Social innovation: the state of the field, practice, theory and the future

ESSSE, July 2011

Geoff Mulgan

What I'll cover

1. The field
2. Why now
3. Practice
4. Theory
5. The future

1. THE FIELD

hospices carbon trading online tax transactions

pre-school programmes innovation camp restorative justice

social ventures Pledgebanks magazines sold by the homeless

fair trade positive deviance incubators microcredit

therapeutic communities community wind farms timebanks

zero carbon housing production schools participatory budgets

distance learning social innovation open source

eco-cities slow food police community support officers corporate universities

citizen reporters personal budgets health collaboratives

world wide web criminal assets recovery congestion charging

co-production skunk works personalisation

non-emergency phone numbers

wikipedia drug courts online learning platforms

cognitive behavioural therapy for prisoners consumer co-operatives

Definitions

- 'innovations that are social both in their ends and in their means'.

- New ideas (products, services and models) that simultaneously meet socially recognised social needs (more effectively than alternatives) *and* create new social relationships, capital or collaborations, that are both good for society *and* enhance society's capacity to act.

- Theoretical literature about means as well as ends, about notions of value as well as the values that are expressed in the pursuit of value, and about capacities as well as products and services.

- The definition internalises within itself the conflict that is inevitable in the use of the word 'social': what counts as good, or a socially recognised need, is constantly contested, and this very contest provides some of the dynamic energy that drives the field

Contributors to the field

Web entrepreneurs. innovators

Mutuals, coops

Politicians

Service design companies

Design advocates

Professions

User groups/NGOs

Policy makers

Social entrepreneurs

IT/egovernment

Public sector managers

Consultancies

Social ...

Innovation parks
Innovation camps
Innovation funds
Innovation incubators
Innovation offices
Venture intermediaries
Impact bonds
Entrepreneurs in residence
Value metrics
Returns on investment

.... all applying systematic methods to addressing social challenges, but early stage, little theory, analysis, datasets

2. WHY NOW?
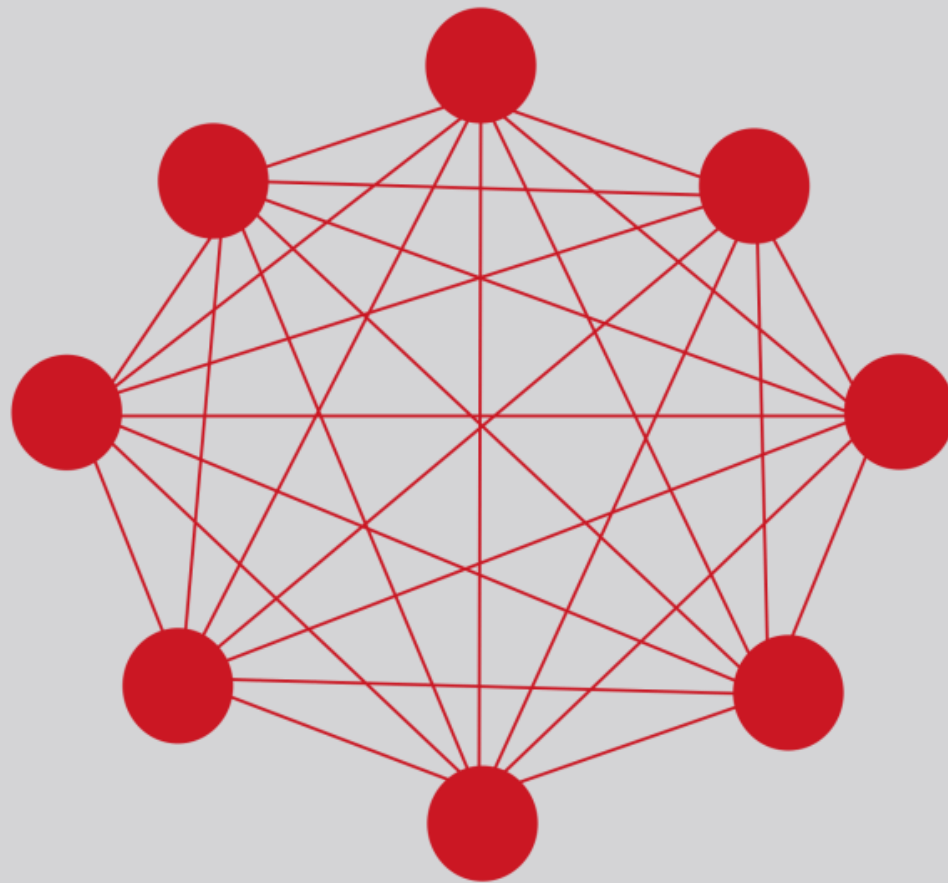
- Pressures for innovation and productivity improvement in public sectors
- Evolution of civil society and its economic roles
- Growth of social econ**omy** – 11m jobs in Europe, growing numbers of social enterprises
- Growth of socially oriented commercial economy: US Congressional Budget Office: projections forecast total spending on health care will rise from 16% of GDP in 2007 to 25% in 2025, 37% in 2050 and 49% in 2082.
- Visible exemplars: Grameen/BRAC, Pratham, Mondragon

Areas to watch

- Third-age learning
- Experiential goods and services
- Health services and wellness products
- Connected health
- Lifelong finance
- Age-inclusive consumer goods

Creating the conditions for success

- Widening the net by retaining older workers in the workforce
- Ensuring future supply of "hands and minds"
- Promoting the productive capacity of older workers

The silver economy

Organizational imperatives

- Age-proof your human capital by adapting the workplace environment
- Recycle and diffuse the critical expertise of older workers
- Develop your silver radar to capture market share

Impact on growth and jobs

- US: US$442bn added to 2020 GDP, 2.2% above current trajectory; 5m additional jobs
- Germany: €61bn added to 2020 GDP, 2.1% above current trajectory; 1.5m additional jobs
- UK: £46bn added to 2020 GDP, 2.5% above current trajectory; 1.3m additional jobs

