organisations, and what entrepreneurial skills should be provided by these modules. As part of this, internships of students in the social organisations will have an important role. It was also envisaged that students could support the organisations with research activities and in turn learn more practical skills that relate to running a social organisation.

1.4.3 IPVC, Portugal

IPVC is a polytechnical higher education institution located in the north of Portugal. IPVC is relatively young institution, founded in 1980. It offers academic programmes at bachelor and master level as well as specialisation courses for higher professional and vocational training. Students can choose from a wide range of academic programmes in Education, Agriculture, Technology and Management, Business Sciences, Health Professions, and Sport and Leisure. In 2019, around 5,000 students were enrolled at IPVC, and around 340 academic staff were working there.

IPVC actively engages in the development of the Minho Region through several projects. Among these is the 'Inclusive School Project' which aims at integrating students from educationally disadvantaged family backgrounds or first-generation students into higher education. Further, the project aims to contribute to the development of the Minho-Region, with a focus on preventing the migration of young people from the region and creating social innovations to strengthen the regional labour market. To this end, the Inclusive School Project aims at implementing several student-led research and innovation projects through service learning. Students and teachers work together with social organisations in the region to develop small projects in which social innovations are created on the basis of research. These innovations should primarily contribute to bringing young people into training processes and thus create long-term development prospects for them, which will help to prevent young people from migrating to economically better-off regions.

In the BeyondScale project, IPVC's Inclusive School Project provides the basis for the inbound and the outbound activity. While the inbound activity is aimed at supporting teachers to learn and implement service learning, the outbound activity will contribute to developing IPVC's eco-system further, i.e. it aims to lay contacts with these regional social organisations, scanning their demands and needs, and finding ways to design feasible social innovation projects in which IPVC students collaborate with the social sector.

For this activity, IPVC has defined three main project phases. The first phase was to map existing contacts and collaborations with social organisations in the region. Secondly, these social organisations were invited to a workshop to find out their perception of IPVC and their needs and expectations of the institution. Thirdly, based on this information, further steps should be planned to implement service-learning projects and consolidate the collaboration with the sector.

When mapping already existing contacts and collaborations with the sector, IPVC implemented a form to collect information from teachers and departments.

In the second phase, the IPVC contacted the listed organisations in bilateral meetings to inform them about their Inclusive School Project and discuss the organisations interests and needs when participating in this project. In these meeting, the social organisations were also invited to a stakeholder workshop. In this workshop, the IPVC aimed at several objectives of which some were not directly related to developing a network with the social sector:

1. To expand IPVC social entrepreneurship ecosystem, expand collaboration and knowledge exchange with the public sector and society.
2. Capacity building of the local community.
3. Develop and systematise good teaching practices in service learning at national level.
4. Identify the partners needs to promote the development of ApS (Aprendizagem em Serviço - Service Learning) projects.
5. Discuss Inclusive School actions.

IPVC invited representatives from social organisations with which it was already collaborating in service-learning projects, and from social organisations which did not yet collaborate in such projects to the workshop. Further, also teachers leading the Inclusive School Project in their faculty and students working in these service-learning projects were invited. Also, representatives from the institutional management and leadership were actively participating in the workshop. In the workshop, no tool or canvas was employed to structure the discussion. Rather, the discussion was strongly influenced by the Covid-19 Pandemic that was strongly limiting possibilities for collaboration and opportunities for service-learning projects at that time. Nonetheless, in the discussion a few other barriers to collaboration and measures to remove them were identified. These included the low administrative resources available to support the service learning projects, the work overload of teachers and resulting difficulties to adapt or change teaching practices towards service learning. Further, also resistance to change or to engage in these projects among students were found. Finally, curricula were evaluated as not matching well with the needs of the social sector. On the other hand, in the workshop several assets of IPVC were mentioned. Foremost, IPVC's contribution to regional development through providing knowledge and competencies in social entrepreneurship and social innovation were mentioned.

