

Social Innovation Skills Sharing Event Report

Thursday 31st May 2018

Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Background to the event and key take home messages..... | 3 |
| Challenges in Community-University partnership working | 3 |
| Key take home messages | 4 |
| Case studies of practice 1: scaffolding collaboration and building networks..... | 6 |
| Case study 1: CUPP Help Desk, David Wolff, University of Brighton | 6 |
| Case study 2: Knowledge co-production for novel social agency in social innovation: Les Levidow, Open University..... | 9 |
| Case study 3: Promoting Cohesion through Building Networks, Michelle Lawrence, Link Up UK | 12 |
| Workshops 1..... | 14 |
| Workshop 1: Co-design and its Limitations, Paul Sternberg and Simon Gough, Ravensbourne..... | 14 |
| Workshop 2: Partnering for Public Value, Saidul Haque (Citizens UK) and Prof Monder Ram (University of Birmingham)..... | 16 |
| Case studies of practice 2: tools and techniques..... | 17 |
| Case study 4: Parenting Science Gang - parenting is one big experiment, Tamasin Greenough, Viatic / Parenting Science Gang..... | 17 |
| Case study 5: Scotland's National Standards for Community Engagement: a useful resource for universities? Jessica Watson, University of Glasgow / Glasgow Centre for Population Health | 19 |
| Case study 6: Listening and exploring experiences of illness, Carmel Capewell, Oxford Brookes University | 21 |
| Plenary | 22 |
| Workshops 2..... | 23 |
| Workshop 3: Coventry University: Embedding Social Innovation, Gabriela Matouskova and Andy Turner, University of Coventry..... | 23 |
| Workshop 4: Co-designing a degree in social change with civil society, Harsha Patel, Doing Social | 25 |
| Closing plenary | 27 |
| Final reflections..... | 28 |
| Appendices | 31 |
| Appendix 1: event participants..... | 31 |
| Appendix 2: challenges in community-university partnership working | 33 |
| Appendix 3: definitions of social innovation..... | 37 |

Background to the event and key take home messages

This day-long event was aimed at people keen to learn about the different ways community-university partnerships can be developed to realise social innovation. Participants included community partners keen to work more closely with universities; public engagement professionals working in a university setting; researchers keen to explore new methods and ways of working; and funders, keen to understand better how to invest in productive projects.

The event was funded as part of [HEFCE's Social Innovation Fund \(2016-17\)](#), which the NCCPE helped to coordinate. The Social Innovation Fund supported six collaborative pilot projects, which were co-created through a 'sandpit' event. The project defined social innovation as follows: 'innovation with the primary aim of improving social outcomes for people through collaboration or co-creation'. The work is now being taken forward by Research England.

The day was built around six case studies of practice and four workshops, in which a range of different approaches to social innovation were shared, and key lessons learned were highlighted.

We would like to thank all of the participants and presenters for the generosity and thoughtfulness of their contributions over the course of the day, and for their help preparing the event. Particular thanks are due to HEFCE / Research England, and to Rachel Tyrell, for funding and supporting this activity.

Challenges in Community-University partnership working

When booking, delegates were invited to provide some reflections on their practice. The challenges they identified were used to scaffold conversations at the event.

| | |
|--|---|
| Challenge 1: match-making and finding each other | Challenges in knowing who, how and when to approach |
| Challenge 2: practical alignment | The challenges caused by a lack of alignment of expectations about working practices e.g. around budget, time-horizons, governance etc. |
| Challenge 3: aligning expectations and agendas | Issues caused by differing agendas and expectations |
| Challenge 4: equitable involvement | The challenge of developing balanced and fair relationships |
| Challenge 5: organisational 'buy in' | Difficulties securing buy-in from within the organisation and time to garner relationships |
| Challenge 6: practical know-how | Having the confidence and knowledge to get started |
| Challenge 7: sustainability | The struggle to maintain community-university partnerships over the long term (& beyond initial funding) |
| Challenge 8: describing the value / impact and making the case for this way of working | Challenges in communicating value of mutual work to both parties (when they have different agendas and drivers). |

These challenges are fleshed out in appendix 2, with suggestions from delegates about how they might be addressed.

Key take home messages

Over the course of the day a number of themes and talking points emerged. We summarise these here.

What is social innovation?

While a great diversity of approaches were showcased at the event, participants were struck by how much commonality there was

- It's reassuring that everything we all do is quite compatible, and easy to be put together.

However, there were concerns expressed about the term 'social innovation' as a catch all phrase to describe this kind of work:

- The NCCPE should develop the discourse in this area to emphasise its multi-dimensional nature. There is a risk of it looking like one thing, being homogenized
- 'Innovation' can be problematic as a term. Why do we need 'new' things when we've already got good things in place that are underinvested in? In a relentless quest for the 'new' are we failing to sustain things? Are 'innovation' and 'sustainability' in tension?
- Still not a massive fan of 'social innovation' as a phrase but more open-minded than at the start of the day

The power of simple ideas

People were struck by the potential of the various approaches showcased at the event – and their applicability to their own context. These are 'big ideas' with tremendous potential to be taken on by others and scaled up across the sector. For instance:

- The **helpdesk** – as pioneered at the [University of Brighton](#), to facilitate purposeful community-university interaction
- The **social spinout** – as a route to sustaining projects, modelled in work at [Coventry University](#)
- Applying **strategic design** methods – to scaffold purposeful collaboration (utilised by many)
- Investing small amounts of **development funding** to support the co-design of projects, currently being trialled in the Power to Change / AHRC funded [CUPI project](#), facilitated by the NCCPE
- Investing in **networks**, to bring people together with common purpose to mobilise good work, for instance through [Link Up UK](#)

The importance of acknowledging differentials in power and resources

Again and again, participants foregrounded the need to attend to equity

- The goal should be for people to make equitable commitments to a relationship. Even if there's a difference in resources
- People can make equitable commitments even if they are not equitable in other ways
- The relationship between those who are paid (HEI staff) and unpaid (many community groups) is problematic. What does this mean for commitment to a project? How does this influence the power balance or more importantly the perception of power balance? How does this influence the result of the project? Paid HEI staff can explore ideas and fail, but for unpaid community groups a failed project (or one that discovers what doesn't work) can be a totally unsatisfactory and potentially damaging result
- We should make it a standard to give acknowledgement. Giving thanks collaboratively

Attending to words and meaning

*A strong theme across the day was the role of language and meaning in realising social innovation. It is **through** language that meaningful relationships and projects are built and negotiated. And projects often result in changes to language and discourse. They generate and circulate new narratives and definitions, often by ensuring that*

previously unheard or neglected voices and meanings are properly listened to and their significance made explicit. These new narratives can effect powerful social change.

- A key currency of social innovation is language
- A focus on 'meaning' and 'meaningful work' is important. We should always be checking in that the work is meaningful for everyone involved, and is creating value that is meaningful to them and their communities
- A focus on 'narrative' is really useful too. Narrative provides a helpful focal point, in different ways:
 - Narrative is how people express their different experiences – experiences that diverge from or challenge the dominant narrative – the default narrative
 - Narratives can be a research method, but exploring people's different narratives can also be a strategic intervention. Bringing together stories at odds with the dominant discourse to challenge it. What we call evidence is always something more than information – lots is the narrative

Focus on method, craft and process

*This work is hard and requires enormous skill and reflectiveness if it is to succeed. Given the subtlety and complexity of the processes involved, there needs to be a firm focus on **method**: building on what has been learned about how to scaffold productive collaboration*

- **Design thinking** really helps – you need a team where researchers can play to their strengths and designers can play to theirs
- Build scaffolding, so that when facilitation stops, the processes can still carry on
- **Curiosity** should be at the heart of this work – it's about valuing multiple perspectives
- The work needs to start before projects are developed and funded: co-design needs to be used in the scoping of the work – not introduced later, after the academic (for instance) has worked out what they want to do
- Both process **and** outcomes need to be valued
- Social innovation does not necessarily mean participatory approaches. They can exist together or separately. But people often equate the two

Share learning

The event emphasised how vital it is that we invest time in reflecting on our work and sharing our learning – participants were often amazed by the quality of work that is going on, and eager to find out more:

- Disseminate good practice! Publish/ publicise your process/outcomes and evaluation. Culture change can only happen if we show how these activities can work
- Make it standard to illuminate the tensions - make this productive point of discussion rather than the status quo being of everything looking unproblematic or shiny
- There needs to be room for saying "this is hard" and sharing failures
- I need to find a way to harness the enthusiasm and passion generated today when back in my own professional practice

How funders can help

There was a strong sense that funders and policy makers can help this kind of work to thrive, and some concrete suggestions about how, including:

- UKRI - should invest further funding in social innovation projects
- Funders should build expectations around sustainability into Pathways to Impact and other funding routes – for instance, to allow costs for scoping out spinout possibilities
- Funders should consider the value long-term and repeat funding – which is needed if this work is to thrive
- They should create hard incentives for academics to work this way
- They should invest in development funding and brokerage of the kind being piloted by the CUPi programme

Case studies of practice 1: scaffolding collaboration and building networks

Three case studies of practice were presented, exploring different approaches to building networks and supporting productive collaboration.

