

‘Innovation that brings value to everybody’ freely available but not for free

Position, approach and practice of the Social Innovation Factory Brussels, an example of a successful accelerator for social innovation

A starting paper for all participants of the trans national working and learning group SIAC, Social Innovation Acceleration in Cities, based in the EU-Program SEiSMiC part of JPI Urban Europe.

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Code of conduct: This paper is to inspire you as possible actor to set up an accelerator in your country and it's cities. It can not be used for commercial purposes.

Introduction

Social Innovation to alter society

Social Innovation (abbreviated to SI in this document) 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, SI will bring better solutions for the big questions societies face, and in this way bring value to society.

Social innovation addresses the creativity and needs of its citizens where the system structures and rules are unreceptive, although they're formally democratic. Ideally; through social innovation we will be able to build a more democratic, sustainable, inclusive society. That is why we started The SIAC Project; Social Innovation Accelerators in Cities.

The example of the SIF (Social Innovation Factory)

The SIF is a part of this project and offers her insights and knowledge as a starting point for all of us, the participants of SIAC, our working group of the EU-program SEiSMiC, part of the EU-program JPI Urban Europe. Our aim is to build a trans national work and learning network of accelerators in various European Cities that work together based on common grounds in philosophy and technique. We are very grateful for the sharing of insights and experience by Kaat Peeters and all representatives of The **Sociale InnovatieFabriek**.

Realizing labs for SI

We take their approach as a starting point and dynamically develop this knowledge further through our joint effort to develop and realize SI labs. Since a lot of grassroots initiatives and social entrepreneurs face obstacles in reaching their ambitions, labs like the SIF contribute to the ecosystem for SI. Our aim is to build a trans national work and learning network of accelerators in various European Cities together with you. By:

- sharing our knowledge in a trans national working group;
- creating a number of new labs in Europe;
- (re)creating a CMS that will support scientific research;
- closing the circle by giving input into to system world.

Experiences and research results will make the top-down world more receptive for SI. With joint research possible on all levels; local, national and international. In this way we enhance the possibilities to effectively develop and stimulate social innovations and social entrepreneurs on a far larger scale, and bring their efforts with the institutional context together at it's bottom-up desired alteration.

We hope you enjoy reading this paper and that you subscribe to it's idea and that it will be the starting point of a successful cooperation between us all.

Let's make a difference together!

Erna & Arjan

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1 Our inspiration: The Social Innovation Factory from Flanders

This chapter will give you an answer to the question why the Social Innovation Factory (SIF) from Flanders is our inspiration. It is an introduction to the principles that form the soul of the SIF. We also try to answer what makes the SIF different from others and why we think she is so successful that her example should inspire us in The SIAC Project. SIF herself will continue as an accelerator on regional level and will stay in touch with us during the entire process, so this document is a starting point. We all will work together and through our combined experiences and research we will be able to dynamically grow the knowledge about all there is about social innovation.

The SIF itself recognizes that there are a lot of experiments of social innovators, civilians, companies and associations, which succeed to deal in a creative way with interdependent and multilayered societal challenges. "From them and their experiences we can learn and together search for improvement and the new concepts that contribute to social change. It's the mission of the SIF to stimulate this."

Why the SIF?

Firstly we choose the SIF because it is not only an accelerator of social innovation but the main objective of the SIF is **to create a culture of social innovation** in Flanders. This is the first reason to study the approach of SIF, since a lot of labs seem to fall prey to 'solutionism' and fail to connect to their socio-political context. <Lab Matters, KL, 2014> So it is interesting how they do this in Flanders.

To succeed in this the SIF wants firstly to inform everybody about social innovation and social entrepreneurship, to encourage them to think along with the concepts and to activate them to take part in the network activities. And 2. coaches and supports socially innovative initiatives to become successful by working towards successful plans and guiding them to the right partners, knowledge and financial support.

Secondly, the SIF is open to everybody who wants to contribute to SI. Everybody who wants to think along, learn, experiment or to realize SI or social entrepreneurship is able to join the network. So the SIF is open to not only entrepreneurs but also civilians with good concepts, associations of civilians that work jointly and realize SI, etc.. This openness to everybody avoids narrowing your mind about where good initiatives start, and, puts central that social innovation is not realized by a single, central player: SI simultaneously meets social needs and create new social relationships or collaborations, thus enacting greater societal involvement. So the approach itself should be inclusive as well.

What makes SIF different

The SIF seems to meet a number of missing elements in the labs we know so far when it comes to incubate or accelerate social innovation initiatives. Such as: an effective and accessible exchange of knowledge between peers in the community. A CMS 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.

Open Network

The SIF is convinced that everybody has certain knowledge that is relevant for social innovations. Being aware that your knowledge has relevance, empowers small initiatives and citizens to gear up their initiative. And also partners of government, knowledge institutions etc. are looking for new ways of working and do have relevant knowledge. So, everybody who wants to act for an improved society has to be able to join and use

the knowledge network of the SIF.

Reciprocity

The motor of real social innovations is the acknowledged knowledge in the network. One of the main principles of the SIF is also one of the most distinctive ways in which their approach towards social innovators and social entrepreneurs varies from others. Knowledge and support from SIF network is freely available, but not for free! The reciprocity is an important asset in their approach. To organize this exchange of knowledge the SIF created a coin, called the 'SIF'. See chapter 3 for details.

Community

Besides advise about possible partnerships and co-funding, the SIF offers, after an intake so called strengthening sessions. These sessions are done by peers in the learning network of the SIF. The SIF knows who is the most interesting sparring partner in the network (since all knowledge and experience is collected in their CMS). Because everyone who joins the network has a meeting with a team member of the SIF. It are never just names; it are always people of whom the experience and skills have been discovered by team members of the SIF. So the creation, functionalities, tools and mechanisms that provide insight in who is having what knowledge and skills, and the reciprocity of this network is the main asset of the SIF. Thus the SIF is an accelerator of SI, based on the exchange of existing knowledge of the regional network. The SIF also has a strong belief that all the necessary skills and know how are available somewhere in Flanders and that it is only a matter of the good match to connect needs to skills and know how.

Co-finance

At the start of the SIF, she also co-financed social innovations, in cooperation with the agency for Innovation by Science and Technology in Flanders (IWT). More mature concepts were able to apply / present their idea to the advisory board of the SIF. After a positive advise the agency can offer financial support for a feasibility study and/or an innovation project. Who wants to apply for these funds first has to take part in the coaching pathway of the SIF and then has to convince the advisory board that the social innovation concept is valuable.

