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UIA | URBAN INNOVATIVE ACTIONS

The Urban Lab of Europe !

The USE-IT! Project Journal N°3

Project led by the City of Birmingham

URBAN POVERTY

The USE-IT! project

Social deprived neighbourhoods – urban regeneration – poverty alleviation: Linking large capital investments with community skills and assets to combat urban poverty

Although Birmingham is a key economic hub, the reality of poverty and underemployment amongst indigenous and migrant populations is leading to increasing social, economic and environmental isolation. Therefore, the USE-IT! project seeks to identify and connect social, cultural and economic assets already existing in poor and migrant communities to major capital and infrastructure investments, in order to reduce displacement and maximise the economic and social benefits of urban development for marginalised residents. The building of a new hospital, local social enterprise structures and universities rich in cultural and creative capital will be relied upon to enable the population to self-empower in a sustainable way.

The model proposed will rely on Community Researchers, recruited among the local community and trained in research methods to identify local assets. Mechanisms will be tested in order to unlock the potential of poor communities and facilitate the creation of a matching skills service to enhance employment and encourage the spin-off of social enterprises that are socially innovative and resilient. The project will provide peer-to-peer support for communities, and act as change and innovation drivers to bring out bold and sustainable solutions.

As a result of the project, people in the communities will be supported to raise their aspirations and to access affordable educational and training opportunities. They will access job opportunities linked to the large investment projects planned for the area (macro-assets), and new businesses will be created and developed in the area by local people.

The USE-IT! project

For further information

USE-IT! UIA website: www.uia-initiative.eu/en/uia-cities/birmingham

USE IT! Facebook: www.facebook.com/USEITUIA/; @USEITUIA

USE IT! Twitter: https://twitter.com/UseItUIA; @UseItUIA;

USE IT! Instagram: www.instagram.com/useituia; useituia

USE IT! YouTube: www.youtube.com/channel/UCfZrYQBA87FsszE4JvhlZug/featured

USE-IT! 1st journal: Download

USE-IT! 2nd journal: Download

USE-IT Zoom-in – The creation of social enterprises: Download

USE-IT! Social entrepreneurs programme:

> *http://sohosen.org.uk/*
>
> *www.i-se.co.uk/news/use-it-social-entrepreneurs-programme/*
>
> *www.i-se.co.uk/news/use-it-catalysing-social-change-in-birmingham/*

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1. Executive Summary

USE-IT! is a £3.13m (3,6 Mio. €) project by Birmingham City Council and one of the "Innovative Urban Actions" from the European Commission initiative. It tests **new solutions combating urban poverty by linking larger capital investment projects (macro-assets) in deprived neighbourhoods with local community skills, talents and ideas (micro-assets).** It does all that with the intention to unlock social and economic innovation and to improve the socio-economic situation of the deprived residents. The project strives to increase the employment prospects of the residents and migrants by generating jobs and stimulating local economy.

For an overview about the USE-IT! project, the background and reason, its innovative approach, mechanism and partnership, take a look at the 1st and 2nd journal of the USE-IT! project.

The 3rd journal outlines the project's progress from Feb. 2018 - Sep. 2018. It reflects on the recent activities and looks at what has been achieved so far. A focus is to look at challenges faced by the project and analyse how they have been dealt with. The current learning from this project period is summarised in chapter 3.

The key activities in this year have been so far:

- Learning from own and external projects (cf. 2.1.),

- Communicating a multi-facetted project to local communities (cf. 2.2.),

- Creation of a community of social enterprises (cf. 2.3.),

- Matching job skills in the community with job opportunities (cf. 2.4.),

- Identification of local skills and assets through community researchers (cf. 2.5.).

Relevant challenges for the project have been currently **to react as a partnership** to successes and failures and to **adapt the project on the basis of this experience** in order to guarantee its success (cf. 2.1.).
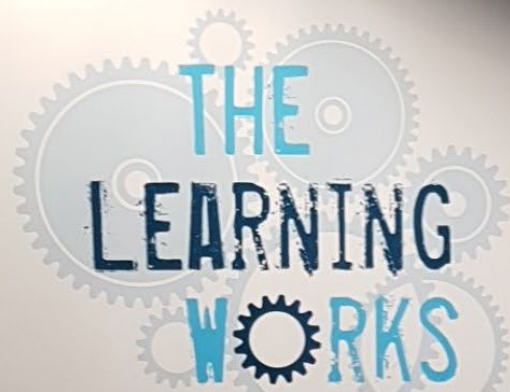
Also reaching and communicating comprehensibly the complex USE-IT! project approach to the different communities and target groups is a challenge (cf. 2.2.).

Although the creation of a community of social enterprises is advancing well a current challenge is the reduced attendances to the SoHo network meetings. Also finding emerging social enterprises and community businesses needed a different approach than initially planned; the same for the recruitment of mentors for the social enterprise start-ups (cf. 2.3.).