Health spend as % GDP (2005) versus adult mortality rate (2006)
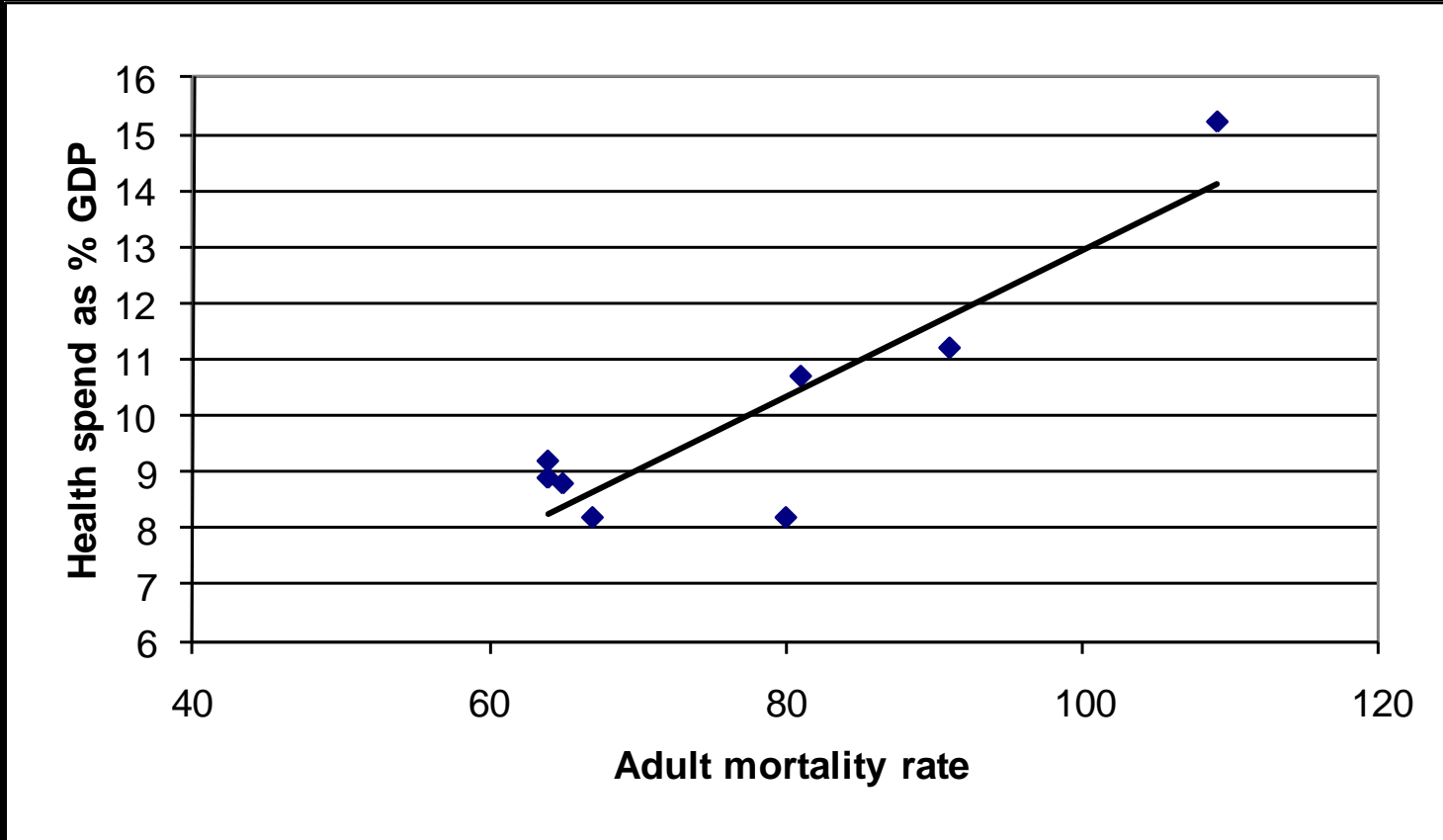
Change in health spend share of GDP versus % improvement in adult mortality rate
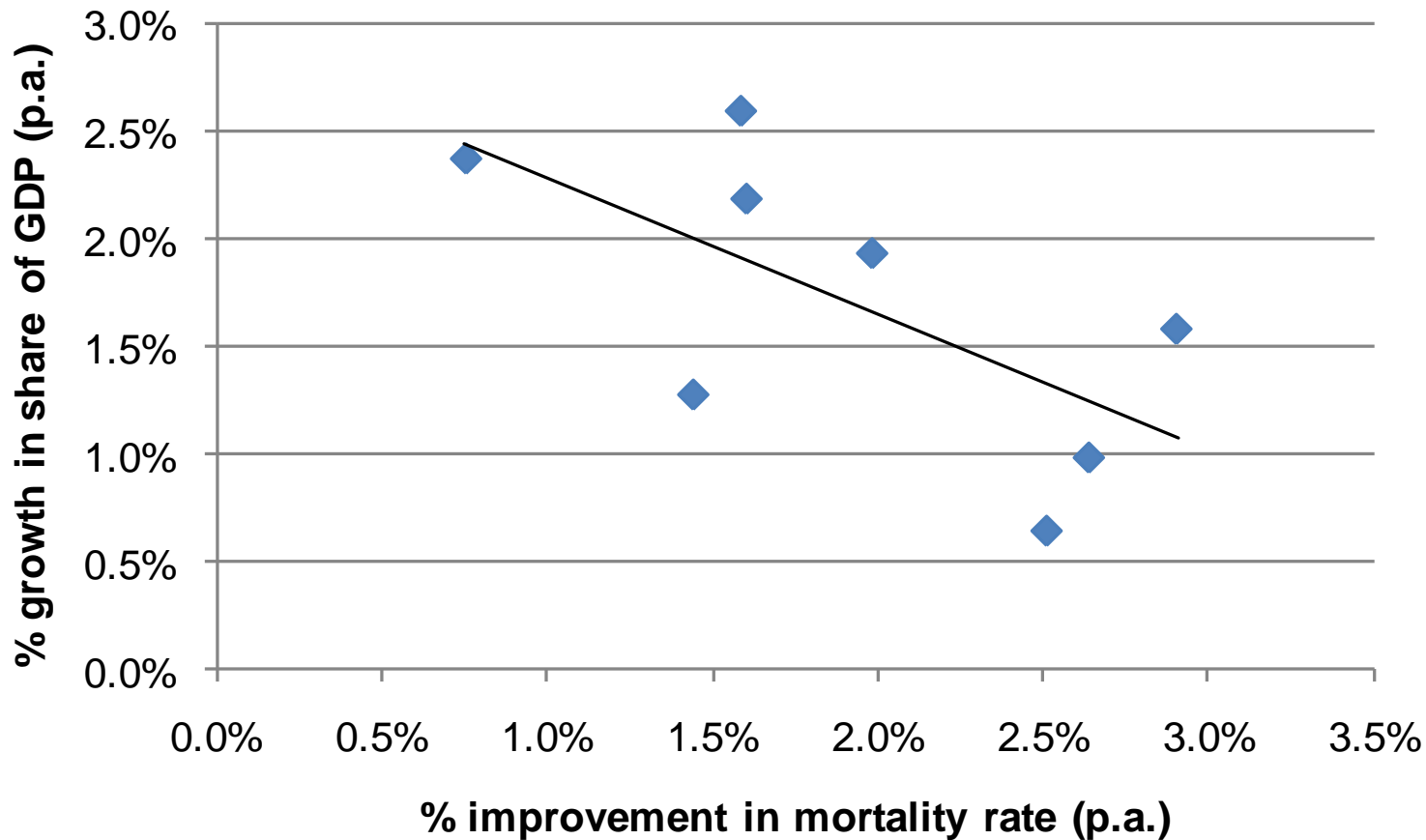
R&D in local services

