

VIP Educational Partner Interview Guide and Questions

Purpose: Understand the effects on your business of the Valleys Innovation Project

Definitions: Social Innovation - "new ideas that work in meeting social goals" (Mulgan et. al 2007)

Civic Mission - "civic leadership, links with schools, positive contribution to local communities, encouraging social innovation and enterprise" (HEFCW, 2017)

Overarching Research Questions

- **Q1) How do learners gain entrepreneurial confidence and skills through social innovation challenges?** (EEUK Aim: To increase the scale, scope and effectiveness of enterprise education initiatives)
- **Q2) What is the economic impact for local businesses using socially-driven innovation challenges?** (EEUK Aim: To develop new areas of applied enterprise education which link with the national focus on the needs of the economy and employers)
- **Q3) Does the civic mission of VIP educational partners align with local business priorities?** (EEUK Aim: To develop new areas of applied enterprise education which link with the national focus on the needs of the economy and employers)
- **Q4) How does a digital solution enhance proximity between academia and industry?** (EEUK Aim: To provide evidence of the effectiveness and impact of enterprise education)

Icebreakers

1. **What do you think of the project's aim to combine social and economic challenges in Wales with solutions from local colleges and universities?**
2. **Would working with industry in this way be possible without projects like VIP?**

Rationale: Open icebreaker questions which ask them to think about more generally about the project and its relative benefits or disbenefits.

Understanding Civic Mission - Education institutions supporting the local community

3. Civic missions in higher and further education are strategies and actions of these institutions that help their local communities. What would you say is your organisation's civic mission?

Rationale: Helps to support the answering of Q3 as awareness and knowledge of the civic mission is important to allow the fulfilment of that strategy or values statement.

Quantitative Links: The quantitative phase of this study also illustrated that the learner awareness of the civic mission of their institution with the majority of respondents to Q14 of the survey indicated that they are neither aware of nor unaware of the civic mission of their institution. This question allows industrial partners to reflect on this.

4. Do you believe your organisation's civic mission aligns with the local business's priorities?

Rationale: Again relates to Q3, and understanding from the educational perspective how the relationship is viewed between business and civic mission orientated educational institutions. But also allows us to test whether VIP has actually delivered new civic engagement for these organisation or whether this is a continuation of existing activity. Follow-up questions will explore the difference VIP and previous activity.

5. Learners who completed a survey about their experience of VIP outline that there is greater awareness of Civic Mission in Further Education than in Higher Education? What's your perspective on this as part of one of these institutions?

Rationale: Helps support the answering of Q3, but nuances the perspective captured from the industrial partners and allows similarities and points of difference to be established between the two parties.

Quantitative Links: CrossTabulation of variables led to the establishment of a difference between learners in Further Education and Higher Education and their view of the importance of the Civic Mission. Learners in Further Education

6. Do you feel more or less engaged with the community because of involvement in this project?

Rationale: Relates to Q3, and seeks to understand any gain on a more fundamental level if this project has led to a closer relationship between the business and the community it serves.

Quantitative Links: Question 5 of the learner survey illustrated the importance for learners of helping the local community as part of this project. This question allows us to understand how employers view the importance of supporting the civic mission of education and by extension the community in general.

7. **Learners surveyed in Further education identified strongly with 'helping others' as a primary motivation for involvement in VIP. While learners surveyed in Higher Education identified that building 'personal skills' was the key motivation for VIP involvement. Do you feel this is representative of the learners in your institution, and what does the institution do to support learner awareness of supporting the local community?**

Rationale: This question allows us to reflect on both the relationship between different perspectives in FE/HE. It also highlights a key shift in perspective from the socially centered 'helping others' to the more personally centered 'personal skills'.

Quantitative Links: CrossTabulation of variables led to the establishment of a difference between learners in Further Education and Higher Education and their view of the importance of these differing skills. This question allows us to explore this difference with individuals directly involved in this employability activity.

8. **Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 = Strongly Supports, 1 = Does not support) how much your organisation values supporting the local community (through either a recognised civic mission or values statement): Could you please explain why?**

Rationale: Allows us to capture a metrified indicator of impact to contribute to the CiVIC score measurement, alongside narrative feedback from this part of the interview.

Working with Education

9. **Have any links developed with local businesses because of this project?**

Rationale: Directly link to Q4. The question seeks to explore if the relationship between industry and academia has lessened due to the project, and what the longer term effect of this kind of interaction could be.

Literature Links: The issue of proximity has been discussed widely in both entrepreneurial ecosystems literature and regional development literature. This questions seeks to understand how, and if, proximity between actors and institutions has been reduced due to the outputs of VIP.

10. **How was your experience of working with local businesses to deliver employer engagement activity? Pros/Cons?**

Rationale: This question asks the educationalist to reflect on the impact of their relationship with an business partner in the longer term. This also links with answering of Q1 as the skills, experience and knowledge gained through involvement in this social innovation challenge will be directly influenced by the relationship between the two organisations. This also allows us to capture information for the Best Practice report to support the enhancement and understanding of these relationships for other institutions.

11. Does the use of a digital platform enable relationships between organisations like yours with education? Why/why not?

