



# Research & Teaching for Social Innovation

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# Overview

- Purpose of this talk is to explore research & teaching for social innovation.
- Specifically, we will explore:
  - Overview of the University
  - Institute for Social Innovation & Impact
  - Research/Teaching Impact
  - Research
    - Gaps
    - Strategies
    - Examples
  - Teaching
    - Place-based teaching
    - Masters courses
  - Summary



**UoN**

**University of  
Northampton**



**Hello  
Waterside**

*Changemaker  
Campus*

*Committed to Social  
Innovation*

*Community  
Anchor Institution*

*21<sup>st</sup> Century  
University*

*Community work  
informs teaching*



# Institute for Social Innovation & Impact

- The Institute for Social Innovation and Impact (ISII) and leads the University's research aims centred upon:
  - Social innovation and social entrepreneurship
  - Social impact measurement
  - Third sector research consultancy
  - Public sector reform
  - Educational innovation
  - Business support
- We have a team of:
  - 1 x Professor
  - 2 x Senior Researchers
  - 1 x Postdoctoral Researcher
  - 1 x Data Manager
  - 1 x Data Entry Assistant, 8 x PhD students, 1 x Visiting Researcher



# SI/SE Impact Hexagon



*HEIs should achieve ALL of these six outcome pillars where possible*



# Research

# Strategies for SI/SE Research

- SI research provides a ***rich area of enquiry***, within which we can develop innovative approaches to ***research excellence***.
- ***Quantitative gap*** – Still a relative paucity of quantitative research. Large-scale statistical studies that can test/extend theory are essential.
- ***Co-researchers*** – A growing area of research, in which non-academic stakeholders are directly involved in the research.
  - Essential for understanding local, bottom-up innovations.
- ***Diverse funding*** opportunities:
  - SI/SE research not just about government research grants. Funding is also accessible from NGOs, private/third sector organisations & supra-national funding streams.



# Some Examples of our Research



- Explored social innovation ecosystems in higher education across Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico, the Philippines, South Korea & Vietnam
- Mapping teaching, research & community engagement activities across these countries
- Policy recommendations for developing ecosystems

- Evaluating the efficacy of the Social Enterprise Support Fund delivered in England
- Tracking impacts on funded SEs & communities
- Longitudinal research over two years (2021-2023)
- Generate understanding of how grant funded programmes can support community resilience



- Exploring arts-based peace-building initiatives in Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal & Rwanda
- Mapping social impacts delivered & theorising community arts approaches as social innovation
- How can such approaches be leveraged to deliver bottom-up social innovation & promote community cohesion?

# SI Friendly Journals

## Prominent Journals for Social Innovation Research

<i>Journal Title</i>	<i>Impact Factor</i>	<i>SJR</i>	<i>H-Index</i>	<i>Average Citation Count*</i>	<i>Country of Origin</i>
Entrepreneurship Theory & Practice	6.19	5.37	155	12.37	US
California Management Review	8.84	1.81	129	10.60	US
Journal of Business Ethics	4.14	2.21	187	6.83	Netherlands
Public Management Review	4.22	1.62	68	6.12	UK
Entrepreneurship & Regional Development	4.73	1.67	90	5.69	UK
Non-Profit & Voluntary Sector Quarterly	1.93	1.10	84	3.61	US
Journal of Social Policy	3.06	1.43	64	3.65	UK
Non-profit Management & Leadership	3.04	0.84	54	2.79	US
Journal of Social Entrepreneurship	2.80	0.61	25	3.42	UK
Voluntas	2.28	0.79	51	2.68	US
Sustainability	3.25	0.61	85	3.66	Switzerland
Community Development Journal	0.88	0.55	43	1.02	UK
Voluntary Sector Review	0.79	0.37	8	0.80	UK
Social Enterprise Journal	1.66	0.39	7	1.66**	UK
International Journal of Social Economics	1.40	0.29	39	1.26	UK

Hazenberg (2022): \* Based on 4-year citation index \*\* Based on a 2-year citation index

Data gathered from journal homepages & [www.scimagojr.com](http://www.scimagojr.com)



# Teaching

# Teaching SI

- Need for '**place-based**' learning in the teaching of social innovation (Elmes et al. 2019).
- Having curricula that can deliver **place-based** learning & the networks to enable this is critical (Alden-Rivers et al., 2015):
  - Students are enabled to achieve learning outcomes through **experiential work** in the community (ibid).
- Lecturers need the **requisite skills** to be able to effectively teach in this manner (Cederquist & Golüke, 2016).
- Enabling a **nexus** of theory, policy & practice (bringing academics down from **ivory towers**, whilst retaining theory & credibility).

# Skills of Social Innovators

- In developing social innovators ***you are encouraging***:
  - employability;
  - creativity;
  - self-efficacy;
  - empathy;
  - and ensuring that they are socially aware and that they can become Changemakers.
- This enables them to ***think laterally*** and approach societal problems from new perspectives (e.g. UoN hospital choir).
- Creating the ***global citizens*** of tomorrow, who can think idealistically, but engage in the realities of the world.

# Some Examples...



- MA Social Innovation
  - Masters course that seeks to provide practical, accredited learning to social innovators
  - Coursework alongside business development

- MSc Social Innovation
  - Strong focus on sustainability & SDGs
  - Hybrid approach of theory/practice



Trinity College Dublin  
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath  
The University of Dublin

- Exec MBA (Social Enterprise Programme)
  - Collaborative work of students/SEs
  - Problem-solving approach

# Summary

- As researchers/educators we should try to think about our research, teaching & impact **holistically**
- **Community-embedded** approaches to both offer great potential:
  - Research quality/impact/validity
  - Student learning through doing
  - Ensuring we are place-based institutions
- Social innovation is a **growing area**, whether for teaching, research or community impact





Thank you  
for listening

Any questions?

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