% of GDP, 2007

% of value added, avg. 95-05

Total R&D
% of GDP, 2007

Total — 0.1 ... 1.2

EU-15: 1.9 (Other[1] 0.2, Government-financed 0.6, Industry-financed 1.1)
China: 1.4 (Other[1] 0.1, Government-financed 0.4, Industry-financed 1.0)
OECD: 2.3 (Other[1] 0.2, Government-financed 0.6, Industry-financed 1.5)
United States: 2.7 (Other[1] 0.1, Government-financed 0.8, Industry-financed 1.8)

Other[1]
Government-financed
Industry-financed
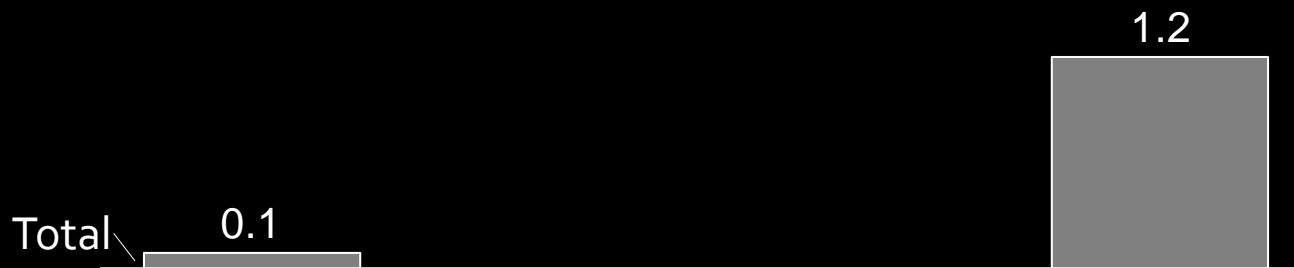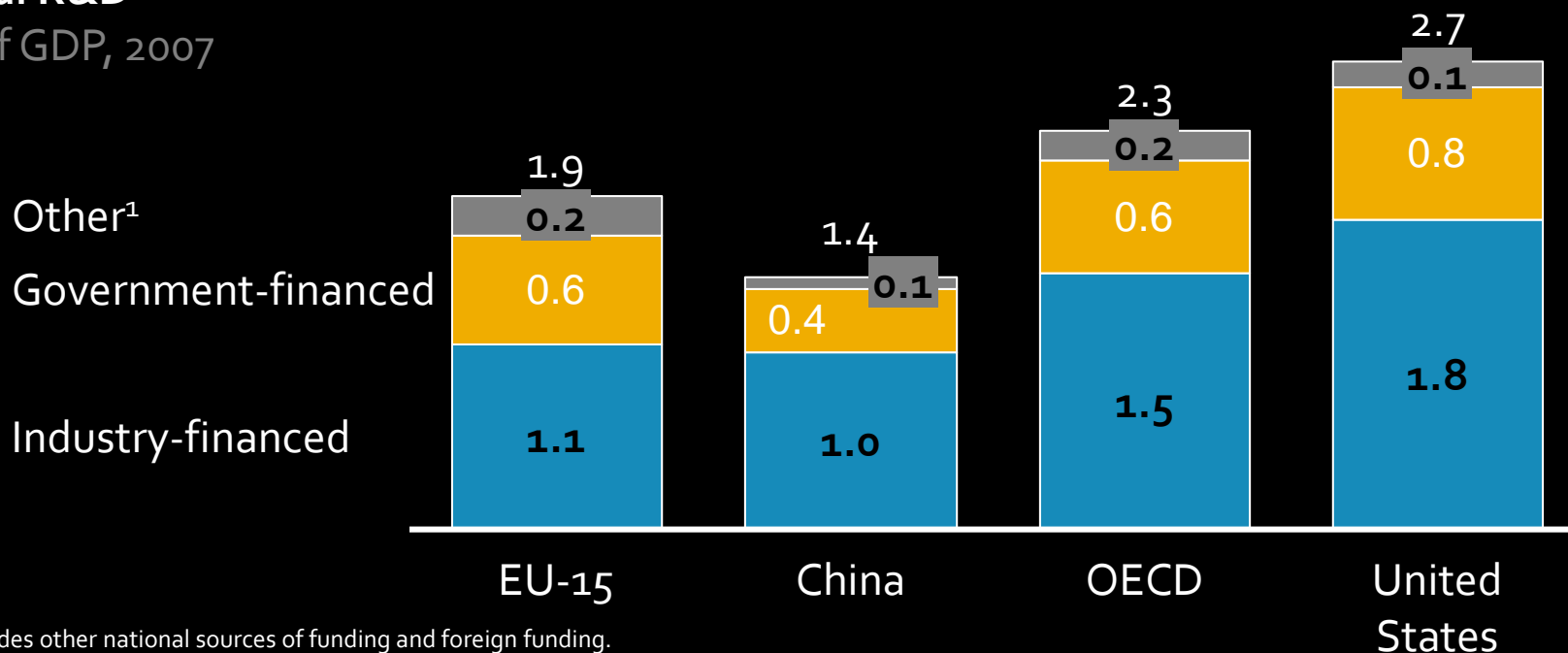
1 Includes other national sources of funding and foreign funding.
Note: Numbers may not sum due to rounding.

Beginning to connect to broader debates on innovation and intangibles

Investment in fixed and intangible assets as a share of GDP, 2006

Source: OECD (2010), *Measuring Innovation: A New Perspective*, OECD, Paris based on COINVEST [www.coinvest.org.uk], national estimates by researchers, EU KLEMS database and OECD, Annual National Accounts Database.