Besides that the innovator has to show the long term perspective of the project and the investment the innovator wants to bring up itself. The funds are only to start-up the social innovation. Budget 2 million euro (2014). A participant can apply for a feasibility study, or for project funding, but than has to bring at least two other participating parties. Now they altered their approach and SIF will talk to all kind of parties like funds for instance to create opportunities for innovators and entrepreneurs.

Summary of the core of the SIF

1. **Everybody has knowledge** _ Taking SI seriously, we have to acknowledge that every body has relevant ideas and knowledge. And that is the core/soul of the SIF: exchange of knowledge and empowerment of initiators of SI. An important skill used here is empathy, to get insight in everybody's skills. This is a very important aspect of the activities of the SIF: on the one side it empowers people involved in SI, on the other hand it provides a basis for the desired reciprocity in the network (see bullet 5.)
2. **Knowledge** _ knowledge, connections (e.g. knowledge of the existence of relevant partners), skills are the main accelerators of growing SI initiatives. And not money and funds.
3. **Accessibility** _ there are no boundaries to participate. This openness empowers initiatives and will also make sure the SIF will work cross sector (see 6.).
4. **Community** _ Knowledge exchange takes place by bringing people together in real life. Thus the SIF creates opportunities for a community to grow. Secondly; by peers join this network and commit to each other, the networks' existence prevents a renewed

institutionalization of knowledge.

5. **Responsibility** _ no community without reciprocity: you get as much as you give. Everybody has to offer something!

6. **Cross sector** _ Since SI crosses boundaries, their practice involves cutting across organizational or disciplinary boundaries.

7. **Open innovation** _ Ideas, opportunities and questions .. are most of the time not coming alone. It is a force of the SIF to connect people with similar ideas and/or possible partners with complementary assets.

8. **Stakeholder management** _ The SIF is connected to the socio-political context. It is the base of it's juridical form. They have partners in commercial companies, but also in governments, universities, interest groups and NGO's. They form alliances with many of these groups on various occasions always with the goal to grow chances for social innovators.

Principles of the SIF

In short the SIF has a number of principles, you find them listed here, some they practice since the start, some evolved after nearly two years of labor.

- Concept: Support will be given to any person or group that already has a any concept (it has to be some steps further than an idea) on all fields possible as long as it is a;
- Societal challenge: The concept always has to be a new way of dealing with a societal challenge in the area it is to be implemented in (see the paragraph Social innovation according to the SIF);
- Safe environment: The participants all have to sign a statement of non-disclosure when it comes to exchanging concepts in the peer-to-peer network, to create a safe environment;
- Scale: There is an end to the scale on which a peer-to-peer network keeps working after that a new network needs to be formed. The dynamics change above approx. 300 persons inside the peer-to-peer network;
- Open: Knowledge is not to be monopolized by anyone, but should be shared by the accelerators (not per se by the innovators/entrepreneurs).

Social innovation according to the SIF

Social innovation is a very broad concept. 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).[1]

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.

SI might also refer to new working principles applied in existing organizations, so, social innovation within companies. For example the participative management approach of Ricardo Semler and others. To be exact: this is not included in the scope of the SIF.

According to the SIF:

A **Social** Innovation is an *innovative* solution to a societal important *challenge*, that results in a product, service, organization model or method, with societal *impact*.

Challenges:

These challenges are interdependent and multi-layered, like poverty, climate change

and abandonment. There is not one simple solution. A lot of experiments of social innovators – civilians, companies, associations - succeed to deal with these problems in creative ways. An important characteristic of their work is that it often brings forward value at two or more areas at the same time for different public and private parties.

Social:

It is a social innovation when the innovation tackles a societal challenge, like multidimensional societal problems of vulnerable groups in society. Or climate change. Or loneliness in an urban environment. And simultaneously create new social relationships or collaborations that contribute to greater societal involvement.

Innovative:

A solution is innovative when it is dealing with or resulting in a new or better product, service, process, marketing method or organizational model. So it is about ideas no-one ever thought of before as well as the application of existing ideas to new target groups or in a new way or form or new ways to connect different actors, expertise or resources. Social innovations are usually new combinations or hybrids of existing elements, rather than completely new.

Lets start an experiment!

The beauty of this approach of the SIF is that we don't have to wait, e.g. for new legislation, or until everybody is ready for this change. Change on a local level is already possible today. Right now. Just by realizing new connections, sharing knowledge, and creating a good context, or ecosystem, for the network (by empowerment, reciprocity, value creation, and the creation of partnerships). Since there is no 1 central approach, every new initiative will have the character of an experiment.

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.

But what is a social innovation lab, like the SIF?

In short, a lab is a container for social experimentation, with a team, a process and space to support social innovation on a systemic level. The rise of labs is partially explained in the transformative promise that they bare, namely that they function as vehicles to combat our social ills by achieving 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 SI. The differences in approach are many: it is not easy to make a general classification of types of labs. A broad range of initiatives and organizations are using the term "Lab," with many choosing either Design Lab or Change Labs.

- Design Labs tend to place emphasis on the quality of the ideas or solutions being generated, with a particular focus on incorporating different (often "user" or "citizen") perspectives in the development of specific "thing" (technical innovation, likely a product, object or service)
- Change Labs tend to emphasize building collaboration and shared understanding between participants in the lab as the basis for shared action(s)
- Social Innovation Labs would emphasize the development of solutions, but place more attention on the processes by which these solutions become deeply integrated into systems and ultimately transform them. <http://www.sig.uwaterloo.ca/feature/social-innovation-labs>

Incubator?

The similar and sometimes overlapping characteristics of accelerators and incubators have led to some inconsistency in classification. Organizations may refer to themselves as being one type when their operations more closely reflect the other. In the absence of a standardized definition, scholars and practitioners have arrived at their own definitions, and each one is different. In general there are a number of distinctions: (Innovation Accelerators: Defining Characteristics Among Start-up Assistance Organizations, oct. 2014). Incubators tend to be local, and select participants locally. Offer facilities, a location, office space, access to management skills, network etc. Most of the time no funds are involved: they do not invest in the start-ups. Terms of assistance are one to five years. They are nonprofit organizations, frequently associated with universities.

Accelerator?

Start-up accelerators tend to select participants from a wide region or even a country. Accelerators provide training and mentoring for cohorts of participants (rather than individual companies). Offers validation of ideas, linking to business partners, facilitates pitching to follow-up investment ('demo-days') (aiming to help the entrepreneur scale their business and become ready for investment). Terms of assistance are relatively short, 1 to 3 months. Time-limited support comprising programmed events and intensive mentoring. Most of them are for-profit organizations that receive equity in exchange for the provision of funding to the start-ups. They do not necessarily provide office space for the start-ups they support, but typically provide meeting space.