Case study 1: CUPP Help Desk, David Wolff, University of Brighton

Outline:

The University of Brighton has taken a pioneering role in supporting community-university partnership working. 15 years ago it established the Community University Partnership Programme, at the heart of which is a simple but hugely productive service – the CUPP Helpdesk. Modelled on similar helpdesks in other sectors, it provides support to local community, voluntary, social enterprise and statutory organisations enquiring about research, university resources and partnership opportunities.

Enquirers are provided with one to one support to facilitate productive exchange and collaboration with staff and students across the university.

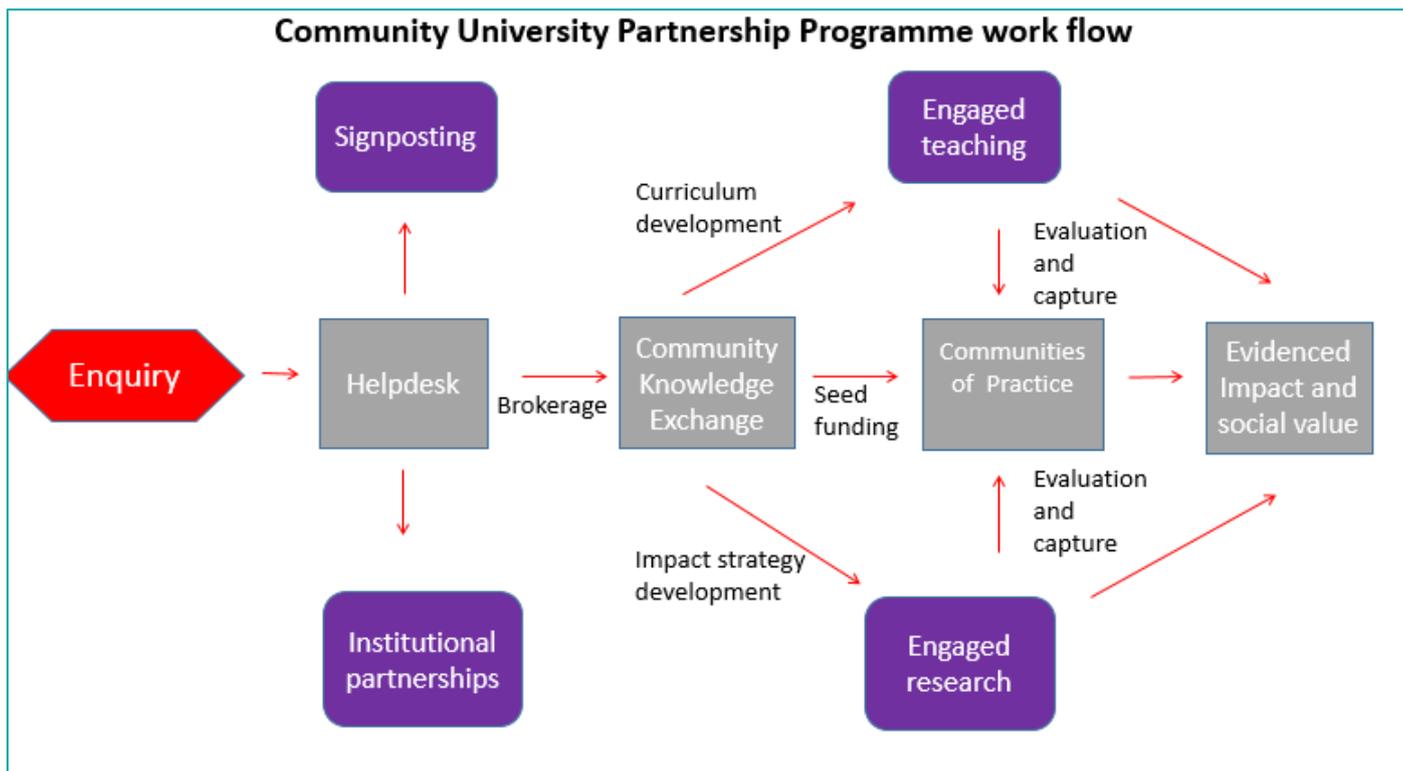
Dave has been there from the beginning and shared some highlights of the journey they have travelled and some top tips and lessons learned about how to take such a simple idea and make it work in a university setting.

Some context

- Established in 2003 - one of the early participants in a whole new wave of HEIs partnering up with communities
- Interesting terminology – Community partnerships vs Public Engagement vs Social Innovation. Proliferation of terminology can be problematic
- Social Innovation is a useful term and potentially one that unites all of the areas we're working in. e.g. PE, student placements, public engagement etc. People out in communities don't care what department people are in
- The key thing is the term '**partnership**'. Different way of working – not just researchers going out and sharing. It's mutuality - expertise and knowledge sitting together

How does the help desk process work?

- The CUPP Help Desk is a particular mechanism for enabling access to the HEI. It's a community help desk. Help desks are very common in big companies, but HEIs generally don't have that orientation to the wider world. Communities can contact it about anything they want. It's an initial way in, and then enhanced brokerage
- The Help Desk has a named person on the website so people know who to contact, and it is for people both in and outside of the university. Within a big institution, HEI staff don't necessarily know what is going on outside their team
- The remit of the help desk is around disadvantaged audiences – people who can't routinely be resourced to find their own way into the HEI. Needs a particular level of accessibility
- The help desk has around 400 community enquiries a year, 200 turn into pieces of co-work and about 20 are turned into significant projects
- The help desk ensures referrals go to the right place, and establishes a process by which communities can come into the university
- As projects progress, Communities of Practice typically develop to address a particular issue or topic. Projects cluster around topics, e.g. older people and wellbeing
- These mechanisms give space to explore ideas – lots of experimentation, community knowledge exchange and user perspectives



What has been achieved?

- Helpdesk – Over 2000 enquiries from community organisations responded to
- 5000 plus students involved in community projects as part of study
- 224 community knowledge exchange partnership projects resourced – involving 750 plus project partners see <https://community21.org/partners/cupp/>
- Numerous communities of practice formed (for example: older people and wellbeing; young people and resilience, LGBT community needs; waste re-use;) that link the local to the global
- 7 impact case studies in Research Excellence Framework 2014 based on community university partnerships

Some challenges

- There are tensions – for instance, a tension between innovation and sustainability. We don't want an obsession with the new and for what's currently working well to be ignored
- We work on a high risk, experimental basis, which is usually alien to HEI culture. It's exploratory work - out of the 20 projects we fund, perhaps only 10 will work – and that's a good thing! We give out tiny sums of seed funding. For the project that don't work, it's better to find out with £2,000 from us, rather than with £30,000 from a research council!

Q & A

Question: what is the difference between a network and a community of practice (COP)?

- They're the same really, but you could look at a COP as a learning network. A COP gives you the opportunity to reflect on what it is and the chance to scrutinise what makes it work well. We don't generally take the chance to do this with 'networks' as perhaps we see them as normal business. Networks and COPs are important vehicles to make things happen – we should pay more attention to them

Question: With CUPP — how did you promote it initially, and how do you promote it now?

