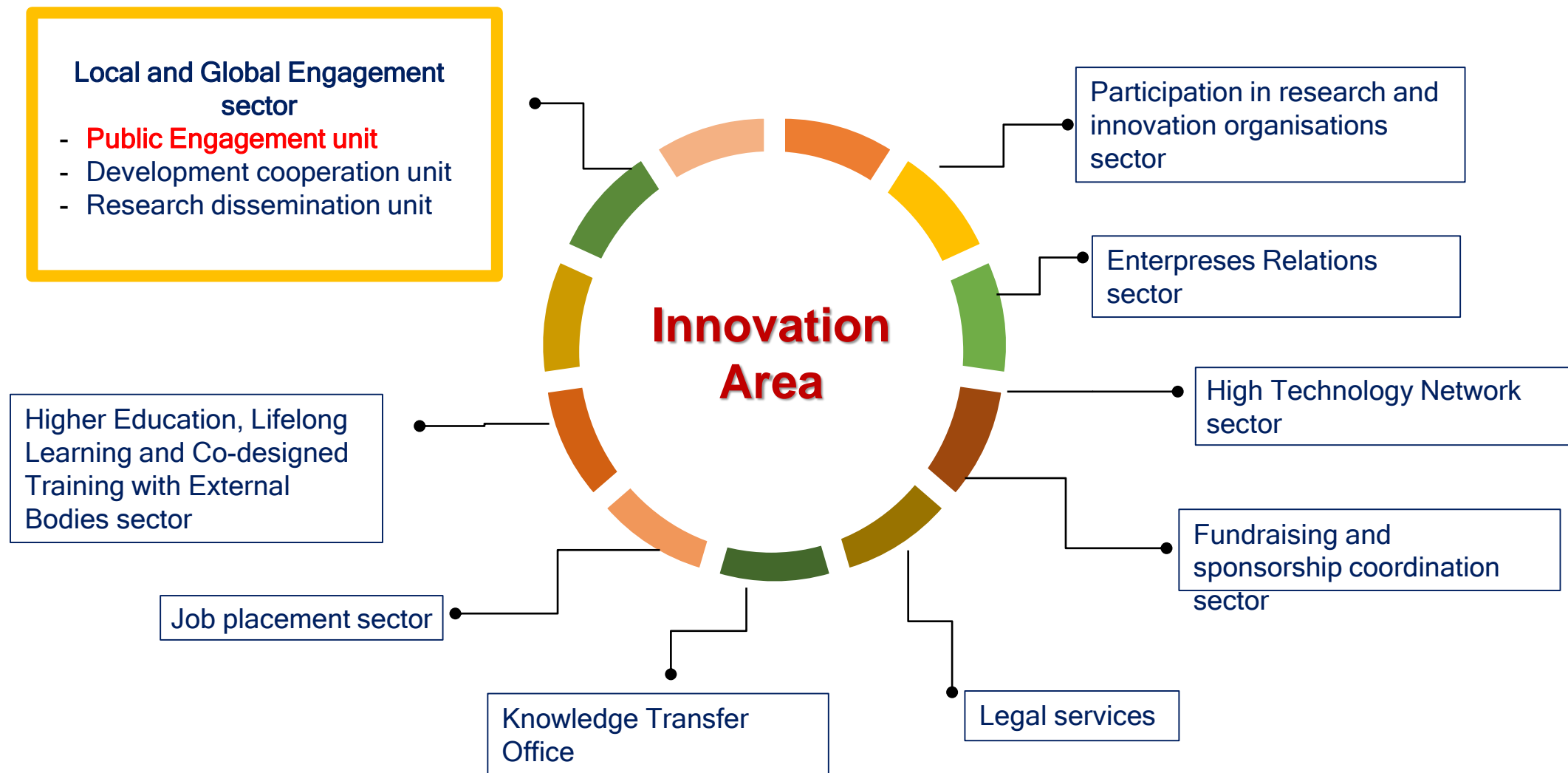


Beyond the Third Mission: the Public Engagement dimension at the University of Bologna

Public Engagement Unit
Local and Global Engagement Sector
INNOVATION AREA

Carlotta Viani

Who are we?



Public Engagement...

- Definition: mission impossible
- The elements of a PE projects
- A look at current projects
- Sum up





Definition: mission impossible

- ✓ **Research communication:** popularised (scientific) contributions (books, social media, encyclopedia), public lectures, podcast, science cafe/bar, explanation and infographic, exhibitions
- ✓ **Contribution to public debate:** expert opinions, think tanks, awareness campaign, exhibitions
- ✓ **Participatory research:** citizen science, living lab, action research, co-creation & co-design, stakeholder engagement
- ✓ **Policy influence and advice:** legislation and legal interventions, relevant memberships, endowed chairs, public tenders
- ✓ **Service to society:** expert opinion and consultancy, shared research infrastructure, training, handbooks and guidelines, online tools and apps

PE: set of those activities that generate social impact?

Public Engagement projects

What do you think of when you are asked about a public engagement case brought by your university?



It's an event

Citizens are involved

Dissemination of research results

Count of persons participating

Is it enough?



Elements of a Public Engagement project

1) Needs Analysis



A public engagement initiative should start from an analysis of a need expressed by one or more actors in the area who turn to the university to assess the possibility of finding effective and innovative solutions/responses

Elements of a Public Engagement project

2) Co-designing together with the territory

Through a shared needs analysis, a public engagement initiative should be co-designed as much as possible with actors outside the university, each bringing their own expertise. Co-designing serves to enhance mutual competences.





Elements of a Public Engagement project

3) The territory as a sounding board

In cases where public engagement activities refer to the organisation of outreach events, it is important to work together with organisations in the area in order to calibrate the target audience and the methods of promotion. The university website cannot be the only tool for promoting public engagement events!

Elements of a Public Engagement project



4) The role of students at all levels

Public engagement projects can involve students at all levels through curricular placements, thesis preparation (especially for second cycle degrees), service learning initiatives. Students can be an excellent vehicle to foster the development of social innovation actions supported by universities



Elements of a Public Engagement project

5) Social Impact

Which social impact methodologies to adopt?

Short, medium, long term?

Quantitative or qualitative analysis?

Narrative method?

Are social impact tools used in the third sector also good for universities?



A look at current projects

Ecosister - Ecological transition, funded by Recovery and Resilience Plan

Pillar Public Engagement - Project involving all universities in the Emilia-Romagna region



Case study in brief

- Universities have identified through public calls for proposals territorial challenges to be solved and external agents appointed to support territorial entities in the task of developing these issues within portfolios of ideas
- The ideas that emerged were translated into useful possible actions to solve the challenges
- Solvers (public or private bodies) called to support challenge owners and agents in the service design of the solutions

A look at current projects

PENTRER - Public Engagement for the Ecological Transition of Emilia-Romagna
Project involving all Universities of the Region



Case study in brief

Our University will present at the Italian Pavillion of the Osaka Expo:

- A **debate** between Italian and Japanese high school classes on topics related of ecological transition (mobility and food)
- **Science outreach events** designed for the expo audience where Ph.D. students will showcase their research projects related to ecological transition
- **Videos** that through the use documentary-style and animations inspired by Japanese anime to explain the impact of climate change in Emilia-Romagna and how young people can react to it

Sum up

Our Public Engagement unit works with

- territorial public bodies, third sector, private sector, external stakeholders, social community, schools...

In order to

- identify problems and possible solutions with input from research

Future expectations

- expand our reach beyond territorial boundaries and embrace projects with an international scope





Thank you!

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