The information collected in the discussion supported the IPVC in developing the Inclusive School Project further. Firstly, it found that facilitating collaboration among the social organisations hosting a service-learning project contributes to strengthening the ecosystem. Further, to find additional opportunities for service-projects, the IPVC planned to redesign the dissemination strategy of its Inclusive School Project. A road show of the project, i.e. paying visits to social organisations and introducing the projects in bilateral settings was implemented. Further, it was agreed to enhance the existing dissemination strategy for project results to make the relevance of the project clearer to social organisations that do not yet participate in the project. The action plan that also was concluded from the discussions in the workshop zoomed in on developing and implementing more service-learning projects with the social organisations. It included three major tasks:

- Firstly, the collection of information on the social organisations' needs for service-learning projects. Therefore, the IPVC provided a so-called diagnostic form which enabled the organisations to report on issues and needs where they would find the implementation of a project useful
- Secondly, the analysis of this information and the design of potential service-learning projects. The social organisations were requested to validate this list of projects
- Thirdly, the implementation of these projects in collaboration with teaching staff and professors in the current teaching and courses

In a follow-up workshop that was conducted one year after the initial workshop, IPVC evaluated the progress of these planned activities.

1.5 Comparison of the three cases

1.5.1 Introduction

The three universities presented here have taken on a similar challenge. Their goal was to establish or intensify cooperation with the social sector or the not-for-profit sector in their region, i.e. to establish or expand a network with organisations in this sector. This goal was motivated by various factors. On the one hand, by social objectives that point to the importance of the sector for the sustainable and just shaping of societies. Concrete social problems in the region, such as increased youth unemployment and the massive exodus of young people from this region, also provided the impetus for such a commitment. Ultimately, the projects were also initiated without any particular reason, but rather driven more by the desire to establish entrepreneurship education in the less traditional areas as well and thus offer all students the opportunity to acquire these skills.

Regardless of the actual reason for the increased engagement, all three universities faced a similar challenge: establishing contacts, defining opportunities for cooperation and ultimately also maintaining and further expanding this network. At the same time, however, the HEIs were also challenged to assess what support services it could offer to social sector organisations, and also to find out what needs existed in this sector.

To meet this challenge, the universities each chose different measures and processes, which are compared with each other in the table below.

The main difference that emerges for the three HEIs is that the process is open to varying degrees. UIBK, as the University initially involved in establishing such a network, hardly set any concrete goals for cooperation with the sector, but derived collaboration possibilities from the information gathered in the initial contacts. At DCU, there were already more concrete goals for what collaboration with organisations from the social sector should be about. The main focus here was to achieve learning opportunities and an expansion or adaptation of entrepreneurship education to the needs of this sector and to involve the sector in this development. Through the Inclusive School Project, IPVC finally had clearly defined goals. The focus here is to generate concrete opportunities for cooperation through service-learning projects. All three institutions have chosen adequate inputs and activities according to their objectives. It is striking that all HEIs chose to inform the selected organisations about their concerns and objectives in a bilateral initial contact. This has primarily helped to build trust with the organisations and to gain an initial insight into their perception and evaluation of the HEIs.

Table 1: Comparison of initiatives undertaken by the three HEIs

	IBUK	DCU	IPVC
Input	Scanning the institution's environment social sector Identifying suitable organisations for cooperation Initial contacts with social sector organisations (cold contacts) Collecting data/information from social sector organisations in bilateral meetings Assessment and discussion of IBUK's jobs and services as perceived by the social sector organisations	Reconnecting with already existing contacts in the social sector Survey of their needs and requirements for DCU services Information talks/bilateral talks with social sector organisations Provision of information package about workshop in advance Structured workshop based on value proposition canvas and discussion of selected HEInnovate statements	"Inclusive School Project" Implementation of service-learning Already existing collaborations Workshop with social organisations

