



Beyond the Institutional Walls: Partnerships with External Stakeholders

Community for Educational Innovation (CEI)



September 24, 2025

CEI

Community for Educational innovation



Community of practice created by the **Directorate General for Education, Youth Sport and Culture (DG EAC)** of the European Commission.



Aims to advance educational innovation and develop the mindsets needed to navigate and contribute to Europe's innovation landscape.

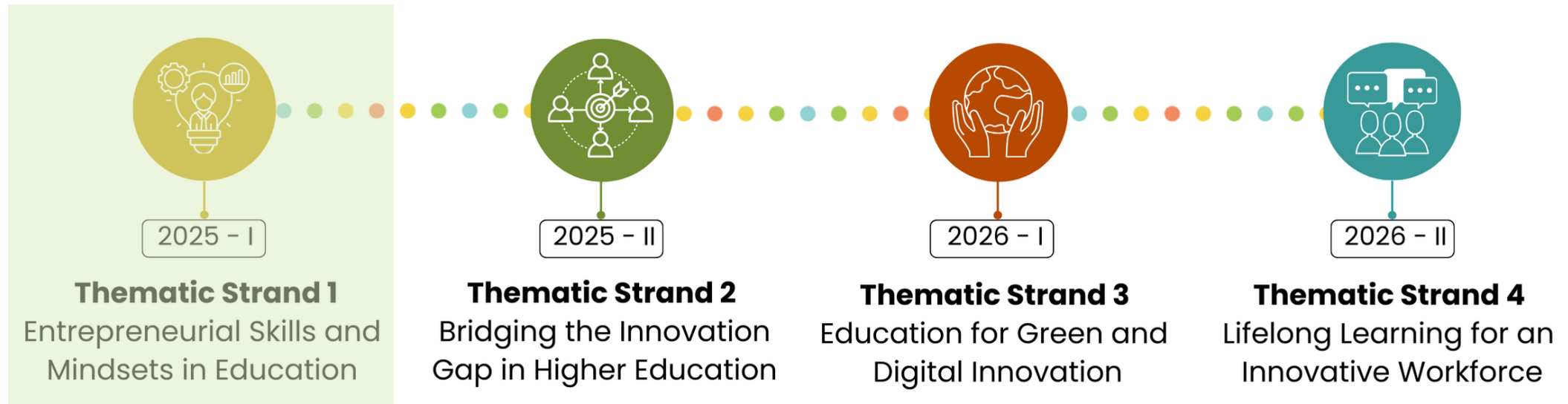


Developed under the **HEInnovate** initiative and part of the **EHESO** (European Higher Education Sector Observatory) **Strategic Transformation Toolbox**.



Brings together representatives from higher education, industry, the public sector, and civil society.

Thematic strands



Coming soon:
Report on Thematic Strand 1



Thematic strand 2

From Research to Impact: Bridging the innovation gap in higher education



Webinar topics:

- Partnerships between universities and non-academic stakeholders (Sep. 24),
- Institutional support for knowledge valorisation (Oct. 22),
- Capacity-building for researchers (Nov. 18).



Study visit

- St. Pölten University of Applied Sciences, St. Pölten, Austria (Nov. 2025).



Calls for good practices & polls

- Share your **good practices** on Bridging the innovation gap in higher education.
- Take our quick semester **poll** and share your insights.



Thematic report

- Summarises thematic strand activities.



Agenda

- 15:30 Welcome
- 15:40 **Intervention 1:** Local responses to multiple global crises: Universities on the frontline
John Goddard
- 16:00 **Intervention 2:** Smarter together: How Smart Docklands leverages the quadruple helix for urban innovation
Karolina Anielska
- 16:20 **Intervention 3** – Seeding Trust, growing impact – Rethinking industry-academia partnerships
Amanda Paananen
- 16:40 Interactive Debate
- 16:55 Closing Remarks

OBJECTIVE

Explore how collaboration between universities and non-academic stakeholders breaks down traditional silos to drive knowledge valorisation.

KEY TOPICS

- University-non-academic stakeholders' collaboration for innovation,
- Facilitation of cross-sector partnerships,
- Challenges in developing impactful partnerships.



John Goddard

Emeritus Professor of
Regional Development
Studies, Newcastle
University, United Kingdom

Intervention 1

Local responses to multiple global crises: Universities on the frontline

- Professor Goddard founded and led the Centre for Urban and Regional Development Studies (CURDS) at Newcastle University.
- He was appointed Deputy Vice-Chancellor with responsibilities for the University's regional role.
- He retired in 2008 and was appointed visiting Professor at the University of Birmingham and Sheffield Hallam University.

Beyond the institutional walls: Partnerships with local and regional stakeholders

John Goddard
Emeritus Professor of Regional Development Studies
<https://www.johngoddard.online/>



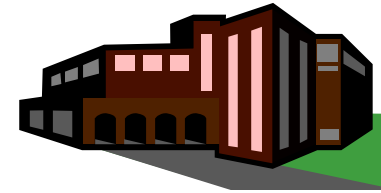
Two separate knowledge and policy communities...

Domain: Education and Research

Focus: University as an institution

Seeking: International Academic Excellence

THE UNIVERSITY



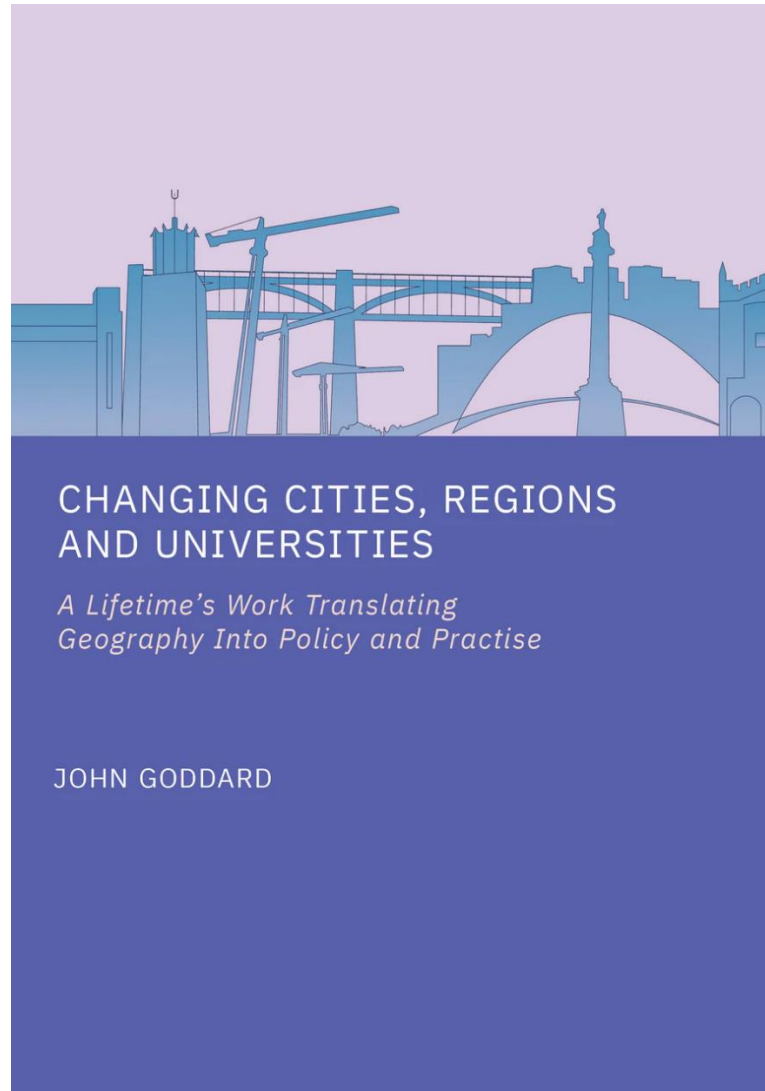
THE CITY

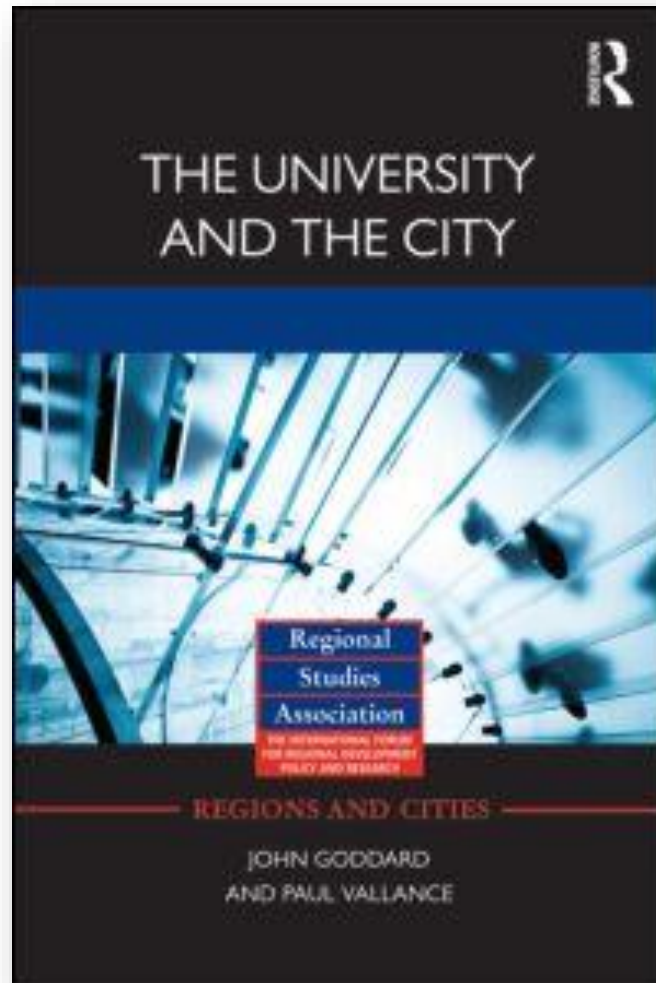


Domain: Territorial Development

Focus: City and regional development

Seeking: Answers to societal ills

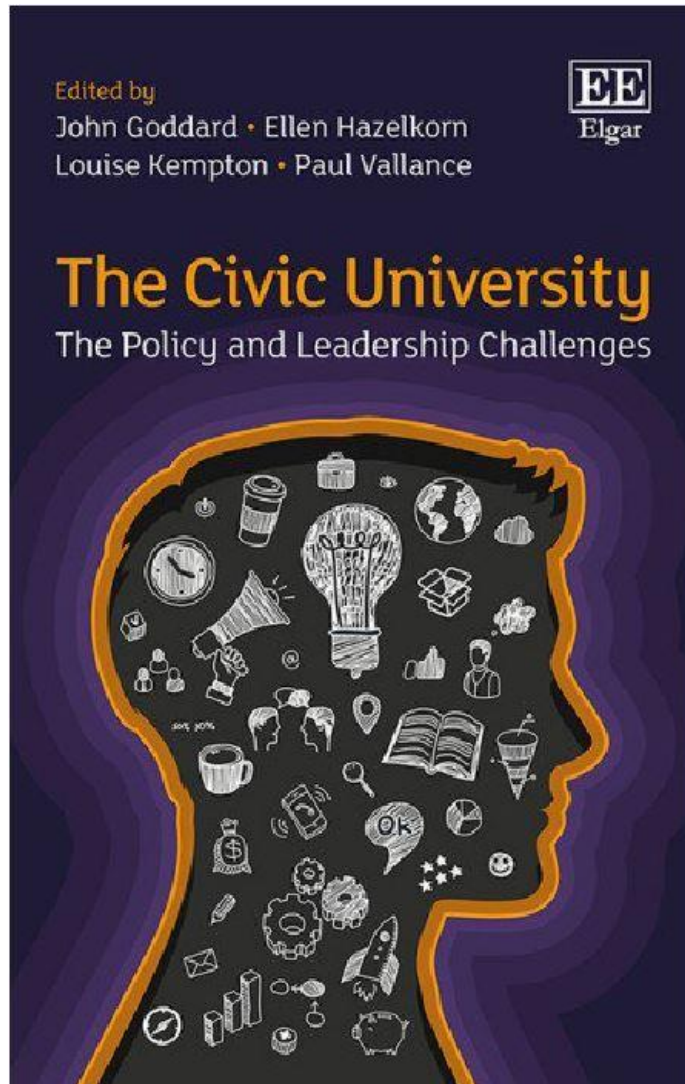




Looking into the university from the city, 2013

This book is based on original research into the experience of the UK and selected English provincial cities, with a focus on the role of universities in addressing the challenges of environmental sustainability, health and cultural development.