- It's been happening a long time and we've been through many different phases of promotion. At the start, there was lots of leg-work. We recruited someone with from a voluntary sector background who hadn't worked in HEIs – they had networks and knew who to talk to. There were lots of one to one conversations and lots of momentum building. Talking at key meetings. A publicity strategy. Even with all that there was lots of misunderstanding and some suspicion

- We also did lots of work with people. Small scale then scaling up slowly. Defining the doing. Action oriented approach – this was also good for promotion. Lots of small scale projects
- We were overwhelmed with demand, so sometimes we have to go quiet. After a while, in the main it's self-sustaining because the work carries it forward

More information

- Twitter: @cuppbrighton @davewolff
- Online community of practice: www.cuppcop.ning.com
- Website: www.brighton.ac.uk/business-services/community-partnerships/index.aspx
- Mapping of projects: <http://community21.org/partners/cupp>

Case study 2: Knowledge co-production for novel social agency in social innovation: Les Levidow, Open University

Outline:

This case study drew on Les Levidow's recent collaboration with a London food-growing initiative at the front-line of 'urban regeneration' threatening its community base and amenities. It explored the theory and methods for such collaboration.

A particular issue it foregrounded was how academic researchers can engage with the social innovation of community groups. Innovation in the conventional sense (technological or organisational) either builds upon a social agency which already exists or else creates a social agency in parallel with a business. By contrast, social innovation depends fundamentally on creating a novel social agency of some kind, prior to or even without a social enterprise.

Social innovation processes

- Social innovation has transformative roles, in particular:
 - Empowerment from learning new skills, building territorial support networks, linking numerous micro-agencies within a territorial project, thus increasing their 'socio-political capability and access to resources' (cf. Moulaert et al., 2005)
 - Activities addressing 'hitherto unsatisfied human needs', especially for marginalised people (cf. Neumeier, 2012)
 - Multi-actor networks redefining socio-economic problems as a basis for addressing them (Richez-Battesti et al., 2012)

'Appetite for Change' in HEFCE Social Innovation Programme 2016-17

- Our project, 'Appetite for Change: University-community knowledge exchange for localising the food chain', aimed to facilitate or even create social innovation, as did the entire HEFCE programme
- In the project plan, the OU undertook to map London's food localisation initiatives through a knowledge-exchange with them
- They were constantly proliferating forms of social innovation, supported by numerous organisations, including local authorities. So how could one academic help?

'Community' as a social agent

- In group food-growing activities, the term 'community' has been pervasive, often as an adjective before other terms – e.g. gardens, participation, development, capacities, cohesion, empowerment, resilience, enterprise, kitchen, asset, agent, ownership, inclusion, etc
- Such activities in England have been analysed as a grassroots social innovation with 'the community as a social agent' (Kirwan et al., 2012). How is community understood and built as novel agency?

Novel social agency for transformation

- Social agency reproduces and/or transforms the very conditions of praxis, which are activity-dependent (Bhaskar, 1994)
- Everyday routine activity depends on a familiar social agency, but a different future depends on novel forms, in particular: a capacity to transform existing states of affairs, thus gaining the capacity *to transform itself* reflexively (Harvey, 2002)
- Academic-community cooperation can help to help to identify these processes, in turn as a basis for a transformative potential

Building community via social innovation

- Community Food Growers Network (CFGN) provided a window into mutual learning processes within and across food initiatives. Participants:
 - Learn how to recognise each other's' needs and aims across differences in backgrounds
 - Devise more egalitarian modes of cooperative activities

- Create common spaces through place-making activities (community gardens or city farms), whose products are labelled through a low-cost certification scheme and are supported by consumers
- Redefine 'food poverty' as a malaise of the entire food system, warranting solutions through a food culture
- Develop solidaristic interdependencies around a vision of food sovereignty for social justice, as the basis for social inclusion

Community assets vs land assetisation

- Food initiatives face constant threats from 'estates regeneration', a euphemism for social cleansing and land assetisation, driven by local authorities
- The dominant agenda maximises financial value, encloses commons and so limits or jeopardises 'meanwhile' food-growing spaces
- For their survival, food initiatives depend on London-wide resistance networks
- These networks attempt to gain secure tenure for food-growing spaces as 'community assets', on grounds that these offer long-term societal benefits, as demonstrated by their current activities
- In the process, they valorise 'assets' encompassing all potential resources, spaces and capacities

Granville Community Centre – an example of resistance in action

- The Granville Community Kitchen (based at the Granville Community Centre) ran an event in January 2016 called the 'Urban Feast'
- This initiative has been run on a small budget by two women who had long experience as community organisers and political activists
- Like many community projects in London, the Granville found itself at the front-line of an 'urban regeneration' programme threatening its premises, local residents' base and amenities
- We co-organised a workshop at a CFGN London-wide gathering at Stepney City Farm in July 2016. Topic: 'How do local food initiatives build community and promote the right to healthy food?'

Building the campaign

- The community centre had already started a 'Saving the Granville' campaign, backed by author Zadie Smith
- I joined the Granville's strategy discussions about expanding their support base to counter the threat from Brent Council
- Organised a petition opposing its Master Plan for South Kilburn and demanding retention of the community facilities
- Along with the kitchen, the community garden built a food culture: facilitated skills-sharing, built friendships and supplied some food for the Kitchen's weekly communal meals
- Through CFGN contacts, the Centre invited [JustPlace](#) for a mapping exercise to identify 'community assets for a fairer London'; also a team to deal with social media
- Hosted the Youth Forum, which devised the title for an Open Day and mobilised participants (Footprint Fair, June 2017)

Temporary victory through support networks

- After a half-year's campaign, the campaign won a 5-year reprieve, thanks to the Granville's strategy and support networks
- But the Kitchen but still had to fight for a suitable space in the premises being renovated
- They had to counter the official expertise which privileged 'high-end users' in the redesign and space allocation of the new premises
- Mobilised supporters to attend the Council's consultation event

CFGN guides: knowledge interchange

- Meanwhile I learned that the CFGN was preparing two toolkits: How to work with local authorities by offering solutions and gaining wide support for them, and how to resist eviction, despite urban regeneration
- I sent my draft journal paper to the CFGN. Some examples from this paper were included in the toolkits

- Conversely, I drew on their texts for my paper: London's urban agriculture: Building community through social innovation, *International Journal of Sociology of Agriculture and Food*

Conclusion: novel social agency in social innovation

- Through this academic-community cooperation, we co-produced knowledge about/for social innovation in local food initiatives
- This experience was congenial and mutually beneficial: we had a common language, e.g. defending 'community assets' through multi-actor territorial strategies
- Appeals to 'community' help establish a novel social agency
- It gained the capacity *to transform itself*, while transforming existing states of affairs (Harvey, 2002)

More information

Weblink for partner group, <https://granvillecommunitykitchen.wordpress.com/>

Some relevant publications:

Levidow, L. and Neubauer, C. (2012) Opening up societal futures through EU research and innovation agendas, *EASST Review* 31(3): 4-11, http://easst.net/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/review_2012_09.pdf

Levidow, L. and Oreszczyn, S. (2012) Challenging unsustainable development through research cooperation, *Local Environment: The International Journal of Justice and Sustainability* 17(1): 35-56.

Levidow, L., 2018, forthcoming. London's food localisation: building community as a social innovation, *International Journal of Sociology of Agriculture and Food*, for special issue on 'Social Innovation in Agriculture and Food'.

Case study 3: Promoting Cohesion through Building Networks, Michelle Lawrence, Link Up UK

Outline:

Michelle introduced the work of Link Up (UK), a charity she founded to combat prejudice, intolerance and discrimination in Britain, by celebrating the benefits of diversity. Link UP UK are dedicated to combating negative stereotypes, discrimination and false myths. All of these factors can contribute to particular groups feeling threatened, undervalued or misinterpreted which in turn can cause divisions and hostility between groups that are seen as not alike. They believe that it is important to promote awareness and respect for the contribution that different communities have made as well as continually looking for innovative ways to bring communities together.

Michelle also reflected on her involvement in the HEFCE funded Social Innovation Pilot project, Talking Heads. The initiative aimed to engage with young people to create a resource that breaks down the myths and stereotypes and therefore the barriers that exist between young Muslims and their peers. The project team consisted of two universities and two community groups, Link Up UK and Cap-a-Pie, who were experienced in bringing together theatre makers, universities and communities to co-create theatre and foster learning and thinking through a creative process.

