UNIVERSITIES ENABLING SOCIAL ENTERPRISE
Delivering benefits for all
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Universities have always embraced working with business and supported their students to develop entrepreneurial skills. Social enterprises give us a fantastic opportunity to work with existing businesses for economic and social benefit whilst also developing students’ enterprise skills. Social enterprise experience can give students a taste of an alternative career path in a growing sector, a chance to develop the skills that all businesses look for, and even inspire them to start their own business. This is a valuable, developing relationship that benefits social enterprise businesses, students and communities.

Recognising the importance of social enterprise, Universities UK held a round table discussion in May 2012 to bring together higher education and social enterprise representatives. This provided an opportunity to explore issues such as:

- What role do universities have in supporting social enterprise?
- Is the social enterprise sector aware of the support universities may be able to offer?
- What are the benefits and opportunities for engagement between universities and social enterprises?
- How can universities and social enterprises work together in the context of government policies on social innovation?
- What challenges do universities and social enterprises face in building relationships?

Although universities have started to look at how they can work with existing social enterprises and encourage student enterprise, this is an area that is still developing. Through this report we are able both to highlight some of the good work already happening within universities and to look at areas where there are opportunities to strengthen the relationship between universities and social enterprises.

University engagement with social enterprise can only be beneficial for all concerned.

Professor Dame Julia King DBE FREng
Chair of Universities UK Employability, Business and Industry Policy Network
Vice-Chancellor, Aston University

FOREWORD
Background

Universities have always had a strong social mission and work extensively within and support their local communities. More recently we have seen a renewed focus in this area through the significant role that universities play in supporting and developing social enterprise.

Universities are playing a variety of roles in this area. This includes student placements in an existing social enterprise, university staff and researchers procuring or providing services to social enterprises, or even students setting up their own businesses. Whatever the form of activity, there are wide ranging benefits for students, staff and the wider community.

Social enterprise provides students and graduates with the opportunity to develop enterprise skills, which are applicable in all types of business, and to actively demonstrate these skills to potential employers; it offers an opportunity for university staff to develop enterprise solutions within their own areas of interest; and it enables universities to interact with and offer solutions to local businesses or in response to local issues and work closely with the community.

I chose to work on a social enterprise because I wanted to control what I do and see a tangible impact on others.

Simon McCann, Aston University graduate and Chief Executive, Voltee

The wider social enterprise sector

Universities’ contribution to social enterprise forms part of a wider sector that makes a significant contribution to the social and economic wellbeing of the country. Social enterprises are active across a wide variety of industries throughout the UK. They can vary from small community-led initiatives to public sector spin-outs, which are being encouraged through the government’s mutualisation agenda. The use of social enterprises by the public sector may also increase following the passing of the Public Services (Social Value) Act in March 2012, which calls for social value to be considered as part of the public sector commissioning process.

Social Enterprise UK reports that:

[T]he Annual Survey of Small Businesses UK (2005–07) estimates that there are approximately 62,000 social enterprises in the UK contributing at least £24bn to the economy. Social enterprises are estimated to employ 800,000 people. We believe the true picture is that the social enterprise sector is bigger than this data suggests.1

It goes on to report that:

39% of social enterprises are based in the most deprived communities [compared to 13% of standard small and medium-sized enterprises [SMEs]]

58% of social enterprises reported growth last year [28% for SMEs]

57% of social enterprises predicted growth in the next year [41% for SMEs]2

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2 ibid
Universities enabling social enterprise

As this area of enterprise continues to grow it offers an opportunity for universities to strengthen community ties, support businesses, develop graduate skills and open up alternative career paths.