The recruitment of Community Researchers and maintaining their commitment is another challenge the USE-IT! project deals with (cf. 2.4.).

With regards to matching job skills in the community with job opportunities USE-IT! had to find out that the needed support by the local people had been different than anticipated. There are no standard employment pathways and timescales. Also matching clients to appropriate placements is a challenge (cf. 2.5.).

2. Key activities & key challenges

- **Learning from own and external projects**

- **Communicating a multi-facetted project to local communities**

- **Creation of a community of social enterprises**

- **Matching job skills in the community with job opportunities**

- **Identification of local skills and assets through community researchers**

2.1. Learning from own and external projects

- **Challenge Panel and communal USE-IT! office**

- **Site visits and discussion with externals**

USE-IT! is about to combat urban poverty by linking larger capital investment pojects in deprived neighbourhoods with local community skills and assets, unlocking local based social and economic innovation. Key to that is the collaboration and coordination of key players in the area. These range from public, private and civic sector organisations, joining their different skills and resources to tackle the issue of urban poverty in Greater Icknield in a people and place-based approach.

> **"No project is ever perfect but I have never been involved in a multi-partnership project like this before that has achieved so much in so little time".**
>
> *Conrad Parke, Sandwell MBC*

Key challenges & Solutions

Implementing such a diverse project with new approaches and such a large partnership requires a lot of time and the ability **to react together to successes and failures and to adapt the project based on this** experience in order to guarantee its success. It requires the ability to change parts of the project based on initial findings.

To correspond to this, '**Challenge panels**' are organised and co-designed by the Project Board and the external evaluators. They are meetings focusing on capitalization of learning from the project and transferability of best practices locally and nationally. Their thematic focus varies and is designed to be linked to the challenges the project is focusing on. Panellists change according to the subject. The objective is to bring people together to think about solutions for a particular challenge and to listen about the work that USE-

IT! partnership has already undertaken in that context. Opening the discussion wider offers a chance to peer review USE-IT! work.

Another activity to learn how to improve the USE-IT! approach are **site visits** to other related good-practices in the UK and **inviting externals to discuss the USE-IT! approach**. For example the 'Barking and Dagenham Participatory City Foundation' was visited who are trialling a new and inspirational model of community organizing that in the USE-IT! partnership was identified to respond to the gap in the USE-IT! project provision – engaging with the communities that are not ready to establish their own enterprises and need help in breaking social isolation. As a result of this visit, a new approach was introduced into the way the 'Community Awareness Sessions' (p. 12) are organized and made them focus more on doing activities with the residents and building leadership in the communities as opposed to just talking about opportunities.

Also a **communal USE-IT! office** at Ladywood Community Centre was opened. It allows for improved communication and sharing between the partners who regularly use the space as well as for joint working.

2.2. Communicating a multi-facetted project to local communities
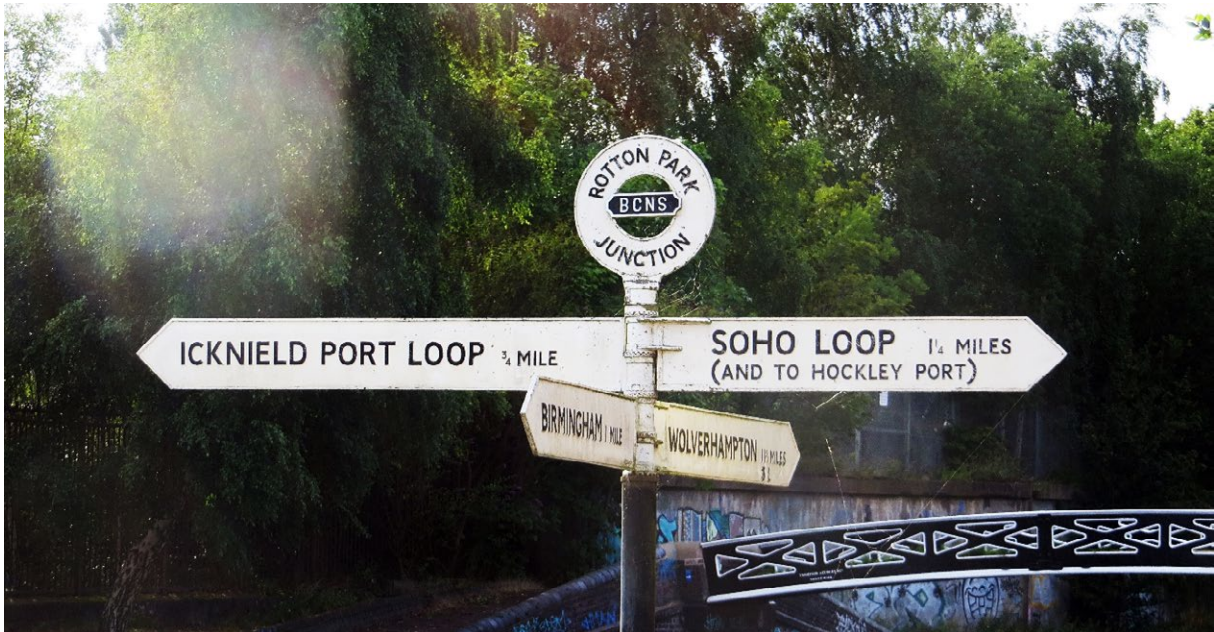
- 'Maker Pop-up picnic and Fun Day' to communicate how USE-IT! unlocks local assets for community