Context

- LinkUp aims to combat divisions in society. 'Cohesion' is a buzz word now, but when Michelle set it up, it wasn't
- The causes of most divisions are similar and have similar roots. It's a good idea to look at the big, deep, entrenched roots rather than the surface roots - no one approach will work with all audiences
- We try to change people's attitudes towards each other, using role models, quizzes etc. Looking at issues of identity and belonging. Trying to promote a community that embraces diversity as part of society

Link UP UK's relationship with universities and researchers

- Lots of our work is shaped by academic research, and understanding what makes people behave the way they do
- Michelle went along to **the HEFCE Social Innovation Programme** Sandpit event, to try and find partnership to respond to a social need and create innovation
- She and some academics came up with the idea for 'Talking Heads', to trial a project breaking down myths around Muslims, using role models and storytelling – see the person not the stereotype
- There were lots of hurdles – timing, reliability of teenagers etc.
- However, the partnership worked because we had comparable agendas and different but complementary skills
- The relationship was well balanced – we contributed the same amount of time, energy etc. Understanding and recognising that we all have different skills. We also got on very well. It's also a question of luck that we found each other at the event

Some reflections

- There are lots of skills in all sectors that should be shared – Voluntary sector, HEIS etc
- The usual barriers –
 - Organisations too busy to find partners
 - Don't know where to look
 - Failure to recognise the synergies you might have when you don't seem like a perfect fit
 - Are they willing to collaborate?
 - No central location for bringing things together
- We're addressing these barriers with an online resources centre and research centre – a one stop shop for latest research. It will be underpinned by a set of rules of engagement – it has to be managed
- We know it's not going to be easy. We'll be drawing on lessons from the HEFCE sandpit and academic research

More information

You can find out more about Link Up UK and the Great British Community here:

<http://greatbritishcommunity.org/link-up/>

Q & A

Question: I'm interested in the theme of common language, and your reflections (Michelle) about being in a room with lots of academics. Do you just get a certain type of academic who can switch between different roles, or is it something we can teach?

Michelle: There's a learning curve. It's good to interact with people who speak a different language – it does start to rub off. Also the processes – it's more structured with academics. In the voluntary sector there's more 'jumping in'. Good to encounter people who teach you different ways of doing things.

Les: Often the changes that take place through this work are changes in language, a reframing of language and discourse. When I talk about language I really mean 'discourse'. Words are always used strategically. Language is innovation in the more technical sense. The key currency of Social Innovation is language change. Not just a means to an end - it is an end in itself.

Workshops 1

Delegates were then invited to join of two parallel workshops, exploring an area of social innovation in more depth

Workshop 1: Co-design and its Limitations, Paul Sternberg and Simon Gough, Ravensbourne

Paul Sternberg took part in one of the HEFCE funded Social Innovation pilot project, a Silicon Valley for Greenwich. As Head of Design Innovation at Ravensbourne, his role is to develop social innovation projects involving new forms of stakeholder partnership and collaboration.

In this workshop, he and his colleague Simon Gough provided an insider view of the challenges they faced developing MoneyLab, a one-year project designed by Ravensbourne and funded by the Money Advice Service. Its aim is to explore the impact a co-creation project can have on the attitudes and behaviours of young adults in Higher Education.

In the process they explored

- The challenges of implementing co-design approaches
- An exploration of the challenges in involving students in such processes, and in particular of how to address student financial capabilities
- The contribution of this kind of work to the civic role of a university

Money Lab

- There is lots of research around student financial hardship, but there is a huge gap in understanding students' mind-set around money - the way they think about it. Their values and attitudes. Do they plan ahead? Do they talk about it with friends etc.?
- In university, money is dealt with by student finance in terms of hardship, rather than understanding and learning – does it affect the university experience?
- It's a taboo topic – we don't talk about money. Interesting how students find out about money. Students don't have that much hardship – it starts afterwards. Actually there is money, it's how they think about it and use it. Not the lack of money
- The stress of the future. Impacts on what they're doing – creates anxiety. Sense of impending debt
- MoneyLab aims to co-create services and interventions with the students – what could the university do to equip and support them? Rather than traditional student support service – co-creation to create helpful interventions
- We're recognising that the end user really has the answers. They have the solutions. But how do you create the right kind of platforms and opportunities to elicit that?
- We designed a listening campaign – getting under the skin of the issues around money that matter to them. How might we identify the needs and insights of students

Co-creation process

- Assumption that interventions lead to a product. Have to be careful about managing expectations. Expect something tangible to come out of the project. We're trying to make it as open as possible. E.g. could create a campaign, or lead to political action
- We wanted access to insight of student, but also keeping it broad and not being prescriptive about what will come out of the project
- Co-creation is a process rather than specific outcome. What's coming out of this are quite low tech, rather than e.g. an app
- Lots of different levels of co-creation. Some consultation, but we came up with the starting point and co-created within a framework

- Design thinking. The way that we work is very much about trying to create a culture where things are tried and learned from and failure is a part of the processes. The core of the original proposal was to use a design thinking process
- Need to think about different levels of co-creation. Students were given a defined starting point
- Where do the idea come from? How are the ideas owned? Dynamics of that change your perspective
- The benefits of co-creation include:
 - Students are collaborating (from different courses)
 - Lots of skills development
 - Understanding needs
 - Quick working - making tangible things in a short space of time.
- A big challenge was student engagement – difficult to engage with as there are lots of other demands on their time. Trying to keep a body of students all the way through process is very difficult. How do we get early adopters? Created package of benefits and they became co-founders. The idea was that they'd bring other people in. Great enthusiasm, but then it whittles down due to competing pressures. We then had to find others, but it's difficult for them getting involved at a different stage. Less of a sense of ownership

More information

<https://www.themoneylab.org/>

Workshop 2: Partnering for Public Value, Saidul Haque (Citizens UK) and Prof Monder Ram (University of Birmingham)

This workshop explored the ground-breaking collaboration being pioneered in Birmingham between Citizens UK and the University of Birmingham.

Some context

Citizens UK: Birmingham is a diverse alliance of member faith, education, trade union and community institutions in the city established to build the power of civil society to win change for the common good and social justice. Founded in 2013, it is affiliated to Citizens UK, a non-partisan nationwide alliance of civil society chapters. Their method is the craft of broad-based community organising, strengthening civil society institutions to develop leaders experienced in putting democracy into action.

Universities play a significant role in this mission, as in 2014 Newman University students secured a public commitment (costing £15 million) on youth mental health in a public assembly attended by 400 people, in 2015 the city council leader pledged to resettle Syrian refugees at an Assembly attended by 600 people at the University of Birmingham, and in 2017 1000 people returned to the University ahead of the then Mayoral elections to set out civil society priorities.

By taking an active role in Citizens UK: Birmingham, the University can work to increase the power of communities to participate in public life, bring their research to bear on the issues impacting on local communities and support students to engage in local projects, placements and research.

In their presentation, Saidul and Monder:

- Introduced the work of Citizen's UK and community organising using this short film: <https://vimeo.com/259667616>
- Introduced the College of Social Sciences at the University of Birmingham: <https://vimeo.com/254120285>
- Described the business leaders project, led by Monder, which has had a significant impact in the city revealing the significant economic impact of BAME businesses in the city and region: <https://vimeo.com/254118123>

Further information

<https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/university/colleges/socsci/partnerships/citizens-uk/about.aspx>

Case studies of practice 2: tools and techniques

3 further case studies of practice were presented, explaining different tools and techniques

Case study 4: Parenting Science Gang - parenting is one big experiment, Tamasin Greenough, Viatic / Parenting Science Gang



Outline:

Parenting Science Gang is an online, user-led citizen science project funded by Wellcome. It asks groups of parents what parenting questions they would like evidence-based answers for and enable them to design and carry out research to answer those questions with the support of university-based experts.

Their aim is to empower parents to direct the future of research to cover areas that are truly relevant to them, and to feel that they can play an effective role in making that research happen.

The entire project is run on Facebook - a space that is used by most demographic groups to hang out socially with friends, and to make friends with people with similar interests. This also means that discussions can take place non-simultaneously and at odd times of the day - perfect for parents whose time is restricted by the needs of their families.

Their approach is to empower the community to take the lead in the relationship. It is they who identify the areas they wish to research, who make the decisions regarding methods, and who are taking the lead in disseminating the results. This helps to maximise the effectiveness of each group - the researchers leading the analysis and the community in ensuring the research's relevance.