The benefits of universities’ contribution to social enterprise sit alongside the wider benefits that social enterprises can generate. Some of these benefits are indicated by the wide range of social impacts that social enterprises report they are working towards. Social Enterprise UK’s State of Social Enterprise Survey 2011 states the top ten reported objectives of social enterprise. These are shown in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Benefits of social enterprise

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improving a particular community</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating employment opportunities</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting vulnerable people</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving health and wellbeing</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting education and literacy</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addressing financial exclusion</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protecting the environment</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addressing social exclusion</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting vulnerable children and young people</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing affordable housing</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Social enterprise and universities

Universities support social enterprise in many different ways – fitting with regional characteristics, local industries, and universities’ own aspirations. Some universities have taken a ‘top-down’ approach to incorporating social enterprise explicitly into their strategic objectives and embedding it across everything they do; others provide tailored modules and support for students and graduates as part of a wider objective to support enterprise and enhance employability. There are also many examples of extra-curricular social enterprise societies supported by the university, students’ union or both. Social enterprise initiatives managed or supported by universities complement the work being done by numerous student enterprise societies such as Student Hubs, Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE) and the National Association of College and University Entrepreneurs.

The expanding social enterprise sector gives our students very exciting career opportunities. Whether they decide to have a career in social enterprise, or in other sectors, we must ensure we have done all we can to prepare them for future success. Combining the best practical and the best theoretical learning helps prepare our students to be leaders.

Professor Nick Petford, Vice-Chancellor, The University of Northampton

A recent report from the European Commission and draft guidance on enterprise and entrepreneurship education from the Quality Assurance Agency both point to the value of enterprise education undertaken across the curriculum. They both highlight that developing enterprising behaviours, attributes and skills can enhance a student’s employability. Practical enterprise education also offers students a relatively safe space to learn first-hand about the risks faced in running an enterprise. Providing enterprise and entrepreneurial experience may also be beneficial to institutions, by increasing the attractiveness of what they can offer potential students.

While enterprise skills are recognised as an important asset for graduates, the potential for wider application of social enterprise across careers appears to not be so clearly recognised. Research conducted by the Higher Education Careers Services Unit (HECSU) through the Real Prospects survey found that many universities do not recognise that students other than those studying subjects with a social contribution, such as medicine or social care, might still be motivated to make a difference in society. They highlight that there

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3 ibid
5 Available at http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Documents/EE_Draft_Guidance.pdf
6 Further information on the Real Prospects 2011 survey is available at http://www.hecsu.ac.uk/2556.htm
is a need for universities to remind graduates that they can choose where to work as well as what to do – for example, becoming an accountant and making a difference in society need not be mutually exclusive.  

HECSU summarises the opportunities that social enterprise can offer as:

- an option for graduates who want to work for not-for-profit organisations to pursue careers in professions which are traditionally associated with commercial companies
- allowing graduates to engage with the challenges of running a business, but in order to benefit society rather than shareholders

Universities UK’s discussions with institutions have highlighted that there is not just one way to encourage and support social enterprise. Figure 2 details just some of the different approaches that have been taken. In many institutions social enterprise is a relatively new and developing area of interest. The case studies showcased in the latter half of this report give a flavour of some of the varied work that is already taking place within universities.

The UK has long been a world-leader in social enterprise and we are delighted that British universities are coming together to embrace it. Social enterprise has gained mainstream political recognition and the support of forward thinking businesses in recent years. Our higher education institutions should be central in taking these gains forward. Traditional thinking on capitalism and business behaviour must give way to social enterprise and social value and we need to equip our students with the knowledge and skills they need now and in the future. British universities are a vital catalyst for achieving this aim.

Peter Holbrook, Chief Executive, Social Enterprise UK

Working in or establishing and running a social enterprise also provides an alternative career path for graduates. This is shown by research conducted by HECSU through its Real Prospects survey, which found graduates starting to specifically report social enterprise as the sector they are entering careers in.

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I like working for an NGO rather than in the private sector. It’s a cliché, but I feel like what I do makes a difference in society.