- Supporting the communication for the social enterprise & community business programme of USE-IT!

- Getting on air on radio, YouTube and social media promoting USE-IT! aims and offer

- Communication workshop for key project partners

The USE-IT! project intends to improve the socio-economic situation of deprived residents. This by making use of the local community skills, talents and ideas, linking them with larger capital investment projects sourrounding their neighbourhood. To be able to do so, the project partners rely on the collaboration with the local people, initiatives and organisations.

That is why the USE-IT! project needs to communicate how it can be helpful to people and organisations and how they can participate. This, to promote citizens, public services, (local)

organisations and academia to come together, practically and meaningfully to become part of the USE-IT! approach.

Key activities (Feb. 2018 – Sep. 2018)

To promote and inform the communities and wider public about the USE-IT! project, its activities, its events and to encourage their participation, the Birmingham City University has continued to use **social media channels** (Twitter: @UseItUIA, Facebook: @USEITUIA, Instagram: useituia and YouTube) and **printed materials** (project-wide roll-up banners, large PVC banners, posters and flyers).

At the moment 451 people are following on twitter and 411 on facebook. Instagram and YouTube is used to visually record the USE-IT! activities and tell the USE-IT! story. In April they went on air at a live BBC radio show broadcast from the Ladywood Community Centre promoting USE-IT! aims and offer.

Another form to spread the word about USE-IT! and engage with the public is the organisation of **'Maker Pop-up picnics and Fun Days'** co-designed with local residents and organisations.

The events attracted around 250 people to the Reservoir playing fields, many for the first time,

and allowed to focus publicity around how USE-IT! is unlocking local assets for the community. The events were filmed and photographed and recorded interviews and vox pops with visitors produced for the social media channels.

To improve the communication skills of the key project partners on how to communicate USE-IT!, Birmingham City University (BCU) organised **Communication Working Group meetings**, at which the key project partners learned and discussed how to communicate their activities to "their audience". A further offer are **Drop in Communications Sessions** at Ladywood Community Centre (communal USE-IT! office). They help to identify how BCU can support partner communication. This offer has opened up ongoing channels of communication between the partners, too, learning about each other's future activities and events, sparking some new activities.

Key challenges & Solutions

Still a challenge, but to less of an extent is to **communicate comprehensibly the complex project approach of the USE-IT! project** (the three main components 'Creation of a community of social enterprises and social production'; 'Identification of local skills through community researchers'; 'Matching job skills in the community with demand'), its diverse activities and to **reach the respective target groups**; this with the aim to build up trust and relationships for the cooperation.

Solutions have been presented in the 2nd journal. The best way to deal with the challenge is from the experience of the USE-IT! communication partner to **build links with community partners/ organisations** and **attending community events** (meeting them in their places) to build trust with the diverse target/community groups. An example is the 'The Real Junk Food Project' and 'Suited For Success': they are two organisations working with and embedded in local communities. By collaborating with them USE-IT! was able to connect with these often ignored and unheard individuals.

> "So instead of formal events, I decided to invest my time in attending the existing community events like the Neighbour Nights in Summerfield. The final effect is the Community Economic Development Plan for Summerfield and the two picnics on the Playing Field which ended up much more important than anything else we would have convened that would be more formal".
>
> *Karolina Medwecka, project manager*

Thus, the main task to communicate the multi-facetted USE-IT! project is to **provide communication services** for activities and events of the project partners:

- *before* – calls for participation, advertising events, helping design events for added impact, creating flyers;

- *during* – attending and helping deliver where appropriate, documenting, live video streams, recording vox pops and video interviews, photography;

- *after* – disseminating project activity, event write-ups for social media, creating video edits / storytelling, using dissemination to draw/pull participation.

2.3. Creation of a community of social enterprises

- **Supply chain development event**

- **Mentoring**

- **Next recruitment round for FUSE start-up programme**

- **Themed awareness raising sessions, Social Enterprise Festival, City Drive**

- **Closed Facebook Alumni group**

- **Summer Boot Camp for social enterprises**

The USE-IT! project aims to support employment and the development of socio-economic activities in the community through social enterprises, boosting "community services" through citizens and socially innovative producers; this linked in particular to the new hospital and housing developments in the area.