The case studies are set in the context of reviews of the international evidence on the links between universities and the urban economy, their role in 'place making' and in the local community.

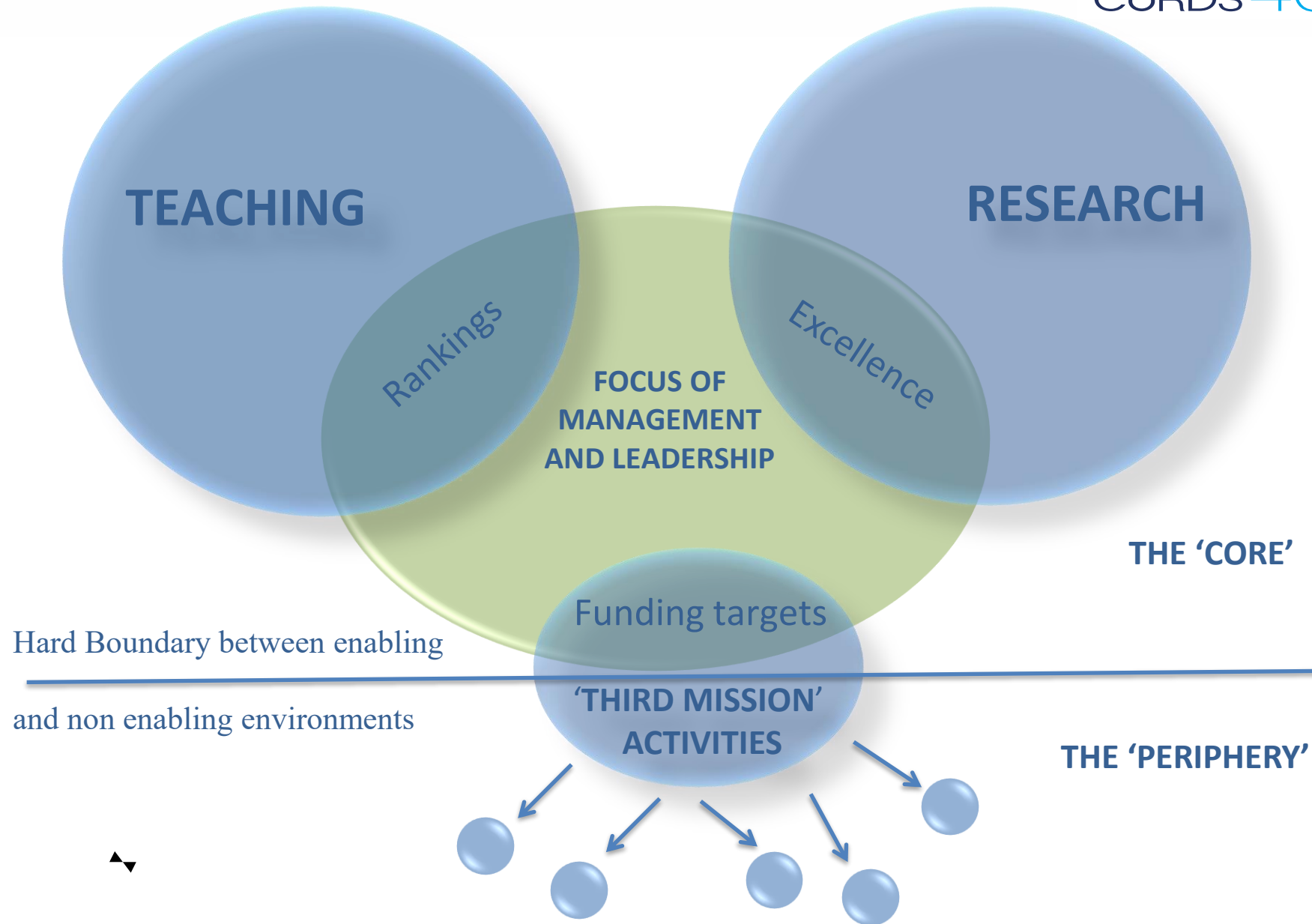


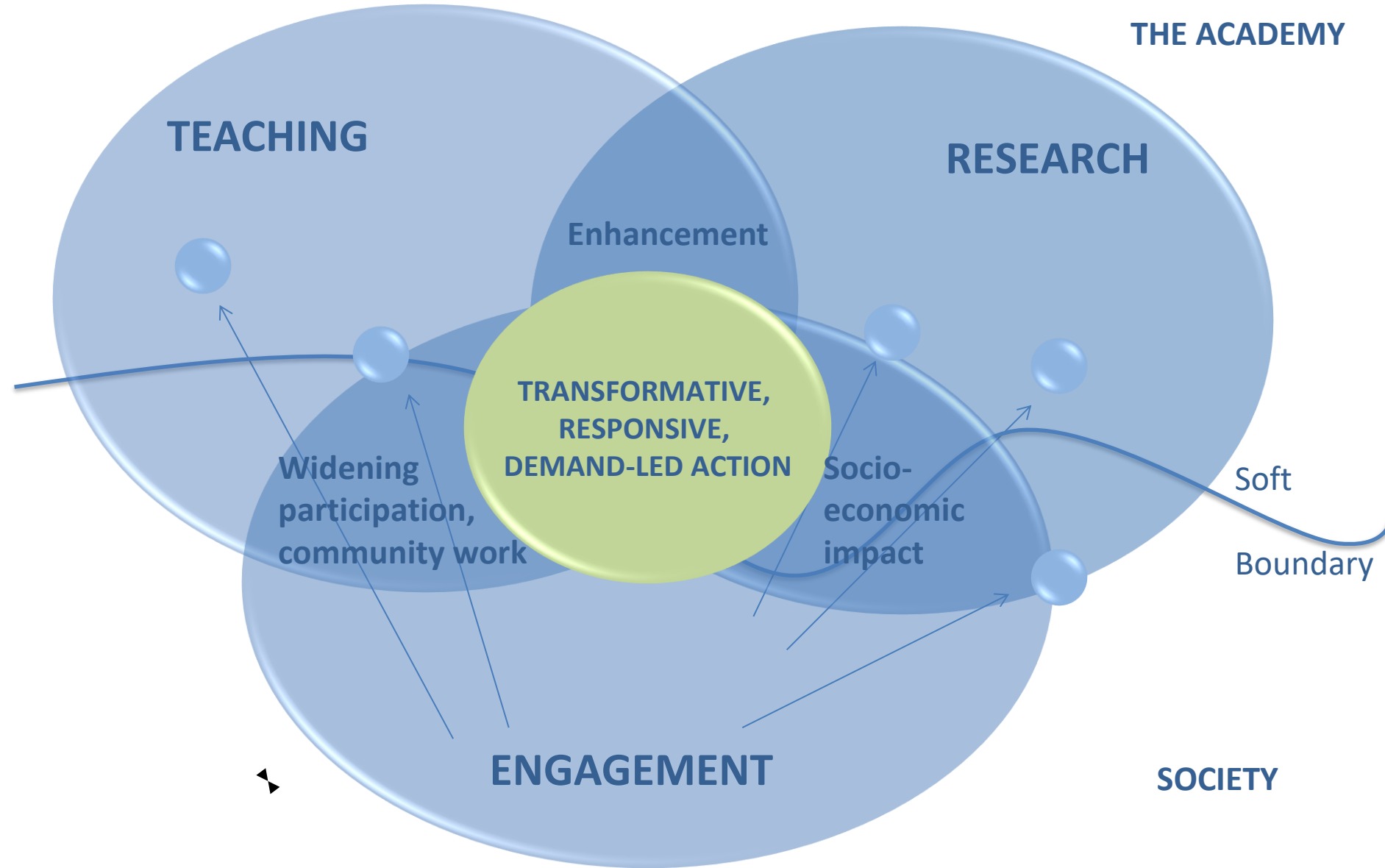
*Looking outwards from
the university to society,
2016*

An edited volume of case studies of 8 institutions in four European countries (Newcastle, University College London, Amsterdam, Groningen, Aalto, Tampere, Trinity College Dublin, Dublin Institute of Technology)

The focus is on the ‘what’ and ‘how’ of civic engagement, particularly the vision and mission, leadership, management and governance, organisation, financial and human resource policies and practises required to mobilise the academic community to meet the needs of the wider society locally, nationally and globally.

The 'Traditional' University







Truly Civic: Strengthening the connection between universities and their places



The final report of the UPP Foundation
Civic University Commission

<https://upp-foundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Civic-University-Commission-Final-Report.pdf>

Civic university agreement



As a place-based institution we are committed to attaching a high-priority to the economic, social, environmental, and cultural life of our local communities.

- Our civic role will be informed by an evidence-based analysis of the needs of our place, developed collaboratively with local partners and informed by the voice of our local community.
- We will collaborate with other universities and anchor institutions and form partnerships to overcome the challenges facing our local communities.
- With our partners, we will be clear about what we do and how we measure it, so we can say with confidence what we have achieved – and how we might do better in the future



GUNI SERIES ON THE SOCIAL COMMITMENT OF UNIVERSITIES

Higher Education in the World 6

Towards a Socially
Responsible University:
Balancing the Global with the Local

GUNI
GLOBAL UNIVERSITY
NETWORK FOR INNOVATION

GUNI recommendations

- **Adopting the mantle of the civic university** – pursuing the ‘public good’ by aligning its interests with those of society, and working collaboratively with other HEIs to maximize their collective impact;
- **Playing a proactive role** in ensuring that the SDGs are included in local agendas, proposing changes to education, conducting research and engaging with local and global communities on sustainable development;
- **Educating future generations** to make the SDGs a reality, with the necessary knowledge, skills, competencies and partnerships, thereby helping to produce new SDG leaders;
- **Building capacities** for SDG policies, planning and management;
- **Conducting transversal** reviews and refinements of curricula to ensure the mainstreaming of SDG issues, and including new values and practices for economic development that enhance social equity while reducing environmental risk;
- **Widening and extending access** to and successful participation in higher education by serving the needs of an increasingly diverse student cohort (from 18 to 100 years), by adopting new organizational structures and pedagogical approaches, including online, open and flexible learning that can help in forging the new SDG Generation

