

Social Enterprise and the University: Experiences and Lessons from the University of Northampton

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Northamptonshire in the UK



c 70 miles North of London

c 680,000 population

Mixed economy, traditional industries replaced by light manufacturing, high-tech. engineering, service sector, logistics, public sector

Strong political need to transform local public service delivery

University of Northampton in a major strategic change, based on institutional improvement

We have two campuses...at present







A global university

- The University's strategic plan: Raising the Bar commits it to developing strategic partnerships and to internationalisation:

For us, to internationalise offers new opportunities to build long term strategic partnerships with overseas institutions defined by increased student mobility, transnational education and in-country delivery. It offers our students the opportunity to embrace new cultures and develop a global perspective with enhanced employability. For staff it opens up new territories for the delivery of research and consultancy.

Social responsibility

- First in the UK for Social Enterprise – the UK's first and only Ashoka U Changemaker Campus
- University supported Social Enterprises
- International Scholarship
- Cutting edge research into Social Enterprise; Education; Health and Wellbeing; Public Safety, Crime and Justice
- Commitment to Open Research



Sustaining excellence

- Changemaker plus
- Waterside campus in 2018



UK / EU definition of social enterprise:

- Businesses who trade for a stated primary social purpose
- Reinvest > 50% of profit back into the business or used to fulfil social mission
- Owned in the interests of their community or intended beneficiaries
- Transparent and accountable regarding operations and impact



UK State of social enterprise 2013:

70,000 social enterprises

>1 Million staff employed

39% based in deprived areas

59% grew last year compared to 28% of SME's

57% predict growth next year

38% led by women

75% actively involve beneficiaries in governance







85% of social
enterprises reinvest
their profits back into
their local economies



rise.org.uk



@SocialEnt_UK

#buysocial

DO A GREAT DEAL

**BUY
SOCIAL**

Why social enterprise?



Social enterprise and UK universities

The national picture

- Social enterprise increasingly important
- A 'new model' flexible, dynamic and cost effective model for service delivery and transformation
- Social enterprise supported by all mainstream political parties
- UK universities good at following developments!
- Social enterprise moving from a niche specialism to more mainstream education
- New research, learning material, degree programmes , student societies, external speakers etc
- Very small government funding to support social enterprise via HEFCE – UnLtd engagement

It's more than modules

Socially enterprising university models

- You don't have to do a social enterprise degree to be socially enterprising
- Attitudes, values and behaviour more important than specific qualifications
- Can be a socially entrepreneurial artist, scientist, lawyer, accountant, dentist, teacher etc
- Philosophy underpinning learning and research is vital
- Extra-curricular opportunities very important – Enterprise Club crucial to Northampton **Helping students and graduates to set up social enterprises**
- Promotion of a socially enterprising university should be different

It's more than modules

Student opportunities at Northampton

- Enterprise Club – Big Bonanza: introduction to social enterprise through to personal support and funding for start ups e.g. Agnes Soups and Sauces, iDID Adventure
- Work placements with social enterprises
- Social enterprise involvement integrated with most degrees
- Student Union business operations moving to social enterprises
- Participating in research projects, fund raising, strategy formation
- If it does not enhance the student experience, we don't do it!

What Values?

- Provide a unique student experience of the very highest quality, developing both theoretical and practical competence in social enterprise
- Encourage, support and develop entrepreneurial skills and enterprising attitudes in students, staff and communities we work with
- Strive to deliver a fairer and more inclusive society (doing ‘good stuff’ and helping people to have better lives)

What initiatives?

- All students have opportunity to work in a social enterprise, as part of their degree
- Integration of social enterprise with learning and research (Changemaker ethos)
- Inspire2Enterprise
- Investment in social enterprises
- Evolution of UN functions to social enterprise operations
- Delivering social change initiatives
- Use procurement power to deliver social value, and encourage others to do so (how much 'good stuff' can we do when we spend £300M+ on a new campus?)
- Influencing policy and practice

Initiatives in action



Goodwill Solutions

Logistics business c £6M turnover, profitable

Trains and employs ex-offenders, homeless, drug addicts etc

Staff opportunities: research, teaching case studies

Student opportunities: placements, jobs, careers

University opportunities: PR and money

What results?

- League tables, now a UK top 50 University
- Prizes (Midlands Business Awards 2012, 2013, 2014)
- Recognition in social enterprise sector and media (Ashoka), UnLtd, Social Enterprise UK, Guardian
- Recognition in academia in UK and abroad
- Recognition by UK national and local government (Cabinet Office, DWP, BIS, MOD, DfE, Northamptonshire Strategic Economic Plan)
- National expertise in public service spin-outs, social investment, social impact measurement and metrics
- Social impact part of the UN Diamond Standard for research
- Massive student involvement, over 50 graduate social start ups
- Over 7,200 social enterprises engaged
- UK's most integrated and effective social enterprise 'ecosystem'

UK Support for Thai social entrepreneurs?

“We’ve got a great idea here that can transform our societies, by using the power of finance to tackle the most difficult social problems.

Problems that have frustrated government after government, country after country, generation after generation. Issues like drug abuse, youth unemployment, homelessness and even global poverty.

The potential for social investment is that big.

So I want to make it a success in Britain and I want to sell it all over the world.”



– David Cameron, G8 Social Impact Investment Forum, June 2013

20 countries in Asia, Africa, Europe and North America

4000+ social entrepreneurs trained

95 partnerships (in the UK and around the world)

57 million media reach

300,000+ social media followers

60,000 people engaged face-to-face



Ecosystem Development

Social Investment Platform

- launched in China, extending across Asia
- connects social enterprises, investors, policy makers to promote social investment
- Supports established social enterprises in the “missing middle” by providing access to incubation and new funding streams
- 268 high achieving social enterprises vied for nearly **£1 million** in investments in first year through a business plan competition



Collaboration for impact



Cabinet Office



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office





Thank you
for listening



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