

Features of Citizens Living Labs of SIAC

This document describes the features of Citizens Living Labs, shared in the SIAC network. A shared document as a starting point for different actions of the network. Either it is practice, research or the establishment of working relations with the outside world and actors.

This document is 'work in progress': you are invited to add and comment, to work together on a next version. This document will be used as input for activities of different working groups within SIAC, the connections we make to new partners, networks and cities that will join, funding proposals and for local citizens living labs.

The following 7 features are described in this document:

Publicness:

- private ownership of the labs,
- combined with public goals, asset based model, self organization, social capital,
- the lab is not restricted to a certain policy area.

Ecosystem:

- diversity, heterogeneity (cross sector), density, focus on (social) relationships,
- porosity with the outside relevant world (learning process), leveraging corporate and academic social responsibility to address challenges,
- clear connection to/or ownership by the local community.

Openness:

- the individual is the starting point; so the lab is open to everybody,
- cross sector approach,
- dialogue instead of new rules, skills and mentoring.

Physical interaction

- proximity and density: process of matchmaking,
- access to knowledge and networks independent from background or starting point,
- learning by face to face interaction.

Collaboration

- peer to peer network, reciprocity,
- connection to and matchmaking with external network,
- learning process and network with surrounding partners in ecosystem.

Innovation

- new relations / unexpected combinations: process innovation and digital social innovation,
- non traditional solutions,
- working on a culture of social innovation.

Impact orientation

- hybrid business models, impact based model,
- research organized regarding approach and impact measurement,
- measuring impact regarding redistribution and activation of commitment, capacity and funds: multi dimensional measurement and indicators.

1. Introduction:

Our (SIAC) network

SIAC, Social Innovation Acceleration in Cities, is a 'joint venture' of people from different countries in Europe, with background in practice, research and accelerators, with the aim to establish new kinds of social innovation accelerators and to build a trans national learning network, to connect research to practice and accelerators to cities and policymakers.

Social innovation

The accelerators or labs we envision are different from most existing labs. Therefore we distinguish a number of features of these labs, to create clearness on how they (could) work and what is so specific about them. Taking Social Innovation seriously, we have to acknowledge that **everybody** has relevant ideas and knowledge. Good ideas are the capital of a viable future and we firmly believe that those people who come up with world changing ideas should get structural support to bring these ideas into valid actions. Supporting social innovative projects and ideas is not just a societal benefaction, but also a real investment in the future of ourselves and the next generations.

Social Innovation is a very broad concept and a domain where a lot of parties are searching in approach and direction of development. Many people recognize social innovation as a sustainable choice with which we can alter our current societies, into a more democratic, sustainable and inclusive world. Besides that, social innovation will bring better solutions for the big questions societies face, and in this way bring value to society.[1]

Since people recreate and reinvent (parts) of society on a local level, every experiment will face challenges in organizing and will face boundaries grounded in how we organized our society so far. So the experiment has to incorporate this socio political context to be successful. A well organized initiative gives the opportunity for this.

The function of 'Social Innovation Acceleration' is to enable a dynamic and systematic civic and civil interface, to increase the capacity and delivery of benefits and outcomes. A serviceable, necessary and very effective way to promote social innovations are so called Social Innovation Accelerators or Citizens Living Labs. The SIAC network aims to found such Social Innovation Accelerators in different European regions and cities.

A transnational learning network is the basis for a mutual learning process on how to boost social innovations most effectively. The shared insight behind this approach and the learning network is the following: *Instead of only developing solutions in terms of new smart products, we argue that social innovation labs should focus as well on redesigning the way we are organized in institutional processes and activate and organize in new ways existing capacity within local communities.*

Citizens Living Labs

In short, a lab is a container for social experimentation, with a team, a process and space to support social innovation. The rise of labs is partially explained in the transformative promise that they bare (and not only fulfill the role of alternative meeting places or a support structure), namely that they function as vehicles to combat our social ills by achieving also systemic change. In this regard, labs do not operate alone in their endeavor, but form part of a growing number of practices that rely more and more on citizens to act "prosocially", both individually and collectively. There is a growing number of parties that create a network, place or hub to support and promote social innovation. The differences in approach are many.