Both accelerators and incubators work with a highly competitive selection of participants. From qualitative interviews that he had conducted with startup founders, Jed Christianson found that mentoring and networking opportunities were the most valuable benefits gained from attending programmes, while generic and inconsistent mentoring, and too much focus on demo day, were frequent drawbacks.
<http://siresearch.eu/blog/social-enterprise-accelerators>

Incubators and accelerators for social innovation may work in a similar manner to technology incubators or accelerators, by bringing together the resources, skills, and expertise needed to assist entrepreneurs and innovators seeking to build a social enterprise or to address a societal need. They may also take on entirely new tactics and processes. <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/socialinnovationeurope/en/directory/europe/news/social-innovation-incubators-europe>

Characterizing SIF

The word lab is used frequently, but the practice of each lab varies and reflects different ideas on how change occurs.

The roots of this emergent practice stem from a certain fatigue of limited and insufficient institutional repertoires that do not challenge, for example, undemocratic decision making, socio-economic inequality and unsustainable use of natural resources (Moulaert 2013: 228). The "innovation society", with its traditional models of innovation, like narrowly framed technical models, conventional public sector policies and market-led innovation, seems to have run its course (Lane 2014:29). In practice this entails that we do not solely need incremental solutions that continue to lean on a reluctance to imagine alternative practices. What is needed is discontinuous change: change that displaces an established structural order for something new. (Lab Matters, KL, 2014)

So, it's understandable that we cannot easily classify the activities of the SIF, since the practice of accelerators and incubators originate from quite classic institutional repertoire, although they create a vivid environment for new startups. Leaving behind this classic institutional repertoire brings something completely new, and in the mean

time we recognize a form and activities that resemble things we know.

The SIF is a social innovation lab, with the characteristics of an accelerator, although it doesn't take equity stakes in start-ups, is founded by profit and not-profit parties, is not highly competitive in the selection of participants (and is open to more participants than social enterprises alone), and the term of assistance is longer and in this respect makes it more look like an incubator.

So, although one can find a lot arguments against it: In this document we choose to use the term social innovation accelerator with a focus on mentoring and creating networking opportunities (very important assets, since these two were the most valuable benefits gained from attending programmes).

Let's turn to this practice of networking and mentoring (by peers!) in the next chapters and read about the successful activities that the SIF undertakes.

2 Mission & vision of SIAC

Our mission

To enhance the possibilities of social innovative ideas to become sustainable solutions for societal challenges and thus build a more democratic, sustainable and inclusive society where all humans can thrive

Our mission is to bring back human creativity and potential in the accommodation of society, ownership to communities and civilians. A creativity and potential that is not bound to organizational or disciplinary boundaries, but cuts across them. So the world will become step by step like the world we envision to live in.

We think we can do that by supporting those that make a difference because of their solutions of societies big questions we are facing today. Like our prolonged age and need of intensive care, energy consumption, our bursting cities, the lack of sufficient jobs, the inequality between people, regions, nations, the lack of proper primary goods like healthy food or even water or a house for shelter.

Our vision

Working jointly, by:

- identifying crucial factors for SI labs, with the insights of the SIF as starting point, to enhance social innovation by a transnational working group;
- creating a number of these labs by laboring in different societal systems on the ground throughout Europe in working as an 'accelerator', applying and experiencing with these factors/insights,
- combined with a scientific (longitudinal) research, done by various universities in order to do local, national and transnational research. This link between grass root initiatives and research is possible by using the same CMS-standards in every region or country. Needless to say that we will design the CMS in a way that ensures this by co-creating it with scientists.

Principles

These local accelerators will be open to all individuals, groups, whether they are commercially oriented or not, in the fields of sustainability, green energy, food, health care, well fare, education, housing, democracy and media, by creating a learning network that is based on reciprocity.

Connecting to the context

Basically a lab works on a local scale, open to all kind of different partners. This local scale is recognizable on the level of neighborhoods and cities. It is not indispensable to have a city, or a number of cities, on board to start a lab: an existing network organization might also be a good starting point. But we are convinced that SI has to take place in dialogue with the institutional context. Especially cities are recognizable entities to cooperate with to realize change.

We will support and actively promote scientific research in co-creation with 'the system', like (local) governments to realize real input on change making policy and thus make alternations in current policy and legislation logically and desired.

Reinventing society

Our democratic societies have developed over decades to the central model we know today. This model uses too much resources and reduced the interconnectivity between people. It has led to alienation. A lot of area's of life are 'over organized', or better stated:

institutionalized. Top-down systems of planning, design and delivery tend to be closed and unreceptive to urban change. Many of them were created at a time when big government and big thinking were thought to be needed to solve big problems of the time. Driven by utopian visions, they have promoted simple behaviors, treating neighborhoods, quarters and centers as mechanistic elements of the city.

In this world, people can not be trusted to do the right thing. There is no room for experimentation, for creativity or for learning. In this way the ratio of this 'system world' dominates our relations more than necessarily. The logic of these institutions doesn't bring responsiveness. Our mission is to bring back human creativity and potential in ... the accommodation of society fueled by communities and civilians

'(...) 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.18 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, MaRSReport-Labs-designing-the-future_2012

Geography

Most of the time there are no simple solutions or central government regulation that bring the new answers we need. The questions of today are . multi-level, multi-layered, interdependent. Traditional approaches to building solutions are having difficulty coping with this kind of complexity. So not one central player is able to come up with the right solutions. We will find these solutions at the local level by being open to all kinds of initiatives. Local solutions will incorporate needs and capacities that are present at this level. The spot (geographical area) and the connection to the local community are the central elements in this approach.

People driven

When you acknowledge that SI solutions come from the local community (and the answers don't come from above), individuals or social entrepreneurs, you have to acknowledge that everybody has relevant knowledge and skills, especially in the area where the social innovation is grounded. So people are the central point of action, instead of institutions.

If we want to find new approaches and solutions at a local level, in the community, we no longer can trust upon institutional logic alone.

The voices of citizens are being recognized as increasingly important in decision-making and design processes. Participation has increased the pool of ideas, which in turn has increased the probability of finding transformative ideas. In this new context, it is no longer only up to those regarded as the "experts" to prescribe the future. Rather, it is up to the collective to imagine what is possible. MaRSReport-Labs-designing-the-future_2012

The shared insight behind this approach and learning network is the following:

Instead of developing solutions in terms of new smart products, we argue that social innovation labs should focus on redesigning the way we are organized in institutional processes and activate and organize in new ways existing capacity within local communities.

3 SIF: Practice and working methods

Introducing the SIF in facts and figures

The SIF is an accelerator of SI based in Brussels, working for the Flemish community in Belgium (6 million inhabitants, including cities like Antwerp, Ghent, Hasselt, Leuven, and Bruges and 15% of the inhabitants of the Brussels region that are considered to be Flemish). Total GDP of the Flemish Region in 2004 was €165,847 million (Eurostat figures).