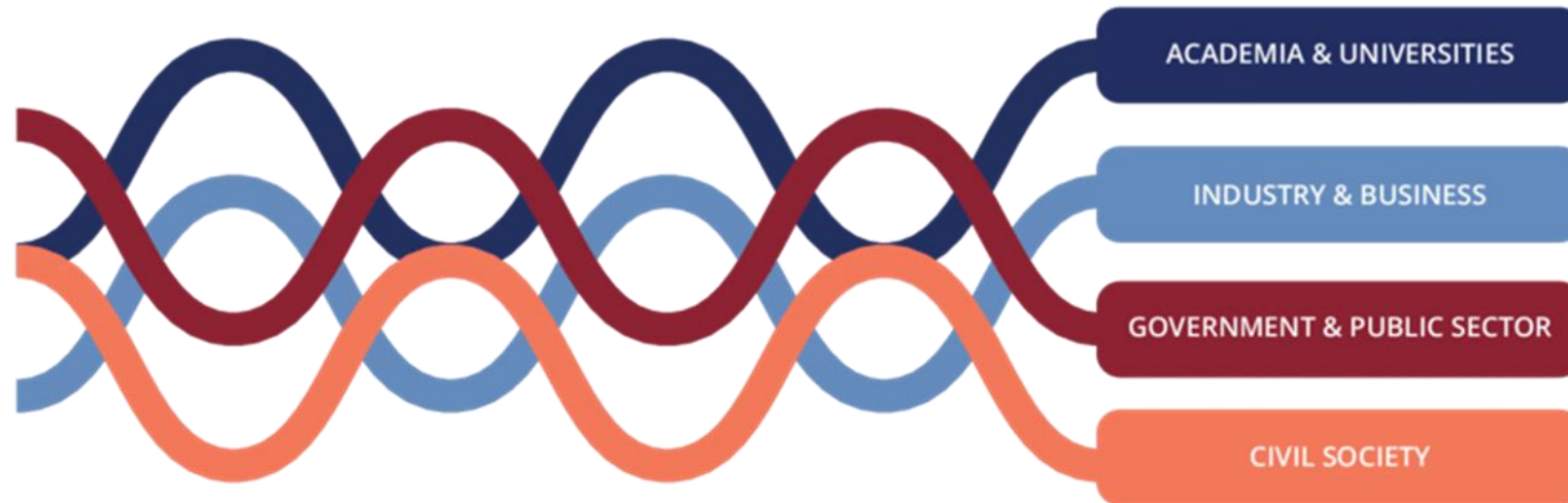
Innovation Now: Europe's Mission to Innovate, 2016 (Madelin Review) A critique of the linear model

- ***“It’s complicated...**Innovation happens in complex ecosystems. Too often, we imagine innovation in a linear way, as a pipe-line with inputs and outputs. But where we focus only on the pipeline, we miss the real needs of Europe’s more diverse and demand-driven innovators. We need more open collaboration, both globally and locally between citizens, governments and inventors at home”*

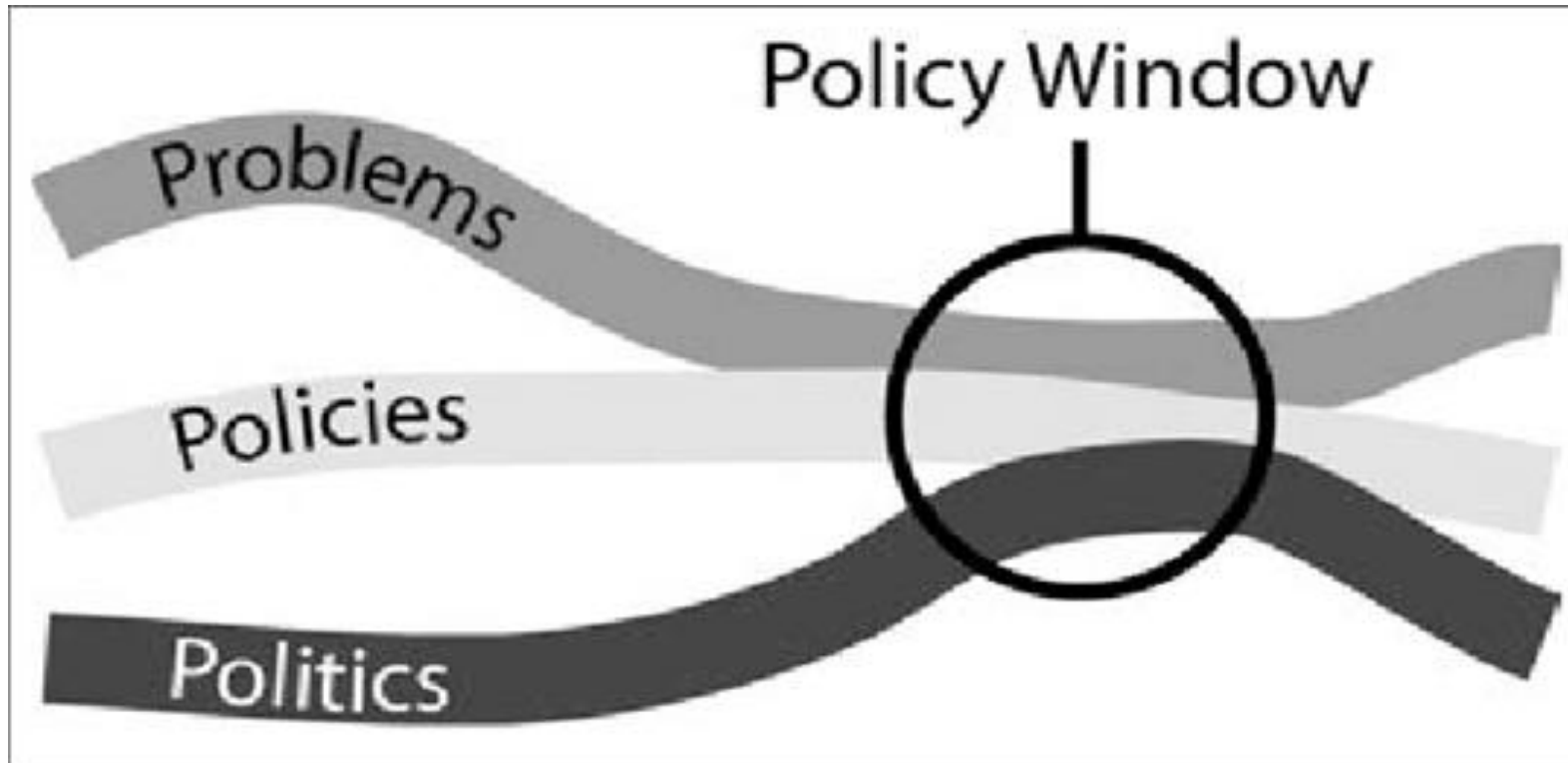
- ***“Focus on People, Places and Processes.** Europe needs better assets as well as a broader vision. We have to get back to basics: upskilling Europe’s people, using local strengths to underpin local innovation, and transforming public processes. Europe’s public sector must change faster. EU 1.0 cannot deliver Europe 2.0”.*

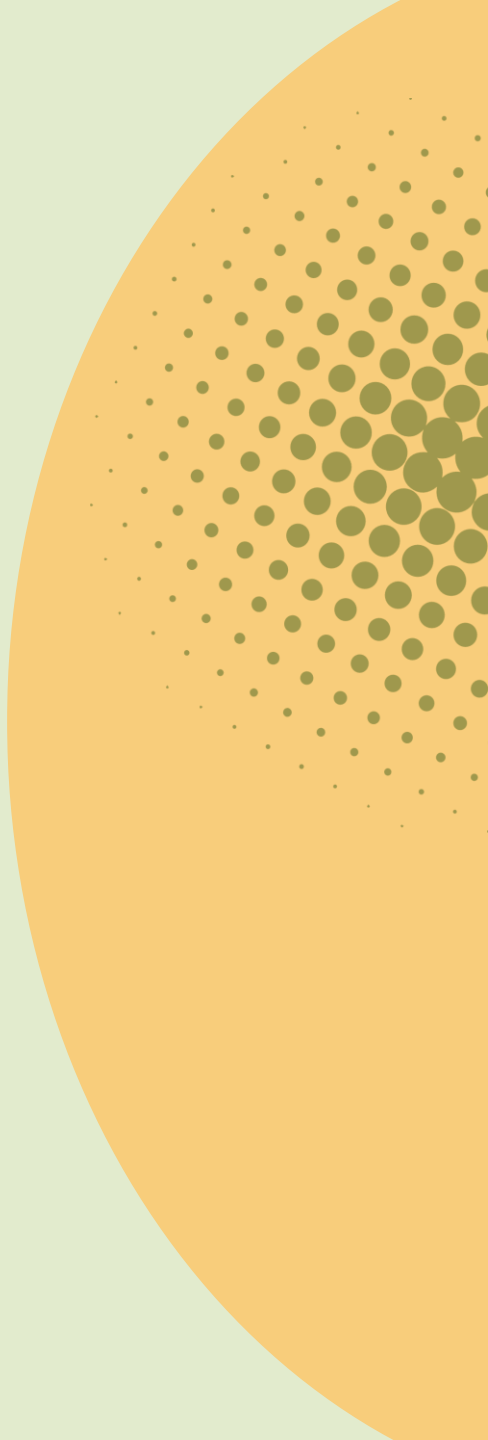
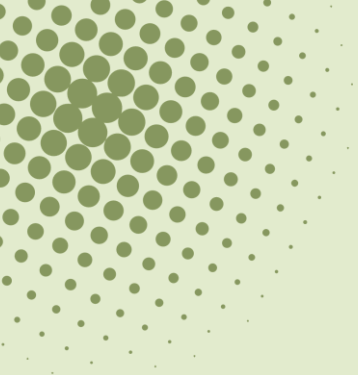
- *“Our innovation economy is not a Roman aqueduct but a muddy pond ... it requires all actors, corporate, academic, civic and political”*

The quadruple helix



Translating the helix into action





DO YOU HAVE
ANY QUESTIONS?



Karolina Anielska

Programme Manager,
Smart Docklands,
Ireland

Intervention 2

Smarter together: How Smart Docklands leverages the quadruple helix for urban innovation

- Karolina leads strategic initiatives and public engagement to advance urban innovation in Smart Docklands, a smart city testbed in Dublin.
- She has experience in urban planning, specialising in community consultation and engagement.
- She holds a double BSc in Urban Management and Real Estate, a Master's in Spatial Management, a PhD in Human Geography, and experience as a research assistant at King's College London and Erasmus University Rotterdam.



**SMART
DOCKLANDS**

A Smart Dublin District

Smarter Together:
How Smart Docklands Leverages the Quadruple Helix for Urban Innovation

Dr. Karolina Anielska, Smart Docklands Programme Manager

Dublin as a Testbed



We are big enough yet small enough to be an ideal location to pilot new city services & solutions.

What is Smart Dublin?