It is not 'a lab' we envision, but a certain kind of lab. In this document we describe the features of such a Citizens Living Lab (CLL). On the one hand there is the need to learn and develop, and in this way to be

open to different solutions and approaches. As stated, we form a learning network. So we can not be too normative about the design of a lab.

On the other hand we don't start from scratch. The awareness is growing that it is difficult to promote Social innovation in a 'classical' way. Both means and end should be congruent. Traditional steering doesn't bring a long term self enabling solution. We still see in Europe a search in how to do this. So far dominated with challenges (competition instead of cooperation), the ambition to create 'new smart startups', 'policy wishes', and too narrow formulated goals, and the wish to fit these activities in existing policy.

'(...) in a world defined by disparate and deeply specialized silos and sectors, we tend to select the best solution from known options as opposed to creating integrated solutions. This is because, by and large, we operate within closed, risk-averse environments where human creativity and potential for innovation are stifled. Experimentation with alternative methods, approaches and solutions is not typically part of organizational DNA.' (p.6, MaRS Report, Labs designing the future, 2012). This is a big pitfall for the promotion of social innovation. Insights are more and more shared to advocate different approaches.

The local establishment of Citizens Living Labs (CLL's) will include People-Public-Private-Research-Partnerships (PPPRP), to draft (and review) an annual agenda on most pressing issues in the city, for which social innovative solutions have been found or will be activated. By doing so the project creates a more democratic way in the urban decision making process, which will legitimize choices on how public money and resources are spend. Thus creating a urban innovative SI-friendly eco-system which will in turn help to accelerate social innovation as a way of finding solutions for the cities' most pressing societal issues.

By structuring the relations between all stakeholders, emphasizing that all of us are THE citizens, we work at the same time at furthering democratization by including all stakeholders in the partnerships to participate in these, by its democratic process, legitimized solutions. The risen awareness of all stakeholders actively invited and involved to co-create, will in time gradually bridge the gaps between research and citizens, policy and citizens and policy/research and implementation.

The Social Innovation Factory in Brussels is an inspiring example of an Social Innovation Accelerator we use as a starting point for further enhancement of this proven concept. The approach of the SIF meets a number of missing elements in the labs we know so far when it comes to accelerate social innovation initiatives. Such as: an effective and accessible exchange of knowledge between peers in the community. A CRM that supports the possibility to find relevant peers and partners. The introduction of 'a coin' to stimulate the reciprocity and the valuation of the exchange of knowledge, experience and capacities. Thus effectively coping with the problem of free riders. And a strong link with the system world of policy and politics. For more details about this approach we refer to the document available at the SIAC network about it.

Shared direction of the SIAC network

From 2016 and further, we will work together on the creation of new citizens living labs, tools and skills for these labs, the creation of a learning process together with research and local government. And doing so, the number of people taking part in this endeavor will rise. As a network we have to be clear about what we add to what is going on in the field of social innovation. This means we have to express ourselves what kind of labs we envision to realize.

So, in this document we review relevant features of a lab first in a positive, non normative, way and conclude and finish every section with a more or less normative conclusion regarding how we envision in what way the feature contributes to the design we work on in the network. These are the principles we

share in the network and will use as a starting point for the labs we envision, research questions we formulate and relations we create in the surrounding ecosystem of a lab.

2. Features/learning from existing labs

Social innovation Accelerators (SIAs) or Labs may take different forms and in the last years, all over Europe a great number of initiatives have developed. These are, for example, incubators, accelerators, co-working spaces, virtual support networks, hybrid spaces for innovation and cultural activities, social business angels, university based contamination labs and living labs.

All these examples, and many others, present interesting features for the labs we have in mind. Trying to distillate different key features, we had different discussion among the group, starting from the paper prepared by Erna Bosschart and Arjan Biemans, continuing with a first discussion and expansion of characteristics during the kick-off meeting in Berlin (June 27/28 2015), preparing a commented list of some features (in annex) and discussion them during the second meeting in Vienna (November 20/21 2015) by Matteo Bartolomeo. The current document is a commented version of the findings we had in the Vienna meeting.

