

# Universities for Social Innovation & Social Entrepreneurship

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# Overview

- In this session we will explore:
  - Introduction to the University of Northampton.
  - Universities as investors & incubators.
  - Social Innovation Research Hexagon.
  - British Council Projects:
    - BRICKS
    - SISERTL
  - Summary



**UoN**

**University of  
Northampton**

**Hello  
Waterside**

**TEF Gold**



# University of Northampton

- The University of Northampton has an ***institution-wide*** commitment to social innovation & impact.
  - Have built a new Innovation Centre & open our new campus in September 2018.
- It is the first HEI in England to become an ***Ashoka U*** Changemaker Campus.
- Students on ***all*** courses will engage in social innovation/impact, both academically & through work-placements.
- All students will be given the opportunity to ***practically*** engage with social innovation/impact.



# Ways we deliver social impact



# Inspire2Enterprise

- Inspire2Enterprise is a national SE support organisation that delivers:
  - Start-up advice & support.
  - Business growth support.
  - Learning & skills development.
  - Specialist support services  
i.e. legal & accountancy.
- It is a CIC that is a joint venture between the University & Exemplas:
  - Established & initially funded by the University.
  - Now a fully sustainable enterprise.

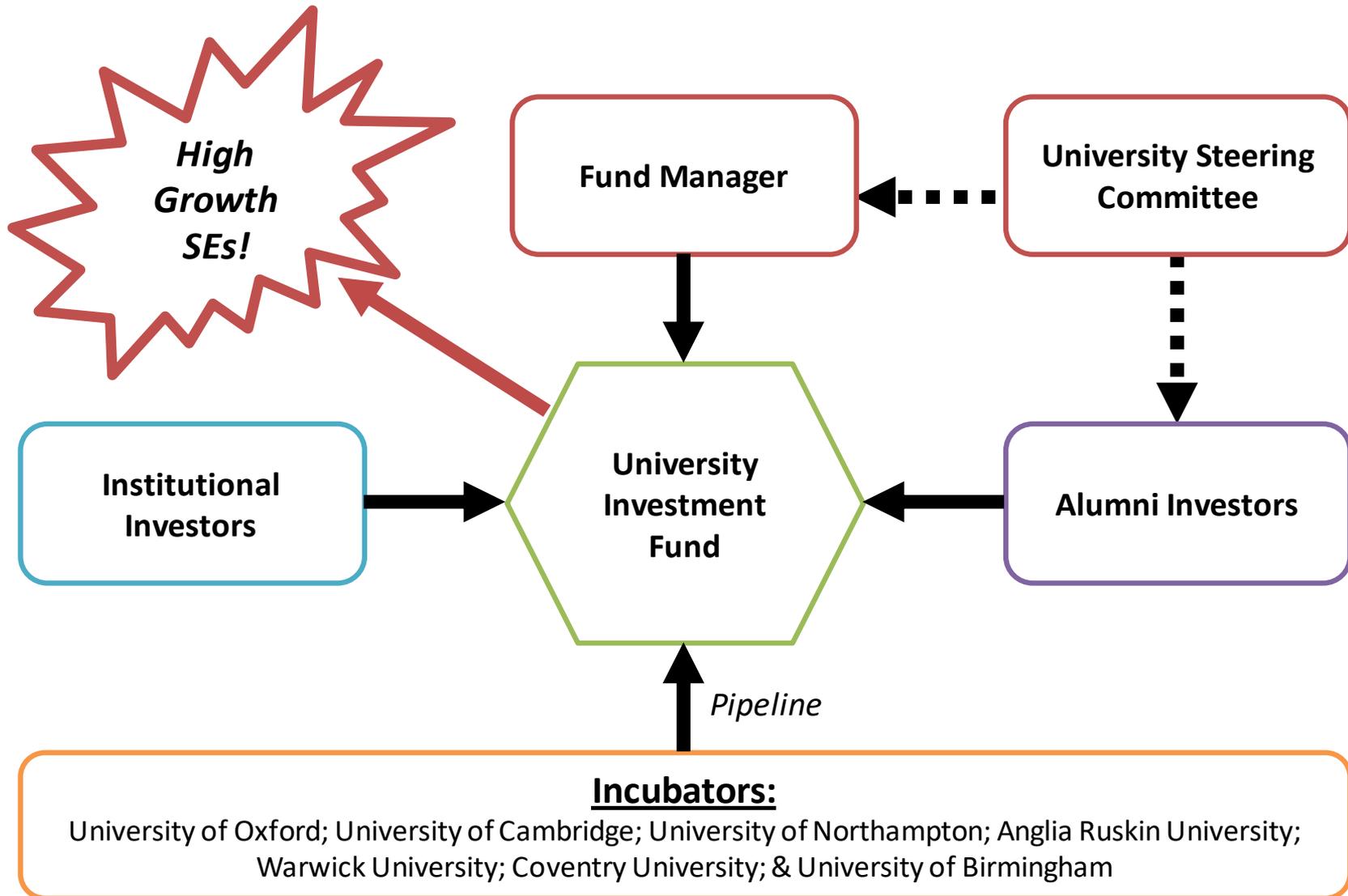


# Goodwill Solutions



- Logistics business c £8M turnover, profitable.
- Trains and employs ex-offenders, homeless, drug addicts etc.
- In 2011 The University invested £200k for a 20% stake.
  - Turnover at time £500k
- Opportunities:
  - Research case studies.
  - Student placements.
- PR & financial return.
- Do good stuff!

# Incubation & Scale



# SI in HE Hexagon

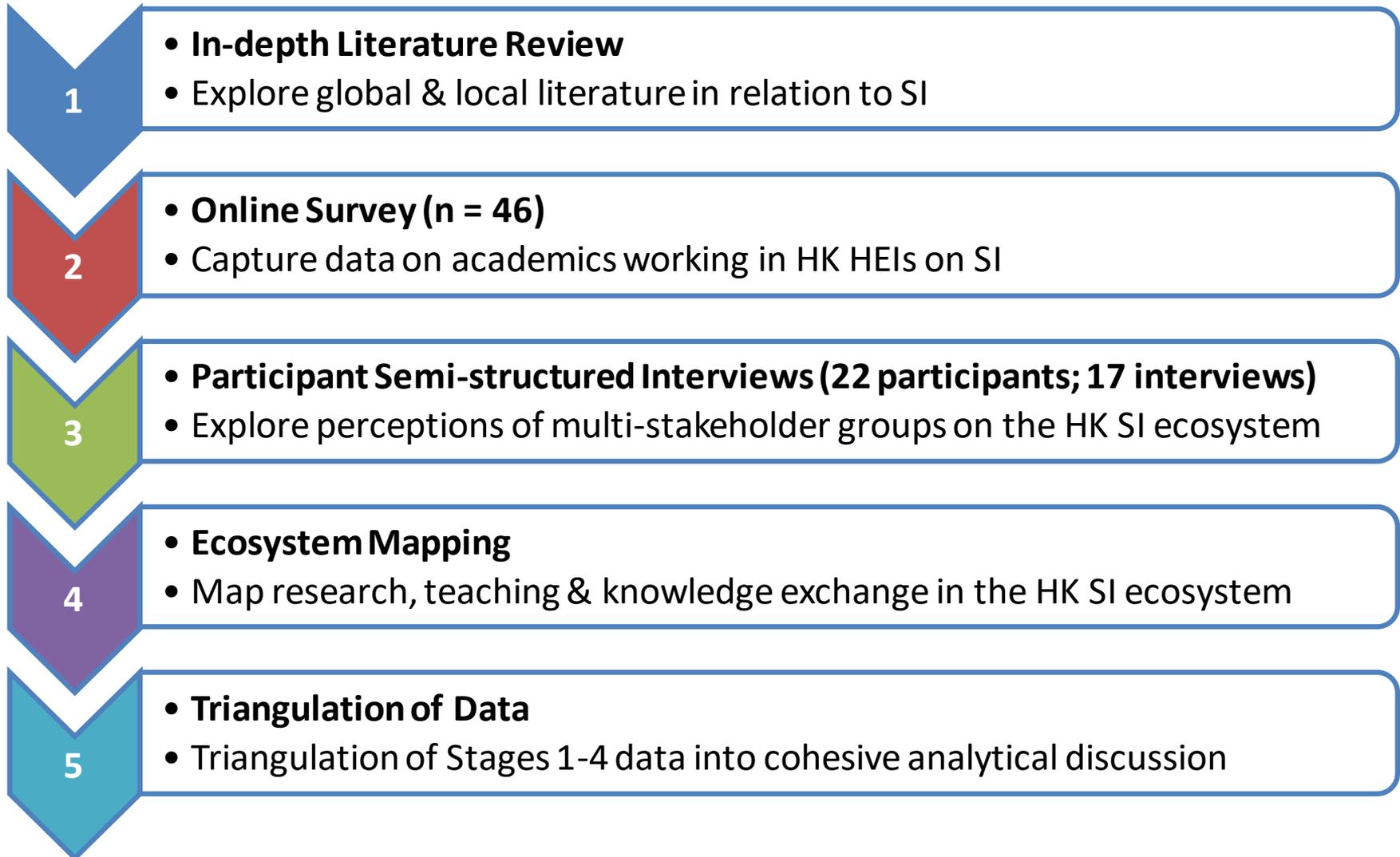


*Universities  
should achieve  
**ALL** of these six  
outcome pillars  
where possible*