The SIF was founded in 2013 by a consortium of Flemish profit and non-profit organizations. The members of this consortium today form an association which is the organizational form of the SIF. An association without lucrative purpose (Not for profit). Income: 0,6 million euro per year by the Flemish government, 0,2 million external income (14%).

Activities effectively started in July 2013 with two employees, nowadays 9 (7 FTE), showing the rapid growth of activities. So, at the moment of writing of this paper the SIF has almost two years of experience in the practice of SI. The specialization of the SIF is to connect people and at the same time build a learning network. Not only social entrepreneurs, but also citizen that realize SI by grassroots initiatives as well as professionals from companies, institutions, academics and government. So the SIF created an active network of people working on social innovation.

At this moment, of writing this paper, more than 7.000 people are member of the network. This varies from people only receiving the digital newsletter, to active participants in meetings, workshops and others forms of participation. In the meetings and lectures they gave they reached thousands of people.

The SIF supported 223 real SI initiatives over the last two years. So the SIF did 223 intakes in 20 months, including initiatives at a very early stage of development. Around 60% of them continue with a stronger concept, new partnerships and concrete advise. So far, 44 of the 223 are now more mature and realized concrete follow up actions and in 2014 11 initiatives are connected to IWT-funds for co-finance of their project. 20 sustainable companies resulted from the activities of the SIF. There are more companies to evolve, because starting a social innovation or business takes usually more than a few months. On average 2 actors participate per innovator that come for an intake. So the sum is $2 \times 60\%$ of 223 intakes = makes 267 different actors.

In 2014 the SIF (co-)organized or joined 69 meetings in the network:

- meet-ups. Per province the SIF organized these meet-ups to start the network
- every year one big network event
- solution labs around topics desired by the network
- peer circles, around specific subjects
- 1 to many sessions: when knowledge isn't found in the network the SIF brings together parties to develop new tools and knowledge
- social entrepreneurship labs
- study sessions and boot camps
- other conferences and meetings

PART A Workflow, processes

The first step is: being found. Most participants find SIF through mouth-to-mouth via friends, colleagues, relatives. Second best is the groups that attends study meetings. And also via the website of the SIF, she is known and found. Most of the people had no special knowledge about what social innovation meant, or even heard of the word. That indicates that the SIF through their approach has been able to reach a total new target group in society.

An important part of their image building is their appearance in the media. They work with a professional communication advisor and this strategic input from communication is very valuable for the image of SIF in Flanders and it's reputation. Also research taught them that their digital newsletter is the most important and well read piece of media they use with over 7000 (international) subscribers. The Social Innovation Factory is also well known abroad, since they get a lot of requests to tell about their approach and work in various countries.

First stage

From the perspective of the innovator or entrepreneur we will describe the working process. We will call them participants. Any participant can contact the SIF to ask for an intake session. Through the website any person can fill out a small questionnaire and submit it. The idea will be checked and weighted on it's suitability by the process-officers of the SIF. When concerned a good idea the participant is asked for an intake-meeting at the SIF. The questionnaire the SIF uses on their website is found easy to use by the participants.

Apart from that it is also possible for participants to attend Information sessions; a few times during the year people can subscribe for a costless session. With a group of maximum 12 persons the participants first get information about the way things work at the SIF. After this introduction program the group can discuss their plans together while being supported by two members of the team of the SIF. Beside that they can also ask for an intake separately. In these meetings it needs to be safe to speak your mind, so all participants have to sign a statement of non-disclosure.

In the intake session the process manager will dig into the plan with the participant and together they will find the main issues that need to be addressed to make the concept stronger. The capacity to empathize of the process manager involved is very important. In this meeting the process manager will not only sharpen the ideas of the participant, but it is also used to map the available field of knowledge of the participant. Together with some personal features; all is done to match this person to another person that is fitting. So that both of them will benefit from this. The goal is to build a community and you can only achieve that when people feel connected.

Second stage

After the intake the matchmaking is the next step. The whole team organizes also a session with the process managers on a structural bases. In these sessions all team members will participate in the discussion of the cases. In this way they support the process managers and sharpen ideas for this second stage. The matchmaking is with someone that can give the participant good valid information they are seeking to strengthen their concept. Then a peer is looked for in the network by the process manager and the match is made. A so called strengthening session was at first given by someone new or out of the network, but as the network grew nowadays it will be given by a peer as their contribution to the network. This session is half a workday long. A detail but really important is that a strengthening session is given by someone from a different field of expertise, cross sectoral that is. For the preparation of the session there is a written guideline. Also in this session a statement of non-disclosure is part of the procedure.

Third stage

Backbone of the second stage is the peer to peer knowledge exchange. More and more the awareness is growing that the acceleration of SI is not realized in first place by additional money (and that the obstacle to SI is the absence of it), but by knowledge transfer and network opportunities: opening doors that otherwise would have stayed closed and creating equal connections where co-creation becomes possible. This brings more structural solutions than money: a sum of money is always connected to a demarcated amount of time and money alone drives other interests. So money alone brings less sustainable solutions. That makes the approach of participants really important to create sustainable communities.

Then, knowledge transfer is an area where still a lot of questions are not answered clearly. But clear is that it is not a question of linear transfer. It is considered to be more than just a communication problem. Knowledge transfer is complex because (1) knowledge resides in people, (2) much knowledge is tacit or hard to articulate and (3) knowledge transfer doesn't implicate the application of it in practice. So to keep in touch and create the best possibilities for relations to evolve is an important condition for sustainable projects and companies.

Knowledge has to do with flexible and adaptable skills—a person's unique ability to wield and apply information. This fluency of application is in part what differentiates information from knowledge. Knowledge tends to be both tacit and personal; the knowledge one person has is difficult to quantify, store, and retrieve for someone else to use. Bringing together people, under the right conditions, seems to create the best circumstances to exchange knowledge. That is were the content management system (CMS) the SIF uses, provides in. They were able to store important knowledge in this respect of the participants into their CMS.

CMS

With the digital revolution, on-line possibilities to connect are growing, every day still. Although digital communities of practice are promoted for almost two decades, they never realized the potential we expected from them. Indeed, possible connections are enormous, but digital communities of practice so far didn't really come to the point that co-creation was achieved.

That's why off-line learning (besides network meetings) forms the core of the activities and tools of the SIF. Only the CMS helps them retrieve the information about the peers of the network and helps them select peers for the strengthening sessions. The participants do not have access to the CMS. Another reason to connect people instead of institutions is 1. The problem of ownership of knowledge (for that we have the 'market'). Knowledge tends to be institutionalized. It is in the interest of organizations and institutions to collect knowledge and to seal it off, and 2. It is not possible to realize SI by one or more central players. Users, citizen are important, as well as perceived problems, instead of known solutions.