	IBUK	DCU	IPVC
Activity	Analysing the needs and requirements of social sector organisations with the help of the value proposition canvas Based on analysis: opening the job portal cost-free for social sector organisations Identifying opportunities for research collaboration with social sector organisations Further investments in finding social sector contacts Increase visibility/accessibility of the UIBK for social sector organisation	After the workshop: analysing the collected information Identifying barriers, needs etc. playing a role in the collaboration of the DCU and the social sector organisations Identifying opportunities for collaboration in education and research Arranging meetings for further collaboration of social sector organisations and educational leaders at DCU	Collecting information on need for feasible service-learning projects among social sector organisations.
Output	Knowledge about needs and requirements of social sector First opportunities for collaboration	Kick-off to adapt entrepreneurship training to the needs of the social sector	Collaboration with social sector Establishment of service-learning projects
Outcome	Start up of network with social sector	Intensified contacts	
Impact	Not measured yet		
Upcoming challenges	Nurture and maintain network Identify clearly delimited areas for collaboration	Nurture and maintain network Identify clearly delimited areas for collaboration	Continue project, find funds, stimulate organisations to participate, stimulate students and teachers, nurture network

All HEIs also point out that the quality of the information provided is an important basis for the social organisations to decide on the possibility of cooperation with the HEI. This is especially true when the social organisations themselves have to contribute resources for the cooperation (such as in the IPVC project, where the organisations have to provide opportunities for service-learning projects). The use of statements from the HEInnovate self-assessment tool was sometimes not considered very helpful in terms of stimulating discussions or evaluations of the HEI. The HEIs perceived as problematic the statements that were written in too general a manner, which encouraged questions about the content of the statement rather than a discussion about the institution's performance. The structuring of the workshop and the discussions with the help of the Value Proposition Canvas, on the other hand, was rated as helpful, as it made it possible to focus the discussion content well through concrete questions. All three HEIs found the information gathered helpful for the further planning of their activities, as they were better able to connect to the needs of their external stakeholders against this background.

1.5.2 Factors obstructing the development of networks with the social sector

For all three universities it was found that it is often difficult for social sector organisations to identify who is the right contact or contact person for them in the university. The current strong orientation of entrepreneurship education towards industry and business and the associated establishment of transfer offices or incubators created the impression among some social organisations that cooperation with them is mostly not envisaged.

Social organisations also frequently state that they do not seek cooperation with universities, as they assume that universities are more interested in cooperating with value-creating sectors through research and innovation. They often do not perceive or are not aware that HEIs are also engaged in the field of social value creation.

Another problem that social organisations see is the bureaucracy of universities. Cooperation is often difficult. This is especially true for projects in which public funds are used for joint research or innovation projects.

In addition, it emerged for all three universities that the social organisations cannot afford support from the universities (e.g. through research or similar services), as they themselves already have to manage tight budgets.

Finally, in all three cases it also became apparent that the social organisations employ university graduates less frequently. This is often due to the fact that they have less frequent access to the university and its networks to recruit graduates. At the same time, the social organisations point out that the qualification profile of the graduates often does not match their job requirements.

1.5.3 Factors supporting collaboration with the social sector

For the three universities described here, concrete reasons could be identified that could ensure lasting cooperation between the social sector and the universities.

The social organisations have a great interest in having the social problems they work on and their approaches to solving them accompanied by scientific research. This accompanying research can help them to improve their approaches to solutions, but also to gain more legitimacy for their actions. Through accompanying research, the organisations can, for example, point to the effectiveness of their measures and thus possibly generate further funding or subsidies. Currently, this form of cooperation often fails because the social organisations do not have sufficient funds to carry out this research. Universities can support here, for example, by defining social organisations and activities as an interesting object of research and acquiring research funds within this framework.

Furthermore, there is a great interest in social organisations for support in the research-based development of social innovations. Social organisations are often faced with the challenge of developing new social interventions, but they do not know whether they can effectively achieve the goals they are pursuing. Here, too, accompanying research activity by universities can provide important support. One possible solution is the development of service-learning projects, as in the case of IPVC, in which students accompany the organisations. For both, i.e. for the students and the organisations, this results in a win-win situation that can lead to a lasting cooperation.

Capacity building is another opportunity for cooperation between universities and the social sector. Capacity building can take place for both parties: For example, while the HEIs learn more about the functioning of the social sector and its value creation, the organisations can strengthen their management capacities.