Graduate, HECSU survey

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Figure 2: Types of social enterprise support offered within universities

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The survey also identified the following personal, social, and professional development opportunities that social enterprise can offer students:

1. Introducing students to the idea of social enterprises early in their university career broadens their career horizons and allows them to explore the idea that work can be about more than just earning a living. It reminds them that different kinds of employers offer different kinds of employment opportunities.

2. Setting up and/or managing a social enterprise at university enables students to develop their entrepreneurial skills, collaborate with colleagues, and develop their understanding of business processes such as financial management and marketing.

**Procurement methods can be used strategically to work with social enterprises to generate maximum social benefit.**

**Communication**

University engagement with social enterprise is at a relatively early stage and the knowledge of what universities have to offer across the wider social enterprise sector can be variable.

Some universities already have their own networks in place with local social enterprises. However, if universities are seeking to build new contacts it has been suggested that a good approach would be through the use of existing regional and national networks (a non-exhaustive list of these is included in the Annex). Clear routes of communication between the two groups would help foster new links.

Universities already work to engage with businesses. It is important that any efforts to reach out to business incorporate and recognise social enterprises. This includes areas such as innovation and knowledge transfer, which may have previously only been considered in the case of more traditional companies.

**Local and national social enterprise networks provide an opportunity for universities to promote the support programmes that they offer.**

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8 ibid

9 For more information see www.northampton.ac.uk/news/article/309/1-billion-university-challenge

10 For more information see www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/PolicyAndResearch/PolicyAreas/Efficiency/Pages/default.aspx
Universities, in addition to their role in knowledge creation and dissemination, have a key role to play in the transformation of the social and economic environment, leading the development of economically and socially vibrant cities. For Plymouth University, engaging with social enterprise is a natural part of our enterprise-led approach, inspiring the nation’s future entrepreneurs to embrace social responsibility, and to support and add value to the communities we serve in a sustainable way.

Professor Wendy Purcell, Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive, Plymouth University

Funding and support is available from a variety of sources.

Future considerations

Measuring impact

As discussed, many universities are just starting to investigate how they can support social enterprise. In order for this to continue it will be important that the value of working with social enterprise for students, staff, local businesses and the local community are recognised. Students at participating institutions are able to demonstrate enterprise skills to employers through the new Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR). While some aspects of enterprise, such as support for local businesses, may be captured within national impact exercises, the wider value of all university enterprise is not currently measured. For example, social enterprise is not currently captured within HEFCE’s Higher Education Business and Community Interaction survey.

There may also be a role for universities to explore the social and economic impacts of social enterprise. Social impact is notoriously difficult to capture consistently. While there have been various projects looking at measuring social impact there is no one agreed approach which encompasses all aspects. Universities could focus on refining measures of social impact and analysing the overall impact that social enterprises have.

Not all forms of enterprise are currently captured within impact assessment measures. Universities should consider how they can document the different outcomes and associated value for their own records.

Funding and support available for universities

Social enterprise initiatives can be funded in different ways. Some universities have utilised the Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF), European funding, private funding and/or their own resources. The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) is running a scheme in 2012–13 with the social enterprise organisation UnLtd to help universities build their social enterprise capacity. More information on this is available from the HEFCE and UnLtd websites.

Intermediaries can offer loans, grants or business advice and can access the government’s Big Society Capital fund. Details of intermediaries that can offer funding or support can be found on the Big Society Capital website.

The Young report into small business development identifies the importance of student entrepreneurs. To support this Lord Young announced a £10 million pilot start-up loan scheme for 2012–13 to provide loans of up to £2,500 to those aged 18 to 24 thinking of starting a business.

Advice and support is also available through social enterprise organisations, such as UnLtd and Social Enterprise UK, as well as sector-specific resources such as the Enterprise Alliance, Students in Free Enterprise and the National Association of College and University Entrepreneurs (for further details see the Annexe).