Comhairle Cathrach
Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City Council



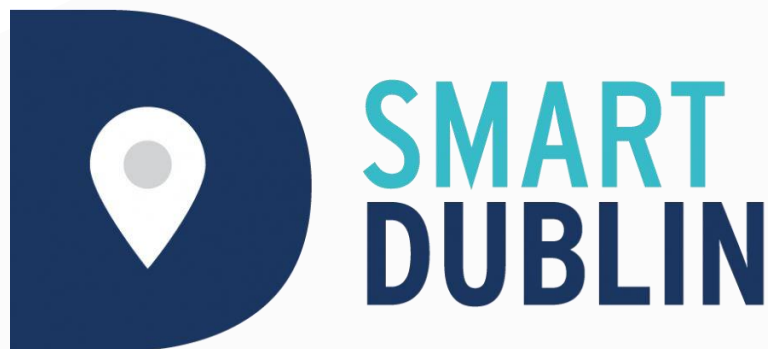
Comhairle Contae County Council



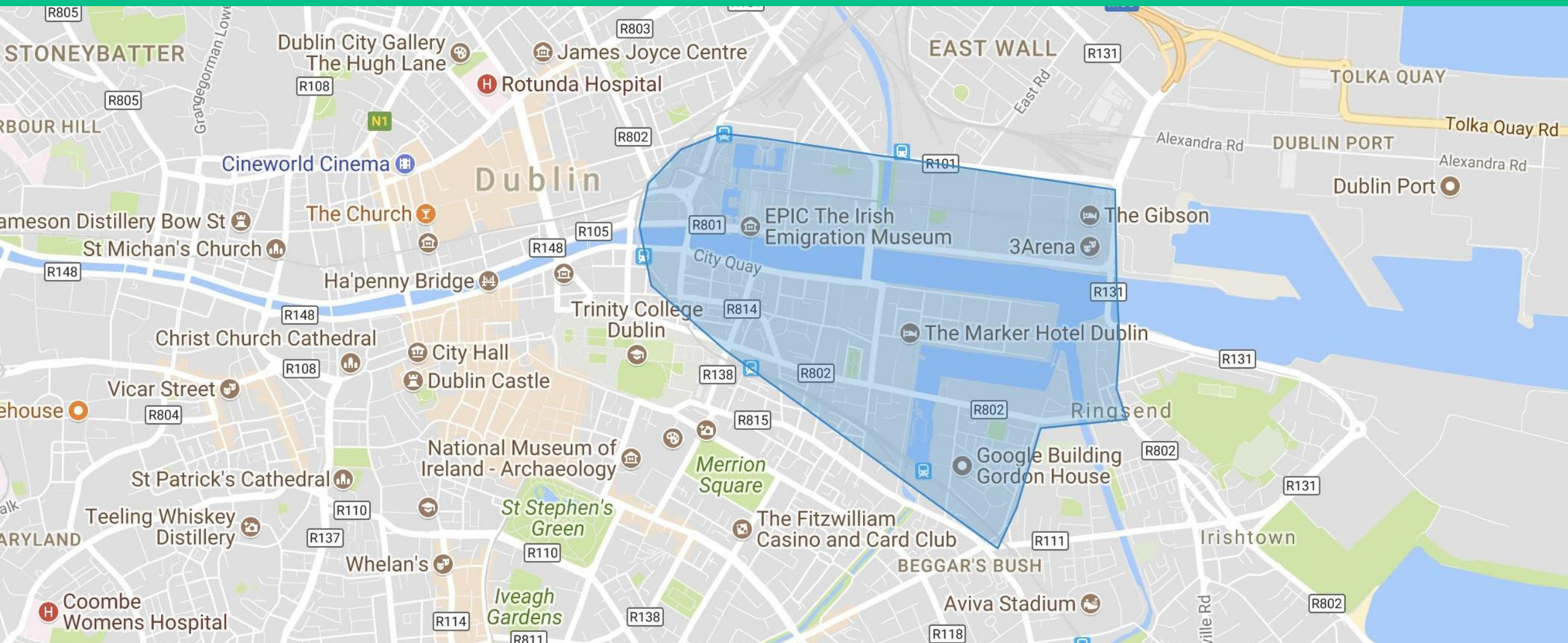
Comhairle Contae
Fhine Gall
Fingal County
Council



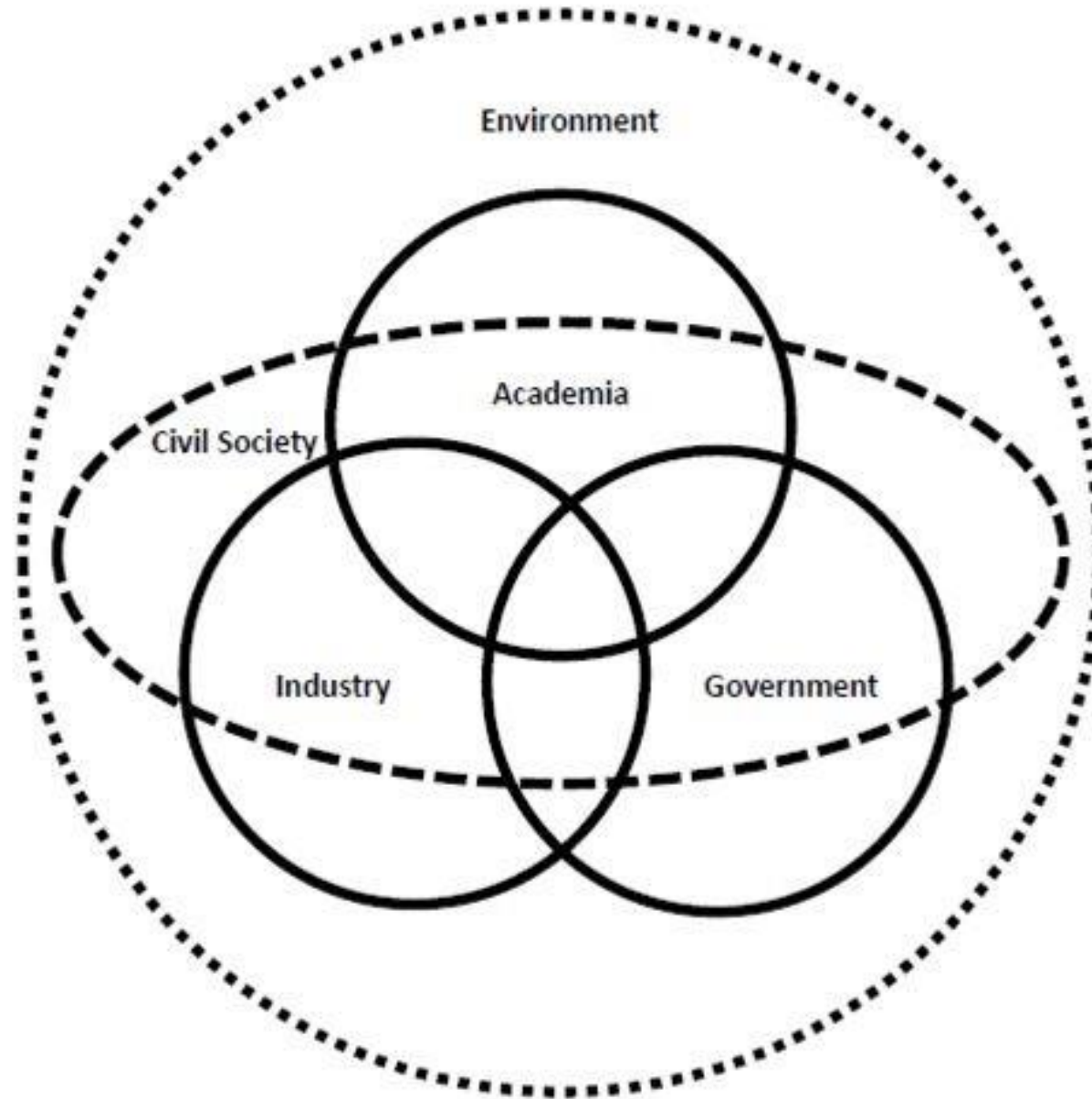
The four Dublin local authorities came together to form an initiative that engages smart technology providers, researchers, and citizens to solve challenges and improve city life.



Smart Docklands District



Quadruple or Quintuple Helix?



- **Who:** schools, local communities, artists, youth
- **What they care about:** quality of life, voice, inclusion
- **How we engage:** Citizen Science, DEIS outreach, creative workshops
- **Example:** Academy of the Near Future Youth Programme, The Sensors Inspector, Smart Cities Urban Quest, Community Engagement
- **Highlight:** making people feel like co-owners, not test subjects

We offer:

- Co-creation workshops, citizen science, youth panels
- Interfaces between technical research and lived experience

This is a chance to ground all this work in human relevance

Design Your Future City



**Citizen science
workshops**

Smarter together: engaging
with **young people** to bring
feedback to **local authority**
in collaboration with
academia and industry



**Prototyping
ideas**



**Presenting ideas to
city leadership**



The Sensor Inspector



Workshop 1&2

Air pollution and
traffic sensor set
up & data

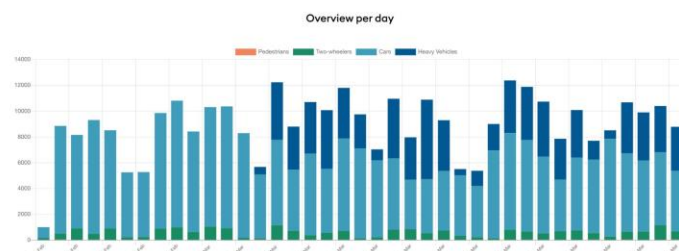
Workshop 3

Idea generation and
solution

Workshop 4

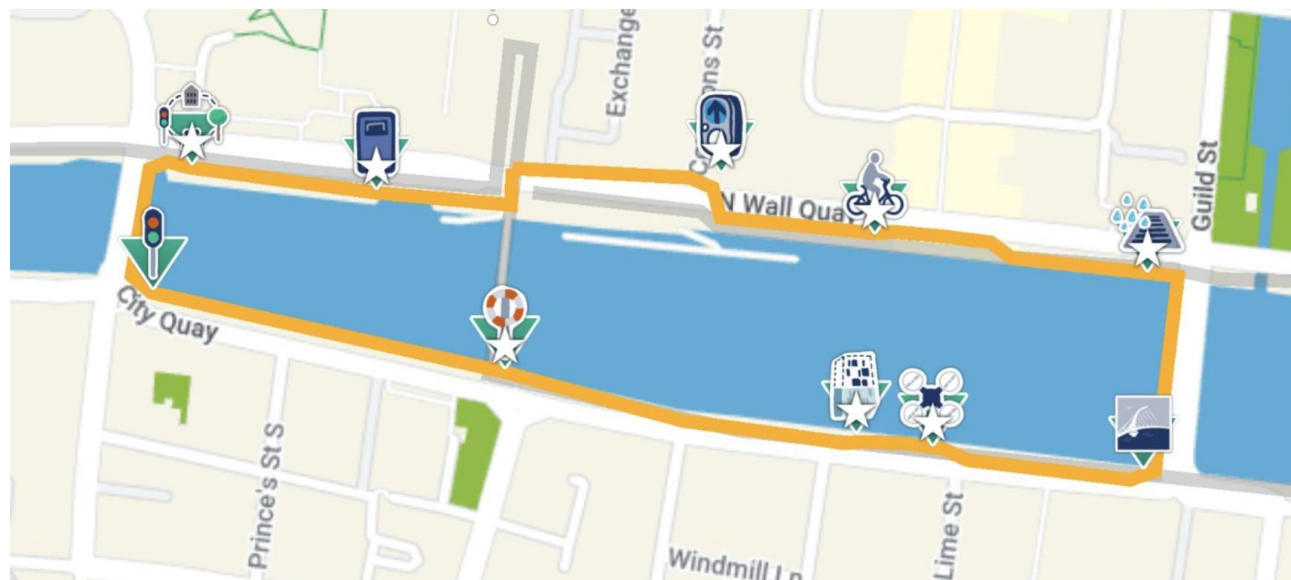
Preparation for the
showcase

Smarter together: engaging with young people
through **citizen science** in collaboration with **local
authority**

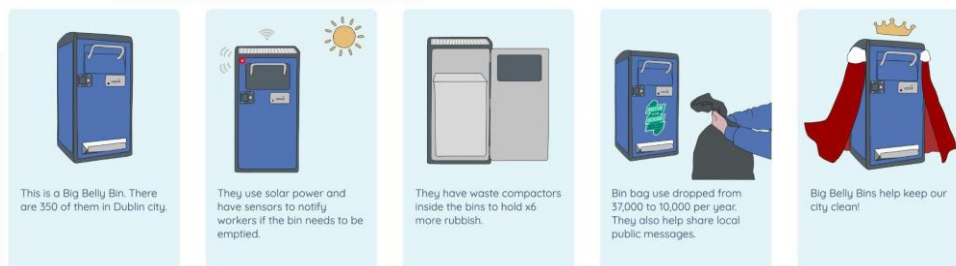


Smart Cities Urban Quest

Smart Cities Urban Quest
(440 people over 4 days!)



