

SWOT Analysis of Responsibilisation Strategies

SUMMARY

December 2022

Our main objective in Work Packages 4-6 of BoostEuroTeQ is the development of a strategy for reflexive institutionalization of responsible and co-creative teaching and research practice at the EuroTeQ universities. The SWOT Analysis of Responsibilisation Strategies presents a rigorous and context sensitive analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats with regard to the current status of responsibility practices and their links to co-creation efforts at the EuroTeQ Universities. The main findings:

	INTERNAL/CURRENT		EXTERNAL/POTENTIAL	
	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
ADDRESSING SUSTAINABLE TRANSITIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All EuroTeQ partners have recently launched strategies. Specialist research centres on sustainability topics. World leaders in diverse renewable technologies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategies are in early stages, under-staffed and under-funded. Many strategies and statements, little implementation. Mostly tech-driven solutions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are very committed to sustainability. They lead many initiatives. Collaborations in other national university networks. Universities can learn from each other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> University actions could be constrained by strategic partners from unsustainable sectors. Technology-driven solutions overshadow other possible responses. Overemphasis on marketable “green” solutions.
INCORPORATING SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES IN TECHNICAL UNIVERSITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All EuroTeQ partners have SSH departments. Diverse experiences training engineers or SSH specialists. SSH expertise in diverse technical domains (e.g. mobility, energy, robotics, AI). Student projects make it possible to bring together SSH and STEM students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenges to scale-up. Shortage of specialists and specializing students. Lack of clarity between SSH and other “soft skills” offers. Economics and entrepreneurship receive most attention. Assumption that other universities can provide SSH expertise when needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crises such as the pandemic highlight the relevance of SSH to address apparently technical problems. SSH scholars and departments are internationally renowned. Great opportunities by increasing collaboration in specific technical domains. Opportunities sharing courses and advanced students. Opportunities to examine similar sociotechnical issues across the 6 EuroTeQ locations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Narrow view of SSH value as merely helping tech transfer and economic impact. Highly mobile and ephemeral staff as obstacles to continuity of research lines. Vulnerability to institutional re-structurations. Under-appreciation of SSH are a challenge to attract prestigious researchers.

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FOSTERING MULTI- AND INTER-DISCIPLINARY RESEARCH (ESPECIALLY SSH-STEM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multi and disciplinary departments in all universities. Pioneer academic programs and courses that bring together multiple disciplines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not too many examples of interdisciplinary projects across SSH and STEM disciplines. Not many explicit incentives and organizational mechanisms to foster interdisciplinary work. Interdisciplinary mode that predominates is “service-subordination” of SSH to STEM. Assumption that SSH help to “fix society”. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EU and other research funders increasingly encourage interdisciplinary collaboration between SSH and STEM. Many opportunities of mutual learning about organizational structures to facilitate interdisciplinary research. Much to learn from successful experiences across all EuroTeQ universities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contradictions between expectations for interdisciplinary growth but lack of incentives for scholars. Lack of recognition that interdisciplinarity takes time. SSH-STEM collaborations depend on individual people rather than institutional structures. Highly volatile and vulnerable.
ENGAGING WITH SOCIETY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Different formats of engagement with society in all universities Engagement at different scales, local, regional, global 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diversity of engagement and meanings of engagement can turn into ambiguity. Industrial and governmental elites become main targets of “engagement with society”, rather than more diverse communities. Vague definitions of what or who is “society” – in strategies. Roles given to societal actors may be too restrictive. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EuroTeQ could push for collaborative forms of engagement across universities, with a focus on specific technical domains. These can help to foster a sense of Europeaness. Increase impact by focusing on specific sectors of society, also across universities. Reflect on inclusion / exclusion dynamics across different forms of engagement and work to address them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement as tick box exercise rather than genuine effort to democratize knowledge, technology and innovation. Narrow focus on privileged sectors of society. Society has little or no decision-making power. Unreflexive engagement with disadvantaged populations.

The SWOT Analysis sets the grounds for work on the intervention phase of the project. In a later stage, this SWOT Analysis will guide our efforts in the development of policy recommendations and exploitation outputs.

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Further documents

More information and further documents can be requested by contacting Lisa Hasenbein.

Project Information

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