11 See http://www.hefce.ac.uk/news/hefce/2012/social.htm
12 See http://www.unltd.org.uk
13 See http://www.bigsocietycapital.com/
15 For more information see http://www.startupbritain.org/loans/
16 For more information see Universities UK (2012) Bringing it all together: introducing the HEAR London: UUK available at http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/Publications/Pages/introducingtheHEAR.aspx
Wider opportunities

Universities may also want to examine other opportunities, for example in providing services such as monitoring and evaluation to existing social enterprises. There may also be the chance to develop new enterprises following the government’s Open Data White Paper17, which outlines how more open data may lead to “inspiring innovation and enterprise that spurs social and economic growth”.

Government may want to explore how universities can be encouraged to utilise open data for social and economic benefit.

There may be wider opportunities for universities to provide services and potential new markets from open data for social enterprises.

Sustainability

Universities should consider the sustainability of both the support they offer and any enterprise they establish. While some start-up funding may be necessary, a social enterprise should be financially sustainable. Contributors to Universities UK’s discussions made it clear that social enterprise is about applying business principles in a social context. Social enterprises should operate in the same way as any other business and not be reliant on grant funding. The enterprise and entrepreneurial skills that are needed to run a social enterprise are the same skills that are required in all types of business.

Aside from start-up funding, social enterprises should be financially self-sufficient and not reliant on grants or donations.

Social entrepreneurs are at the heart of a global revolution of social commitment by traditional business. We were delighted to join forces with HEFCE to create an initiative that will directly empower universities themselves to create a wider culture of social entrepreneurship. We will be helping to remove the barriers from starting up a project or scaling their social venture up to the next level, which will allow us to see firsthand how social entrepreneurship adds value to the higher education sector through knowledge exchange, staff development or enhanced teaching.

Cliff Prior, Chief Executive, UnLtd

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE CASE STUDIES

The remainder of this report showcases examples of the wide range of social enterprise work being undertaken in and with the support of universities. These are grouped into the following topics:

1. Research
2. Supporting social enterprise
3. Local community initiatives
4. Skills
5. Spin-outs and placements

1. RESEARCH

University of the Arts London: designing enterprising solutions

The University of the Arts London (UAL) supports social enterprise through its academic research, for example its Socially Responsive Design Hub, a lab which joins up design and research for social innovation.

The Socially Responsive Design Hub, part of the university’s Design Against Crime Research Centre, has been designated a Design for Social Innovation and Sustainability (DESIS) Lab, part of a network of more than 20 autonomous but interconnected labs worldwide. The ambition of the lab is to join up research staff, design students and tutors working in the research centres at UAL to create research-led social innovation and sustainability programmes.

Current projects

Current activities include transport projects with the London Borough of Camden and the Urban Green Line social enterprise, which has grown out of UAL’s MA innovation management course. The Urban Green Line is a physical and symbolic trail running through London that connects communities to green spaces and sustainable businesses, encouraging co-creation and guerrilla gardening along the way. The project hosts a website\(^\text{18}\) that invites visitors to tag green spaces on a virtual map while sharing ideas about building a healthier, more sustainable future. The Urban Green Line is also setting up a seed fund that will support urban community initiatives.

Building international partnerships

The lab also intends to engage with the DESIS international network to form international, research-led partnerships to seek funding opportunities and develop tools and techniques, as well as PhD programmes, to address social change in the UK through socially responsive design. The aim is to use DESIS to kick-start activity and thus contribute towards the creation of a sustainable ‘ecology’ of significant design-led social innovation and enterprise projects across UAL inclusive of research, curriculum and postgraduate skills development.

\(^{18}\) For more information see www.urbangreenline.org
2. SUPPORTING SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

University of Northampton: university for social enterprise

The University of Northampton offers all its students the opportunity to work in a social enterprise – one the university has set up, one the students are supported to set up, or some other one operating in the UK. Delivering this offer develops new entrepreneurial competences in the student population, significantly enhancing their employability.