Key activities (Feb. 2018 – Sep. 2018)

USE-IT! has continued to focus on growing the social enterprise sector.

For this, iSE along with the major built environment company Wates held a **supply chain development event** in mid-March. 27 social enterprises were introduced to purchasing and supply

chain managers in some of the country's top construction and built environment companies. The organisations had five minutes to pitch their products and services. Based on this event new services have been developed and from this new markets achieved for the social enterprises.

In addition **"Themed awareness raising sessions"** were organised. They are about to bring people from Greater Icknield together to talk about what they want to change within the given theme in the community. This moment is used to introduce the concept of social enterprise and community business. During the sessions it is checked if from the emerging ideas a social enterprise or community business can evolve. The sessions

have been themed in order to raise interest and encourage higher attendance.

Also having a **presence within the community centre at Ladywood** has had a positive impact. The project is now more recognised by residents and those working in the area and more connections and referrals have come about as a result of this. Particularly valuable is the work closely with the Community Researchers, who are embedded within their local areas.

Also a '**Social Enterprise Festival**' and a '**City Drive**' was organised: a whole week dedicated to showcasing Birmingham's finest Social Entrepreneurs.

To support the growing number of new social enterprise start-ups and help them to develop their enterprise idea into a sustainable business, a **next recruitment round for the 'FUSE' Social Enterprise start-up programme** has been undertaken. Currently they are interviewing over 30 applications from start-up social enterprises. So far 10 organisations/ 12 individuals are supported in the start-up phase of their businesses.

All FUSE participants receive **mentoring**. General mentoring is provided by Birmingham Chambers of Commerce supported by about 15 technical/ specialist mentors from other agencies. They work on a volunteer basis. Their motivation is the understanding that social enterprises are an important part of the business environment and they want to support it.

ORGANISED AND DELIVERED BY iSE CIC

Birmingham City Drive 2018
CREATING A SOCIAL ENTERPRISE CITY

CALL 0121 771 1411

WHAT'S ON WHEN...

MONDAY 23rd APRIL
10.00am – 5.00pm **ART IN THE CITY** with The Arches Project @ B9 4EE DROP IN
Come along all week, be inspired by this creative #socent gallery supporting art in #brum
12 noon each day **CaSE STUDY CAREERS** with University of Birmingham @ www.i-se.co.uk ONLINE
Enjoy a virtual read each day at 12 noon from 5 inspirational #socent led by young people
5.00pm – 7.00pm **NEW START STORIES: The Unvarnished Truth** with BSSEC @ B12 0JD BOOK
Starting up can be challenging, new #socent's are invited for roundtable and networking

TUESDAY 24th APRIL
8.30am – 10.30am **DIGBETH SOCIAL ENTERPRISE QUARTER NETWORK** with iSE @ B12 0HJ BOOK
Find out more FIND YOUR FINANCE & BANKING, then enjoy Digbeth #socent networking
11.00am – 1.00pm **THE DIVINE GREAT BAKE** with Divine Chocolate @ B5 5NR BOOK
Sophi Tranchell (CEO, Divine) shares her social entrepreneur journey and judges 8 bakes!
2.00pm – 5.00pm **RETAIL THERAPY** with Citizen Coaching at John Lewis @ B2 4AU BOOK
Product-based social enterprises explore retail challenges, successes and what works well
6.30pm – 8.30pm **HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE DINNER** with WMAHSN @ B5 5RS INVITE

WEDNESDAY 25th APRIL
9.00am – 12 noon **CONNECTING SOCIETY & COMMUNITY CONVERSATION** with BiTC @ B4 6GA BOOK
Cross-sector networking to collaborate and build thriving communities across #Brum
10.00am – 1.00pm **MIKKRO FUND YOUR SOCIAL ENTERPRISE** with Samosa Saturday @ B15 1DT BOOK
4 women entrepreneurs pitch their #socent – winner gets the micro-fund from £5 entry!
11.00am – 1.00pm **#SOCENT FOR STUDENTS** with Birmingham City University @ B4 7XG INVITE
Birmingham students come together to explore the word of social enterprise opportunity
1.00pm – 4.00pm **COLLABORATION AND CONTRACTS** with Living Well Consortium @ B12 0JD BOOK
Extend your mental health #socent connections and explore the benefits of consortia!

THURSDAY 26th APRIL
10.00am – 12 noon **SOHO SOCIAL ENTERPRISE NETWORK** with iSE @ B18 5LB BOOK
Our USE IT! #socent network in Soho, Ladywood and Smethwick plus 3 inspiring speakers!
12.30pm – 3.00pm **YOU & YOUR COMMUNITY** with Gtr Birmingham Chambers of Commerce @ B21 9DP BOOK A marketplace for Soho Rd businesses, local traders and social enterprises to meet
2.00pm – 4.00pm **THE VALUE OF #SOCENT VOLUNTEERING** with Aquarius @ Birmingham city BOOK
Volunteering is more than a 'spare pair of hands', join us for some 'best practice' insights
5.00pm – 7.00pm **POP UP & POP IN** with Miss Macaroon @ B2 5HU DROP IN
Come along for delicious foodie treats at our city centre #socent food market!