The project is built on some fundamental assumptions:

- That normal people are both willing and capable of developing their skills to meet a challenge that they have set themselves
- Some questions don't necessarily occur to researchers - by having those with lived experience on board, you can widen the pool of questions addressed to make the findings as relevant as possible to those who need them
- That the "demise of the expert" can be positively affected by enabling normal people to interact with experts as equals who value each other's area of expertise

Tamasin explained the rationale for the project

- Coming from a university background, the public engagement I've been involved with usually takes the form of researchers doing their research, then saying "who can I tell about this?"
- PSG turns it round and asks "what are the public interested in?"

Why Facebook?

- Our audience is parents. Lots of them don't think about science all the time, but they want to be able to critically assess all of the parenting advice they are bombarded with
- We identified that Facebook is the best way to reach them – parents use Facebook at ad-hoc times, and can engage with the group when they have time

How does it work?

- The projects are led by the parents' interests. We find out what questions they have
- For example - Parents of young children do a lot of changing nappies. You need to use something to wipe your child with, then dispose it. One parent designed an experiment to show what happens to different types of wipes when you flush them down the toilet, by shaking each in a bag of water to simulate a toilet flush. It showed that toilet paper will disintegrate, whereas napkins and baby wipes won't. This was designed by someone to take to her baby group to show them why you shouldn't flush baby wipes
- These projects are helping the parents think about problems in a scientific way, and using a scientific process to help solve it
- Parents take part in Q&A sessions with researchers about topics that they're interested in but where they think there are gaps in the research, e.g. effect on children of screens, what effect does flexi-schooling have on child/family/school? What is in follow on milk? Etc
- Then parents develop their own projects to look at a topic. They design scientific experiments (both at home and in labs) to answer the questions and inform future research

Why is the project significant?

- It's true science engagement – the parents are understanding the scientific process and its limitations. Doing science makes them better consumers of science
- Their children benefit too – it's good for them that their parents are engaged with science
- Results are being disseminated and have changed the direction of science in some cases. For example: Researchers working with mass spectrometry were putting different drinks through, but hadn't considered putting breast milk through. The results are now leading to changes in how breast milk is stored and banked. This is highly significant – it has opened up a new development in healthcare
- Parents really enjoy talking to the experts, but actually it's now flipped on its head – researchers are coming to the parents to ask questions, help with recruiting research participants and to disseminate their work

Question: How was it working with Facebook and not face to face?

- Parents only have snippets of time. Using Facebook means people can engage when they want/can. It is a bit awkward to be involved with it at the moment (given the recent media storm), but people are still using it. It's also really good at embedding science in their everyday life – if science appears in their Facebook feed amongst everything else, it becomes an everyday thing

More information

<http://parentingsciencegang.org.uk/>

Case study 5: Scotland's National Standards for Community Engagement: a useful resource for universities? Jessica Watson, University of Glasgow / Glasgow Centre for Population Health

The National Standards for Community Engagement

- *Inclusion*
- *Support*
- *Planning*
- *Working together*
- *Methods*
- *Communication*
- *Impact*



Outline

The National Standards for Community Engagement for Scotland are a central benchmark and reference point for best practice in effective community engagement. The Standards use a definition of "purposeful" community engagement which at its heart is about "taking joint action to achieve positive change". They were originally developed for:

- public sector bodies and elected representatives
- third sector organisations and community groups
- the private and independent sector.

Jessica includes universities as public bodies in spirit, in that they receive public funds and are civic institutions working towards social good. But they don't 'deliver' social good in the same way that a local authority or a major employer might - and while they have high aspirations for the impact of our work, they may not feel we can promise the positive change the Standards describe.

Jessica's case study explored: So where are the opportunities for using the National Standards (or other guidance) in building community-university partnerships? Will principles designed for other sectors work for university partnerships? And do universities put themselves at a disadvantage by not signing up to work under the same standards as colleagues from other sectors are using?

Context

- The Olympia Social Research Hub where Jessica works is located in a historically deprived area of Glasgow
- It houses both researchers and PE professionals, and aims to make a positive difference that benefits the local community and wider city region

- In Scotland, we have the National Standards for Community Engagement. Developed with the intention of providing a benchmark for working with community. Intended for public bodies but also private e.g. Engaging with local community when building new flats
- We should be using them in universities – we are public bodies

Could the standards be applied in higher education and to research?

- When she presented them to her colleagues, feedback was that broadly speaking they are a good, clear set of standards with the messages you'd expect to see for co-production work. BUT they saw problems in applying them to their research – in particular, the expectation that the work should be focused on realising impact is problematic – you can't guarantee this for research

Jessica invited participants to reflect on the following statements and to say whether they agreed or disagreed

IN YOUR EXPERIENCE, COMMUNITY-UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS ACT ON COMMUNITY NEEDS AND AMBITIONS.

- Majority of room disagree

WHAT ABOUT IF I CHANGE THE QUESTION TO 'IN YOUR EXPERIENCE, COMMUNITY-UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS SHOULD ACT ON COMMUNITY NEEDS AND AMBITIONS'.

- Majority of room agree

UNIVERSITIES ARE APPROPRIATE PARTNERS TO TAKE JOINT ACTIONS WITH COMMUNITIES.

- Majority of room agree

PROMISING POSITIVE CHANGE TO COMMUNITIES IS OUTSIDE THE GIFT OF UNIVERSITIES.

- Room is split

Comments on the last statement:

- It's hard – depends what you mean by 'positive change'. Most disagree
- You could ask for very specific promises, e.g. access to sports facilities, pay living wage to community members who work in low paid jobs, paid work experience. Then use them as an example
- Think about the broader role of unis, not just research. It's easy to get stuck in our research impact agenda.
- The term 'promising' is challenging – that's way outside the gift of unis. As a researcher, if I went in thinking this would have positive change, aren't I pre-empting the outcome? What am I doing the research for if I know the answers?

Final reflections

- Are there opportunities for use of the standards? What are the other challenges?
 - Communities have been promised a lot of things – I have to be conscious of this every time I have a conversation. We have to be honest from the outset – it might not sound as enthusing but we have to come to terms with that
 - We need to factor the significant power imbalance into how we approach this – HEIs hold much of the power. Promising to be the 'saviours' is tempting but fraught with difficulties, as this session has revealed

More information

<http://www.voicescotland.org.uk/>

<http://www.scdc.org.uk/what/national-standards/>

Case study 6: Listening and exploring experiences of illness, Carmel Capewell, Oxford Brookes University

Outline:

Carmel shared her work to develop specific tools to support patient engagement. Her work is underpinned by the conviction that patients have valuable information that can inform the practice of healthcare and educational professionals, but they need an environment and tools that enable them to share that knowledge.

Techniques and tools she has developed include:

- Asking people to engage in exploring and explaining their experience through creating images, giving them a caption and then sharing them in discussion with others. This has been used with young people and adults for both Breast cancer and Glue Ear
- Developing Hearing Maps whereby young children are provided with a framework to help them explore, explain and communicate situations in which they find it difficult to understand speech

These approaches have shown, that with appropriate support, children and young people are capable of identifying, analysing and evaluating their experience of health issues and communicating the support that would be beneficial

Why this work matters

- Many voices are hardly heard in both health care and research – and this both exacerbates inequalities, and limits the impact of interventions
- Carmel has been working with children suffering from Glue ear. This condition has a huge impact on children – because of its impact on their hearing, their learning suffers: but teachers and health care providers rarely seem to understand the impact it has
- Her activities included:
 - Public Engagement: Actively involving those with glue ear in the research
 - Knowledge Exchange and Sharing: Increase 2-way flow of knowledge and insight about the condition
 - Social Innovation: Seeking to tackle the root causes of the inequality
 - Engaged Teaching/Learning: Training professionals in the field. Getting them to recognise that the patient is a person

How Carmel worked to address this

- Challenges included finding someone who had a child with glue ear. There are currently no support groups. She used Facebook and twitter to recruit participants
- If the researcher starts asking a bunch of questions, aren't they setting the agenda for understanding people's experience? Instead, she used a visual approach
- Mothers were the gatekeepers. Carmel told them, 'I'm interested in your experiences' – asked them to show me with pictures, using photo voice. They create the images then explain rather than the researcher interpreting the images. These helped enormously – not least because they captured the emotional impact of caring for a child with this condition
- With the children - hearing maps to chart how well they can hear during the day. The view of child in decisions is often missing, but they are capable of judging themselves. The hearing map is something they can take back to consultant and gives the children some authority to talk to adults about their experience. It allows them to be more assertive about changing their environment to suit them better

Plenary

A brief plenary allowed participants to reflect on cross-cutting themes. How were they making sense of the diversity of approaches being shared?