The above-mentioned opportunities for cooperation are attractive, but in some cases difficult to realise due to the resource endowments of social organisations in particular. It is possible that HEIs can support cooperation if they develop special resources and exchange models for it.

Include social engagement in the institutional strategy. Selecting a clear-cut orientation of social entrepreneurship activities can help institutions develop focused strategies and activities and stimulate support from staff, students, and (regional) stakeholders. There is a risk that the internal stakeholders in the university do not feel a sense of ownership with the social entrepreneurship strategy. This may lead to the activities fizzling out eventually, and plans are

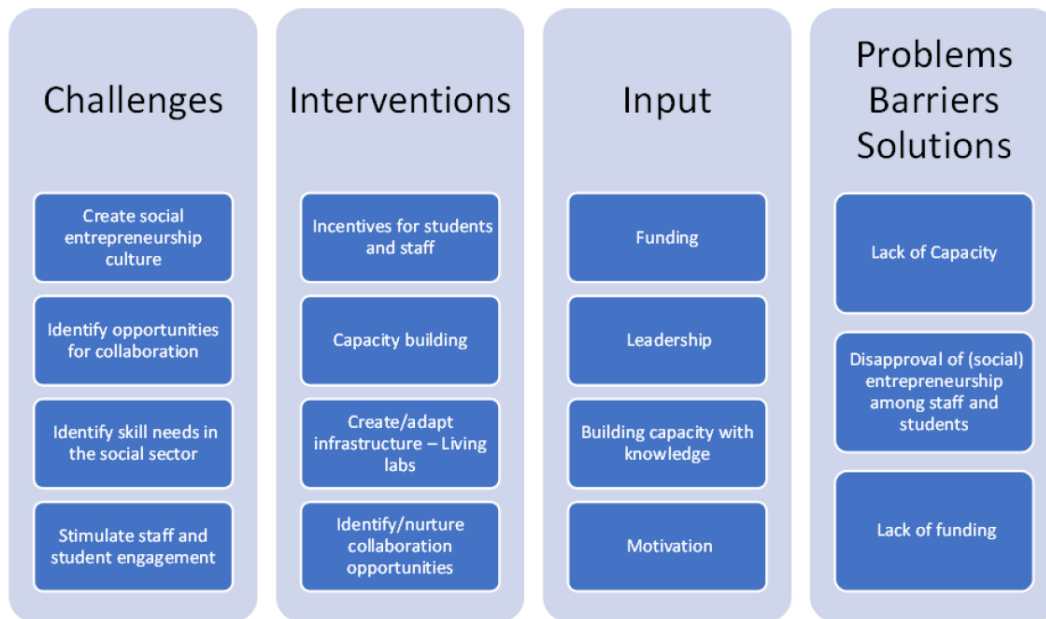
not followed up. Devoting managerial roles with clear tasks and competencies to embed social entrepreneurship is indispensable for embedding social entrepreneurship.

1.6 4. Lessons learned

The lessons learned from this comparative case study have been summed up already in the previous section, where we listed the factors that can support social entrepreneurship and the building of the culture that comes with it.

The picture below shows the outline of the Inspiration Fiche that was created as part of the BeyondScale project for the topic of social entrepreneurship.

Figure 2: Social Entrepreneurship Inspiration Fiche



Source: Kottmann et al. (2022), see: <https://www.beyondscale.eu/inspiration-fiches/>

The challenges are listed in the fiche, along with some typical interventions of which some were adopted by the three HEIs described in this comparative case study. The interventions can be supported by a self-assessment of institutional characteristics, using the HEInnovate resources⁴ and toolboxes such as the one suggested by TEFCE.⁵ Other useful tools and approaches are the Value Proposition Canvas and project guidelines.⁶

⁴ See: <https://www.heinnovate.eu/en/events-webinars/heinnovate-social-innovation-fostering-social-inclusion-education-through-knowledge>

⁵ See: <https://www.tefce.eu/>

⁶ See <https://www.beyondscale.eu/result-repository/research-reports/>