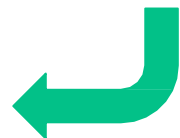
Smarter together: educating
general public in collaboration with
local authority and industry



Community Engagement



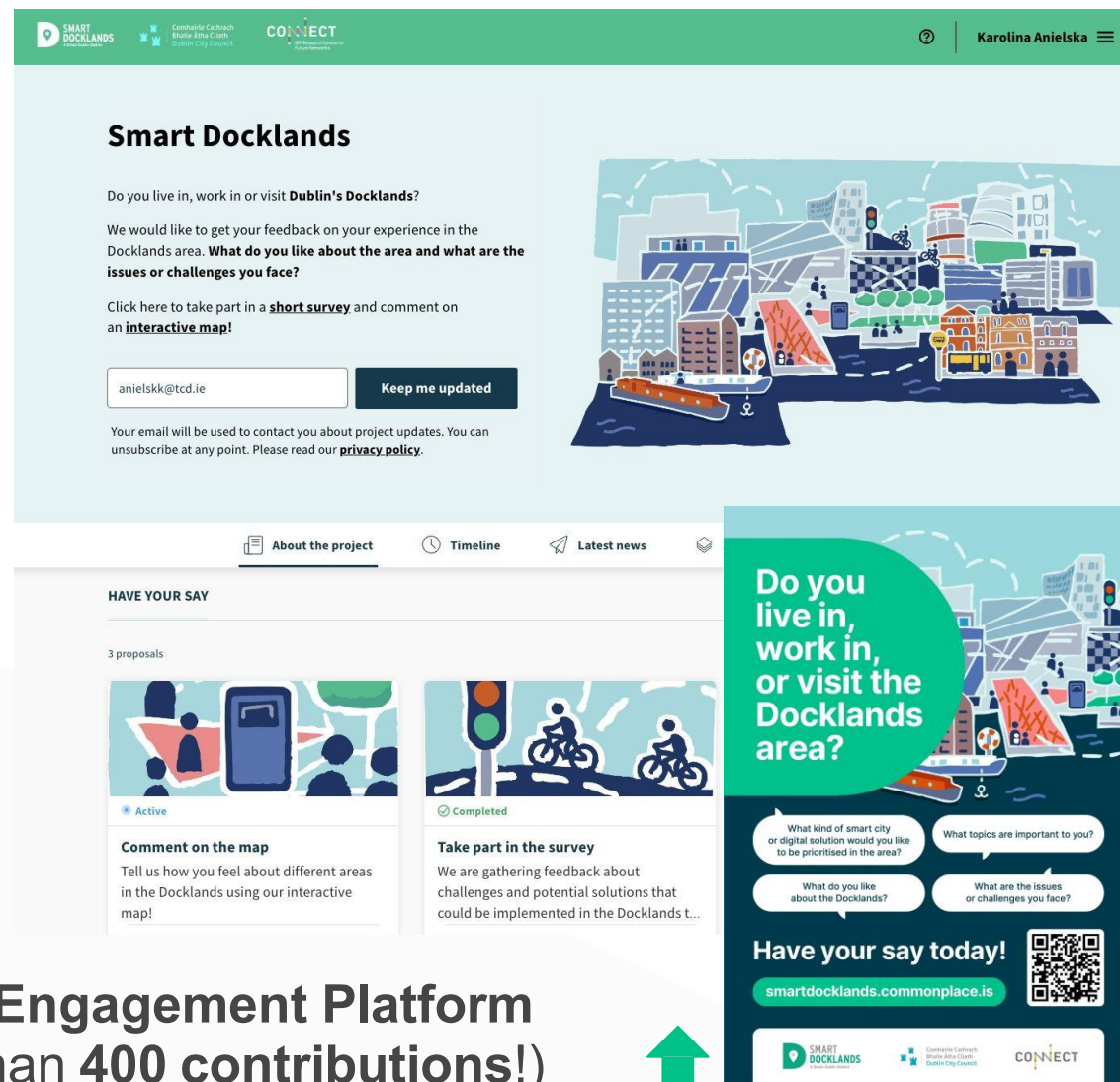
Pop-ups



Innovation Tours



Workshops

Smart Docklands

Do you live in, work in or visit **Dublin's Docklands**?

We would like to get your feedback on your experience in the Docklands area. **What do you like about the area and what are the issues or challenges you face?**

Click here to take part in a **short survey** and comment on an **interactive map!**

[Keep me updated](#)

Your email will be used to contact you about project updates. You can unsubscribe at any point. Please read our [privacy policy](#).

[About the project](#) [Timeline](#) [Latest news](#)

HAVE YOUR SAY

3 proposals



Active

Comment on the map

Tell us how you feel about different areas in the Docklands using our interactive map!



Completed

Take part in the survey

We are gathering feedback about challenges and potential solutions that could be implemented in the Docklands t...

Do you live in, work in, or visit the Docklands area?

What kind of smart city or digital solution would you like to be prioritised in the area?

What topics are important to you?

What do you like about the Docklands?

What are the issues or challenges you face?

Have your say today!

smartdocklands.commonplace.is



SMART DOCKLANDS **CONNECT**

Online Engagement Platform
(more than **400 contributions!**)



- **Who:** companies and startups
- **What they care about:** real-world validation, visibility, partnerships, regulatory clarity
- **How we engage:** shared infrastructure, pilot opportunities
- **Highlight:** derisking innovation in the public realm
- **Examples:** Call for Pilots, River Liffey Water Sensors, The Connective Detective

We offer:

- Deployment space, city endorsement, pilot framing
- Public-private match-making

These are tech transfer and commercialisation pathways



+ Call for Pilots 2024 —

Opportunity for inventive solutions
addressing key thematic areas
in the Docklands



Opens: 25 April 2024

Closes: 13 June 2024

Four pilots - €50k fund
€12.5K funding per pilot



Environmental
Monitoring 🌳

Urban Greening /
Biodiversity 🌿

Antisocial Behaviour /
Safety 🚶

Community
Development 🏠



Comhairle Cathrach
Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City Council

CONNECT
Centre for Future Networks

River Liffey Water Sensors



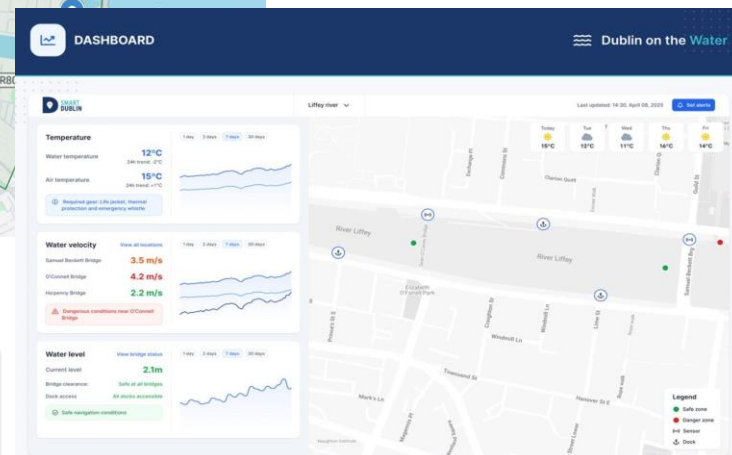
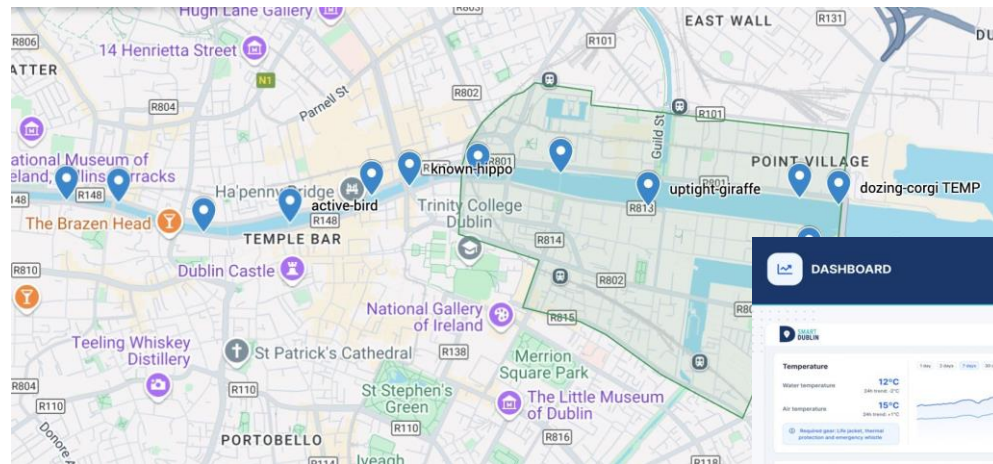
RIVER LIFFEY WATER SENSORS

Environmental Monitoring
PILOT PROJECT EVENT

Thursday 15th May 3pm-5pm

DCC Innovation Hub
The CHQ Building North Wall Quay Dublin 1

SMART DOCKLANDS CONNECT Comhairle Cathrach Bhaile Átha Cliath Dublin City Council SMART DUBLIN UTS TECHNOLOGIES

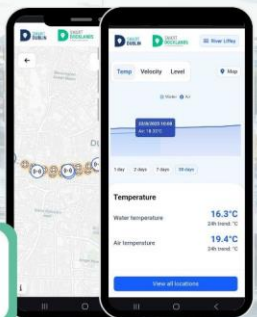


DUBLIN ON THE WATER

Explore River Liffey in Real Time!

As part of the 2024 Smart Docklands Pilot Call, UTS Technologies deployed cutting-edge water sensors along the River Liffey, and now that information is at your finger tips!

Access the **temperature, velocity** and **level of water** in real time and plan your next adventure!

More information: <https://bit.ly/riverliffeywatersensors>

SMART DOCKLANDS CONNECT Comhairle Cathrach Bhaile Átha Cliath Dublin City Council SMART DUBLIN UTS TECHNOLOGIES

Smarter together: industry partner providing services in collaboration with local authority and academia, incorporating engagement



The Connective Detective

Featured
by
News2Day/
RTÉ!