Communities like this need a moderator or intermediary. The SIF choose to take this role structurally. It is up to the employees of the SIF to see opportunities in the network to exchange knowledge and to create partnerships, when someone comes up with a question. So, the employees of the SIF are not the coaches of the participants, the innovators (peers) themselves do coach each other. But only then when employees of the factory bring them together around a concrete question of a participant.

Starting a new network

So the central part of the SIF is bringing together people and their knowledge, networks, skills and experience in a new network. With the aim to reform this into a sustainable community. When the SIF started they had to create a network so they combined forces

with a lot of parties. Think of the personal networks of the process managers and the other employees, they brought with them to their new jobs. The networks of the companies involved in realizing the SIF brought in all their contacts.

So the start up was really strategically organized: every involved organization of the consortium contributed by active communication with their own network. In this way the network and community was quickly started. Some of these people were asked to give strengthening sessions in the beginning and were named knowledge sponsors. After some time in the network enough new peers were enlisted so they could give these sessions. Nowadays 223 people are part of the active community of social innovators and/or social entrepreneurs.

The practice of knowledge exchange in the network:

- coaching vs. advising
- save environment
- (format for) strengthening sessions.
- open innovation
- ...

When the SIF notices that there is need in the network around specific topics or knowledge, the SIF invests in special meetings or the development of new tools. E.g. tools to measure societal impact and knowledge about Social Impact Bonds. So the SIF is not only active in connecting the right people, but also registering what kind of questions come up at different places the same time. First peers are brought together to share knowledge about this subject. When it appears that the answers are missing, external partners are gathered around a subject to co-create new insights and knowledge.

PART B Reciprocity and the virtual coin

Just like in real life. A community is built around reciprocity and value creation. How value co-creation occurs at a new network is a big question.

Whilst in the past innovations were expected to flow from researchers to entrepreneurs as end users (linear innovation model), new and sustainable solutions are now progressively viewed as emerging from joint learning processes (interactive innovation model). Such lively interactions do not occur spontaneously, especially not under competitive market conditions. It takes deliberate effort, for which space should be created.

According to Eelke Wielinga three concepts are important to realize co-creation in networks:

[1] Vital Space: this is the space in a network in which people feel the freedom to contribute what they enjoy doing in connection to others. Here they feel recognized and useful, and there is curiosity, enthusiasm and creativity. (the SIF does this by creating a culture of SI)

[2] Free Actors: these are the people or actors who do whatever is needed to create vital space in a network, whether they are mandated to do so or not. No network can function well without a free actor. (the employees of the factory operate as these free actors)

[3] Responsive Capacity: this is the capacity of a network or system to generate effective responses to changes and challenges. Enhancing this capacity is the ultimate justification for free actors to intervene. (responsiveness of the network is created by empowering participants, the creation of new connections and partnerships and the policy network of the SIF)

New connections

A social network is based on, or created around social relationships. Non-market exchange is constrained by these existing social relationships. The SIF wants to create new connections, and by this exchange of knowledge that otherwise wouldn't have taken place, by creating an open network.

New social networks are generally volatile. A big problem with networks is the lack of reciprocity. Within networks often a big non-balance is experienced. The virtual coin brings back the balance and makes knowledge accessible and doesn't make participants dependent on the one bringing the knowledge (asymmetric exchange, over time).

This brings redistribution (of knowledge), and makes trade of knowledge possible that otherwise wouldn't have been realized in the community and wouldn't have been exchanged. So the SIF not only created a network, but also functions as a barter, by the use of a currency unit called a "trade-credit".

So, the coin is not a 'regular' trade coin. One can't use the coin outside the activities of the SIF. The coin to trade knowledge is called the SIF, It serves as an exchange credit, for example when you share your knowledge and skills during a strengthening session to another member of the community.

How does it work?

The one sharing knowledge will build a credit, the one receiving the knowledge a debit. A strengthening session has a value of 8 SIF and takes approximately 2,5 hours. 8 SIF have a counter value of 400 euro. This value is verified in line with the market.

Every transaction (session, contribution, etc.) is registered in the accounting system of the factory. There is a separate transaction databank, linked to the accounting system

of the factory. Two times a year every participant receives an accounting overview. This 'euro-invoice' can be paid by delivering a service to (a member of) the community in return.

To reduce your debit to zero one delivers a contribution in return. At the moment your balance equals zero the SIF sends all booking documentation: for every received service a bill, and for every delivered service a credit note. In this way the whole operation can be closed and will be accounted as a zero operation. To deliver this contribution in return, the SIF offers the possibility to work with a menu. The menu gives different possibilities to deliver an action in exchange.

Strengthening session:

You react on a question of employees of the SIF to share your know how as a sparring partner for another participant in the community. The SIF has written a guideline that supports to structure the session. You prepare the session, based on the description of the concept involved and the requested knowledge, provided by the SIF. You prepare yourself to spend a half day on this at the office of the SIF.

The menu has evolved over the years with other possibilities:

- sharing your knowledge with the team of the SIF (4 SIF)
- participation in a panel discussion organized by the SIF (4 SIF)
- writing an article or report (2 SIF per 2000 words)
- presenting a workshop or keynote speech for the audience of the SIF (8 SIF)

In the end, participants are supposed to 'pay back' in activities within one year, participants receive an invoice or a credit note. If one doesn't succeed to deliver knowledge in return to the network, the participant has to pay the amount in euros to the SIF.

See Chapter 5 for an insight in number of participants and background.

Administrative actions and Tax implications

The SIF takes account for all the necessary administrative actions. Every transaction is registered in the accounting system and at the end of the month every participant receives an accounting overview.

Each transfer in the network that is registered with the virtual coin, is charged with Value Added Tax. But, in general, all acts and counter acts sum up to zero and liquidate the v.a.t. So, also the tax operation can be closed and will be accounted as a zero operation. This is not the case when the participant is not liable to VAT, then the SIF will pay the taxes.

PART C Research facts & figures

Target groups

The SIF distinguishes itself by allowing all kinds of participants in the network. Most of the known SI accelerators and incubators in the world focus on social entrepreneurs. The SIF is open to anyone with an initiative to realize SI. So, the SIF is also open to local community groups, associations of civilians and individuals with a concept that is expected to drive SI.

Social Entrepreneurs according to the SIF

Social entrepreneurs do realize their mission by selling their products, services and knowledge. A social enterprise is an enterprise that above everything else wants to work on a societal challenge. A social enterprise realizes societal gain by reducing a social problem or market failure, fulfilling social needs or challenges in an entrepreneurial

and market driven way. So, a social entrepreneur generates (most of) it's own income.