# BRICKS Overview

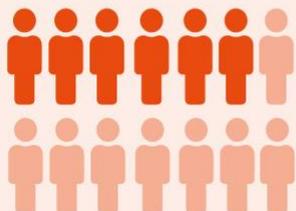
- **Objectives: Building Research Innovation for Community Knowledge & Sustainability (BRICKS)** is to build capacity & community amongst leaders from academia around the role that social innovation (SI) theory & practice can play in poverty relief & related social issues.
- **Research Aim:** To understand the knowledge, capacity & future ambitions of the Hong Kong academic community in relation to social innovation.
  - How is this shaped by barriers & enablers at the below three levels?
    - **Systemic Level:** Cultural norms, traditions & incentive structures that mediate inter-HEI collaboration.
    - **Institutional Level:** Behaviours & attitudes of faculty & staff at HEIs to collaboration.
    - **Practice Level:** Frontline knowledge of how to collaborate in the delivery of social innovation initiatives.
- British Council led & funded project in Hong Kong.

# BRICKS Methodology



# BRICKS Findings

## INDIVIDUALS AND ECOSYSTEMS



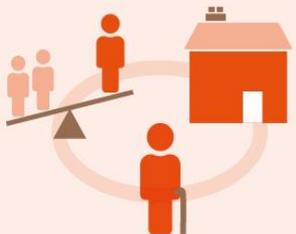
### PRACTICE

The role that individuals play in driving institutional change is key in Hong Kong's HE sector. Indeed, just six academics accounted for nearly half of the lead authorship on all 50 publications identified in this report. There is therefore a need to recognise the importance of key individuals in driving SI, and empowering them to further expand (and more importantly to facilitate others to expand) their SI activities in Hong Kong's HEIs<sup>10</sup>.



### INSTITUTIONAL

There remains a lack of institutional support within HEIs for SI and leading staff are not supported to deliver SI research and curricula. If universities supported staff and students to establish social innovative organisations, to engage in volunteering/work placements both within degrees and as extra-curricular activity, it would better align Hong Kong's HEIs with the needs and wants of the more socially aspirational younger generations (i.e. their customers).

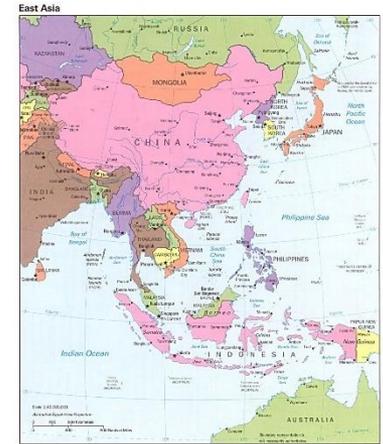


### SYSTEMIC

The key social problems facing Hong Kong identified in the research through participant survey responses include social inequality, elderly/ageing issues and housing, accounting for 59% of all respondent-identified social problems in Hong Kong. Health was also identified in the interviews as a key determinant of all these other issues, showing the interrelated nature of social problems in Hong Kong and reinforcing the need for a collaborative, multi-agency approach to solve them. Finally, there remains a lack of clarity around the concept and definition of SI, which makes it difficult for strategic leaders to understand and implement socially innovative research and curricula.

# SISERTL Overview

- **Overview:** Ongoing British Council funded research mapping social innovation research, teaching & community engagement in Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines & South Korea.
- **Methods:** Mixed-methods approach utilising online survey & interviews/focus groups:
  - Survey of academic stakeholders (N = 256)
  - Interviews with academics & wider stakeholders (N = 78)
  - 27 x focus groups with academics & wider stakeholders (N = 115)
- **Results:** Analysis is ongoing with the results published in April: However, early findings indicate:
  - A lack of government & HEI support for SI research.
  - Teaching is better supported within HEIs, with government funds to support this.
  - Greater focus on community engagement in Malaysia & Indonesia.
  - Clear differences in different areas across the five countries.



# Summary

- Universities can be **key institutional supporters** of SI/SE.
  - Impact-led research.
  - Teaching focused on creating Changemakers.
  - Wider focus on policy & practice.
  - Focus on social impact across all institutional functions.
  - Co-design research/projects with the community.
  - Universities as social investors.
- BRICKS/SISERTL research shows **key barriers** to spread of SI/SE in Higher Education:
  - Lack of policy/funding support
  - Lack of strategic support for SI/SE in HEIs
  - Academic career tracks often don't favour high impact research.
  - Definitional issues in understanding SI/SE.
- However, whilst we can look for global or meta-trends, we must acknowledge the **socially/culturally contextual** nature of SI/SE.

**SUMMARY**

Thank you  
for listening

Any questions?

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