Smarter together: industry partner funding engagement programme for **young people** that has been developed in collaboration with **researchers** and will be offered to other local authorities

748 reached people - over 1500 engagements

with 52 school workshops, 6 community workshops and the Connective Detective exhibition/showcase

- **Who:** local authorities including Dublin City Council, Smart Dublin
- **What they care about:** service delivery, public value, trust, political risk
- **How we engage:** internal capacity building, service delivery, cost efficiency, trust from residents
- **Highlight:** trust-building and accountability
- **Examples:** Docklands 3D Model, Academy of the Near Future Local Authority Programme, YAP

We offer:

- Fast feedback from real environments
- Channels to deploy pilots in city spaces
- Access to decision-makers

This is how research can get embedded into policy and procurement

Docklands 3D Model



Smarter together: building Digital Twin in collaboration with **industry** to inform **local authority's** actions. Used during the **engagement** and incorporating data from **pilots**



Local Authority Programme

Smarter together: education programme for local authority staff so they can use technologies and understand research behind it



Digital Rights & The
Public Sector



AI Awareness
Building

← expl[AI]n





Smarter together:

co-creation of
programmes for
young people with
young people to
inform **local**
authority's actions

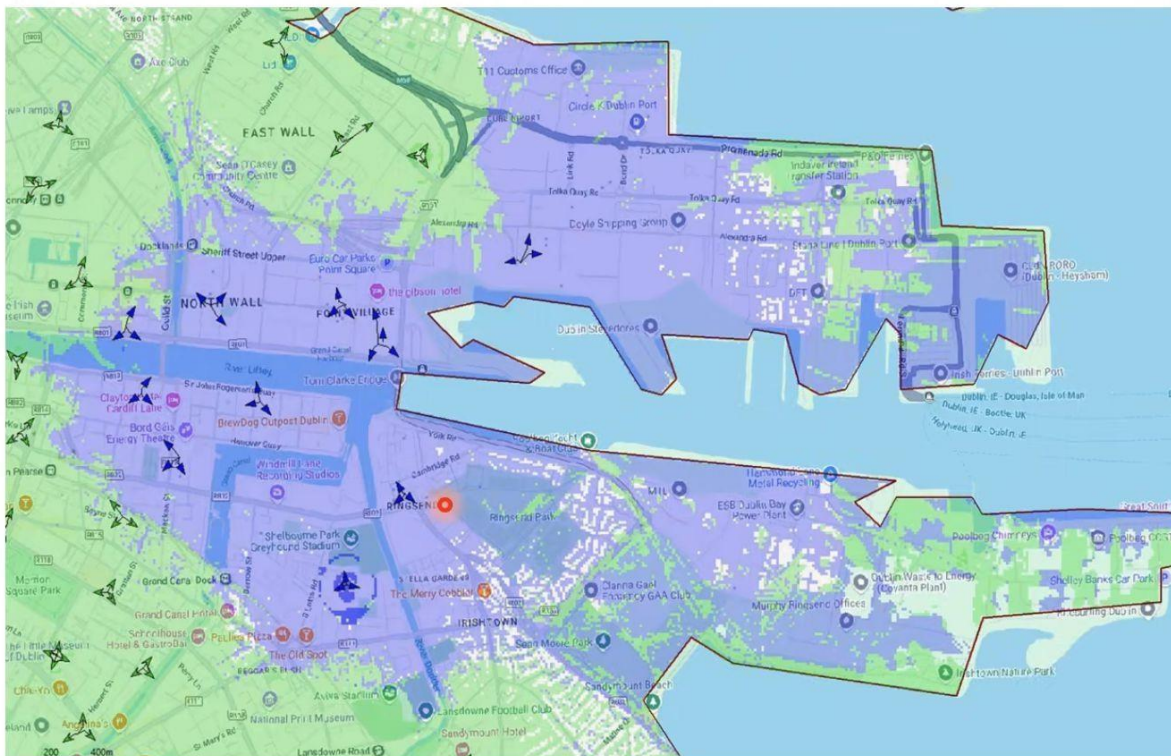
- **Who:** CONNECT, researchers, universities
- **What they care about:** impact, data, access to real environments, funding alignment, meaningful collaborations
- **How we engage:** testbeds, joint EU projects, impact pathways
- **Highlight:** turning the city into a living lab
- **Examples:** 5G Standalone Testing, Count Docklands, Craft My Street

We offer:

- Testbeds, neutral infrastructure, community access
- Structured engagement projects aligned with research goals
- Scaffolding for EU/NSF/IRC impact sections

This how research can showcase its impact

Trial Coverage Area – Dublin Docklands (Option to extend)



Site Names

Clarion Hotel
Macken House OTI
ESB South Lotts
Alexandra Quay
Regal House
William Fry
Kilmore House ISM PWC
Bloodstone Building
The 3Arena Indoor
The 3Arena Outdoor

Smarter together: working with a another **research network** and an **industry partner** to carry 5G Standalone Testing for **schools** incorporating education and engagement



Smarter together: working with a research team looking at traffic patterns after local authority's traffic plan changes, incorporating **community engagement**

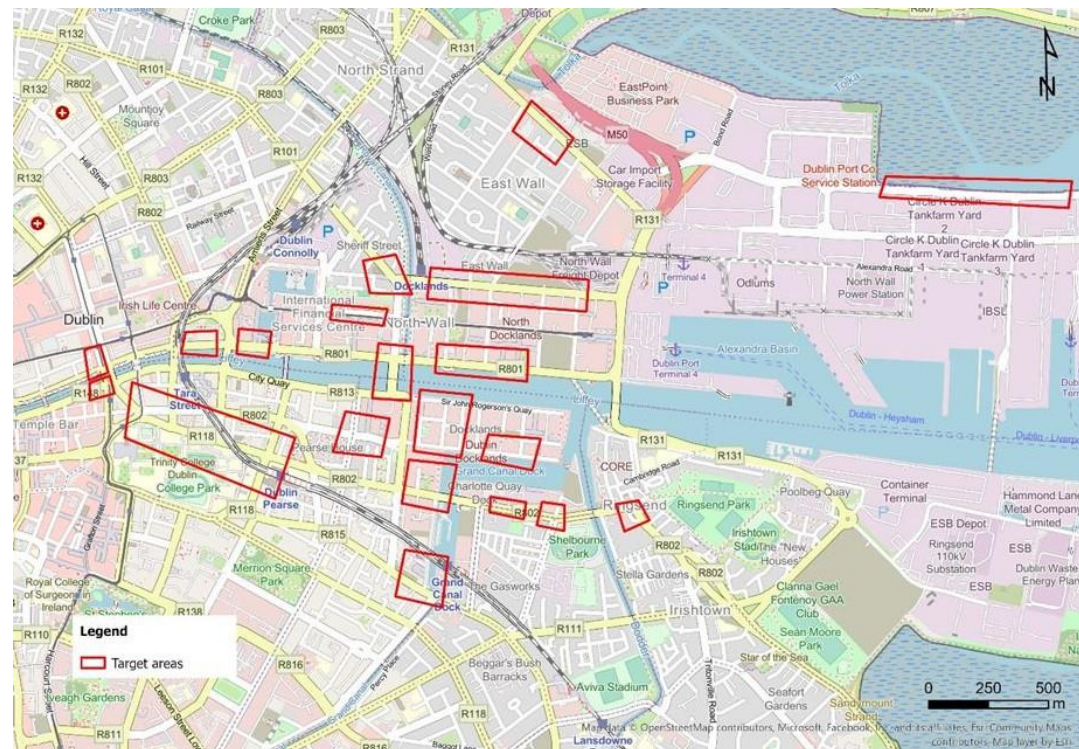


COUNT DOCKLANDS

🌿 Environmental Monitoring
PILOT PROJECT

Sign up by 30th of September

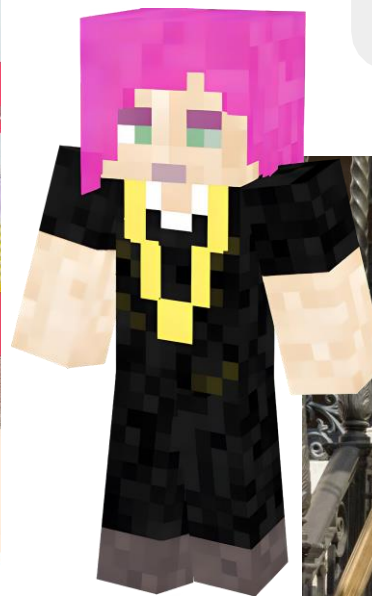
Docklands



Craft My Street



Smarter together: working with a research team providing education workshops and participation tools for young people to inform local authority's policies



Smart Docklands as a Platform

It's about impact built on partnerships.

Smart Docklands is a repeatable platform,
not just a place!

Cities that learn together build better.



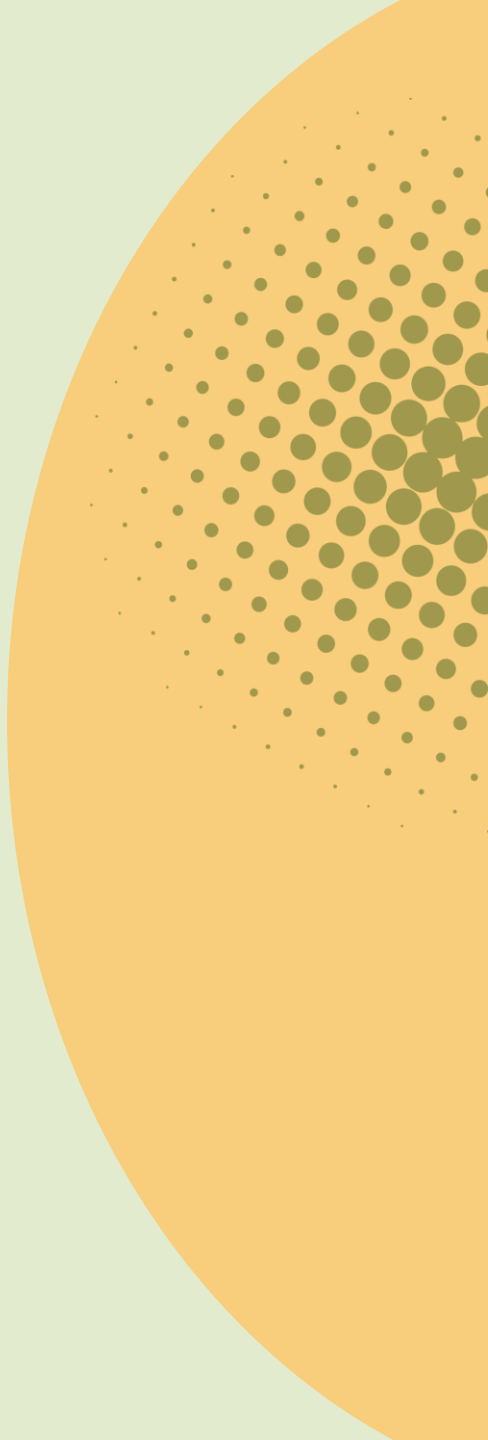
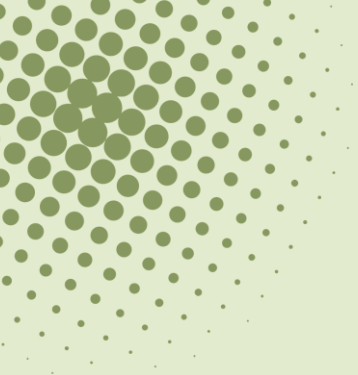


**SMART
DOCKLANDS**

A Smart Dublin District

Thank you

Dr. Karolina Anielska, Smart Docklands Programme Manager



DO YOU HAVE
ANY QUESTIONS?



Amanda Paananen

Innovation Manager,
EIT RawMaterials

Intervention 3

Seeding trust, growing impact – Rethinking industry-academia partnerships

- Amanda is an Innovation Manager at the EIT Higher Education Initiative, driving efforts to boost innovation capacity across European universities.
- She specialises in translating research into impact through licensing, spinouts, and commercialisation strategies.
- She works closely with SMEs, corporates, and public stakeholders to foster innovation ecosystems, combining strategic foresight with practical experience in navigating university-industry engagement.