The distinction is the following: some organization (associations, groups, foundations, etc.) are real strong social innovators, but the SIF doesn't call them social entrepreneurs, while they don't work market driven.

Number of participants and background:

The total community of the SIF nowadays consists of 223 parties and 223 parties applied for an intake the last two years. The participants have a very broad background, in compliance with the goals of the SIF.

48% of the community consists of associations without lucrative purpose.

22% consists of companies

4% consists of parties with a government background

23 % citizen, (without registered legal form)

3% is 'in creation', so the legal form will follow.

<figures, SIF, 2014>

Which societal challenges/areas does the SIF cover?

The approach of the SIF is to be open for initiatives that work cross sector. So, in general, initiatives will not cover one sector only. The SIF doesn't exclude a certain sector beforehand. The SIF targets the following societal challenges:

- poverty, employment
- diversity, social cohesion
- new connections
- loneliness
- ageing of the population
- healthcare
- urbanization, use of space
- climate
- ecology

At the moment of counting in 2014 the following division over the societal challenges of the initiatives could be made (and the percentages sum up over 100, because initiatives cover multiple areas):

10 % of the projects targets the area of **urbanization**

9 % of the projects targets the challenges that our societies face by the growing **ageing of our population**

26 % of the initiatives establish activities that contribute to **new connections**

5 % targets **climate**

13 % of the projects targets **health**

9 % of the projects is involved in counteracting **loneliness**

18% of the projects is involved in improving **ecology**

12% of the projects aims at **diversity**

20% targets at reducing **poverty**

and 15% points at other areas as central focus of their project.

Knowledge for policy

SI is a bottom up-practice and works cross sector. This practice involves cutting across organizational or disciplinary boundaries. Since government is still organized in columns, the SIF generates a lot of knowledge and insights about what is happening in

the projects.

Meanwhile, the SIF is initiating sessions with all relevant stakeholders (government, education, universities, associations, private investors, companies) about upcoming subjects. E.g. Social Impact Bonds, to explore together what the possibilities are.

Experiences of participants

SIF held a survey amongst their participants. more the 50% of them claimed that their own innovation evolved faster due to the peer-to-peer network. They also said that their plans were more solidly based financially. New contacts and insights are easily available and make their concepts stronger and more solid which launches the plans faster into real business.

Research

The SIF created a research network with different partners and universities in Flanders. Goal of this research is to create insight and tools for the measurement of societal impact of social innovation. The research started January 2015. Through action research existing impact assessment methods will be tested. In this way social innovators will be supported in the definition, methods and measurement of their impact. The project will end with the realization of a management tool.

Lessons learned

General:

- the 'innovation society' needs to be added with something completely new. The SIF did already start with this.
- mentoring and networking opportunities are the most valuable benefits gained from attending programs and lab-activities. The same conclusion we can draw from the experiences of the SIF
- The motor of real social innovations is the knowledge in the network and the new connections. So, connect people to exchange knowledge, instead of institutions
- the SIF puts people at the centre of its approach, instead of institutional logic, and in this way stays close to the nature of SI
- looking at the figures learns that the SIF reaches a broad group of participants: more than 70% of the participants are associations or civilians. The SIF reaches new target groups.
- starting SI business takes more than a few months, the scope of traditional accelerators

Practice:

- start the coaching pathway of a participant with concepts instead of ideas: people need to come up with ideas that are a bit more mature: otherwise the organization loses a lot of time talking to people with 'ideas'. E.g. there has to be a realistic idea about how the cost will be covered.
- there is a lack of business models for social business. The SIF developed together with partners a tool 'impact driven business modeling'. And is still working on the model.
- the same is the case for impact assessment
- to realize a community we learned three things are necessary: 1. Activities to promote a culture of SI. 2. People need to feel connected, so empathizing and openness are very important. 3. reciprocity
- the CMS is a very important tool in the realization of new matches in the network.

4 Business model structure for SIAC & Social innovation labs

A business model structure for Social Innovation Accelerators in Cities using the Social Innovation Factory as example you find here. This structure can be used to identify the value that is created for different parties. Reasoning in this way helps identify possible partners for SIAC on a European scale and locally for each country.

Introduction

Social Innovation Accelerators in Cities (SIAC's) promote, guide and support social entrepreneurship and social innovation for societal challenges. An important example is the Social Innovation Factory in Flanders. In the words of the SIF these challenges are interdependent and multi-layered like poverty, climate change and loneliness. In Flanders many experiments of social innovators - individuals, companies, associations - succeed in a creative way to handle these. Characteristic of their work is they always create value at two or more places at the same time and for various public and private parties. For example, a project in a public garden is beneficial for nature and also for the neighborhood, and perhaps for clients of care who work in the garden and thus get better therapy.

Because of the delivery of two or more values at the same time, we speak of the 'multiple business case' that social innovators have in response to multi-layered social problems. The mission of the SIF and SIAC's in general is to stimulate this kind of social innovation. Thus they provide value for various public and private parties, and therefore the SIAC itself has a multiple business case. What values does the SIAC provide exactly so that it can earn money for this, and how could the SIAC get funding for that? We answer this question twice, because it helps to distinguish between social enterprise and citizens' initiative. We answer this question using the SIF as example.

Social innovators can establish a social enterprise, or start a citizens' initiative. What is the difference and why is this helpful? Social enterprises specialize in a single product, but with a multiple effect, because the product is usable and thus has value and also contributes to a social interest. Think about fair trade chocolate, which is simply delicious, and also contributes to the sustainable development of foreign rural areas.

Does the product of a social enterprise have market value, than through sale it can provide income for the involved entrepreneurs and their employees. If the product has no market value, than funding must come from other sources. Product and company are not bound to a local community. The SIF certainly supports such enterprises, a majority of which achieve one or more public values, and a minority also create private value that has market value.

In addition to these 'traditional' social enterprises citizens come up with a host of initiatives. These are bound to a local community and contribute to improving and strengthening the social and physical environment of this community. Think of an energy- or care co-operative that primarily work on delivering energy or care at less cost than usual. Such citizens' initiatives can have major economic impact, or small, and in any case social impact. Initiatives like these also are part of the initiatives supported by the SIF. We therefore have two questions:

- What is the multiple business model of the SIF in supporting social enterprises?
- What is the multiple business model of the SIF in supporting citizens' initiative

The social enterprise

Each individual social enterprise can score on six points:

- Contribution to social justice by providing employment and purchasing power
- Contribution to the economy by providing transactions and cash flow
- Contribution to structure and cohesion within the community
- Contribution to democracy through ownership and control by employees and customers
- Contribution to sustainability and international solidarity and stability
- Contribution to innovation

Not every company scores on these six points. It is important however to compare between social enterprise and current mainstream companies, and see how social enterprise in general has a higher score. By getting a variety of social enterprises started the SIF itself scores high on all six points, which is the multiple business case of the SIF. It should therefore be possible for the SIF to make clear that it creates value on all six points and therefore has its own multiple business case that is worthwhile. Before we do that, we first want to score the citizens' initiatives.