Support service

The university has developed and launched a new support service for social enterprises and social entrepreneurs, Inspire2Enterprise. This is a new and unique social enterprise support service providing tailored information, specialised advice, training, consultancy, coaching and mentoring to the social enterprise sector. Access to information, consultation and advice is provided free of charge. However, further services such as specialist legal and financial advice and research services (market intelligence, support for tenders) are charged for.

Inspire2Enterprise provides support to:

- individuals and organisations thinking about setting up a social enterprise
- those in the earlier stages of starting a social enterprise
- established social enterprises looking to grow their organisation
- corporate organisations seeking to create further social value through corporate social responsibility initiatives
- public sector organisations seeking to transform the way they deliver their services

Since its launch Inspire2Enterprise has supported over 2,000 social entrepreneurs. As well as offering a service to social enterprises, Inspire2Enterprise is also sourcing high quality placement – and potential employment – opportunities in social enterprises for students of the University of Northampton. Placements are typically integrated with students’ degree programmes and often form part of their accredited course.

Since its launch Inspire2Enterprise has supported over 2,000 social entrepreneurs.

19 For more information see http://inspire2enterprise.org
Plymouth University: expanding enterprise horizons

Plymouth University offers both practical and academic research support for social enterprises. It also leads the national Social Enterprise University Enterprise Network (SE-UEN), which provides a national policy portal alongside support for universities to establish and support more social enterprises.

New horizons

The aim of the network, launched in February 2012, is to research, pilot and communicate best practice in social enterprise to help shape national policy, and work with students and staff in partner institutions to build social enterprises. It also works with small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and existing social enterprises to provide targeted business advice, mentoring and support. The SE-UEN organises a number of high profile national events aimed at students and SMEs, supplemented by regional workshops for small businesses and one-to-one sessions involving business start-ups and experts. It also plans to work with university procurement teams to espouse the benefits of sourcing from social enterprises in their supply chains, and to develop placement opportunities for students in social enterprises.20

3. LOCAL COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

University of York: improving voluntary services

The University of York offers both curricular and extra-curricular courses and support for social enterprise. It provides its students with access to mentors from its own alumni network and from local social enterprise support organisations.

Strong links

One such link with local social enterprise is the university’s partnership with York Council for Voluntary Service and York Cares, the city’s employee volunteering charity, on a project called Transforming Infrastructure. The project works with charities and not-for-profit organisations seeking to review their activities, develop new strategies, and become more enterprising. The university’s students act as a bridge between mentors from the business community and charities exploring their options in today’s difficult funding climate. The students, who are drawn from a range of academic disciplines on a voluntary basis, are ‘junior consultants’ conducting research, developing options and ensuring that both the business representatives and the charity leaders are gaining as much as possible from the relationship.

20 For more information see http://www.plymouthsocialenterpriseuen.co.uk/
University of Wales, Newport: community TV

The University of Wales, Newport has a strong history of supporting students and graduates to set up in business, including social enterprises, and also encourages its staff to get involved to support the local economy and communities.

Broadcasting success

3VTV is a pilot in local broadcasting. Launched in January 2012, it is an internet-based, on-demand television channel targeted at the county borough of Blaenau Gwent in South Wales. 3VTV is run by a team of four staff employed by the University of Wales, Newport, supported by students and interns. The channel shows films about and of interest to the local community, including promotional films for local businesses. 3VTV is currently entering into a partnership with social enterprise People’s Voice Media (PVM), which runs projects to train volunteer community reporters. Participants in the new 3VTV/PVM short course will be trained in editorial principles, basic camera and editing skills and so on, and on completion will receive a 3VTV/PVM Community Reporter press badge. These community reporters will then provide short films for 3VTV from their chosen community, whether that be a geographic community or a community of interest.

Embracing new skills

Participating in the community reporter scheme will give the volunteers new skills, the opportunity to build on core skills such as communication and teamwork, and important employability skills and experience. Creating a network of volunteer community reporters will help the 3VTV project achieve one of its central aims: to provide the local area with the type of content viewers want to watch. This pool of volunteers will ensure the project operates at the very heart of the community. It will also boost the project’s sustainability, both by increasing its film-making resource and by helping secure the channel’s position at the core of the local community.

