



InSPIRES

Ingenious Science Shops to promote Participatory Innovation, Research and Equity in Science

D7.1: Sustainability, resilience and networking strategies (Exploitation Plan)

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I would like you to know how much this project changed my life, actually. At the personal level and at the professional level. So, it was a gift. I'll always consider InSPIRES as a gift. (Hichem Ben Hassine, Institut Pasteur de Tunis, 28/05/2021)

What has made me feel part of a network are the people at Living Knowledge. They are amazing. They have been there for over 20 years. You come in out of the blue, they let you in, they talk to you, they share with you, they respect you and they tell you: "you are Living Knowledge too". (Anne-Sophie Gresle, ISGlobal – Hospital Clínic de Barcelona, 16/06/2021)

1. Introduction

“Looking back, I'd rather look away”, says one singer. Trying to avoid that tendency, as we embarked on the InSPIRES journey, through strategic documents produced by our Work Package 2 team, the consortium decided to understand the past and history of Science Shops identifying their strengths and limitations in nurturing social innovation. For InSPIRES it was crucial in order to assess how Science Shops can keep contributing to capacity building for social innovation.

One of these strategy documents —a thematic synthesis of the literature on Science Shops— analysed the difficult question of the long-term livelihood of Science Shop units from several perspectives, asking “what are the factors that the literature associates with the raise and/or fall of Science Shop” (Gresle et al, 2021 forthcoming). Understanding a paradox evidenced in the literature, the cited paper postulates that, although Science Shops projects can represent “a persuasive complementary approach to the way science is defined, executed and produced today”, Science Shop units have sustainability difficulties “as they do not fit the current dominant research paradigm” (Idem, 2021, forthcoming).

It is not unusual to note that today and in the recent decades, the ghosts of unsustainability and decline surround the Science Shop movement (Wachelder, 2003 and Fischer, Leydesdorff, and Schophaus, 2004, quoted by Gresle et al, 2021 forthcoming). Perhaps this is why InSPIRES envisioned for the end of its journey, as did PERARES, EnRRICH, SciShops and other European projects devoted to Science Shops, to develop an “Exploitation plan” to ensure long term running of Science Shop structures and





addressing “the issue” of financial sustainability to maintain their activities. InSPIRES also aimed to contribute identifying, (and even developing and the testing) modalities for financial sustainability, through “local ecosystems”. Coming from a Landscape Analysis, InSPIRES’ Exploitation Plan considered it feasible to arrive to a “Business Model”. The previously activated dilemma about the possibility that Science Shop units or structures could charge stakeholders (usually from Civil Society) who initiate projects with their demands, understanding these commissioners as “clients”, was again invoked to a never-ending debate.

All these issues will be briefly reconsidered in the historical review section that opens this paper. Especially in the light of the quoted thematic synthesis of the literature, the paper will continue with a section specifically dedicated to the issue of Science Shops’ “impact, visibility and recognition”. The “lack of visibility” and the reduced capacity to complete impact evaluation studies about Science Shop projects are here identified as other possible harmful effects that Science Shop structures face because of their reduced resources.

Another document produced by InSPIRES Work Package 2 leaders will shed light on these fundamental issues. We are referring to a qualitative study of 80 interviews to Science Shops structures and similar initiatives (54 in the countries of the European Union and 26 beyond Europe), to create a concept map of the “Science Shop at its best” (Task conducted by Environmental Social Science Research Group, ESSRG, team members: Zoltán Bajmócy, György Pataki, Janka Horváth and Bálint Balázs).

As we have seen, the spirit is different after 80 interviews with members of a living community. Although the economic problems are not hidden, other themes emerged louder than “decline” and “unsustainability” in those conversations. Among the main ones, in decreasing order: research, project, questions, community, university, engagement, work, open, groups, students and societal (Bajmócy et al, 2018). Perhaps this is why our ESSRG partners decided to analyse the results of those interviews identifying “leverages for the success of the future science shops and describe possible future pathways” (Idem, 2018).

Taking these possible future pathways as a parameter generated by an InSPIRES team, for the central part of this deliverable we have decided to return to the qualitative interview approach, this time by interviewing in depth the head of each of our partner institutions. The analysis of this new eight interviews was performed after a manual coding. All the quotes that underpin this document come from these conversations, in which we asked our partners to reflect if their subsistence or resilient strategy come close to or move away from any of the following scenarios: “successful operation in a supportive university context; (or) flexibility and impact seeking outside the university context” (2018).





Actually, the ESSRG proposal identify a third possible future pathway for successful Science Shops, namely: “finding links to various science-society initiatives.” And precisely this scenario, presented as an overall strategy, seems to have taken up much of the last section of this document. In that section we analyse, together with the InSPIERS partners, whether or not networking practices are considered decisive for the continuity of the activities of Science Shop structures where funding received from a particular project has come to an end.

It seems necessary to anticipate that this deliverable does not contain the answers that the InSPIRES project asked it to find, with phrases such as "To develop an Exploitation plan to ensure long term running of SS structures". However, the document does present connections between the way in which subsistence has been tackled in the Science Shop tradition and the particular and real ways in which InSPIRES partners are preparing to resist (with greater or lesser coverage) developing projects that meet the needs of Civil Society. The notion of network and the notion of community are consolidated in these final reflections.

2. Previously identified barriers to Science Shops' sustainability

“If we were to leave, would there be a science shop or is it just a passion project of a couple of people?” (Catherine Bates, Students Learning with Communities, DIT Access & Civic Engagement Office, Dublin.)

Using the “thematic theory” approach to extract and systematize Science Shop related topics in 26 scientific papers published in indexed journals and analysed with the PRISMA methodology, Gresle *et al* summarised the historical journey of the Science Shop movement from an early peak to its current situation (2021 forthcoming).