This new version presents characteristics that can be used as inputs but also as simple references to identify effective accelerators of social innovation.

2.1. Publicness

Labs may have, and often have, a private nature - since they take a legal forms such as limited company, cooperative, association or foundation and they respond primarily to private shareholders. Nevertheless, they have been launched with explicit or implicit objectives that are very similar to those of public policies, or at least some public policies.

As many examples suggest, employability, integration, social inclusion, entrepreneurship, environmental protection, support to culture, art and creativity are the key drivers of these initiatives. Similarly to public policies (and the related measures), SIAs operate in areas of market failure or at least they run activities in areas of public failure and combine them (in a blend that changes from case to case) with some market activities, where a reasonable price may be asked to beneficiaries.

There is a relationship with the approach used in the area of Asset Based Community Development. This builds on the assets that are already found in the community and mobilizes individuals, associations, and institutions to come together to build on their assets-- not concentrate on their needs. The key is to begin to use what is already in the community. Among all the assets that exist in the community, the approach pays particular attention to the assets inherent in social relationships, as evident in formal and informal associations and networks.

We may say that SIAs are generators of positive benefits for a number of stakeholders and, by operating in areas of market failure, they have similar characters to public utilities.

By providing utility for a wide range of stakeholders, SIAs have become and may become over time precious allies for policy makers[2], in particular in areas like urban regeneration, fight against unemployment (in particular NEETs) and poverty, inclusion of migrants and refugees, and many others.

In these and other areas, SIAs have anticipated public governments' policies and programmes, by creating favorable conditions for the provision of services or simply by generating positive externalities for local stakeholders and by creating favorable conditions for attraction of young people, start ups,

professionals in creative and cultural industries. <see also:
<http://www.siac.network/item/a-multiple-value-business-model-for-siac/>>

In the last years, public governments, in particular those operating at the local level, have looked at SIAs with an increasing interests and have:

- Recognized the importance of SIAs and legitimated their activities.
- Have provided favorable conditions for SIAs to start up and develop.
- Have directly initiated some SIAs.

The relationship with public administration may take different forms. These are, for example, simple accreditation; supply of services on behalf of local/regional governments; partnership for public policy programmes; funding of investment and / or current expenses; provision of guarantee funds, concession of public buildings or spaces,

2.1.a Our design features for CLL's regarding publicness:

- Ownership. The labs we envision are privately owned (associations, cooperation, cooperatives, foundations, social enterprises), and have a public goal. The institutional context, cities, are part of the endeavor, but a lab is preferably not part of the institutional structure or steered by goals of public bodies alone. So municipalities, cities, regions, are financers of labs and might offer facilities, but do not own or use the labs directly and alone for their own policy goals. Preferably there is a local consortium of parties that is either the supporting structure or form together a body that founds the accelerator. In this way the lab will be financed in a hybrid way, and not restricted to sector or separate goals.
- Goals/fields of attention: the public goals the labs have are not restricted to one single policy area. The approach is cross sector to avoid the dominance of old (or new occurring) silo's. The social needs the lab is open for are defined in a local Partnership of People, Public, Private and Research.
- asset based, social capital.

2.2 Ecosystems

SIAs are ecosystems (or aim at becoming lively ecosystem) as they attract tangible and intangible resources that are used and generated by a number of actors. While it is not easy to define whether a certain place (also a virtual place) is an ecosystem or not, it seems that a number of inputs are somehow required in order to create and sustain fertile environments:

- Density of actors, this seems a prerequisite in order to create conditions for casual and frequent relationship among actors;
- Geographical recognizable scale
- Variety and diversity of actors (in terms of nature, size, focus, expertise, etc...). Diversity can be considered a fundamental ingredient for creativity, innovation and also an important driver for resilience;
- Heterogeneity of functions, as they combine working / professional functions (working space, tutorship and mentorship, capacity building, etc...) with more cultural/creativity/leisure functions (such as gathering corners, cafeteria, place for performing and visual arts,). Different ways to encounter are included in the approach;
- Porosity with the outside world