3. THE PRACTICE

SOCIAL INNOVATOR SERIES:
WAYS TO DESIGN, DEVELOP
AND GROW SOCIAL INNOVATION

THE OPEN BOOK OF SOCIAL INNOVATION

Robin Murray
Julie Caulier-Grice
Geoff Mulgan

THE YOUNG FOUNDATION

NESTA
THE LAB
Innovating public services

1 Prompts

2 Proposals

3 Prototypes

4 Sustaining

5 Scaling

6 Systemic change

Mutation, creativity

1 Prompts
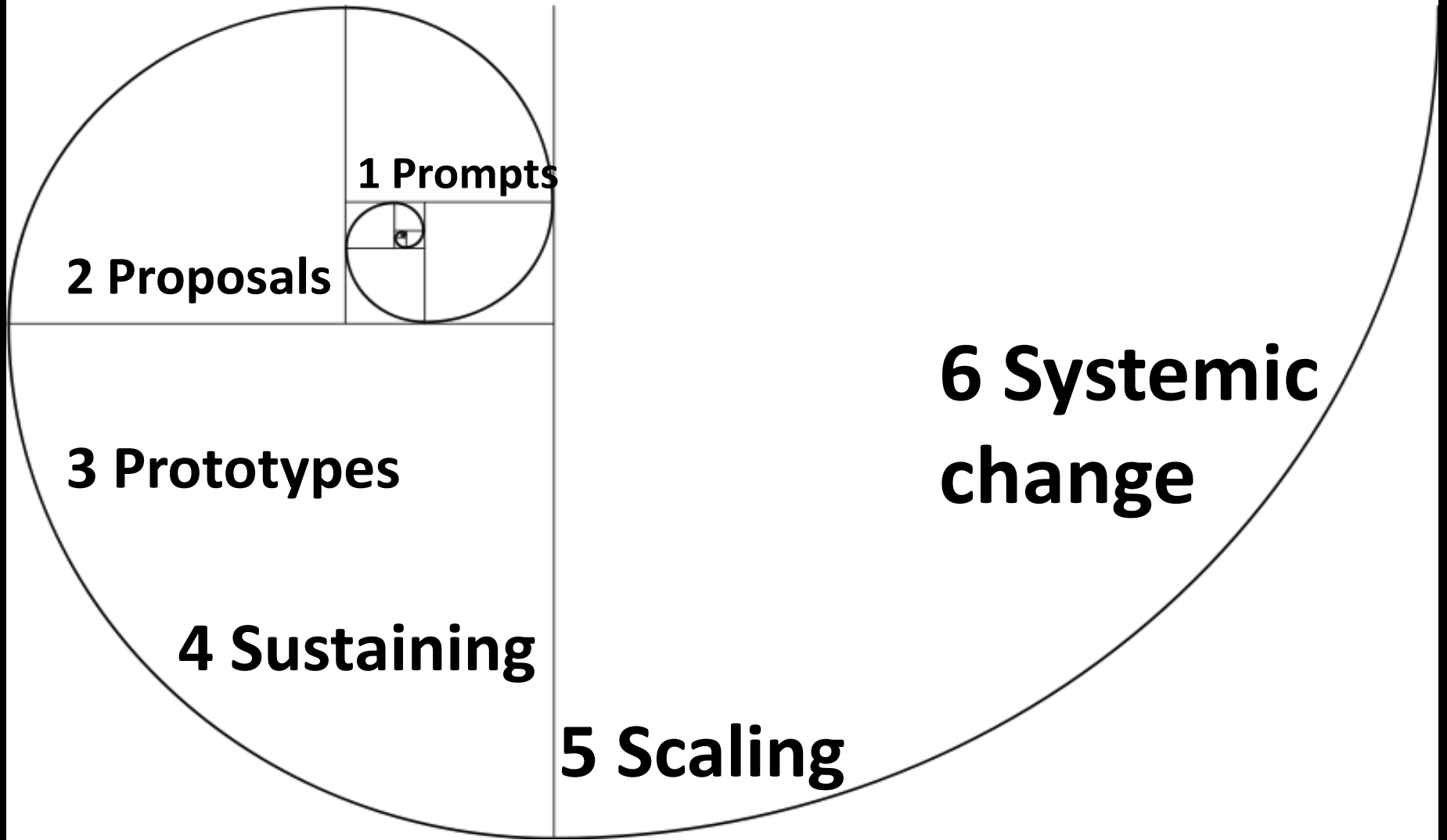
6 Systemic change

Selection

Replication and growth

user feedback

failure demand

rights to time for ideas

political mandates

new **technology**

data and evidence **crisis**

surveys and sousveys

needs mapping diagnosis ethnography

1. prompts and triggers

cost escalation new **paradigms**

critical walking

reviewing extremes, positive deviance

petitions, **campaigns** **visits**

complaints choirs
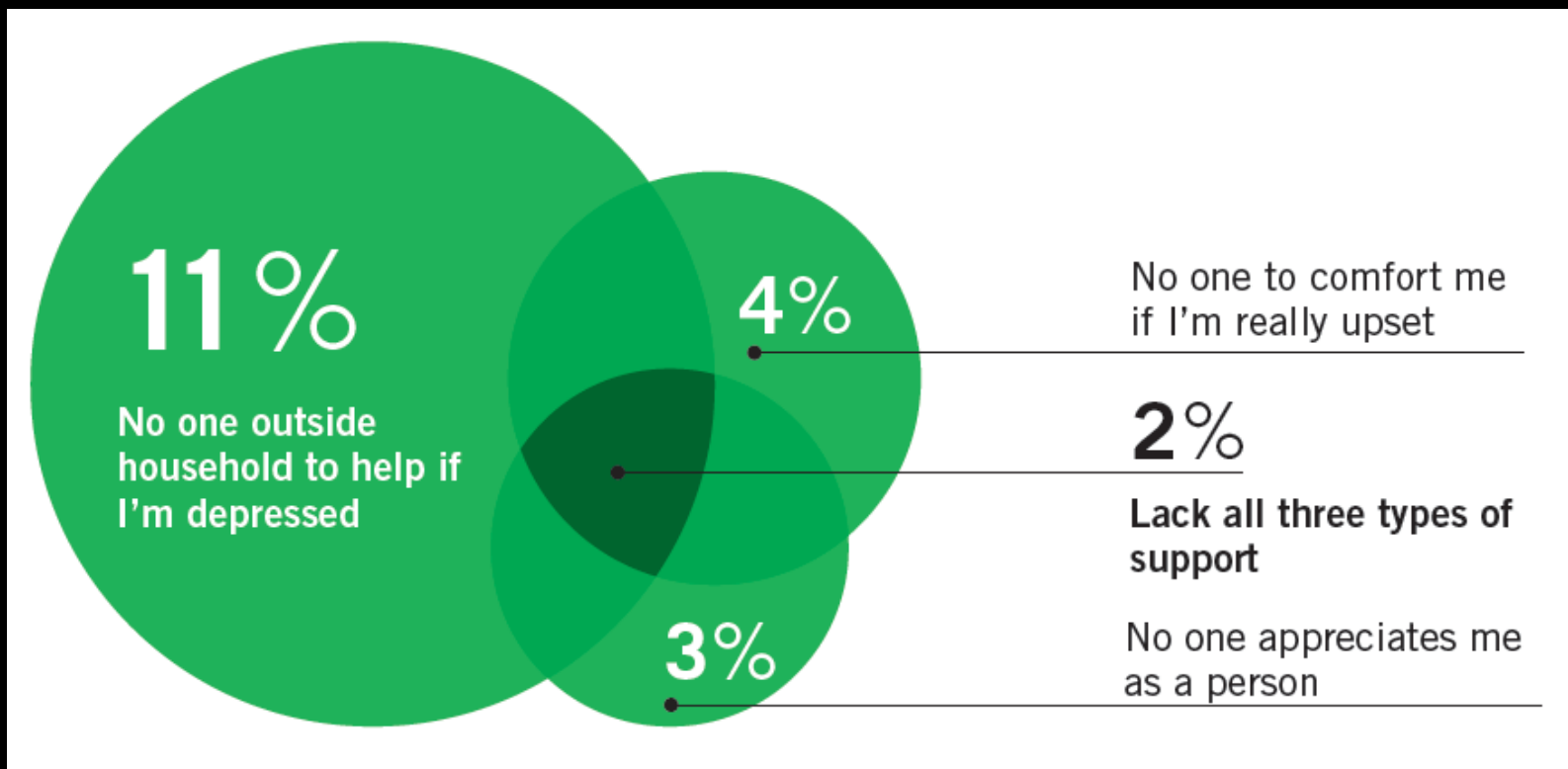
Percentage responses to questions on emotional support