FRIDAY 27th APRIL
10.30am - 12.30pm **SE FESTIVAL** with iSE and Birmingham Partners @ B1 1BB BOOK
Our CITY DRIVE flagship social enterprise event and celebration of
Birmingham as a Social Enterprise City – an event not to be missed!!
2.00pm – 4.00pm **THE ETHICS OF SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP** with Evolve @ B12 0JD BOOK
Celebrate the journey, learning and values, and apprenticeship best practice for #socent's

BOOK www.i-se.co.uk
SHARE info@i-se.co.uk
TWEET #CD2018

VOLUNTEER SUPPLY CHAIN SOCIALVALUE START
TRADE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE PARTNER
AWARENESS EMPLOY COLLABORATION

This project is co-financed by the European Regional and Development Fund through the Urban Innovative Actions Initiative.

To support new social enterprises that want a fast track to start up, iSE has hold in addition to the FUSE programme a **Summer Boot Camp for social entrepreneurs** to provide a short, sharp targeted programme to social entrepreneurs. There have been 7 regular attendees.

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE SUMMER CAMP

FUSE

iSE & THE WEST MIDLANDS ACADEMIC HEALTH
SCIENCE NETWORK PRESENT A FAST-TRACK
START-UP PROGRAMME FOR
SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS.

APPLICATION DEADLINE | 30.6.18
STARTS | 12.7.18 @iSE | DIGBETH | B12 0HJ
EMAIL | mariam.yate@i-se.co.uk
DOWNLOAD APPLICATION HERE
www.i-se.co.uk | @iSE_CIC | #SOCENTSC

To support the communication and networking between the start-ups that already participate in the programme, the WhatsApp group has been expanded with a_**closed Facebook Alumni group.** This group serves current and past FUSE participants (including staff and mentors) to network, for joint working and to support each other. This has proved to be a useful way of encouraging peer working and spreading of information across the network. It encourages to continue, to come to a meeting or event ("You know that you meet someone you know").

For more information about the FUSE programme and further activities, take a look at the USE-IT! journal Nr. 1 and Nr.2.

Key challenges & Solutions

The creation of a community of social enterprises is advancing, but the **attendances to the SoHo network meetings have reduced**. To regain the earlier drive, the format of the Soho Network meetings is currently reviewed. One approach is to shift the **focus** back **onto** the **guest speakers** as a way of drawing individuals/ organisations into the network or to attend regularly. Also it has been discussed to **market the network as a series of "mini-events"** with the speaker at the fore. The general focus of the SoHo network on connecting local businesses and entrepreneurs providing support, sharing skills, experiences and developing opportunities for closer working will be remained.

Another challenge of the USE-IT! project was **finding emerging social enterprises and community businesses**. This is due to the fact there is not a strong culture of community enterprise within the Icknield area. The **themed awareness raising sessions** have gone some way to address this, by introducing the concept in relation to specific areas of interest and concerns in the community e.g. food, employment etc. The themes have been identified through previous events (i.e. city drive), where local people mentioned them or said they would like to explore them.

Also '**Community connectors**' are of help. They are people based in the communities that identify people that could benefit from the USE-IT! project i.e. individuals or community groups that have an idea, which could become a social

enterprise (i.e. from their hobby). They inform about opportunities of USE-IT! and connect these people to the relevant partners and services offered by USE-IT! Or they connect with other like-minded people with the idea to build up a cooperative. Another function is to identify opportunities and/or assets that could form the basis of new community businesses or be used to incubate them.

Recruiting mentors for the social enterprise start-ups also had been a challenge. The best way to acquire mentors finally has been **through personal contacts**, informing and **inviting at business events** and mentor **recruitment evenings**. Also helpful was to **contact enterprises that have schemes to have time off for volunteer work**. The communications partners have been approached to produce a **series of video "talking heads" with existing mentors** talking about why they do it, what they get out of it, why others should consider it.

My role as community connector

Over the last 8 months my role has allowed me to "detect and connect" what is already happening as well as to support some new initiatives. With existing resident groups, I have been experimenting with social innovations that enable residents to build social capital. We do this by incubating and /or promoting "low threshold / low capital" initiatives like Litter Picks, Place of Welcome, Neighbour Nights, Community gardens, Pop-up events in public space. Seen in isolation, these activities may seem to some like insignificant 'busy work,' without a lasting impact. But the reality and truly satisfying aspect of this work comes from recognizing that the lasting value of all these activities lies in the building of social capital – the capacity and the trust to work together to contribute to the well-being of the local community.