Citizens' Initiatives

Each individual citizens' initiative can also score on the six points; in comparison to the social enterprise it does score somewhat different:

- Contribution to social justice by providing employment and purchasing power
- The citizens contribute to the affordability of services such as energy, care, transportation, housing, food and much more, and thus contribute to the preservation of purchasing power.
- Contribution to the economy by providing transactions and cash flow
- The citizens' initiative especially takes care of keeping money in the local economy that otherwise will go to large national or international organizations, think of energy companies and supermarkets.
- Contribution to structure and cohesion within the community
- This is a quality par excellence of the citizens' initiative, because it is of a community and governed on behalf of it. If this community is working on e.g. care or food, then it creates more structure and consistency within the community itself.
- Contribution to democracy through ownership and control by employees and customers
- This is also a quality par excellence of citizens' initiative, because it is owned by the members who decide democratically. It thus brings democracy in the fields of energy and care where previously citizens never had a voice.
- Contribution to sustainability and international solidarity and stability
- This distinguishes citizens' initiative not particularly from social enterprise, which also contributes to sustainability and international solidarity and stability.
- Contribution to innovation
- The distinction is that the citizens' initiatives provoke innovations of products adapting

these especially to local communities.

Supporting social enterprises and citizens' initiatives the SIF also scores on these six points, and thus has a multiple business case itself. How can the SIF or any other SIAC demonstrate this value to customers and funders, public and private? To this end we walk through the six points again.

The multiple business case of the SIF

- *Contribution to social justice by providing employment and purchasing power*
- Governments, employers and workers' unions have an interest in upholding the purchasing power of families. They therefore finance numerous programs especially to generate employment. If the SIF proves to have more impact than these programs, it has a business case. Funding for the SIF can come from the budget of governments, employers and workers.
- *Contribution to the economy by providing transactions and cash flow*
- The SIF assists social enterprises and citizens' initiatives. They have no money to pay the SIF for this in the first instance, or maybe eventually they will. Then it is a business case, although the SIF may prefer to not ask money from a number of companies and initiatives.
- By assisting social enterprise and citizen initiatives the SIF supports the local economy to grow. This is a goal on the agenda of government, employers and workers' unions. Again, the SIF has a business case for them, but this time can be paid also from budget to stimulate the economy, and not only budget for employment or preserving purchasing power.
- *Contribution to structure and cohesion within the community*
- Strengthening communities is a goal for which governments and private foundations have money. Through supporting especially citizens' initiatives the SIF demonstrably can strengthen communities, and thus has a business case for governments and funds.
- This goes a step further when the SIF in the eyes of community members grows to a meeting point where they can exchange knowledge. That makes the business case stronger, because not only governments and funds are willing to pay, but also the communities themselves.
- *Contribution to democracy through ownership and control by employees and customers*
- A small business case can result from the added value mainly citizens' initiatives have for democracy. Again, governments and funds have money for this, but this business case can be much larger. If the SIF in the eyes of many citizens' initiatives evolves to the representative of their interests, then they will be willing to pay perhaps. Think of a large group of members financing their collective interests together. That too is a business case.
- *Contribution to sustainability and international solidarity and stability*
- A growing number of private foundations support diverse social goals that also regularly are the goals served by the work of social enterprises and civic initiatives assisted by the SIF. Thus, the SIF has a business case for these

funds, which may decide to fund the SIF. These funds don't always have to be private, since both the government and the EU have funds for social purposes. For these funds, the SIF can have a business case also.

- *Contribution to innovation*
- Social enterprises regularly are innovative companies with new products that have a chance to be sold often, so they have a high market value. Citizens' initiatives add to this innovations of products adapted to local communities. By being the incubator of both the SIF creates value for venture investors who wish to invest their money in these kinds of products. For this reason the SIF has a business case that is worthwhile for venture investors, who for this reason may pay for the SIF as an incubator.

In summary, we come to the next multiple business case of the SIF:

	Social enterprise	Government	Employers Employees	Funds	Community	Venture investors	
1	Employment and purchasing power		Impact	Impact	Impact		
2	Economy	Start up					
3	Community		Impact Enhancing	Impact	Impact Enhancing		
4	Democracy		Added value		Added value	Meeting point	
5	Sustainability		Start up		Start up	Represen tative	
6	Innovation		Change				Incubator

According to this summary the multiple business case of the SIF encompasses the creation of a total of 17 values for six different types of paying customers. It is finally possible to add an extra value, and not the least: the very fact that the SIF combines the creation of all these values, and gains knowledge and experience, creates considerable value. For example, this makes the SIF an excellent incubator, or an excellent advocate, because so much knowledge and experience is bundled. This goes for the SIF, and for SIAC's in general.

5 Conclusions and perspectives

SIF is a great starting point

- an approach that fits in today's quest for new labs
- the experience of more than two years of development and practice brings a lot of useful information, and realistic information about what is possible. Knowledge exchange and the use of a virtual coin is not an idea but real practice
- a majority of the participants experienced an acceleration of their concepts a demonstrable number of social innovations and companies resulted as offspring of the network
- insights and tools that can be used and redeveloped to the local context
- business model

Required elements

For us all to start an accelerator based on the SIF we can look to their organizational demands. Apart from that the numbers have to be translated to each of our business plans as well as to level of costs that is current in our countries. For instance if you have a business partner that has a lot of locations you probably do not have to make costs for housing. Or the height of the wages can differ and thus have an impact on the totally needed budget. So here we will describe what you could be needing to have an accelerator running, the mathematics each one of us has to do for him- of herself.

The SIF works with a budget of 1 million euro per year. For that amount they hire 7 FTE; 9 people in total now. When they started only 3 FTE were necessary. Then they made the business ready so to speak. They hired the director and gave her the assignment to form a small team. With 3 members in total they formed alliances with people from the contributing companies. Made their business policies. Made means like the website, media, forms, found a working space etc. Also they made the CMS and started to fill it.

When they were ready and innovators started to come in gradually they hired 3 more process managers and the promotions and event manager. The starting-up period lasted 6 months. After nearly two years including the starting-up period the SIF has the following employees in their core-team: director, 3 process managers, 1 knowledge manager, 1 community and communication manager, 1 promotions and event manager, 1 office manager. Besides they hire manpower like for finance for instance.