Competitions and prizes

Hybridisation, recombination

creative meeting methods

collaborative networks

SI Camps

incubation

inspiration

Idea marketplaces

2. proposals and ideas

Design tools

User led design

Living Labs

crowdsourcing

Skunkworks

Artists in residence

Creativity methods

A teams

reflection

brainstorms

TRIZ

Staged prizes

I DO IDEAS

Welcome

My Idea...
from Jenni Clutten

01:16

This is your chance

HD :: vimeo

Could you change your community for the better with £1000? Really...? Then prove it. We're working in partnership with Live UnLtd to give away up to £30,000 to young people 'across' England to make a difference. Get involved and be in with a chance of winning by uploading a film that tells us what you would do, how you would do it and who would benefit. It doesn't get any easier than that - check out our trailer then get filming!

Explore Tagmap

Upload now!

Check out the ideas that have already been submitted on our Tagmap, and if you think you've got a better idea upload one of your own. Click the map and register to take part.

Explore Channels ▶

social innovation camp

enabled by design

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It's all about people powered products: Enabled by Design is a community of people passionate about well designed everyday products. By sharing their loves, hates and ideas, Enabled by Designers challenge the one size fits all approach to assistive equipment through the use of clever modern design.

Loves & Hates

By Dominic on 29 Sep, 2009
Stress watch

By Denise on 22 Sep, 2009
My Rocking Teapot

By Dominic on 21 Sep, 2009
OXO Good Grips bottle opener

By flosskebabs on 08 Sep, 2009
Touch base lamps

By Andy Exell on 23 Jul, 2009
Ironing board mirror

By esinedw on 10 Jul, 2009
Switch Stick - Paint your ow ...

Ideas Factory

By katiekate on 22 Sep 2009
Is there any way of someo ...

By Gabriel Simoes on 9 Sep 2009
senior health care

By Dominic on 12 Jul 2009
Padded crutch handle cove ...

By John Porter on 8 Jul 2009
Personal shriek (attack) ...

By Fieldmaster on 14 Jun 2009
We're looking for some di ...

By Chic Aid crutches on 12 Jun 2009
'Buggy Boards' for electr ...
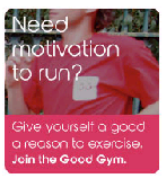
By marmot73 on 3 Jun 2009
Mobility scooter with bab ...

Product Reviews

By Denise on 25 Aug, 2009
Homedics Spot Massager

By funkyarthur on 16 Jul, 2009
Etac Relieve Angled Carving ...

By Drinkup on 15 Jul, 2009
Hands free drinking system

By Denise on 24 Jun, 2009
Sony Ericsson W995 Mobile Ph ...

By HipWomanToo on 31 May, 2009
Crutches

By alison on 26 May, 2009
**Lever propulsion system for ...**

By Ana on 27 Apr, 2009
Baby carrier

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goodgym

be good, get fit

HOME   GET INVOLVED   HOW IT WORKS   ABOUT   TEAM

how it works

Need motivation to run?

Give yourself a good a reason to exercise. Join the Good Gym.

1 sign up
2 get safe
3 run
4 do good
5 get fit

Good Gym in Beta

The Good Gym is currently in beta, we're testing out the idea to find out the best way of setting up the project on a bigger scale. If you want to help us develop the project then get involved.

[ ] Search
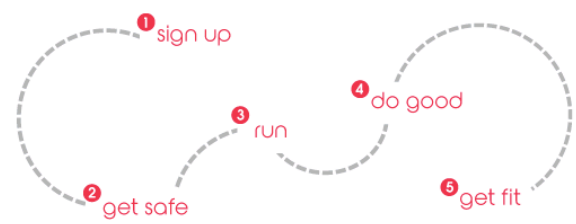
The
Good Gym pairs runners isolated less-mobile people in their area. Runners will jog to their house, deliver something nice, have have a brief chat and be on their way again.

It will help people get fit by provding a good reason to go for a run and it will help the person being visited by providing them with some friendly human contact and a newspaper or piece of fruit.

Timing is up to the runner and the person they're visiting. Usually after work and weekends work best. Runners have to commit to at least one run per week.