Samuel Ewell, Community Connector

To keep mentors on board they organise an annual dinner/ meeting for mentors. Another idea is to publicly reward them.

Also former participants of the FUSE programme could be acquired to act as mentors. These people will be a powerful driver for people from the communities looking to start up their own enterprises.

2.4. Identification of local skills and assets through community researchers

- **Mentoring for Community researchers**

- **Community Partner programme started**

- **Skills and labour market report**

- **Community Research Social enterprise**

The USE-IT! project intends to identify and map ideas, talents and skills of local people in the Greater Icknield area and their qualification needs related to the larger urban development projects. For the identification they have engaged so called 'Community researchers', who identify local assets and personal skills through interviews and surveys conducted with the local population.

Key activities (Feb. 2018 – Sep. 2018)

To support the 'Community Researchers' (CR) in their research projects a **mentoring** was installed. The mentoring provides the opportunity to talk about problems they have encountered (i.e. interviewing techniques) or to discuss research ideas with members of the USE-IT! team.

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[1] For more information about the Community Partners programme, take a look at USE-IT! 2nd journal.
[2] For more information see the 2nd journal.

Further 'Recruitment and Inception events' were organised. The workshops and training sessions for the community researchers continued. The Community Partners programme has started, which asks less commitment than the Community Research programme[1].

So far 49 community researchers have been recruited and 10 are actively engaged within the USE-IT! project.

In addition a 'Skills and Labour Market Report' was completed.

Key challenges & Solutions

The main challenge remains the recruitment of community researchers and their retaining in the programme as described in the 2nd journal.

The set-up of a light version of the community research programme, the community partners programmes[2] that requires less time commitment, has contributed to the recruitment of further researchers. Also the mentoring of the Community Researchers is a key to keep them engaged in the programme.

"Mentoring was not built into the bid, but turned out to be a key component to a successful Community Research programme."
Dr. Peter Lee and Dr. Sara Hassan, University of Birmingham

Also the low response rate to the survey questionnaire remains a challenge as described in the 2nd journal.

2.5. Matching job skills in the community with job opportunities

- **Engagement in work placement programme**

- **Access routes into local work clubs**

- **Building up a network of social care providers**

The USE-IT! project aims to identify and train local residents with relevant medical and non-medical qualifications that could be matched with the jobs available in the hospital, a major provider of health resources and employment in Greater Icknield.

Key activities (Feb. 2018 – Sep. 2018)

Through the success of USE-IT! and the established Learning Works, a one-stop-shop for access to training, development and employment opportunities within the Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust, the Hospital Trust has now opened. This provides the opportunity to engage on **work placement programs** other local high priority groups including the PURE Project (the homeless, ex-offenders, people with mental health problems) & Healthy Kids and Healthy Careers (local school pupils).

The Learning Works has established a growing network with local organisations that are in contact with people the usual NHS employment

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[3] Information about further activities can be found in the USE-IT! journal Nr. 1 and Nr.2.

services do not reach. These organisations help to identify and bring suitable clients to the Learning works and to participate in the USE-IT! project.

Through the Learning Works the individuals receive profession related support to return to practise which includes specialist language training and observership opportunities. They also deliver coaching & mentoring and qualification transfer support.

The partnership with two social care providers has been extended to a **network of social care providers**. They provide participants with interim work opportunities while at the same time these people help the social care companies filling their vacancies with high quality staff.

In addition an **access route from local Work Clubs** has been developed. The Work Clubs are offered by local community organisations (faith centres, community centres and libraries) and support people to find work. They are free to attend and provide help with CV, job search, completing application forms, interview practice and other help to find a job in a community environment. The USE-IT! team has been working with the staff of the Work Clubs so they understand the project, can explain it to their clients and make appropriate referrals. As such they reach people who would never come to the Learning Works by themselves, widening the range of clients of the USE-IT! project.

At the time of writing, 161 individuals with relevant overseas qualifications including doctors, nurses, radiographers, pharmacists and therapist's are on the Clients data base. The database is to track the progress of participants and to produce monitoring information for audit. So far 94 people have been offered placements (60 individuals had been the three year target)[3].

Key challenges & Solutions

The implementation of matching job skills in the community with the job opportunities in the hospital is a success. At the same time this means that the demand has been far greater than anticipated. Also the needed support by clients is different than anticipated. There is a demand for higher level support (i.e. language qualifications) rather than for anticipated immediate needs (i.e. housing, benefits, legal status). This is because the people they have reached have already been in the UK for several years and their immediate needs (housing, benefits etc.) have been addressed. Also through the established network with the local social organisations, the lower level support is provided by them and has not to be provided through USE-IT!

Another challenge is that there are no standard employment pathways and timescales. The original employment pathway designed for USE-IT! did not work as planned because different clients live in vastly different circumstances and progress at vastly different rates - particularly relating to language training *(see USE-IT! journal* Nr.2*)*.