Related to the last characteristic, porosity, SIAs are also part of larger ecosystems where relations among a number of social and economic actors exists. Within these larger ecosystems, SIAs may play an important role as accelerators of innovations, facilitators of relationships, testing zones and simply places where to gather and meet. A positive and active relationship with the wider ecosystem is not to be taken for granted, as there are a number of hubs that have strong inter linkages with actors operating

far away and, on the contrary, have light exchanges with the surrounding environment. There is not a pre-defined set of rules that defines whether a SIA relates with outside ecosystems, but in some cases this relationship may be stronger if some pre-conditions are met:

- local actors have the ownership/control over the SIA
- local actors run specific programmes
- specific programmes and activities are explicitly targeted to local actors
- specific programmes of activities are financed (via grant, sponsorships, vouchers) by local governments and other actors
- active dialogue with relevant actors in the surrounding ecosystem
- relationships with a hybrid external network.

2.2.a. Our design features for CLL's regarding ecosystem

- Diversity: there is no pre-defined type of participant, the lab creates a hybrid external network
- Heterogeneity: starting point of every question or innovation is the individual that brings it in: there is not a restriction to a certain (policy) sector or domain, since social innovation crosses sector boundaries.
- Density: to find matches, the network should grow to a certain number of participants.
- geography: a city or a region is the relevant scale for the acceleration of social innovation.

Although external partners may have a national or even European scale.

- Porosity or Learning together with the surrounding system world: one of the steps that is taken to create or alter an accelerator is to work on the relation with the surrounding system world, meaning the municipality, research institutions, etc. expressing the willingness to learn from each other, having the promotion of a culture of social innovation in mind. This porosity could also be created by 'doing something' together.
- Ownership of the lab by the local community or: the community is created with no other goal than the promotion of social innovation or strengthening of social innovative initiatives and social capital.

2.3. Openness

Closely related to the previous point, but also to the issue of public ness, the degree of openness appears to be an important element for the identification and design of SIAs. This element may have a normative nature, a sort of value-based imperative. But at the same time, openness, in the context of the discussion of the other features, it is a sort of necessary but not sufficient condition for a SIA to be an ecosystem and to produce a benefit for wide set of actors.

But what do we intend for open and who is it possible to keep openness as key element without falling in pure rhetoric? We can consider openness as a cross cutting theme that intersects:

- Governance. An open governance entails the involvement of a number of actors, and not only the owners, in the decision making processes (the actors could be beneficiaries, local groups and other stakeholders). An open governance should also entail the involvement of actors in the definition of metrics and calculation of the social value produced;
- Processes, in particular process of production services generating public benefits. Here again, the involvement of actors as key players and not just beneficiaries appears particularly relevant in order to keep quality as high as possible, in order to assure that certain important needs are met, in order to facilitate empowerment of some actors, in order to foster mutual learning;
- Beneficiaries. Who has access to services and at what price? An open SIA meets expectations of disadvantaged groups by providing affordable services (also with differentiated price) and by prioritizing the type of services on the basis of needs. Clearly this may entail cross subsidies or some forms of mixed payments (cash, social success fees, volunteering, etc...).

2.3.a Our design features for CLL's regarding openness

- Everybody has valuable knowledge and ideas. This is an imperative of social innovation. And it is a starting point we need to treasure since it brings a cross sector approach that is urgently needed. To be open to everybody and any idea means to have the facilities to deal with this. Not only in philosophy and attitude, but also regarding skills. New, open communities may 'suffer' from 'free riders' or people who are in need. This asks for skills to deal with. So we have to look at this in the design of a lab. On the other hand, very early stage ideas, in the hands of people that feel uncomfortable in showing and sharing this in a 'structure' or world with expectations, might bear enormous potential and are often missed. Labs shouldn't stick to usual suspects. The labs should also be open to people with valuable ideas but who hardly show up or show their ideas. Skills that are needed: empathy, dialogue (as opposed to the creation of new rules and exclusions) etc. Process feature: mentoring.
- organizing and structuring activities bears the pitfall of re-institutionalization. New rules are created (a program, rules for in- or exclusion, formats, etc.), to deal with a certain situation or just to come up with a practical solution. These rules shouldn't restrict the openness again.
- price: to be open means to not present barriers that pre-select participants. To be equal means to expect, as a starting position, the same from everybody. In the mean time facilities of the lab are being used and ask an effort or finance from others. See 'Reciprocity', under 'Collaboration' as well.