	DEMOCRATIC SOCIAL DESIGN TOOLS ™ –
∧	inversion (peasants become bankers, patients become doctors)
∫	integration (personal advisers, one stop shops, portals, speeding flow)
x	extension (extended schools, outreach)
∂	differentiation (segmenting services by groups, or personalisation)
+	addition (getting GPs to do a new test, libraries running speech therapy)
-	subtraction (no frills, cutting targets, decluttering)
t	translation (airport management into hospitals, business planning into families)
g	grafting an element from one field into another, creating a new fusion (coaching into a secondary school)
∞	creative extremism – pushing ideas and methods to their furthest boundaries

Social Entrepreneur in Residence (SEiR) – in Birmingham

Incremental improvement

formal validation

grants for growth

policy commitment

programme funding

loans, equity, quasi-equity

Refining business models

embedding

4. sustaining

Commissioner commitment

Organisational forms (CICs etc)

Professional development

Public share issues

Crowd-funding

formation

Growth patterns
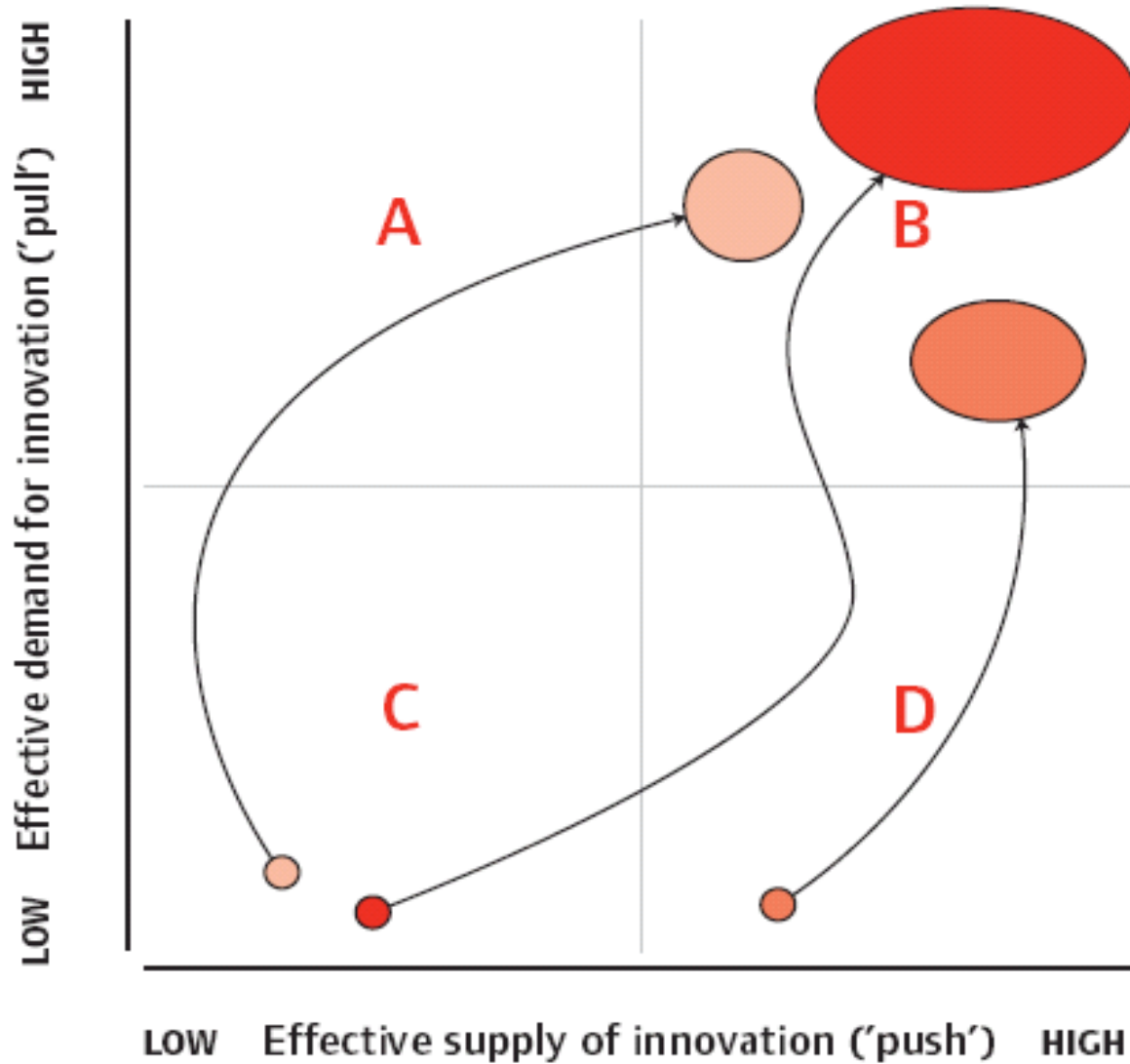
LOW	Levels of control over what, who, where and how		HIGH
Uncontrolled diffusion	More directed diffusion by a 'parent' organisation Promotion through formal networks Multiplication including federations Licensing Franchising	Takeover or emulation by a more powerful organisation	Organisational growth

Who Owns My Neighbourhood?

Home   Blog   My Page   About

Find out who owns places near you, and help take responsibility for land, buildings and activities in your neighbourhood
Kirklees land ownership data only at the moment

Enter postcode or postcode sector (eg HD1): [＿＿＿＿＿] [Go]

Berry Brow by Alison Munday

Who Owns My Neighbourhood?

| Home | My Page | About | Blog | RSS | Contact us | Help |

Enter postcode or postcode sector (eg HD1): [   ] [...or choose an area ▼] [Go]

[« Redraw map] [Add a place]