Participating in the community reporter scheme will give the volunteers new skills, the opportunity to build on core skills such as communication and teamwork, and important employability skills and experience.

21 For more information see http://3vtv.co.uk/ and http://www.newport.ac.uk/partnerships/Pages/3VTVTheMicroBroadcastingCentre.aspx
University of Bath: Bath Soup Company and School

The University of Bath provides financial support for the students’ union to enable it to offer enterprise education and run an annual student enterprise competition. The Bath Soup Company started life as an entry in the competition, with its student founders subsequently working at farmers’ markets in the local area to save enough capital to invest in new equipment. After this, the council gave them one month’s use of a disused shop in the centre of Bath.

Hot soup

The Bath Soup Company has since worked within the community to set up and run The Bath Soup School. This project is run in association with Julian House, the leading provider of services to single, homeless men and women in Bath and north-east Somerset and west Wiltshire. It offers its clients a practical way to learn about catering health and hygiene requirements, basic kitchen skills and food preparation. The aim is to redevelop clients’ independence, improve their self confidence and ultimately increase their chances of regaining employment.

The Bath Soup Company is now working hard to be a completely self sustainable project, funded entirely by the sale of Bath Soup. It also aims to be able to create employment opportunities for clients of the school.22

University of Sheffield: Making Ideas Happen

The University of Sheffield has increased its capacity to support social enterprise activities and community engagement in response to demand from its students.

One example of this engagement is Making Ideas Happen, a sustainable, multi-discipline, multi-level academic module run by University of Sheffield Enterprise and designed to enable students to develop valuable enterprise and entrepreneurial skills, contextualised within a social need. Students work to develop a business solution to a real community need over 12 weeks. In semester one of 2011–12 students worked with the Shiregreen Neighbourhood Challenge.

Addressing key social needs

Shiregreen is a target area for regeneration, and the Neighbourhood Challenge exists to recover a sense of neighbourliness in the area and to address some of its urgent social needs around unemployment, health, public spaces and engagement. Having met with the community and visited the area, students developed a business plan for a greengrocers which sourced most of its produce from local growers, community allotments and garden share schemes. The plan proposed to work with local takeaway outlets to develop recipes that increased the amount of vegetables in their products; to develop recipe packs for local residents; and to hold short courses on cooking with vegetables. Because of its engagement with social enterprise, University of Sheffield Enterprise was able to facilitate start-up funding for the project by the Sheffield branch of international not-for-profit organisation Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE). Sheffield SIFE students will enlist community volunteers and train them to set up and manage the business for themselves.

22 For more information see http://www.bathsoupcompany.co.uk/
Aston University considers support for students to start their own business to be important in three ways: as an alternative route for those who do not want to work in a traditional graduate job; to contribute to the economy and community of the West Midlands; and to develop in all their graduates that all-important ‘enterprising mindset’ that employers are looking for in their employees.

Promoting new talent
A new dance school called Identity, which provides drop-in classes for youths all over Birmingham, was set up by an Aston Business School student. Identity was set up to support young people, to promote youth talent in Birmingham and to allow young people to express themselves through urban art forms such as street dance, MC-ing and spoken word. Also, the IDENTITY Showcase provides a platform for young people to gain experience in event management and promotion, a chance to perform to peers and family, and an opportunity to contribute to the local community. In addition to supporting the youth of Birmingham the project has also helped to raise money for Acorns Children’s Hospice, and earlier this year its founder won the Birmingham Young Professional of the Year ‘Aspiring Talent’ Award.