SEEDING TRUST, GROWING IMPACT

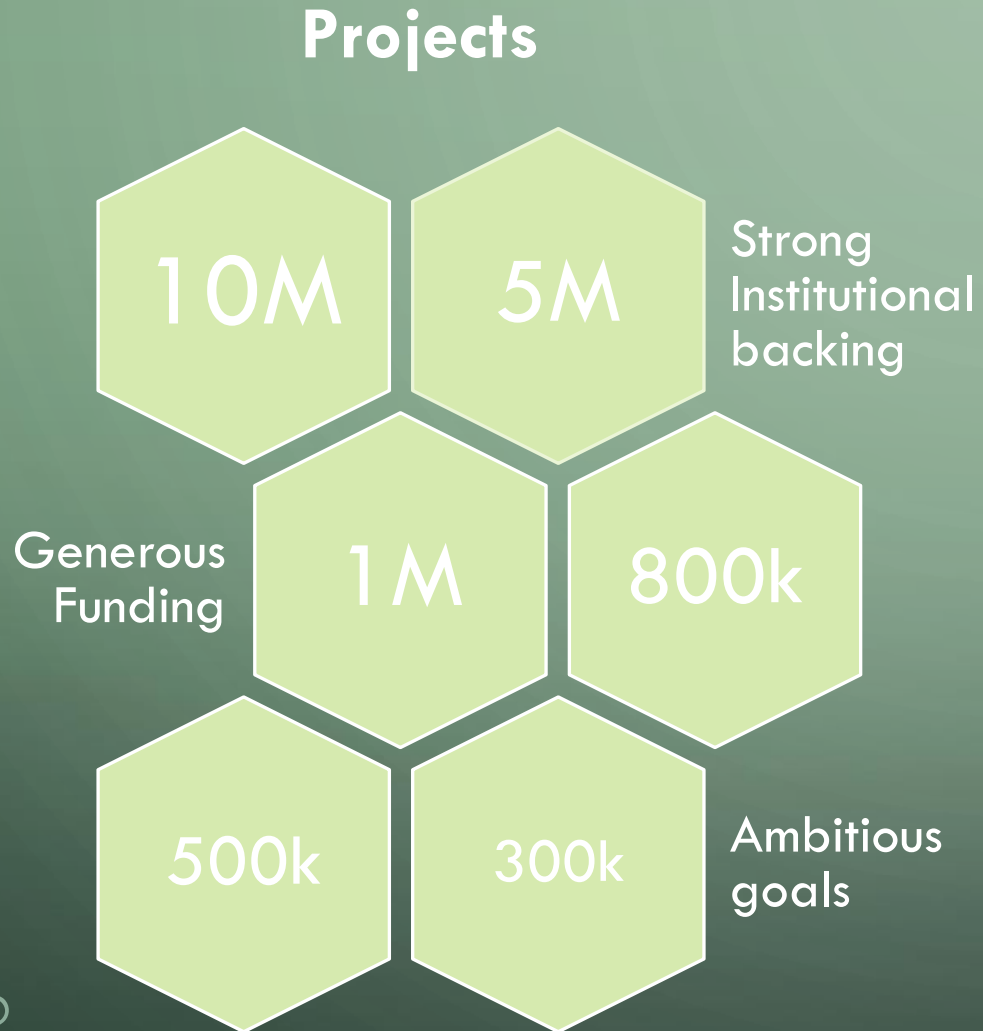
RETHINKING INDUSTRY-ACADEMIA PARTNERSHIPS: STRATEGIES FOR INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

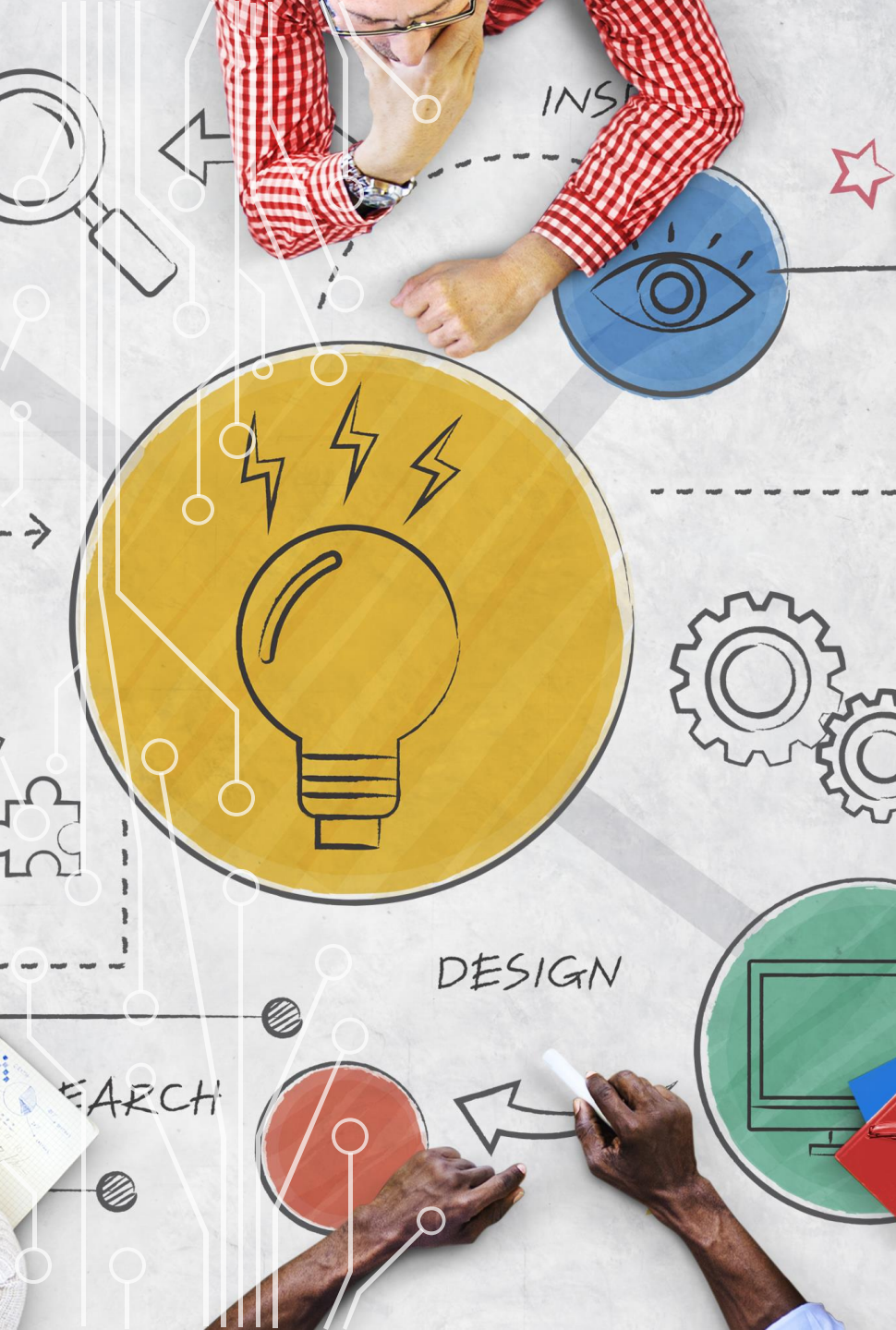
AMANDA PAANANEN

INNOVATION MANAGER

EIT - HIGHER EDUCATION INITIATIVE

WHY FUNDING PROJECTS ALONE ISN'T ENOUGH





WHY DO PROJECTS FAIL TO DELIVER MEANINGFUL PARTNERSHIPS?

- Lack mechanisms to make cooperation possible
- Trust, the infrastructure, and the processes weren't there to initiate successful collaborations



PARTNERSHIPS FORM BECAUSE OF PEOPLE AND NOT PROJECTS

- Partnerships don't form because projects get funded. They form because of people.
 - PhD students, researchers, innovation managers
- Built trust over time
 - Spent time in companies
 - Learned how to speak the language of industry
 - Understood what problems need solving

BUILDING INDUSTRY CONNECTIONS AND TRUST EARLY ON – BEFORE THE PROJECT STARTS

Trust is not a result of a project, it's a requirement to make a partnership work

Interaction → Trust Building



Industry



Academia

Shared language, Need Awareness and Capability Recognition



PARTNERSHIPS FORM FROM PEOPLE, NOT PROJECTS

If we want to build impactful ecosystems, we must fund not just the projects, but the infrastructure around them:

- Educational content that teaches researchers how to engage with industry
- Processes that support matchmaking and communication
- Mechanisms that reward trust-building, not just deliverables

WHAT GETS FUNDED AND WHAT GETS OVERLOOKED



Project Deliverables, Research Outputs
Innovation Goals, KPI & Milestones



Relationship-Building Mechanisms,
Communication Training, Industry Immersion
Programs, Informal Trust building Activities

A SHIFT IN MINDSET: FROM TRANSACTION TO TRANSFORMATIONAL

We must design partnerships that survive beyond grants and leadership changes, ones that are resilient, adaptive, and values-driven.



Transaction

- Short-term
- Project-based
- Limited scope



Transformational

- Long-term
- Purpose-driven
- Ecosystem-wide



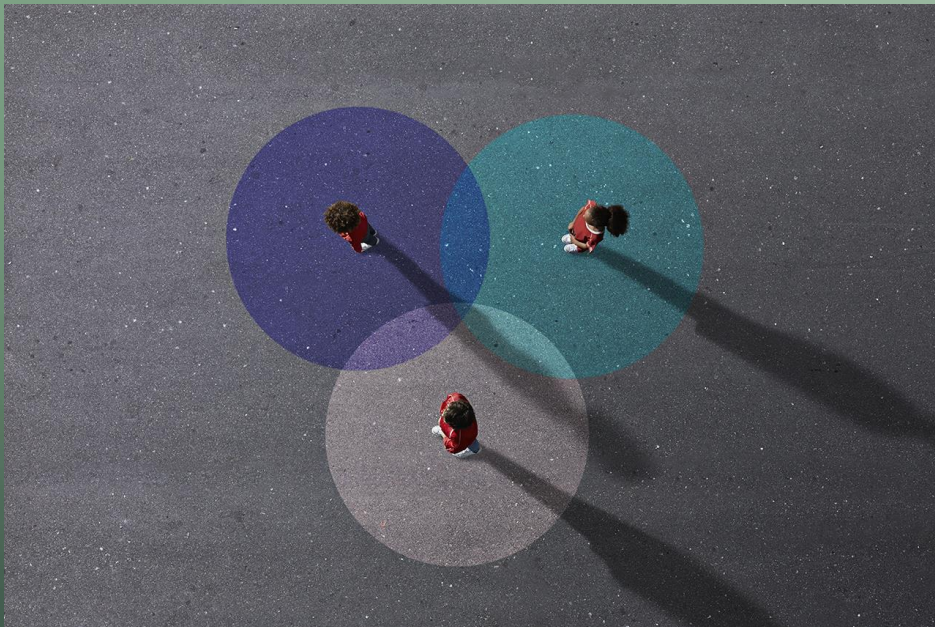
Part of the University's strategy
— sustainable cooperation with FA that cover multiple multidisciplinary projects for long-term cooperation.

The background of the slide is split. The left half features a dark blue background with white circuit-like lines and a network of glowing blue and cyan nodes connected by thin lines, resembling a molecular or data network. The right half is a solid, dark green gradient.