2.4. Physical interaction

In the last years, the debate and practice have been suggesting that physical places still play an important role in innovation and creativity patterns. At different levels, from urban studies to management in corporations, proximity and density have emerged as key drivers also in sectors and markets with limited physical exchange of goods.

The recent experiences of hybrid spaces, accelerators, incubators demonstrate that also social innovation patterns may benefit from the physical proximity among actors and the proximity between innovators and areas where the social issues are particularly severe.

As a matter of fact, a physical proximity may facilitate:

- A deep understanding and validation of issues
- The identification of potential solutions, especially when innovators and affected parties coincide or when at least may live/work/act closely
- A quick validation of solutions, with different stages of development (pre prototyping, prototyping, alfa and beta testing)
- A first market (when market signals are important)

At the same time, proximity and density of innovators, stakeholders and facilitators generate unexpected outcomes as actors freely interact, learn from each other, informally cooperate.

For these reasons, effective SIAs are first of all physical places where different actors operate (and possibly cooperate), designed with a significant attention to the space layout and/or processes and managed in such a way that interaction and serendipity potential are maximized.

Nevertheless, the physical dimension of relationship may be not sufficient and a certain degree, normally quite high) of virtual interaction is needed for a number of reasons:

- To expand the community of beneficiaries and of innovators
- To get public support and legitimacy
- To identify, test and provide socially innovative or simply social services
- To replicate or to scale up same solutions in other context
- To adopt solutions and approaches that have been tested or adopted somewhere else
- To learn from failures in other contexts
- The team up with other actors, get encouragement and lobby together
- To get support from specialists (sectors mentors)

2.4.a. Our design features for CLL's regarding physical interaction

- proximity and density: The personal network of an innovator is often too small to find the right matches, knowledge and capacity. The lab organizes this proximity for participants and the network as a whole; a process of matchmaking.
- physical interaction (meeting, co-working, knowledge sharing sessions),
- knowledge exchange and network: tools are created and used to optimize this exchange and to make it independent from personal network and knowledge
- digital tools are used and developed as well to promote interaction, co-creation and to unlock digital knowledge. See under 'Innovation'

2.5. Collaboration

A fifth and emerging element is the collaborative nature of relationship facilitated by SIAs. Far from the tradition of hierarchical organizations, the relationship within and outside SIAs are more and more horizontal and reciprocal. On the one side, this approach seems very connected to the SIAs' philosophy and cultural environment (philosophy of the founders and sometimes the general approach behind many initiatives behind SIAs); on the other side collaboration and reciprocity are the response to a number of significant constraints characterizing SIAs:

- Know how. The expertise needed to tackle the wide range of issues related to social innovation is so vast, that services offered require multiple production sources;
- Budget. Economic and financial constraints, even in cases where a few upfront investments need to be done, make it necessary to exploit resources and assets owned by a vast group of providers;
- Audience engagement. The attraction of a diversified audience, for the different functions and services offered, also requires the engagement of a number of actors that will exploit the potential of their constituencies and communities;
- Resilience. As SIAs become significant players for social innovation at least at the local level, continuity, stability, sustainability of the initiative are of particular importance and part of the responsibility of the initiators. Resilience, also in connection with the previous points, can be reinforced with a collaborative and horizontal model of relationship binding together the different stakeholders;
- Political power, that is an essential element for the long term sustainability of a SIA, especially in connection with the public utility role, require a frequent re-negotiation of operating conditions with the political bodies and with the wide public at the local level. For this reason, a strong community of stakeholders, connected with horizontal linkages may support SIAs in the struggle for survival.