So the financial investment gradually became larger till the one million they are budgeted with now. Depending on what kind of impact (numbers of innovators reached and supported) partners want to achieve, this model is scalable of course.

By working together the investment to build our CMS becomes smaller, as all costs for an international webpage or other material we all will use. And by searching different partners from different areas in countries' society we reduce the starting costs for each partner as well.

Critical Factors

- starting a network: there has to be a good starting point for the network. E.g. existing networks and partners with networks that are easy to be reached
- more activities than peer to peer knowledge exchange alone seems to be necessary, so activities to promote a culture of SI, organizing meetings, and creating knowledge (in collaboration with other parties) that is missing in the network
- clearness about and consistent use of methods for intake, knowledge exchange, reciprocity, and the creation of new partnerships is a condition,
- empowerment of participants, openness, non-competitive selection: coaching

pathway, learning process,
- CMS
- ...

How to continue

We hope this 'blueprint' will support each national participant in The SIAC Project, initiated by Arjan Biemans (Utrecht) and Erna Bosschart (Delft) under the flag of SEiSMiC. The EU-project funded this paper and the first two live-sessions of the group to get started. During the starting-up phase SEiSMiC's participants will be informed on what it happening in our group. So they can support us and we can share our insights with them on what works and what doesn't.

This document is written with the support and sharing of knowledge by Kaat Peeters director of the Social Innovation Factory in Flanders. Combined with the knowledge from Jurgen van der Heijden from AT & Osborne Amsterdam about business models. We present you this document as a source of inspiration, at your disposal to start and create an accelerator in your country; an accelerator that is part of our trans national network. The SIAC project we form together; a project through which we create possibilities for a culture in Europe wherein social innovation can flourish. We want to give a juridical form to our co-creation.

Although the Social Innovation Factory is very successful and the working elements can be described in the blueprint, their example should not be imitated as an exact copy to other countries and other cities. Also their name, The Social Innovation Factory, should not be copied. In other countries and other cities there are other contexts, other local questions and other actors. Therefore SIAC wants to create a learning network to stimulate the acceleration of social innovations and to support incubators of social in different European countries. To be efficient and to increase the chance of success we take the SIF as a starting point. From this starting point the learning network of The SIAC project will develop herself and her accelerators dynamically through sharing knowledge.

USP of SIAC

The unique selling point of this network will be the use of the same CMS that is immediately designed to do research with on SI. The CMS designers of the SIF can rebuild an English version we all can use, partly based on the SIF CMS but extended with functionalities that addresses the scientific questions we have about SI. We build this straight away into the system. Nobody is doing this so far.

European approach

For the collective investments like the development of the CMS or other means we would like to all join in writing on a Horizon2020 call e.g. p.76. Titled: INSO-5-2015: Social innovation Community

http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/wp/2014_2015/main/h2020-wp1415-societies_en.pdf

National approach

We all have to formulate a national business plan and write a proposition. A re-writing of this paper can be added as an annex. Think over what would be needed. What costs are. Each one of us needs to define their most important stakeholders. Make a plan to contact and start co-working with stakeholders. Which partners are needed for what specific needs and ideas? Also everyone needs to make a timeframe of goals each of us wants to achieve. Maybe you have to look for team members or have to think your current business over. More questions can be thought of and probably even more still.

The first question however, is: Are you in? It would be our privilege!

With special thanks to Kaat Peeters and the team of the Social Innovation Factory.

With special thanks to Jurgen van der Heijden from AT & Osborne.

With special thanks to Koos van Dijken and Bram Heijkers of Platform31.

Yours sincerely,

Erna Bosschart & Arjan Biemans

Annex

Source: Excerpts from Atkins, D. 2011. What are the new seed or venture accelerators? Available at http://www.nbia.org/resource_library/review_archive/0611_01.php.

ANNEX European Call

INSO-5-2015: Social innovation Community Specific Challenge

The specific challenge of this activity is to stimulate and support the establishment of a 'Social Innovation Community' of researchers, social innovators, end users (citizens) and policy-makers. Since the launch of the Innovation Union Flagship initiative in 2010, many actions have developed in the area of social innovation involving research and "hands on" innovation. However many related actions in the field may appear disconnected and not fully exploit the possibilities offered by more effective communication and dissemination means. This could limit the policy uptake of research results.

What is needed is to better link research to practice, develop joint methods and concepts in the area of social innovation research and provide a common space for gathering evidence and identifying new areas for social innovation take up in various fields.

Scope

The scope is that of creating a Community, involving social innovators, researchers, citizens, policy makers, which will bring together on the one hand research actions and results and on the other implementation actions, new initiatives, and policy developments. It will systematically provide evidence and create greater synergies between social innovation activities and related EU policies. It will help promote social innovation initiatives throughout Europe, increase relevance of policies and actions, and contribute to the development of a common understanding of the necessary framework conditions and related socio-economic implications of social innovation policies, activities and initiatives in Europe and beyond.

Within the scope of the action are evidence and methodologies that contribute to social innovation up-scaling. This does not concern only European but also international developments. Such a social innovation community could be seen also as a "network of networks". In particular the Community will take account of existing networks and platforms in the field, and build upon and expand existing coordination actions with active communities of practices and related stakeholders.

Activities should include:

- the organisation of brokerage events to enhance the networking of on-going research and experimentation projects and other activities in the area of social innovation to enhance, inter alia, a cross-project understanding of the concept of social innovation;
- information and awareness activities through the gathering of researchers and various stakeholders, including civil society organisations, citizens' groups, private actors, policy-makers, user groups and other networks;
- design strategies/activities for ensuring the best possible use of the research results and setting up of a mix of dissemination tools targeting different stakeholders at EU,

national and local level;

- the organisation of events aimed at identifying priorities for collaboration and research gaps and needs, and enhancing the quality, quantity and visibility of future actions in the area of social innovation;

- supporting grassroots experiments, replication, incubation and policy uptake of research results ('up-scaling');

Europe in a changing world: inclusive, innovative and reflective societies

- setting up of a network of 'Local Facilitators' for a better dissemination and uptake at all levels.

The Commission considers that proposals requesting a contribution from the EU in the order of EUR 3 million would allow this specific challenge to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless, this does not preclude submission and selection of proposals requesting other amounts.

Expected impact: The 'Social Innovation Community' will enable convergence towards a common understanding of social innovation as a tool and outcome. It will help to provide more effective measures and a better use of resources. The Community will facilitate the policy uptake of research results and experimentation activities. Evidence-based policy-making will be strengthened by supporting learning processes of 'what works'/'what does not work' and under what conditions.

This will contribute to more social innovation initiatives from the ground, new possibilities for up-scaling of small social innovation experiments, and new tools of policy making in the field, thereby accelerating social innovation for growth.

Type of action: Coordination and support actions