Rationale: Directly linked with Q4 to understand how the use of a digital platform allowed the employer to interact with the educational partner through their learners

Projected Effects

12. What skills would you say you have seen illustrated by learners in this project? For example please rate on a scale of 1-10, where 1 is very weak, 5 is average, and 10 is very strong the skills illustrated by learners; creative thinking, creating and seizing opportunities, decision making, making ideas a reality, self-reflection, communication skills and digital skills.

Rationale: Responses to Question 23 of the learner survey suggested that on average all the participants either stayed the same or improved in certain skills. For example, creative thinking, creating and seizing opportunities, decision making, making ideas a reality, self reflection, communication skills and digital skills. This question allows us to test the results from the employers perspective.

Literature Links: The skills and competency framework used to formulate the examples for this question comes from EntreComp: The Entrepreneurship Competence Framework (2016) which outlines the following skills as part of the framework; creative thinking, creating and seizing opportunities, decision making, making ideas a reality, self-reflection, communication skills and digital skills. Exploring the skills that employers have experienced as part of VIP helps to answer Q1.

13. Challenges for the learners were focused on the marketing of Intellectual Property Offices services, new product development in the textiles industry, and after-sales service for recycled motor scooters. What positive or negative effects do you believe this project had, or are having on the community which includes ? (Prompt: Could be employability/financial/social/ environmental/ technological/creative)

Literature Links: Supports the answering of Q2 around impact of socially-driven innovation challenges. The factors both economic (industry), community (social) and how education connects them are described in Munck's (2010) relational diagram (see below) for Civic Engagement and Global Citizenship. This question allows us to test both the economic and community impacts mapped against Munck's model. Further consideration will be given to the university/educational impacts in the separate interviews with the VIP educational partners.

14. Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 10 how much you agree/disagree with the following statement: Involvement in the VIP has created positive outcomes for my organisation (10 = Strongly Agree, 1 = Strongly Disagree) Could you please explain why?

Rationale: The purpose of this question is to gain a perspective on the longer-term value of involvement in a project such as VIP. This gives us a strong base to assess the success or failure of the project and contributes to summative conclusions about social innovation projects moving forward.

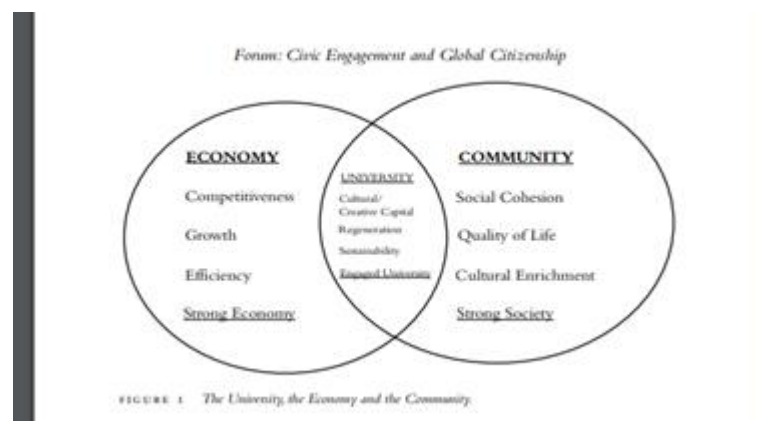
Evaluating the VIP Process

15. Why did you want to get involved in the VIP?

Rationale: Seeks to understand the underlying motivation for involvement with the project. Also helps to answer Q3 in part and provides a nice opener to other questions.

16. Could you tell me the positive or negative effects (which could be social/ environmental/ educational/ technical/ creative) on your institution that you experienced as part of the Valleys Innovation Project?

Literature Links: Supports the answering of Q2 around impact of socially-driven innovation challenges. The factors both economic (industry), community (social) and how education connects them are described in Munck's (2010) relational diagram (see below) for Civic Engagement and Global Citizenship. This question allows us to test both the economic and community impacts mapped against Munck's model. Further consideration will be given to the university/educational impacts in the separate interviews with the VIP educational partners.



17. Why do you think learners wanted to get involved in VIP? (Prompt: It could be work experience, build confidence, help others, personal skills etc.)

Quantitative Links: This question is asked due to the fact that the students surveyed through the quantitative mechanism identified that gaining work experience along with building confidence was the most important outcome of the project. This question reflects on this from an employers perspective Also relates to answering research Question 1.

Literature Links: This question allows the study to test this proposition by MacFarlane's (2019, p.127) study that; "students develop their understanding of how entrepreneurial activity can create both economic and social value. This occurs through experiential learning, where students either provide consultancy to a local organisation (often a social enterprise)."

18. What skills would you say you have seen demonstrated from learners in this project? (Prompt: For example; creative thinking, creating and seizing opportunities, decision making, making ideas a reality, self-reflection, communication skills and digital skills)

Rationale: Responses to Question 23 of the learner survey suggested that on average all the participants either stayed the same or improved in certain skills. For example, creative thinking, creating and seizing opportunities, decision making, making ideas a reality, self reflection, communication skills and digital skills. This question allows us to test the results from the employers perspective.

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19. Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 10 how much you agree/disagree with the following statement: I would recommend involvement in Social Innovation Challenges to other organisations? (10 = Strongly Agree, 1 = Strongly Disagree) Could you please explain why?

Rationale: Again supports the answering of Q2, but gives a metrified response for use in the CiVIC scoring mechanism (see original bid application)

References

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