- This has showcased that **Social Innovation happens anywhere** - not just in HEIs – and anyone can be involved: community, children, whoever. With the right tools and approaches, people's talents, knowledge and expertise can be harnessed. We can make things happen, or provide the tools
- They are all about doing **good work** that realises positive social outcomes
- A really important theme is around **communication** - meaningful ways of listening to people where their voice is really heard and understood
- We should be thinking in an **integrated** way
- The devil is in the detail of the **process**. Is this something that unites us?

Workshops 2

Delegates were then invited to join of two parallel workshops, exploring an area of social innovation in more depth

Workshop 3: Coventry University: Embedding Social Innovation, Gabriela Matouskova and Andy Turner, University of Coventry

Outline:

Gabriela and Andy have pioneered strategic approaches to embedding social innovation and social enterprise at Coventry University. In this workshop they shared the story of the work they have developed.

Gabriela reflected on her role as a development manager and in particular on how she has pioneered a model of university community facing subsidiary (social enterprise) to drive community engagement for mutual benefit. She reflected on how this fits the role of universities today, their accountability to the places they are based in how this approach contribute to the increasingly commercialised outlook of the HE sector.

Andy shared how, as an academic, he has used social enterprise spin-outs as pathway to sustainable impact of university research, and explored the barriers and enablers for both academia and communities of working in this way. He offered his own perspective of why as an academic he chose the route to become an “entrepreneur” and to see legacy of his work beyond academic journals.

The Enterprise Hub

- The Enterprise Hub was set up to support students, staff and community members to set up social enterprises.
- It was set up by Coventry University, but has its own governance system, and is self-funded. Having two avenues to funding is very useful
- They think of themselves as a Switzerland between the university and social enterprise
- Social Innovation (SI) is a process, and Social Enterprise (SE) is an important contributor, helping secure value for money for students, and society. It’s an important contribution by universities to society – and as such, and example of them acting as ‘anchor institutions’
- Social entrepreneurship can be thought of (and taught) as a life skill: at Coventry, they put a positive spin on tackling challenges, and on using tools to solve problems
- The team don’t use SI or SE terminology when talking to communities. They ask what the problem is, and what can we do to help? They are a shop front – anyone can come through the door. They also have referral networks for if they can’t help
- A key challenge is to manage the expectations of both parties
- They are lucky that SE is part of university strategy, so they have buy-in from the top, but they also have autonomy which allows them to move quickly
- Sustainability is core to SE model, as well as replicability and scalability
- They use case studies to highlight the journeys that people go on during this process. E.g. some businesses are started by students, then go on to employ students. Talking about people’s stories show the impacts beyond money

Setting up Hope for the Community CIC

- Andy and colleagues chose to set up a Community Interest Company, to build on several successful research projects that demonstrated how the Hope Programme self-management intervention for people living with and affected by long-term health conditions lead to psychological benefits
- The most exciting innovation of the connected health era is a very simple idea... peers talking to each other.
- Bringing people together and sharing stories is the most powerful part of the Hope Programme interventions. They are using apps, social media etc to help capture its potential and impact
- A great many academic publications are never cited. Andy wanted the research he was doing to make an impact
- They set the company up in 2015. Directors were users – people suffering from long term illness.
- University senior management understand commercial spin-outs, but aren't as sympathetic towards social spin-outs
- Sustainability is really important – the company is separate from the university. It will carry on even if Andy leaves university

Further information

CUSE: <https://www.coventry.ac.uk/cuse/social-enterprise/>

Hope for the Community: <http://www.h4c.org.uk/>

Workshop 4: Co-designing a degree in social change with civil society, Harsha Patel, Doing Social

Outline:

This workshop told the story of a collaboration between Doing Social (DS) and Leeds Beckett University (Carnegie School of Education) that has led to the development of new degree in social change.

It provided a live example of how universities and civil society can collaborate around course and experience design and delivery (in social innovation/change/action), and examined what 'meaningful co-creation' looks like and why that's important. Two-thirds of the course will be delivered by practitioners (managed by Doing Social) from Sept 2019 when the course is launched.

It explored how to build greater confidence and courage to experiment with co-creation and to let processes unravel organically. It also sought to help our collective understanding of the different interests, concerns, and priorities of partners, that need to be balanced in work of this nature.

Doing Social

- Doing Social is a not-for-profit social enterprise. In Harsha's view, social innovation is often not inclusive, and communities are usually positioned as "passive recipients". Inclusion / participation is not always meaningful and recipients / beneficiaries are not enabled to benefit fully from innovation processes. Doing Social's mission is, therefore, to collaborate with others to create the conditions for "inclusive innovation" in the UK

Harsha emphasised the importance of *meaningful co-creation* with communities and civil society, and how it relates to "inclusive innovation"; and the importance of allowing time for co-creation to develop organically.

She explained the model of inclusive innovation, developed by Heeks, and how they aimed to move towards 'active inclusion' in their work:

Social Innovation & Inclusive Innovation



Passive inclusion

- **Level 1 Intention** – The purpose of the innovation is to tackle needs, wants or problems of underprivileged / underserved groups.
- **Level 2 Consumption** – The innovation is adopted & used by these groups – it is accessible/affordable.
- **Level 3 Impact** – It has a positive impact on their livelihoods – economic, social/well-being, skills.
- **Level 4 Process** – They are included in the innovation processes ("bottom-up" innovation, meaningful co-creation)
- **Level 5 Structure** – Created within a structure that is inclusive ("meaningful", rather than shallow/temporary).
- **Level 6 Post-structure** – Created within a frame of knowledge and discourse that is inclusive.

R.Heeks, 2013

Active inclusion (*meaningful*)

Developing a new undergraduate degree in social change

- Doing Social and Carnegie School of Education at Leeds Beckett University partnered to create a new undergraduate degree: BA (Hons) Innovation and Skills for Social Change (ISSC).

- They issued an open invitation to co-create the course with us: 120+ external individuals participated: community members, social change practitioners/civil society, FE and HE students, civil servants.

Lessons learned about co-creation

Harsha identified 12 key lessons learned from the process:

1. Engage underserved communities, civil society and key stakeholders in ways that are meaningful to them, within each stage/phase of the creation process
2. Meaningful inclusion requires capacity. Consider the support and resources needed to do this justice
3. There is often hidden ingenuity within people's *lived* experiences, allow some time to explore this
4. Consider the potential barriers to participation at each stage and try to address them
5. Define "success" (agree outcomes and impact) together
6. *Co-create* the co-creation process
7. Allow the innovation processes to unravel organically
8. Explore power dynamics including the power you hold and what you would need to share
9. Communication should be regular and open - nurture relationships
10. Acknowledge contributions publicly
11. Negotiate and compromise – but not your own mission and values
12. Measure the impact of participation / inclusion

Further information

www.socialchangedegree.org

<http://doingsocial.org/>

Closing plenary

In the closing session, participants were invited to write down some of the key insights and actions which had been triggered by the event. A closing plenary session explored some of these responses. We have highlighted some of the key themes below.

What is social innovation?

