

## VIP Organisational Partner Interview Guide and Questions

**Purpose: Understand the impact 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?

### **Understanding Civic Mission - Education institutions supporting the local community**

3. **Are you aware of the education institutions drive to support the local community?**

**Rationale:** Support the answering of Q3 as business partners require knowledge of the civic mission of their educational partners in order to help support it.

**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. How do you feel your involvement in the VIP has supported, or not supported, the local community?

**Rationale:** Again relates to Q3, and understanding why this is important to the local business. 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. 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.

**6. How important is social innovation to your business?**

**Literature Links:** Relates to Research Question 3. This is important as large parts of the existing literature in the areas focuses on the cultural hegemony of large corporate entities providing Corporate Social Responsibility programmes in the communities that they serve through university students (see Braunsberger, K. and Flamm, R. O. (2013); Mulgan, G. et al. (2007); Galvão et al. (2019)) This question allows us to understand if social innovation has a particular impact beyond the the fulfillment of CSR requirements for larger entities.

**7. Could you rate the importance of supporting the community to your business on a scale of 1-10, where 10 is the most important 5 is neither important or less important, and 1 is the least important? Please explain your reasoning?**

**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**

**8. 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

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

**Rationale:** Again seeking to establish, through Q4, if the relationship between industry and academia has lessened due to the project, and what the longer term impact of this kind of interaction could be.

**10. Has the connection with the VIP educational partner led to any benefits/ disbenefits for your organisation?**

**Rationale:** This question asks the employer to reflect on the impact of their relationship with an educational partner in the longer term.

**Projected Effects**

**11. 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

**12. Please indicate on a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 = Strongly Agree, 5= Neither Agree or Disagree, 1 = Strongly Disagree, how much you agree/disagree with the following statement: Involvement in the VIP has created positive outcomes for my organisation? 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)

**13. Would you be involved in a project like this in the future? Why or why not?**

**Rationale:** Establishes an understanding of the long term future of this this type of education/organisational partnership. Also provides an element of summative feedback for the conclusions of the Best Practice Report.

**Evaluating the VIP Process**

**14. 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.

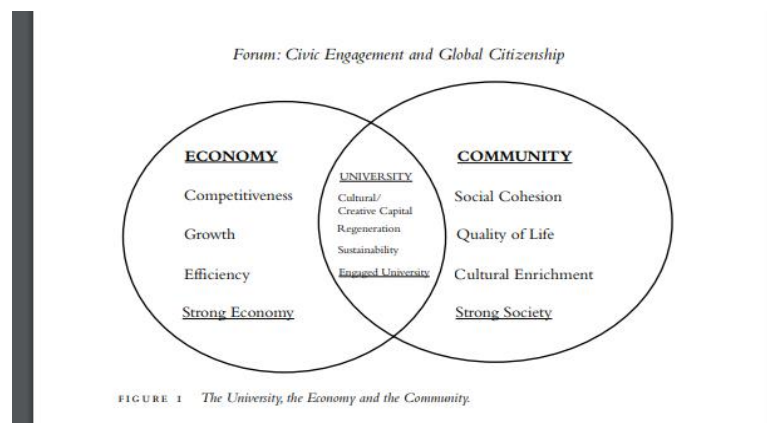
**15. Did your involvement in the project support, or not support, your organisation goals?**

**Rationale:** Targeted towards gathering information towards answering Q3, and understanding why. The question also allows the study to explore a gap in the existing literature around Civic Mission and Engagement which does not really quantify the motivation and the business rationale for involvement in these educationally-led initiatives.

**Literature Links:** Criticism has also been levelled at investors and financing institution's standard financial measures as "Conventional financial reports cannot capture social impact effectively (Kaplan and Grossman 2010); balance sheets and audited annual statements provide little useful data for either the provider of social finance or the not-for-profits, social entrepreneurs, or social enterprises that wish to access finance via a demonstration of their superior performance" Antadze, N. and Westley, F. R. (2012, p134). Bugg-Levine et al. (2012, p. 120) labeled this issue as a 'financial-social return gap.' and seeking to explore why businesses get involved in this for ROI reasoning adds to this body of knowledge.

**16. Could you tell me the positive, or negative, effects on your business of the learner ideas? (Prompt: Could be 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.



**17. Have you seen any measurable financial or community effects of the project on your business? (Prompt: could be jobs protected, increase in sales, supporting young people)**

**Rationale:** Specifically, relates to Q2 in terms of measurable economic impact such as turnover, increase in sales, new product development etc. This may be difficult to quantify for third sector businesses and may be caused by unrelated activity, but provides a comparable measurement for future social engagement projects. Understanding the financial impact of projects such as VIP is key to both communicating and illustrating prospective benefits to future participants.

**18. 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 like VIP to other organisations? (10 = Strongly Agree, 5= Neither Agree or Disagree, 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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