Today there are different entry points according to the different needs. The entry points are now being defined by their level of English. If their level of English is low they start with basic English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) training, but they still can get work in social care as a

health care assistant. If they can pass ESOL level 2 they can go straight into International English Language Testing System (IELTS) training and they can be matched to observerships, clinical attachment and mentoring. Once they have passed IELTS they are ready for a job placement (if the further requirements are settled i.e. the certification of professional skills and education).

The high demand for **language training** at the same time leads to a further challenge: **financing** it. The training costs are around 5.000-6.000 pounds (5.600-6.750 €) per person. Longer term external funding has to be attracted.

When public funds for training cannot be secured, one solution could be the development of an adapted version of **Social Impact Bonds**: Partners in the private sphere (NGO, social enterprise, alternative bank, foundation) are to be found to finance the training. At the same time a contract between the private partner and the National Health Service (NHS; which benefits from new, qualified personal) is done. The contract defines that the NHS pays a fix rate for each person that later works for the NHS. The fixed rate is higher than the costs for the trainings, to compensate the financial risk that some clients might fail the training or startworking outside NHS.

Another challenge is that the **clients have to find time to complete language courses and undertake placements**, while at the same time earning enough money to feed their family and managing the bureaucracy of the immigration process. This can be too much for some people. Here the cooperation with Social Care providers, providing clients both with interim work opportunities and health based work experience has proven to be a good solution.

Also **matching clients to appropriate placements**

is a challenge. A "doctor" might mean one of many different specialisms and areas of interest. So a placement that works for one doctor might be inappropriate for another, even though both say they are a General Practitioner (which is a doctor that works in a community setting rather than a hospital). For example one GP might like to work in a community setting so they can work 1:1 with patients and provide them with whole lifetime care while another GP might like to work in a community setting so they can do health promotion and address the issues that make people unwell in the first place (such as poor housing or poor diet).To try and address this the USE-IT! team has developed a detailed placement referral form.

Placement referral form

- **Full name**
- **Email address**
- **National Insurance number**
- **Country or Origin**
- **What is your profession?**
- **What support you need? profession**
- **Have you taken the IELTS test?**
- **Email all your qualifications and certificates**

- **Full address**
- **Mobile number**
- **Male/Female**
- **Are you allowed to work in UK?**
- **What country you qualified in?**
- **In detail explain your speciality of**

- **What sore you need for IELTS?**

3. Main learning points

Learning from own and external projects

Projects need the flexibility and capability to respond and adapt to both positive and negative findings, financially and in terms of content and structure. The UIA programme allows this flexibility, in particular to shift finances and adapt activities or deviate from the project application, in order to enable the success of the overall project.

Karolina Medwecka, project manager of the USE-IT! projects puts this need as follows:

"Flexibility and ability to change the project based on initial findings has been the biggest advantage. All innovative projects carry a lot of risk – innovation is all about taking risks. There needs to be an understanding that failure is also a part of the learning process and to turn a potential failure into a great success".

Looking beyond one's own nose, learning from others and discussing external solutions to local challenges helps as well to further develop the innovative approach of the USE-IT! project and make it viable.

Communicating a multi-facetted project to local communities

The current lesson learnt is as Jennie Sandford, Birmingham City University puts it:

"It is not enough to assume that people will come to us with their stories, we need to be more proactive in going to them and extracting them. This applies to partners, community researchers, and community groups alike".

The legacy should involve findings on the best way for such multi-partner projects to engage with audiences and communities at ground level i.e. to incorporate those activists at the ground who want to become involved, but also the silent, more passive majority who are still significant and should be given a voice in the narratives of urban change and development. Important for this is the element of "cultural translation": from academia/ professionals to communities and publics. This is to be learned by the responsible key players of such projects.

Also it needs a mixture of communication tools to reach the communities. But the best way to inform and reach people about upcoming events and activities, and to help them fully understand the project's objectives is through face-to-face and word-of-mouth communication. For this it is important to get in touch with community activists, who can spread the word and champion the project. For this you need to obtain their trust.

Social media allows easy way to share and spread information, in particular useful to reach smaller

organizations, community groups and younger people. But also flyers help to inform people, laying them out in community places (shops, fast food shops, churches, supermarkets, etc.). Using Twitter, it is important not to share everything what happens, share "just" useful and inspiring information! This will increase and maintain the number of followers.

Matching job skills in the community with job opportunities

The best way to inform and attract people to the USE-IT! programme identifying and training local residents with relevant overseas medical qualifications to be matched with jobs available in the hospital has been referrals via word-of-mouth. This means you need to find "intermediaries" who spread the word of the opportunities and activities at the community level. That only works if you have established a reputation and trust with key people.