2.5.a. Our design features for CLL's regarding collaboration

- social innovation support is for an important part about learning from each other: peers, and others in the network: a peer to peer network. Social Innovation uses the knowledge of the community, and promotes ownership of it (as opposed to consultancy, etc.)
- collaboration with the external network, e.g. institutional parties, companies, etc. is organized or initiated by the lab as well
- learning process with the surrounding ecosystem: the lab and its network facilitates this learning process to promote that not only new ideas and solutions come up, but also new (social) relations can grow to contribute to the desired new situation
- reciprocity: valued collaboration: everybody adds value to the network by sharing knowledge. This is not just an idea, or a coincidence, but it is structured in the labs way of working. Tools are needed, to underpin this reciprocity. E.g. virtual coins can be introduced to support this exchange of value.

2.6 Innovation

Social Innovations can be seen as the result of social inventions that were picked up by a significant part of population (imitation) and became a “social fact”. Such social inventions can be new and novel strategies, processes, products, organizational models, services, concepts, relations between actors and can lead through imitation to Social Innovation. But the reduction of Social Innovation to a compact outcome of achievements driven by a limited group of professional social innovators whose job is the invention and propagation of new social practices is not approvable. This idea of intentional social change by a group of innovators does not (really) make sense and fall prey to a certain kind of ‘solutionism’. In respect to Social Innovation Accelerators and Labs that is an important fact. Because Social Innovation Labs cannot produce or promise social change in a product orientated way.

Societal change is not (only) the result of new innovative products and services, it's also the result of non-traditional answers on how to leave unsustainable pathways of development, the manifestation of new values and behaviors; after all an intentional reconfiguration of social practices. That means to shift the focus from solutions and products to processes and people and the facilitation of collective innovation capacities. The promotion of a *culture of social innovation* is needed to create openness for innovation in this area.

Thus the alteration of processes might have far greater leverage to change complex adaptive systems than solutions as they offer a chance to revisit and redistribute existing power blocks.

Examples are new procurement procedures, decision-making and policy-making structures, laws, or smart evaluation and feedback methods, and so forth. So Innovation in that respect could also mean changing the rules, which beforehand often implies a process that seeks for the wisdom of the crowd. Labs can be such spaces for experimentation and process work. Social Innovation Accelerators can provide both, a space for experimentation for social inventive people but also a lab for processes and learning, where very diverse people come together to think outside the box to tackle the grant challenges we are facing without promising systemic change but raising questions of the same. So ‘Innovation’ in terms of Social Innovation does not mean the successful implementation of a new product to market but the result of inventive imitation of social practices that are very promising to lead to systemic change.

2.6.a Our design features for CLL’s regarding Innovation

- Since innovation is not something one can force, acceleration of social innovation is about creating possibilities and new (social) relationships. Since social innovation is also about changing relationships and new ways of organizing our society, it is about change. Change is supported by a culture that is open to it. So, the labs activities should work on a culture of social innovation as well, by organizing relationships with the outside world.
- new relations and knowledge (e.g. combining unusual suspects): process innovation and digital innovation (see below)
- non traditional solutions

2.6.b Digital Social Innovation: Social Innovation and digital tools and facilities

Nowadays, the digital world is almost everywhere: It is part of our lives. It isn't easy any more to separate the digital world from the ‘real’ one in our daily life. So it is part of the world of social innovation as well. And it adds to new innovations as well. There is a lot to say for the use of ICT and social media in for instance self-organization and community networking.

In the ‘technical world’ of producers and institutions the citizen is most of time still being seen as a ‘user’ only. And this approach is dominant in all kind of areas. So, there is something happening there, in the

relationship between technique and the human being. On the one hand technique is being seen as a potential driver to increase the involvement of people in all kind of activities with (or without) a societal goal. And there is nothing against 'smartness', when possible we should embrace it. But the attitude and approach is mostly 'technology-driven', often led or fuelled by the market (product) and planning activities of institutions.

And on the other hand when people **do** create or come up with digital (social) innovations themselves, they are mostly regarded as 'smart start-ups', we have to bring (as fast as possible) to 'the market'. Through the looking glass of companies or policymakers, this world seems to be divided in digital start-ups and digital consumers.