Council owned land
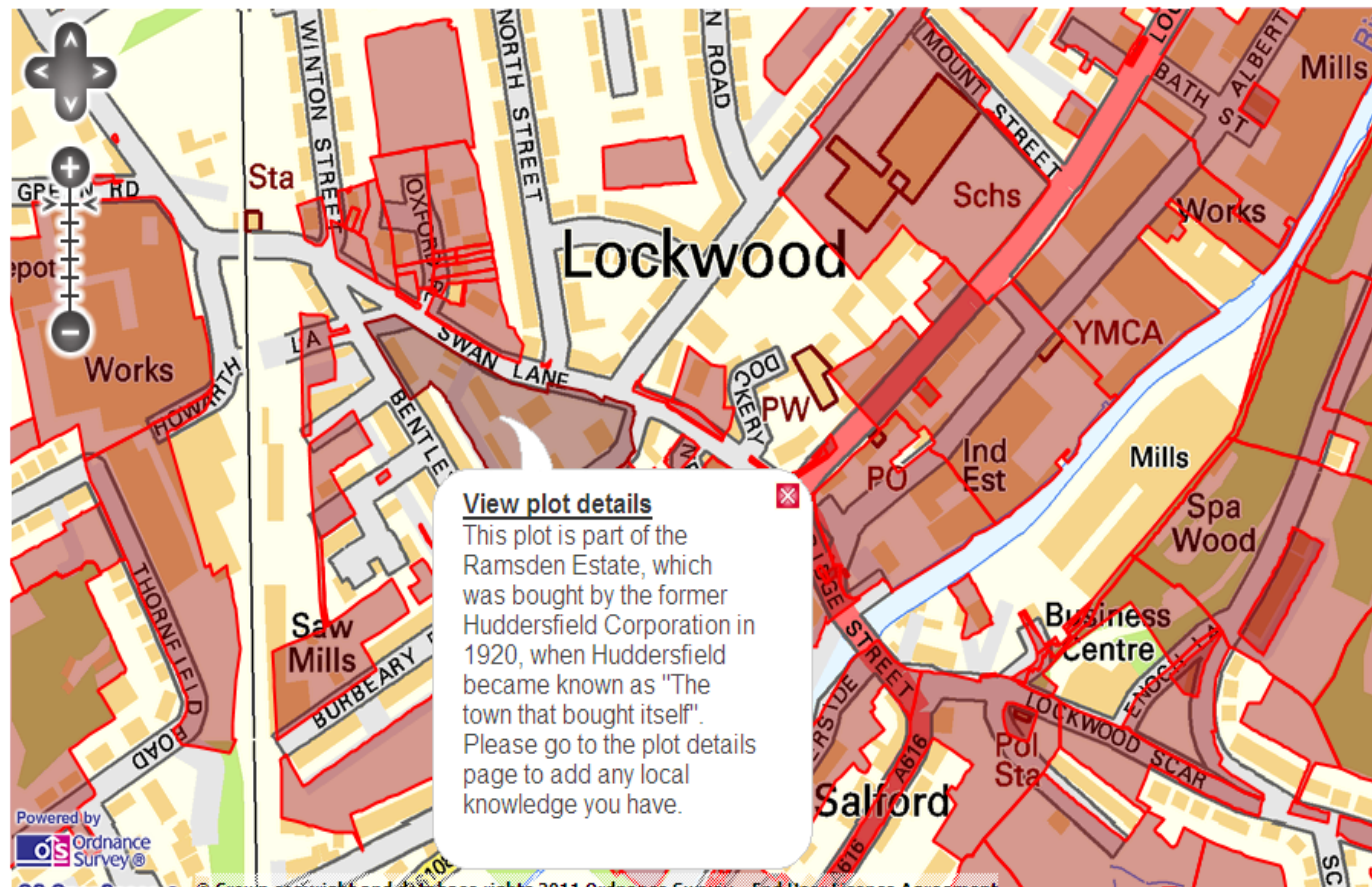
View plot details
This plot is part of the Ramsden Estate, which was bought by the former Huddersfield Corporation in 1920, when Huddersfield became known as "The town that bought itself". Please go to the plot details page to add any local knowledge you have.

Who Owns My Neighbourhood

"This would make a great playground."

Stirley Farm Field
Land - 1250 sqm
Owned by Kirklees Council

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Sutton Bookshare helps you to lend and borrow books. It's free, easy to use and open to everyone who lives or works in the London Borough of Sutton.

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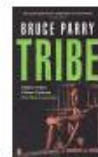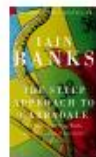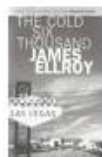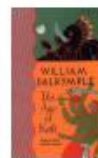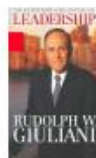
law

coalitions for change

regulation

changed power relationships

changed scripts

whole system demonstrators

new mentalities

6. systemic change

recalibrated markets

new metrics

finance for outcomes

technical diffusion through supply chains

fast colleges

Masdar City, Abu Dhabi. Foster & Partners

Search

Social Innovation eXchange

the **global community** for social innovation

what's new with SIX

Ezio Manzini, DESIS

"imagine a new way of working.... Designing for social innovation"

SIX is continuing with its **6SIX TelePresence Series** in 2010- A global conversation facilitated by Cisco to connect SIX and its members to each other.

flickr

SIX talk (the blog)

more six talk ➜

22 Feb 2010
Only a Northern Blog...

17 Feb 2010
Social Innovation in Denmark

08 Feb 2010
Turning Bold Ideas into Better Lives Down Under!

17 Jan 2010
The pub test, the radio test and the grandmother test

06 Jan 2010
A Responsible Investment Alternative

SIX thinks you might like...

what's your social innovation?

Fixing the Future
from SIX

02:48   vimeo

upcoming events

more events ➜

13 May 2010
Deepening Democracy as a Way of Life. Challenges for Participatory Democracy and Citizenship Learning in the 21st Century.
Facultad de Ciencia Política y Relaciones Internacionales, Universidad Nacional de Rosario

28 Apr 2010
Social Enterprise Summit
San Francisco, California

23 Feb 2010
SIX Spring School: Innovation and Opportunity in an Ageing society
Calouste Gulbenkian Cultural Centre

featured member

Yvonne Roberts, Senior Associate at

4. THE THEORIES

Roberto Mangabeira Unger

The idea of plasticity; working against the present; critique of social sciences; advocating constant experiment as political strategy and social ethos.

'we can do more than innovate in the content of our social and cultural contexts: we can innovate as well in the character of our relation to them: we can change the extent to which they imprison us.

Darwin on evolution

- Mutation, creativity
- Selection
- Replication and growth
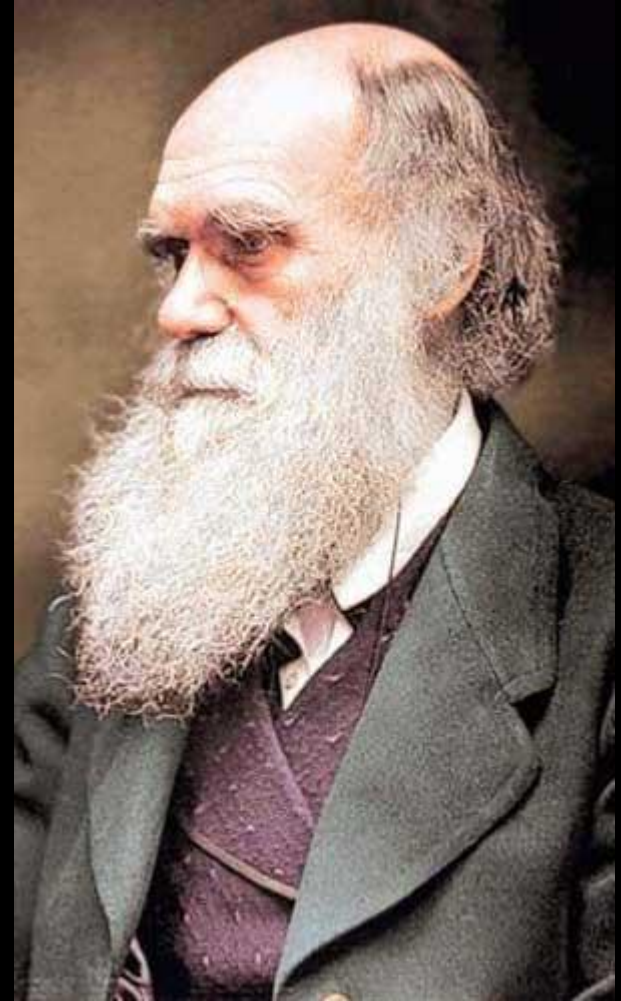
Schumpeter: entrepreneurial innovation (and traditions of understanding entrepreneurship in all fields)

- "..the success of everything depends on intuition, the capacity of seeing things in a way which afterwards proves to be true, even though it cannot be established at the moment, and of grasping the essential fact, discarding the unessential, even though one can give no account of the principles by which this is done.'