WHAT NEEDS FUNDING (BEYOND PROJECTS)

- It's not just the project itself, it's the scaffolding around it.
 - **The mechanisms, processes, and educational content that allow researchers and industry to meet, understand each other, and collaborate meaningfully.**

WHAT NEEDS FUNDING (BEYOND PROJECTS)



Category	Examples / Actions
Capacity Building	- Training for researchers, TTOs, and innovation staff on industry engagement, communication, and co-creation - Educational programs on entrepreneurship
Embedded Roles	- Finance innovation managers, innovation agents, liaison officers, business developers - Support partnership facilitation and negotiations
Shared Infrastructure	- Co-fund labs, co-working spaces, and digital platforms - Regional innovation hubs for collaboration and informal exchange
Processes & Protocols	- IP negotiation templates, co-creation protocols, onboarding guides for industry partners
Trust-Building	- Fund workshops, site visits, pilot collaborations - Industry immersion programs, joint fellowships, informal networking events



Empower, transform and thrive in higher education

The EIT Higher Education Initiative brings together organisations from across **education, business and research** to **empower** HEIs to become **pivotal actors** in the European innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem.

Funded projects implement **capacity building activities** to **translate research** into market-ready solutions, establish **strategic partnerships**, support **new ventures**, and **attract investment**.

EIT HIGHER EDUCATION INITIATIVE (HEI)

Innovation Capacity Building in Higher Education

Purpose:

Empower higher education institutions (HEIs) as key drivers of innovation, entrepreneurship, and societal impact across Europe.

Key Objectives:

- Boost innovation and entrepreneurial capacity in HEIs
- Foster collaboration between academia, industry, research, and public sectors
- Support institutional change and ecosystem integration





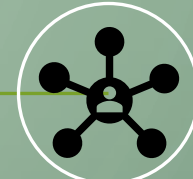
NEED FOR MORE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE FUNDERS

Enable small, rapid-response grants for agile collaboration support:

- Site visits
- Workshops
- Exchanges
- Networking events
- Piloting opportunities

VISION OF A THRIVING UNIVERSITY-INDUSTRY INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM

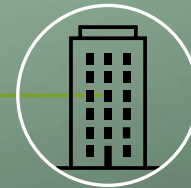
When we fund the ecosystem, collaboration becomes culture.



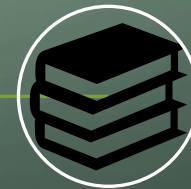
Trusted relationships



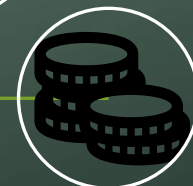
Skilled intermediaries



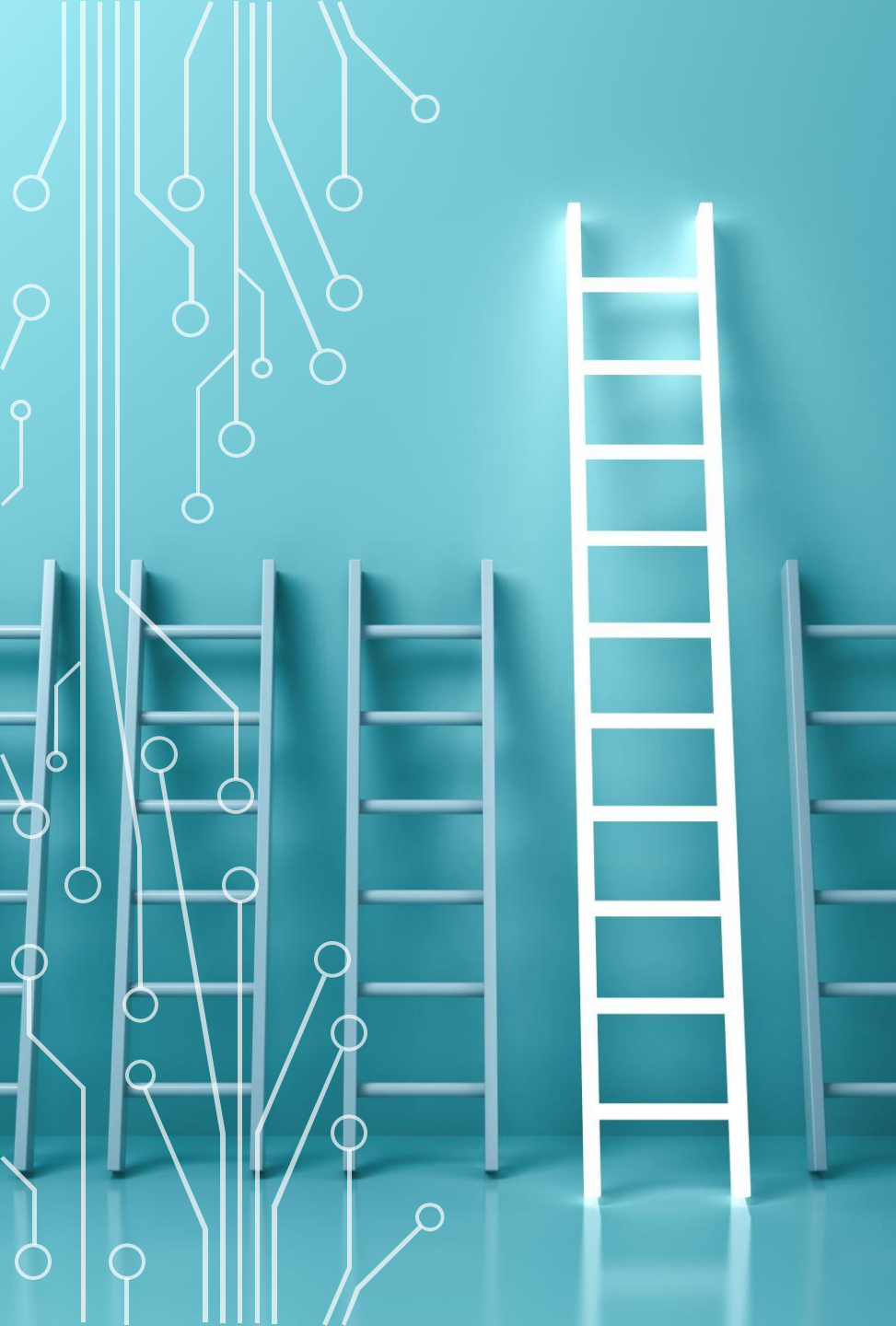
Shared spaces



Embedded learning



Flexible funding



CHALLENGES

- **Cultural misalignment:** Academia values rigor; industry values speed.
- **IP and data governance:** Who owns what?

A CALL TO ACTION: LET'S BUILD THE FUTURE OF COLLABORATION

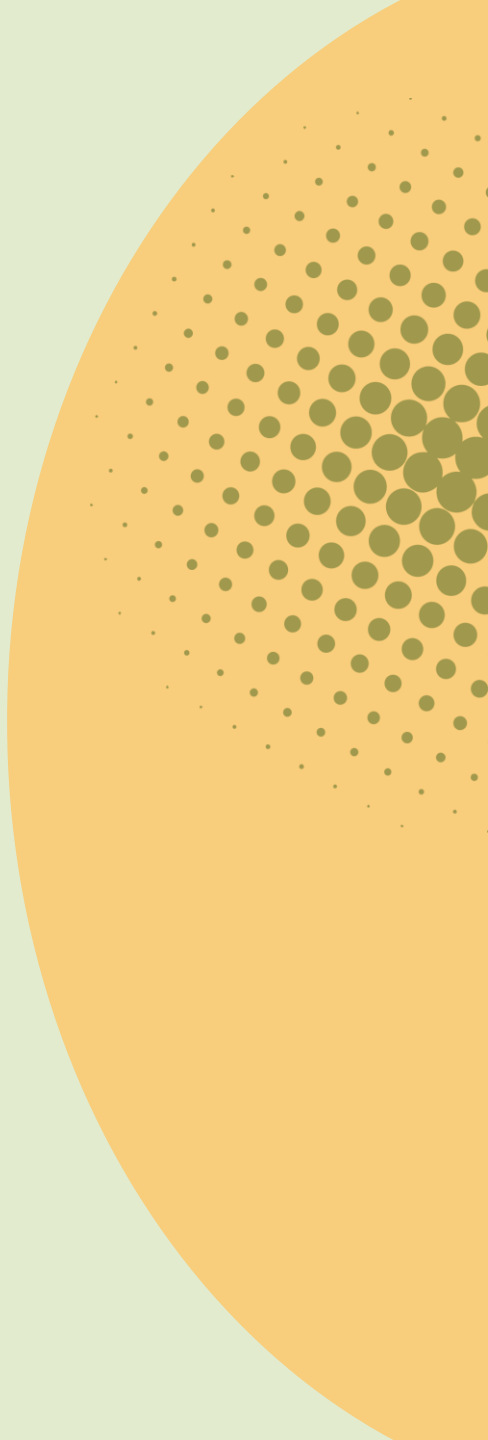
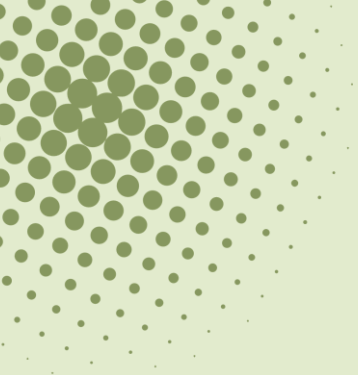
- **Recognize** that trust is infrastructure, not an afterthought
- **Fund** the mechanisms that enable collaboration—not just the outputs
- **Support** the people who build bridges across sectors
- **Design** programs that reward long-term engagement and shared value
- **Champion** a culture of openness, learning, and co-creation



**“Collaboration isn’t built on funding alone, it’s built on trust.
Let’s invest in both.”**



Thank
you!



DO YOU HAVE
ANY QUESTIONS?

Debate



15-minute debate



If you prefer, write your question in the chat box.



Use the 'raise your hand function' to ask your question directly.



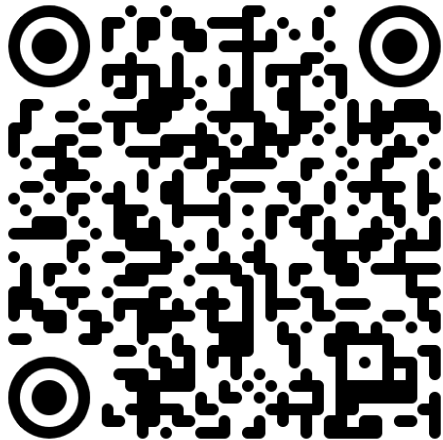


Thematic Strand 2: Bridging the innovation gap in higher education

CEI Study Visit 2025-II

From Research to Impact: Bridging the innovation gap in higher education

November 25th–26th, St. Pölten – Austria



-  Location: St. Pölten University of Applied Sciences, Austria.
-  Funding: Travel (within Europe) and accommodation are fully covered for 15 selected participants.
-  Application deadline: October 6, 2025 (11 p.m. CET).
-  Results: October 13, 2025.

Upcoming activities



Webinar materials:

- Background note,
- Recording,
- Slides,
- Summary.



Participate in:

- Good Practices call.
- Webinar feedback survey.
- CEI poll.



Information session:

HEInnovate:
(Oct. 09, 15:00 CET)



Webinar:

Institutional Support for
Research-based
Innovation
(Oct. 22, 15:30 CET)





Thank you!

CEI



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