Digital features for CLL's

A lab for social innovation is in the first place a **physical place** where people meet, 'for the social good', to enhance their SI Initiatives and ownership of them, recognizing the fact that digital connectedness alone isn't enough to drive social innovation.

The internet and (similar) digital facilities, combined with all kind of tools and data, is also a **place** to find relevant information, means, connections and hubs. These sources add to the initiatives, contribute to the accessibility by and involvement of civilians & community and contribute to the ownership and the 'smartness' of them.

An important feature of the labs we envision is the CRM-system to create reciprocity in the knowledge sharing, and the virtual coin. But there is more.

Digital features would add a lot to the labs we envision/work with, when they add to:

- knowledge exchange, creation and collection, tools, etc. (including the CRM-system)
- network/connections: to find relevant partners: brokerage
- capacity and/or funding (including the digital or alternative coin).

What kind of fields with digital tools could we think of?

- crowdsourcing
 - data: big, open and linked data
 - tools for the wider utilisation of digital resources and data
 - crowdfunding
 - open source, open hardware
 - crowd mapping
 - citizen science
- etc.

Digital tools at the level of the SIAC network: a social innovation process database

In future, to provide data regarding social innovation for the social innovators, research and policy, we work with a shared database. As a starting point for this we cooperate with TRANSIT. TRANSIT is building a database for research on transformative social innovation. The experiences and the framework of TRANSIT is a good starting point for research in the SIAC network. On the other hand we want to minimize the burden for social innovators by using the network tool, similar to what the Social innovation factory is using, their CRM. *The further development of this CRM is part of our proposal for the JPI Urban Europe call.*

We aim at using the databases as backbone for 1. Knowledge exchange, 2. Research, 3. Visibility of innovators, 4. Feeding policymakers with relevant information, and thus 5. Contributing to a change in culture towards social innovation.

We prefer to use what already exists and fits with our approach: using and strengthening existing tools, approaches and networks (in this case from the Social Innovation Factory and TRANSIT, and of course additional suggestions are welcome). Various knowledge infrastructures are already in development, each with own functionalities and added values. *The further development of this digital tool, the database, is part of proposal for the JPI Urban Europe call.*

Digital social innovation (DSI)

A lot of people are already working on and with digital tools, starting with a different mindset, bottom-up, on so called Digital Social Innovation. www.digitalsocial.eu reports at the moment 1148 organizations with 717 collaborative research and innovation projects in the area of digital social innovation.

"Digital Social Innovation is a type of collaborative innovation in which innovators, users and communities co-create knowledge and solutions for a wide range of social needs exploiting the network effect of the Internet." (see: www.digitalsocial.eu). Digital Social Innovation is not restricted to the internet alone, since there are even facilities created bottom-up as alternative for the existing internet, and we should add initiatives as Makerspaces and Fablabs (E.g. Waag Society and others) to the community of DSI as well. The latter often focus on (open) hardware as well.

Crowdsourcing for the crowd.

For the SIAC network DSI is important when it adds something to social innovation or the ecosystem for social innovation. It seems the Digital Social Innovation community can bring this. But there are probably more ways to realize this. DSI shouldn't reconfirm existing relationships, but enable the ownership of citizens in relation to the social innovation they are working on within their initiative.

So the following questions come up for the SIAC network regarding these features:

- what kind of digital tools do (potentially) contribute to social innovation?
- which of them do we want to add to our features?
- how to develop/integrate them? What is our 'looking glass' regarding digital tools and social innovation?
- how to make them available to the communities/labs?

2.7 Impact orientation

SIAs are different from traditional innovation centers also because they have a strong orientation to the generation of impact for the society. Impact (as a longer term effect of outcome) on the population is annually measured in a rigorous manner and measurement is used to identify areas of improvement and evaluate the effectiveness for different stakeholders. Simple straight forward measurement knows a lot of pitfalls.