- 'In the breast of one who wishes to do something new, the forces of habit rise up and bear witness against the embryonic project. A new and another kind of effort of will is therefore necessary in order to wrest, amidst the work and care of the daily round, scope and time for conceiving and working out the new combination… This mental freedom presupposes a great surplus force over the everyday demand and is something peculiar and by nature rare."

Hegel

- Dialectics of synthesis, antithesis and synthesis; inversion of power and recreation
- Dynamics of externalisation and internalisation – of social innovations and knowledge about social innovation

Georg Simmel on the view of life: creating forms that then conflict with fluidity of creation

Jane Jacobs and others seeing social change as organic, trial and error,bricolage from bottom up

Brian Arthur and other theorists of complexity: feedback; attractors; emergence; edge of chaos; simple elements generating complexity; the logic of technological evolution.

Rosabeth Moss Kanter and other business theorists – Christenson, Von Hippel, Chesbrough – for example on disruptive innovation, failure on the way to success, open innovation

Carlota Perez, Chris Freeman, Luc Soete, on techno-economic paradigms explaining why particular innovations thrive at particular times

Pragmatists: Charles Peirce, William James and John Dewey, through to Unger and Latour today

- 'ideas are not out there waiting to be discovered but are tools that people devise to cope with the world in which they find themselves... ideas are produced not by individuals but are social... ideas do not develop according to some inner logic of their own but are entirely dependent, like germs, on human careers and environment... and since ideas are provisional responses to particular situations their survival depends on not on their immutability but on their adaptability.'

A tentative synthesis:

Social innovations tend to originate in contradictions, tensions and dissatisfactions that are caused by new knowledge, new demands and new needs, that make the transition from being personal to being recognised as social in their causes and solutions. The philosophical roots lie in a view of societies as plastic, and a view of humans as impelled to 'resist the present'.

They then depend on a wide array of actors, including social entrepreneurs, movements, governments, foundations, teams, networks, businesses and political organisations, each with different ways of working, motivations and capacities, but united by a belief in plasticity and what I call (drawing on Albert Hirschman), the 'rhetorics of progress';

Innovations gain traction only when they can attract vital resources, that include money, time, attention and power (the diversity of these resources explains why particular disciplines, from economics to political science, have struggled to generate useful theories);

The processes whereby innovations develop have strong analogies with a much wider family of evolutionary processes, that multiply options, select and then grow those best suited to changing environments;

Innovations gain impact through being formalised, as pilots, ventures and programmes, and through dynamic processes of externalisation and internalisation (that may often leave their creators redundant and alienated);

Innovations gain resonance, and wider impact, when they achieve a fit with wider patterns of historical change, including techno-economic paradigms and situations of political hegemony;

The fundamental goals of social innovation include the creation of socially recognised value, the promotion of greater wellbeing, and the cultivation of capabilities, and that these provide increasingly rigorous tests to judge what works and what doesn't.

Most of the knowledge created through social innovation is historically and spatially contextual, specific and liable to decay.

5. THE FUTURE

Where next for knowledge?

- Attention to measurement, metrics, decision- tools
- More developed ecologies of support and links to innovation systems work
- Beginnings of formal theory, testable hypotheses
- Clarity on relationships with neighbouring fields
- Better orchestration of knowledge

- How much is social change driven by entrepreneurial individuals, social movements , networks or teams? Why do some ideas travel well and others poorly?   Should we expect any common patterns as to where the most influential ideas come from?   Do social innovations scale in the same way as business innovations? Is it possible to measure the innovative capacity of an organisation or a nation? Is it possible to show that at particular times and places innovation slows down?

SI Social Innovation Europe

Directory | Magazine

France - The latest Social Innovation

Highlighted

Two exciting French projects win This is Europen Social Innovation Competition.

Austria →	Germany →	Netherlands →
Belgium →	Greece →	Poland →
Bulgaria →	Hungary →	Portugal →
Cyrpus →	Ireland →	Romania →
Czech Republic →	Italy →	Slovakia →
Denmark →	Latvia →	Slovenia →
Estonia →	Lithuania →	Spain →
Finland →	Luxembourg →	Sweden →
France →	Malta →	United Kingdom →

Directory

Portugal	→
Hungary	→
Malta	→
Luxembourg	→
Croatia	→
Sweden	→

→ See all Countries

Themes

Policy Finance Health Funding
Enterprise Prototypes Social Care
Feedback & Review Parterships
Measuring Innovation Research
Enviroment Technology
Community

Articles

95	United Kingdom	NEW
64	France	NEW
15	Denmark	NEW
58	Romainia	
12	Croatia	
95	Sweden	
64	Spain	

France—the lates

Two exciting French projects win This is European Social Innovation Competiton.

→ Siel Bleu promotes active ageing
→ La Petite Reine revolutionizes urban courier services.

Social Innovation Park - transforming Bilbao

Denokinn is pioneering an entire Basque ecosystem in which social innovation will flourish.

→ Hiriko in San Francisco
→ SI Park hosts Competition Winners' Workshop

10 Comments | See more | Case Studies

Experts can't tell us what citizens want. Don't we live in a network society? Ask citizens.

Filippo Addarii,
Euclid Network,
London

Most popular

KoiSPE - A co-operative enterprise with a mental healthcare mandate flourishes in Greece after transplantation from Italy.

Grâce à son action en France, La Petite Reine a permis de soustraire 203 tonnes de CO2 et 84 kilos de particules de la pollution.

Lunch time at San Patrignano. San Patrignano is the largest drug rehabilitation community in the world.

Dialogue Cafés link rio de Janeiro, Amsterdam and Lisbon with the world. New cafes are set to open in London, FLorence, and Istanbul soon.

Bag scenen i Danmark har vi brugt vinteren til at skaffe finansiering og samarbejdspartnere samt køb af udstyr. Vi kan nu afsøre, at over tre millioner nye bier flytter til byen i april!

The Dreams Academy in Turkey was inspired by inclusive social services in Germany, and is now the main programme providing multidisciplinary activities for disabled people there.

Our Partners and Supporters

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