While a great diversity of approaches were showcased at the event, participants were struck by how much commonality there was

- It's reassuring that everything we all do is quite compatible, and easy to be put together

However, there were concerns expressed about the term 'social innovation' as a catch all phrase to describe this kind of work:

- The NCCPE should develop the discourse in this area to emphasise its multi-dimensional nature. There is a risk of it looking like one thing, being homogenized
- 'Innovation' can be problematic as a term. Why do we need 'new' things when we've already got good things in place that are underinvested in? In a relentless quest for the 'new' are we failing to sustain things? Are 'innovation' and 'sustainability' in tension?
- Still not a massive fan of 'social innovation' as a phrase but more open-minded than at the start of the day

Appendix three contains a list of the definitions of social innovation shared by delegates at the event

The power of simple ideas

People were struck by the potential of the various approaches showcased at the event – and their applicability to their own context. These are 'big ideas' with tremendous potential to be taken on by others and scaled up across the sector. For instance:

- The **helpdesk** – as pioneered at the University of Brighton, to facilitate purposeful community-university interaction
- The **social spinout** – as a route to sustaining projects, modelled in work at Coventry University
- Applying **strategic design** methods – to scaffold purposeful collaboration (utilised by many)
- Investing small amounts of **development funding** to support the co-design of projects, currently being trialled in the Power to Change / AHRC funded CUPI project, facilitated by the NCCPE
- Investing in **networks**, to bring people together with common purpose to mobilise good work, for instance through Link Up UK

The importance of acknowledging differentials in power and resources

Again and again, participants foregrounded the need to attend to equity

- The goal should be for people to make equitable commitments to a relationship. Even if there's a difference in resources
- People can make equitable commitments even if they are not equitable in other ways
- The relationship between those who are paid (HEI staff) and unpaid (many community groups) is problematic. What does this mean for commitment to a project? How does this influence the power balance or more importantly the perception of power balance? How does this influence the result of the project? Paid HEI staff can explore ideas and fail, but for unpaid community groups a failed project (or one that discovers what doesn't work) can be a totally unsatisfactory and potentially damaging result
- We should make it a standard to give acknowledgement. Giving thanks collaboratively

Attending to words and meaning

*A strong theme across the day was the role of language and meaning in realising social innovation. It is **through** language that meaningful relationships and projects are built and negotiated. And projects often result in changes to language and discourse. They generate and circulate new narratives and definitions, often by ensuring that previously unheard or neglected voices and meanings are properly listened to and their significance made explicit. These new narratives can effect powerful social change.*

- A key currency of social innovation is language
- A focus on 'meaning' and 'meaningful work' is important. We should always be checking in that the work is meaningful for everyone involved, and is creating value that is meaningful to them and their communities
- A focus on 'narrative' is really useful too. Narrative provides a helpful focal point, in different ways:
 - Narrative is how people express their different experiences – experiences that diverge from or challenge the dominant narrative – the default narrative
 - Narratives can be a research method, but exploring people's different narratives can also be a strategic intervention. Bringing together stories at odds with the dominant discourse to challenge it. What we call evidence is always something more than information – lots is the narrative

Focus on method, craft and process

*This work is hard and requires enormous skill and reflectiveness if it is to succeed. Given the subtlety and complexity of the processes involved, there needs to be a firm focus on **method**: building on what has been learned about how to scaffold productive collaboration*

- Design thinking really helps – you need a team where researchers can play to their strengths and designers can play to theirs
- Build scaffolding, so that when facilitation stops the processes can still carry on
- **Curiosity** should be at the heart of this work – it's about valuing multiple perspectives
- The work needs to start before projects are developed and funded: co-design needs to be used in the scoping of the work – not introduced later, after the academic (for instance) has worked out what they want to do
- Both process **and** outcomes need to be valued
- Social innovation does not necessarily mean participatory approaches. They can exist together or separately. But people often equate the two

Share learning

The event emphasised how vital it is that we invest time in reflecting on our work and sharing our learning – participants were often amazed by the quality of work that is going on, and eager to find out more:

- Disseminate good practice-publish/ publicise your process/outcomes and evaluate-culture change can only happen if we show how these activities can work
- Make it standard to illuminate the tensions - make this productive point of discussion rather than the status quo being of everything looking unproblematic or shiny
- There needs to be room for saying "this is hard" and sharing failures
- I need to find a way to harness the enthusiasm and passion generated today when back in my own professional practice

Final reflections

Participants were invited to suggest actions which should be taken – by themselves and others – to capitalise on the discussions and contacts made at the event

Individual actions

Many people were inspired to follow up with individuals they had met, or to try specific new tools or approaches in their own practice. Here is a short sample

- Write a short summary for colleagues in my HEI institute, with web links

- Link some of the publications/projects/findings mentioned today into our EU project on co-creation.
- Explore a way to harness the enthusiasm and passion generated today when back in my own professional practice
- To meet again with many of the people here
- Explore the role of social media in facilitating engagement.
- Write up our case studies online
- Contact NCCPE with possible publications around the topic of social innovation for the [Research for All](#) journal

Many were keen to apply the new insights they gained to their own practice

- I will consider the purpose of networks that I belong to: do they have the right members to achieve their aims, or conversely are their aims appropriate for their members?
- Approach my projects with the theory of change in mind-at the conception/meta level. Design my research opportunities around the outcomes I want to produce
- Take the learning from CUPP at Brighton to conversations about community-facing campus redevelopment at Glasgow's main campus
- Address the dilemma: how to balance the allure and funding draw of 'innovation' with the authenticity and value of funding longer-term (established) community-university partnerships?

Several reflected on the value of meeting face-to-face with people working in similar ways

- Reach out! Everyone is doing fantastic work and we should reach out directly to each other and to others. Take a chance
- Keep coming to more of these events!
- Keep building networks and exchanging knowledge
- Mixing with enthusiastic, passionate, engaged, like-minded individuals highlights the passion within the HEI sector and it's periphery and brings to life the positioning papers and research that are often dry on paper

Actions for others

Participants were invited to suggest actions for others. Here are some of their suggestions

Funders

- Funders should build expectations around sustainability into pathways to impact – for instance support and incentives to allow costs for scoping all spinout possibilities
- UKRI - should invest further funding for social innovation projects
- Funders should consider the value long-term and repeat funding – which is need if this work is to thrive
- They should create hard incentives for academics to work this way

NCCPE

- Investigate how to balance the engagement with these activities with the needs of an academic career/the business/the institution/the charity
- Provide guidance on incentivising engaged partnership working in universities (see the NCCPE's current [partnership working](#) resources)
- The NCCPE should do desk research to identify how many social Enterprise spinouts there were submitted in REF 2014 to give a baseline for 2021
- Maybe the NCCPE could create a database of organisations who would like to work with universities and vice a versa-highlighting key skills and interests (rather than lengthy paragraphs). Snappy, to the point. Researchers (unfortunately) don't have time to read too much that does not look initially like it is of immediate relevance to their research (see a similar database currently being developed to support university-business collaboration, [Konfer](#))
- Follow-up webinar to share more ideas on challenges perhaps?
- Keep up your important role in this discourse of social innovation and its multidimensional nature

Universities

- Universities need to provide more support for researchers at early stages

- Ask yourself - who should your researchers contact in order to realise their ideas for social innovation? Does that expertise exist in your institution?
- Do you take responsibility for the potential repercussions of research findings?
- Invest in institutional support for matchmaking, initial engagement and best practice/ways of working

Appendices

Appendix 1: event participants

| First name | Last name | Organisation |
|------------|-------------|--|
| Ian | Graham | VIATIC |
| Charlotte | Woodhead | UCL |
| Sophie | Wheeler | University of Cambridge |
| Serena | de Nahlik | Oxford University Innovation |
| Paul | Sternberg | Ravensbourne |
| Les | Levidow | Open University |
| Jenny | Hasenfuss | Newcastle University |
| Harsha | Patel | Doing Social |
| Karolin | Kroese | University of Leicester |
| Tamasin | Greenough | Viatic / Parenting Science Gang |
| Jessica | Watson | University of Glasgow / Glasgow Centre for Population Health |
| Margo | Socha | Oxford Brookes University |
| Hephzi | Tagoe | GhScientific |
| Roza | Hussain | London School of Economics |
| David | Floyd | Social Spider CIC |
| David | Convery | SOAS University of London |
| Jessica | Rexworthy | City Year UK |
| Suzanne | Perry | Power to Change |
| Elizabeth | Smith | University of Nottingham |
| Louise | Evans | Research England |
| Robert | Cooper | University of Bath |
| Gavin | Parker | University of Reading |
| Greg | Oldfield | University of Sheffield |
| Carmel | Capewell | Oxford Brookes University |
| David | Wolff | University of Brighton |
| Michelle | Lawrence | Link Up (UK) |
| Gabriela | Matouskova | CU Social Enterprise CIC |
| Andy | Turner | Coventry University |
| Betty | Woessner | University of Kent |
| Mariama | Njie-Ceesay | CU Social Enterprise |

| | | |
|--------|---------|-------------------------------------|
| Ceri | Davies | National Centre for Social Research |
| Simon | Gough | Ravensbourne |
| Maddy | Foard | NCCPE |
| Monder | Ram | University of Birmingham |
| Mark | Brill | University of the Creative Arts |
| Paul | Manners | NCCPE |
| Saidul | Haque | Citizens UK Birmingham |

Appendix 2: challenges in community-university partnership working

Delegates identified a variety of challenges. During the event, delegates were invited to suggest possible ways that these challenges can be addressed. These are also recorded in the table:

Challenge 1: match-making and finding each other

- In the recent HEFCE project, I had the task to work with one or more local food initiatives in London, which were constantly proliferating forms of social innovation, often with external help but not from academics. I was just one person contributing a few days. So, what could I add? I surveyed numerous initiatives and tried to identify a small one interested to work with me on specific difficulties. I eventually found one at a stage of rethinking its strategy to mobilise wider support
- Knowing who, how and when to approach
- I point academics in the direction of community partnership working. Some have come back saying they want to engage with museums but are having difficulty in getting commitment from local museums, and community organisations face a constant battle of lack of funding and resources, so unless you offer funding (and have accounted for extra funding in your research funding application) for the activities you propose, it is very difficult to engage with these organisations
- Developing interest amongst people in the community at the initial stages of a project
- Convincing researchers to commit to developing new initiatives.
- Speaking to the right person / decision maker and having a key contact for partnerships. Profile-raising to internal staff
- Barriers to reaching communities
- Finding connections
- Relating current research to a practical innovation which has impact
- Building trust (both sides).