Achieving independence
After initial funding from UnLtd Sport Relief to set up the school, Identity now runs independently, raising funds through class fees, ticket sales, donations and securing sponsorship for events from local companies. Over the next five years the aim is to develop the project so that all young people in Birmingham can have access to a safe place to express themselves, develop their creativity, and gain skills and experience. Identity also hopes to train five young people to deliver workshops in their specific area of interest or expertise, as the project’s founder believes that keeping young people engaged with society is the best way to raise their aspirations and thereby to stimulate social mobility.
4. SKILLS

Anglia Ruskin University: Certificate of Higher Education in Charity and Social Enterprise Management

Anglia Ruskin University runs academic courses for existing businesses and also conducts research into social enterprise. It is planning to extend its social enterprise work in two key areas: social impact assessment and research. For social enterprises, understanding the social impact they make is becoming increasingly important, but there is still debate around the methodology by which it is assessed. Universities can play a key role in researching and testing these methods.

Leading the way

Anglia Ruskin’s Certificate of Higher Education in Charity and Social Enterprise Management (CSEM) has been developed by the 3rd Sector Futures team, based in the Lord Ashcroft International Business School. The CSEM course is aimed at managers in the third sector, including social enterprises, charities and voluntary organisations. Launched in March 2011, this two-year part-time course has already recruited over 90 students. Participants include chief executives of small organisations, regional managers of national bodies, leadership teams from retail cooperatives, and local authority managers who are about to launch mutuals and other social enterprises. The practical nature of the course (assignments all apply taught material to the students’ own context) means that the course has attracted people with no higher education qualifications, alongside others who have achieved Masters degrees or even doctorates. Students report that what they learn on the course proves to be immediately applicable to their workplace, resulting in individual development and organisational impact.

Rising to the challenge

Organisations frequently face a challenge in finding sufficient resource to pay the fees. So to help with this, the university is prioritising a distance learning version of the course which can be offered at a reduced rate compared to the current course, and is also looking to develop its bursary scheme (which has already sponsored places for smaller organisations, paid for by a major retail cooperative).

For social enterprises, understanding the social impact they make is becoming increasingly important, but there is still debate around the methodology by which it is assessed. Universities can play a key role in researching and testing these methods.
Staffordshire University: adult education training and support

Staffordshire University supports staff to develop social enterprises and community engagement initiatives and supports students and graduates to form social enterprises through its Enterprise Fellowship Scheme.

Going further

Ameliorate Training and Support, based in Stoke-on-Trent, is one such enterprise. Set up by two university lecturers, the company offers adults the opportunity to access further education at an affordable cost. It offers accredited, nationally-recognised programmes; non-accredited learning, providing the learner with a certificate of achievement; and other bespoke programmes for the local community – meeting the specific needs of individuals, groups and organisations.

Ameliorate also offers work-based and bespoke training options in recognition of the financial difficulties affecting staff training and the need to increase the application of knowledge and transferable skills in the workplace. In 2011 a range of nationally-accredited qualifications were developed, including cognitive behavioural therapy, listening skills, drugs awareness, alcohol awareness, and supervision and performance management.

University of Surrey: enterprise summer school

The University of Surrey runs an annual three-day residential enterprise summer school which is a multi-disciplinary collaboration between itself and the University for the Creative Arts. It is aimed at enterprising and entrepreneurial students (both undergraduate and postgraduate) in mixed teams from diverse courses and backgrounds. Social enterprise forms one part of the summer school’s activities. Participants include staff from a local social enterprise, local businesses, as well as visiting entrepreneurs such as Lord Mawson, author of The Social Entrepreneur and founder of the Bromley-by-Bow Centre in East London.

Successful collaboration

The students meet – and learn to collaborate with – people utterly different from themselves. The groups typically mix management, engineering and maths students with fine arts, fashion and photography students who work together, learning to accept, trust and use the benefits of each discipline in a common challenge. Day two is always about coming up with new social business ideas for the featured social enterprise organisation (in the past this has been the YMCA, the Farnham Museum and Farnham Castle; in 2012 it was a disability charity). The teams present their ideas to the staff of the social enterprise and get feedback as to interest, viability and so on.