Impact of a social innovation cannot be restricted to one sector or organization. Social innovation cuts through sector boundaries and silo's. Means and ends contribute both to the social innovation, so impact is already present in the process. So the impact of social innovation is wider than one type of indicator. The business model for social innovation (as far as this is a sufficient term in this respect) is a hybrid business model (see for more details about this:

<http://www.siac.network/item/a-multiple-value-business-model-for-siac/>)

2.7.a Our design features for CLL's regarding Impact orientation

- hybrid business models, impact based models
- cross sector research is organized regarding approach and impact measurement

- multi-dimensional use of indicators: measuring impact regarding redistribution and activation of commitment, capacity and funds: multi dimensional measurement and indicators

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(with the input from many others in the network)

Annex: features discussed in Vienna

- approach

Ecosystem. Dynamics within SIAs are strongly oriented towards continuous learning and research for new equilibrium in a dynamic and changing context. This requires smart management and a number of undetermined areas where innovation and adaptation may emerge.

Intergenerational. They target a wide public that includes babies, young's, mature and elderly people. More than a constraint, this is an element allowing cross-fertilization, knowledge sharing, serendipity

Open. SIAs are open by nature and openness is relevant in terms of processes, contributors, targets, users and collaborations

Public utility. SIAs provide services of public utility and are recognized, formally or informally, by the public sectors as an ally for public policies

- Roots and ambitions

Space: the existence of a space, in particular of a large and hybrid space where different activities, functions and communities interact often represent a condition for attraction and facilitation of social innovation.

Local communities. Local communities could be the first beneficiaries and testing zones for initiators and social innovators too.

Global language. While rooted in the local contexts, SIAs often dialogue, exchange experiences and collaborate with other similar centers abroad. In addition, they tackle global challenges (such as poverty, human rights, global warming, access to public interest services, ...)

Impact orientation. SIAs are different from traditional innovation centers also because they have a strong orientation to the generation of impact for the society. Impact is annually measured in a rigorous manner and measurement is used to identify areas of improvement and evaluate the effectiveness for different stakeholders

- Finance and partnership

Alternative currencies may promote the exchange of services within the communities, facilitate the strengthening of horizontal networks and create areas for piloting and testing.

Financial support to be provided to social innovators, especially in the early stage phase of development of social businesses, is considered a key element for the reduction of failure rate and the acceleration of new ideas.

Public funding is provided directly or indirectly to managers of SIAs in the form of reduction of investment of operating costs but, sometimes, in the form of vouchers to be spent by social innovators at the SIAs.

Private ownership is emerging as the model for running effective SIAs, also in the context of a provision of services to communities and access to basic services to social innovators

Extended partnership. SIAs can count on agreements with a wide range of organizations (public and private) that may provide support to the SIF itself and / or to social innovators. These may involve investors, industry partners, laboratories, universities , ...)

- Process features

Hackathons. SIAs launches periodically specific calls to tackle priority social issues and gather innovators with different experiences and ambitions

Incubation programmes are run periodically to provide an initial support to social businesses. They provide capabilities, validate product –service offering, consolidate the business model.

Acceleration. More targeted to the growth phase compared with incubation, acceleration requires long-standing partnership between SIAs and the social business and specific skills

Networks of mentors are crucial for providing a competent and specific support to social innovators and, at the same time, to expand the spectrum of opportunities (networks, potential clients, supporters, etc...) to social innovators

Peer to peer support is emerging as an additional way to provide incubation and light support to innovators. This can be provided in analogue and virtual way, with increasingly open communities

Research. SIAs represent significant labs to test research hypotheses in a number of fields: innovation, social metrics, public policy, psychology, sociology, industrial economy, creativity, etc... Many SIAs continuously carry out research and analysis on the dynamics happening in the SIF environment, some others have collaboration with universities and external research centers.

[1] Social innovation is commonly defined as new ideas and solutions (products, services and models) that simultaneously meet social needs and create new social relationships or collaborations (Grisolia and Ferragina, 2015). These innovations are considered both good for society and capable of enacting greater societal involvement. (Murray, Caulier-Griece and Mulgan, 2010, p. 3). Social innovation enhances society's capacity to act and is characterized by the capacity to address social needs that traditional policy seems increasingly unable to tackle, the empowerment of groups and individuals and the willingness to change social relations.

[2] See also e.g. the UNDP report 'Social Innovation for Public Service Excellence', 2014