Ways of addressing this?

- NCCPE [MUPI Match process](#) to link museums and universities
- Having a clear way in to a university with a named member of staff skilled-up to help

Challenge 2: Practical alignment

- Mis-alignment of expectations on working practices e.g. on budget, time-horizons, governance etc.
- Difficulty in establishing common ground on where collaboration is possible - finding the win-win partnership where all interests are met to some degree. Aligning this compromise with funding requirements/restrictions. Aligning funding calls and timescales with requirements on the ground
- Timescales - university research=slow
- Timescales - three separate sets of project planning and delivery timescales used in community organisations, in research organisations (both university and non-university), and funding partners/structures; how to match these up into delivering something that meets everyone's needs?
- understanding how to navigate policies/ infrastructure from both sides

- Identification of a project scale and scope that suits all partners
- Timing
- Time to develop long term relationships, alongside competing requirements
- Relationships tend to be person led not institution led - therefore the relationship can be limited to a department and can stop when a person leaves
- Navigating complex university systems and hierarchies
- Funding for both sides.

Ways of addressing this?

- NCCPE [CUPI project](#) funded by AHRC and Power to Change
- *Scottish Knowledge Transfer Network's Guide: 'Collaborating with academics' (for third sector)*
- *Enhanced brokerage is needed by a 'boundary spanner' who understands the different sectors involved.*
- *Validate assumptions early on. Be open and explicit about aims*
- *Get in the habit of having a jargon check in your meetings – for the benefit of all. Write out acronyms in full etc.*
- *Understanding the different roles that different groups can play – skills, aims, resources etc. Balanced team.*

Challenge 3: aligning expectations and agendas

- Differing agendas/risks of negative findings - e.g. pressure on community organisations to prove their worth to funders can conflict with risk of not finding positive outcomes in research studies, especially as funding requirements de-prioritise learning about how to improve services/programmes
- Understanding (and helping others to understand) what distinct value universities have to offer - where are our useful contributions - and what's overstepping into e.g. service delivery organisations and agencies. Of particular concern in the area I work in because it is undergoing a great deal of regeneration investment of various types - there are already a lot of cooks!
- Language - the same troubles faced by everyone else trying to marry the REF impact definition with the rest of the world's similar-but-subtly-different sense of the word, etc
- expectations, politics / conflicts of interest
- Blending agendas and ensuring that the partnerships are on an even status footing is the biggest challenge.
- Engaging community in a meaningful way.
- Achieving mutual benefit
- Understanding how the University can add value to the community and what the community wants from us
- The town vs Gown divide tends to be a barrier for collaboration, as well as lack of understanding of students regarding the deep rooted issues facing the local community. Also the transient nature of the student population makes it more difficult to engage on a long term basis

Ways of addressing this?

- NCCPE [Community Partner Network](#) resources

- *Only can be addressed by working and learning together – ‘defining in the doing’*

Challenge 4: equitable involvement

- Making sure that everyone's voices are heard, ensuring that we have a diverse range of people represented within the community
- Developing balanced and fair relationships, as a lot of my work is with local community groups
- Managing the relationship between researchers and community to ensure that both parties understand the skills and knowledge that the other brings to the table and balancing those so that both contribute in the right areas in order to result in the most successful outcomes
- Making the case (to the university) for core support to allow for slow and gentle relationship building work to build trust in a community that (justifiably) has a lot of distrust for most outside institutions.
- Power structures and hierarchies - a perennial challenge with university hierarchical structures but something that's been a particular challenge working in a community with extremely high rates of poverty. I find myself constantly on the alert for saviour-like attitudes and hyperaware of the need to avoid the dehumanising experience for community members of being treated as disadvantage lab rats.
- Ensuring that young people/children are included in activities/research

Ways of addressing this?

- *Build equity into structures, e.g. insist on co-led applications for funding. However, ongoing and honest reflection required.*
- *Change JeS so non-academics can be Co-Is*
- *Children in Scotland have produced a guide on involving children in projects*

Challenge 5: organisational ‘buy in’

- Lack of time and lack of funding and support from the University. Not seen as 'core business'
- Internal and institutional wide buy-in
- Getting our researchers and the university leadership team involved
- Accessing sufficient time from researchers. Working with us typically falls outside their normal remit and may not be recognised by their institution
- Buy-in from within the organisation and time to garner relationships, how to make them mutually beneficial

Ways of addressing this?

- *Follow your passion – enthuse others*
- *Influence strategy and policy. Senior champions do good work and make it visible.*
- *Balance two different kinds of work:*
 - *Culture change (slow, invisible)*
 - *Demonstrable engagement (loud, showy, can be superficial but gets recognised)*

Challenge 6: practical know-how

- Having the confidence and knowledge to get started
- lack of experience

Ways of addressing this?

- *Phone a friend. Find a friend.*
- *Engagement professionals are a thing. Please use/hire us!*

Challenge 7: sustainability

- What happens after project funding ends (continuation, capacity, legacy etc)?
Community-university partnerships are often not well-understood (supported) by universities.
- How to sustain long lasting, mutually beneficial collaborations
- How to maintain community- university partnerships over the long term (& beyond initial funding)
- Often, the gains (outcomes-impact) of these partnerships won't be immediate. They require a long-term investment and management of relationships, projects and impact. However if done well, long-term partnerships can be really impactful for the university, students and society and can lead to more sustainable outcomes. But it can be difficult to convince decision-makers (within universities) of the importance of investing in processes that they don't see as necessary for achieving their own priorities and objectives; for example - *meaningful* co-production and inclusion processes, which are key from a societal impact perspective and for the communities and groups that are involved, but doesn't necessarily help their bottom line
- time available to maintain
- Ensuring sustainability. Funding.

Ways of addressing this?

- *University of Brighton SEE-PER project*

Challenge 8: describing the value / impact and making the case for this way of working

- Measuring the impact of such collaborations
- Encouraging people that community partnership can and should be more than a recruitment tool for school/college-aged children
- Finding how to engage people who think it 'might not be for me'
- Persuading funders that personal experience is important to managing long-term health conditions
- need to reinvent good work to appease an ever changing environment
- Communicating value of mutual work to both parties (different drivers).

Ways of addressing this?

- *'Not for me'*
 - *Find a friend*
 - *Snowball*
 - *Twitter*

- *Get an intro*
- *Recognition of different domains of value – imply different ways of measuring.*

Appendix 3: definitions of social innovation

Over the course of the day, participants were invited to share their definitions of social innovation:

- Process and impact
- Creating change in society
- Informing strategy based on needs of community
- Doing things differently and thinking differently
- ‘Social Innovation’ is a phrase used when (statutory) funders want to get something done cheaper
- Combining sectors/practices/knowledge – blurring boundaries
- Driving research towards areas that have effect on people’s lives
- Access to expertise and resources to enable people to make changes in the world
- Doing things differently and giving the permission!
- **With** people not **for** people.
- New, different, changing things.
- To work closer with community
- Through partnership, implementing, maintaining and evaluating change, actions to meet different needs within society by coordinating knowledge, skills, experiences, resources, enthusiasm of individuals, communities, organisations, HEIs.
- University – universal at heart of and integral to society. Recognising different types of professionals within community-based organisations. People to produce/provide services/projects of benefit to all.
- Over-complicated