

## **Feedback from strand: Building entrepreneurial and economically engaged learning cities**

The strand posed the question: can cities be entrepreneurial *and* inclusive *and* economically engaged? A common concern was revealed regarding an increasing gap in society between those included and those excluded, exacerbated by the development of the knowledge economy with its focus on high level skills. Speakers confirmed that entrepreneurial learning was relevant in all contexts. A common understanding is that entrepreneurship is the engine that drives the economy of most nations, and entrepreneurship education is increasingly exploring new and innovative ways of thinking and working. 'Education for sustainable development and global citizenship' and 'entrepreneurial learning' are participatory and interactive and may be integrated through developing a framework that is dialogic and addresses values.

We learned about how the different missions of universities had an effect on the way entrepreneurial learning was embedded into regional entrepreneurship ecosystems, with different outcomes for student start-ups or institutional spin-outs. Contextual dimensions were related to the entrepreneurial activity to help analyse "placed-based" innovation and entrepreneurship activities. Mapping of university regional activity is essential to help us to understand impact, although it is challenging to measure outcomes in comparable ways. The Sustainable Learning-Regions Planner aims to develop certification for learning cities professionals and promote engaged scholarship research methods, community engagement and sustainable development.

We received an historical and global account on the development of learning cities, providing a valuable perspective on the spread of this initiative. The trend is towards learning city specialization, for example entrepreneurial, inclusive or sustainable. The future will be one of more cooperation between cities around the world, although unknown economic and geo-political factors will also play a large part.

Major events, as with other disruptive forces, can create entrepreneurial responses. In this context we considered the stimulation provided by the hosting of the Commonwealth games in Glasgow and considered how growth can be sustained against the harsh backcloth of world recession. It was suggested that entrepreneurs were needed to boost economic direction both during and after the Games. This project succeeded in creating awareness about the possibility of collaboration across sectors to create a vibrant economic and educational region. We reviewed an initiative to create a regional system-level approach to address workforce development, STEM education, and a growing need to support a competitive manufacturing sector. This regional effort to improve the intersection between education and advanced manufacturing addressed the importance of workforce development as a factor in collective impact.

The Learning City of Taipei use social capital theories to understand the role of community as the microcosm of the city. In order to understand the development from community empowerment to the development of the learning city, the paper discussed theories of community empowerment and introduced the strategies utilised in Taipei. Adult access and lifelong learning opportunities featured as sustainable examples of community empowerment.

New routes to employment and their impact for disadvantaged and excluded young people using positive psychology were considered. The group comprised young people identified as being at risk of becoming NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training). Pathways to youth employment using social impact bonds were evaluated and the presenters suggested that a lack of innovation and risk taking inhibits the public sector from adopting more radical approaches and using the tools that businesses use in the development of their people. A 'work in progress' considered how Social Impact Bonds (SIBs) could provide a means to reverse the recent trend in UK Local Government that cut funding for preventative public services, with particular reference to the 'Pathways to Youth Employment'. It examined the background and policy relating to SIBs in the UK and presented some early case study findings.

A report on research into adult education centres in rural Australia revealed the struggle that these centres have been experiencing as they endeavour to develop viable futures. Adult and community education centres known as Learn Local Organisations (LLOs) located in rural and regional communities in the State of Victoria, provide a vital service in supporting the most vulnerable learners in their communities, yet many of these organisations are becoming economically unviable.

Countering the individualistic assumptions around entrepreneurship education, we considered a university-scale entrepreneurial curriculum transformation which was the result of community engagement in disadvantaged areas in Southern Taiwan. Using a Participative Action Research (PAR) approach, multiple stakeholders (students, community associations, community leaders) weave relations and resources (cultural and social capital in particular) in formal and informal learning settings. The proposal was that university-community partnership can be further developed in order to redesign curriculum to address personal as well as social transition, which would have the potential to nurture popular entrepreneurship and contribute to building entrepreneurial learning cities. In Catania, an analysis of the wider third mission activities of university engagement with the city and region were considered, in terms of how the dissemination of knowledge and research could contribute to economic development. The paper challenges whether university /regional collaboration has contributed to the economic, cultural and social development of the city or region in a full or meaningful way.

Finally, we considered whether engaging with entrepreneurial and lifelong learning values will result in the development of autonomy and self-direction in the learner, leading to efficacy and enhanced control of personal development. The development of entrepreneurial learning as education for transformation should produce learners with the knowledge, skills and experience for employment and self-direction. This shows the inextricable link between education, training and employability of learners, especially in developing lifelong learners with the capacity for being self-employed.