This also means to not overlook small organisations. The smaller the organisation the more focused they are likely to be on a particular community. The more focused they are the more likely they are to have respect and trust in that community necessary to get people to trust the offer from USE-IT!.

At the same time it is very difficult for small organisations and non-health organisations to work with a hospital. It needs an organisation (or a project like USE-IT!) to provide the hook for building the necessary rapport between these partners.

Also it needs different entry points to employment pathway and trainings which correspond to the different starting points and needs of the clients. This makes it possible to reach a larger number of people and to enable them to develop individually according to their situation.

Creation of a community of social enterprises

In poor neighbourhoods there is not an existing culture of community enterprise and little understanding what social enterprises and community businesses are about. That is why people usually do not have an idea for a social enterprise that could be developed straight away. Therefore, the work required *at the beginning* is very much at community development level, rather than straight enterprise start-up support. Local problems and wishes for change must be identified together. Ideas for social enterprises and community businesses have to emerge from these. It needs to work out together in which way social enterprises and community businesses can be a solution for the identified local problems and needs. For this, space to scope ideas, pick out the products and services is needed that are going to be the backbone of the business.

Also working in large partnership is essential, being at the same time a challenge as it needs heavy coordination. Through the cooperation of different and complementary partners, their specific skills and capabilities can be brought together in order to significantly increase the possibilities of implementation. New approaches can thus be realised which could not be implemented through smaller partnerships (added values through the single partners).

The development of themed social enterprise consortia is very helpful for the successful development of the social enterprises and community businesses; as well as bringing social entrepreneurs in similar situations together to be able to exchange and share their experience.

Identification of local skills through community researchers

Activating and using local community researchers to identify local assets and personal skills is more difficult than expected. The demands placed on them are relatively high, in contrast to the benefits that community researchers expect from participating in the programme. As a result, their commitment is lower than initially expected. Here, besides setting up a light version of the community research programme that requires less time commitment, building up a mentoring support for the Community Researchers was a key to improve the success rate.

Helpful are the community researchers as connector to engage with communities that feel minority, when the community researcher is part of that community. They can build up trust and "battle" the ground for relationships with other local organisations and community groups.

"Engaging with communities as the USE-IT! projects tries, should become common practice, as opposed to people feeling things 'happen to them' in their neighbourhood and in everyday life."

Jenny Sandford,
Birmingham City University

4. Coming up next

To further progress with the **Creation of a community of social enterprises and social production** several activities are scheduled.

To drive up membership and attendance at the SoHo Network meetings they will offer a calendar of bite sized business support events using guest speakers from within the USE-IT! partners and external agencies.

To strengthen the mentor network ways for continued support of the mentors will be explored as for example an annual mentor dinner. Further it will be looked into the possibilities how to increase the sustainable number of mentors available from existing mentors and existing FUSE participants after the USE-IT! project has officially finished.

To support the existing social enterprises the USE-IT! partners will try to link the development of new product/services with grant monies available through USE-IT! and link them to market opportunities. For this, more business diagnostics will be undertaken.

Emerging ideas from the Awareness raising sessions will be supported and developed into trading enterprises. Here, to support the creation of a food consortium, that will have a physical presence within the Port Loop development in Greater Icknield, they will identify active food growers, producers and caterers within the wider Birmingham area.

Further they will engage with schools to raise awareness of social enterprises and community businesses and provide work experience opportunities for local people within social enterprises, community businesses and charities

Concerning **Community researchers,** the target number of recruitment has nearly been reached. The mentoring and information sessions for the Community Researchers will be intensified and events organised to bring Community Researchers together with people from the community to showcase the work and research findings. In addition, asset mapping workshops will be organised and a business plan developed for the Community Research CIC/SE.

For **matching job skills in the community with the demand** the USE-IT! partners will look for sustainable funding possibilities in Birmingham for the specialist language trainings. As the funding so such language training has already been secured for the Black Country, this programme will be rolled out across the four other hospitals in Black Country so more people can benefit. Further, the opportunities for non-health professional pathways in Greater Icknield will be explored.

In support of the USE-IT! project activities **further communication events** will be lunched, more video interviews done with partners, Community Researchers and participants to tell the wider story and a Dragon's Den event' organised for 'Communication Makers'

Urban Innovative Actions (UIA) is an Initiative of the European Union that provides urban areas throughout Europe with resources to test new and unproven solutions to address urban challenges. Based on article 8 of ERDF, the Initiative has a total ERDF budget of EUR 372 million for 2014-2020.

UIA projects will produce a wealth of knowledge stemming from the implementation of the innovative solutions for sustainable urban development that are of interest for city practitioners and stakeholders across the EU. This journal is a paper written by a UIA Expert that captures and disseminates the lessons learnt from the project implementation and the good practices identified. The journals will be structured around the main challenges of implementation identified and faced at local level by UIA projects. They will be published on a regular basis on the UIA website.

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