The activities undertaken at the summer school benefit all participants: the students benefit hugely from thinking about and understanding the challenges faced by a real social enterprise; the enterprise staff benefit from fresh thinking and new ideas; and the institutions gain new ambassadors, both students and businesses.

23 For more information see http://www.ucreative.ac.uk/enterprise/summer-school-2011 and http://portal.surrey.ac.uk/portal/page?_pageid=787,2712903&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL
5. SPIN-OUTS AND PLACEMENTS

University College London: staff spin-outs and student placements

University College London’s (UCL) enterprise support extends to cover social enterprise. This includes a student ventures programme, small business support and technology transfer. Below are two examples of the different social enterprise projects that have been developed at UCL.

Heritage without Borders

Heritage without Borders (HWB)\(^{24}\), a spin-out organisation funded by an HE Social Entrepreneurship Catalyst Award from UnLtd, was launched in May 2010. HWB is a unique social enterprise that builds heritage skills in developing countries, helping to preserve important cultural objects that could otherwise be damaged or lost forever. It supports heritage projects in situations of poverty and in the aftermath of conflict and disaster, closing the gap in heritage skills between the developed and developing world by matching teams of UK-based professional volunteers with international projects that require specific expertise and training in areas as diverse as artefact conservation, security, exhibition and public outreach. The host communities tap into valuable skills that would otherwise be too difficult – or too expensive – to obtain, while volunteers themselves gain new skills.

Volunteering Services Unit

The Volunteering Services Unit, a joint project between UCL and its students’ union, exists to support student involvement in the community, including social enterprise activity.\(^{25}\) The unit places students with a number of London-based social enterprises (such as Jobs In Mind and Red Kite Learning); supports small-scale, student-led social enterprises (such as the UCL Refugee Project); and supervises the student-run SIFE group. This group has established a Social Enterprise Academy, where students teach their peers about the principles of social enterprise, who then go on to deliver education projects in London schools.

\(^{24}\) For more information see http://heritagewithoutborders.org/

\(^{25}\) For more information see http://uclu.org/services/volunteering-at-uclu
ANNEXE: SOCIAL ENTERPRISE ORGANISATIONS AND NETWORKS

UK-wide social enterprise organisations
Social Enterprise UK: www.socialenterprise.org.uk, including a large directory of other organisations at www.socialenterprise.org.uk/advice-support/directory
UnLtd: www.unltd.org.uk/

Co-operatives
Co-operative UK: www.uk.coop
Links to further organisations and networks may also be found on the government’s Big Society page: http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/content/big-society-useful-links

Higher education organisations
Enterprise Alliance UK: www.enterpriseallianceuk.co.uk
National Association of College and University Entrepreneurs: www.nacue.com
Student Hubs: www.studenthubs.org/xwiki/bin/view/Social+Enterprise/
Students in Free Enterprise UK: www.sifeuk.org

National and regional social enterprise organisations
England
Cheshire and Warrington Social Enterprise Partnership: www.cwsocialenterprise.org.uk
Cumbria Social Enterprise Partnership: www.socialenterpriseincumbria.org
North East Social Enterprise Partnership: www.nesep.co.uk
se2 partnership (South East): www.se2partnership.co.uk

Social Enterprise East Midlands: www.seem.uk.net
Social Enterprise East of England: www.seee.co.uk
Social Enterprise Lancashire Network: www.selnet-uk.com
Social Enterprise London: www.sel.org.uk
Social Enterprise Network (Merseyside): www.sen.org.uk/social-enterprise-network
Social Enterprise North West: www.senw.org.uk
Social Enterprise West Midlands: www.socialenterprisewm.org.uk
Social Enterprise Yorkshire and Humber: www.seyh.org.uk/
Together Works (Greater Manchester): www.togetherworks.org.uk

Wales
Social Enterprise Networks Wales: www.walescooperative.org/networks-and-events

Scotland
Social Enterprise Scotland: www.socialenterprisescotland.org.uk
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