Quoting Wachelder (2003) and Urias *et al.* (2020) the thematic synthesis of the literature starts remembering the 70s. In The Netherlands, around 15% of the university budget was allocated towards “Science Shop-type of activities”; and almost every Dutch university had its own integrated Science Shops by the end of the decade. Twenty years after, university budget cutbacks and the fact that “community-based activities of this kind were a mismatch with the government’s agenda” (Wachelder, 2003 quoted by Gresle *et al.*, 2021 forthcoming), explained the “shut down” in the Science Shops of The University of Leiden, and The University of Amsterdam, among others.

Those cutbacks have been explained as one of the consequences of “an increasing entrepreneurial spirit at the university”. Perhaps not by accident, those were also the





years of the consolidation of the popularly known as the “Bologna Process”, which was described by its detractors for “only aiming at the privatisation and marketisation of public education and education in general” (Fernández-Liria, 2009). The severe reduction of public funding had also determined the closure of almost all French Science Shops, initially not imbedded in universities (Gresle *et al*, 2021).

The reason why this background is presented in some detail is to point out that already in those years the invitation for Science Shops to adopt the functional consultancy model to cover at least part of their operational costs by charging the “clients” for whom a research project is carried out is already being installed. Some Science Shops adopted the consultancy model, charging for their services. Practitioners more grounded in the philosophical and activist roots of the movement have expressed their mistrust or opposition to this corporate drift. Science Shops were supposed to give “free support to voiceless CSOs who did not have the resources to pay for research” (Ades 1979; Le Crosnier *et al*. 2013; Zaal and Leydesdorff 1987, all quoted by Grese *et al*).

The applied research consultancy model also limited two founding aspirations of the Science Shops: the training of students in participatory research and the possibility of influencing public policy. Several researchers and practitioners (Van Den Berg, 2004; Jellema and Mulder, 2016) remembered that Science Shops “operate very much from the perspective of the citizens and formulate research questions that take CSOs’ views as their starting point, whereas professional consultants would not place such a significant focus on the standpoint of the affected citizens” (Grese *et al*, 2021 forthcoming).

With a vindictive voice, the systematic review reflects a diagnosis and a desire from this community of practice: “Science shops, while maintaining their mission-driven commitment to solve societal problems, may have to rethink their focus and alliances on a regular basis to stay resilient (Debok 2008), while upholding the social and public values from which they were initially born” (Grese *et al*, 2021 forthcoming).

Already in the implementation period of InSPIRES, as one of our deliverables shows, the possibility of generating some kind of economic resources by approaching, in one way or another, to market dynamics has been experienced by one of our partners: “In terms of alternative business models, the Science Shop at Institute Pasteur de Tunis (IPT) has been approached by pharmaceutical companies that are interested in fostering synergies between the Science Shop and their corporate social responsibility initiatives. This model has allowed the unit to raise extra funding not only from these partners, but also from the IPT itself. From a Responsible Research and Innovation perspective, these partnerships might raise a need to consider how to prioritise demands and, at the same time, keep the Science Shops’ independence during the project so that more powerful stakeholders do not over influence Science Shop processes” (Muniz Pereira Urias, Vogels, Zweekhorst, 2019).





Very recently, through detailed empirical work (which included structured questionnaires, focus groups, interviews, direct observation and document analysis), the Università di Sassari team arrived to similar conclusions and a proposed resolution to the dilemmas we are now called upon to address:

Universities' community engagement is confronted with growing pressure from increased competition and marketisation of knowledge, along with widespread adoption of New Public Management measures. This context is notably challenging for forms of engagement that are based on such principles and practices as cooperation, knowledge democracy and public value. [...] In the light of relevant literature regarding possible strategic assets that may enable Science Shops and Community Engagement units to overcome observed fragility and ensure durability, [this can be pursued] through systematic mobilisation of specific knowledge, competencies and abilities. Combinatory capacity and boundary spanning are pinpointed as specific components of Science Shops' action, which – we maintain – are also key strategic assets to consolidate their role and ensure durability. The distinction between the 'instrumental/operational' and 'strategic' function of boundary spanning is introduced in order to analytically develop this argument (Vargiu, Cocco and Ghibellini, 28/05/2019)

3. About visibility, impact and recognition

In two weeks, we'll have our institutional event, which aims to really restate what we did during InSPIRES. We are going to focus on the results of the ten Science Shop projects we performed; and my goal, our goal, the most important one, is to show that Science Shop is science, okay? And for that, I'm asking the scientists that were involved in the projects to do the talk. Like ten minutes of each project. Because scientists can only be convinced by scientists, okay? I can do my best to convince them; but only scientists can convince scientists. (Hichem Ben Hassine, Institut Pasteur de Tunis, 28/05/2021)

We can repeat that a key theme that emerged in many articles is the lack of visibility that Science Shops face. Although operating since the 1970s, Science Shops have suffered from considerable problems of visibility, a shortcoming documented in earlier European reports on participative research (Søgaard Jørgensen et al., 2004; Millot, 2014, quoted by Gresle et al, 2021 forthcoming).

Visibility is, of course, not only related with publicity or advocacy. When talking about science, at least in a traditional register, we can have to address the “indexed publications topic”. “To date, Science Shops tend to have revealed a slim scientific production (De Filippo et al. 2018) as resources are principally available in ‘grey literature’, primarily in the form





of Master's theses and CSO reports (Vargiu, Cocco, and Ghibellini 2019). This situation is certainly explained by the lack of time and resources available to Science Shops staff (De Filippo et al. 2018) which make them focusing mostly on their primary goal rather than communicating and publishing their results" (Gresle et al, 2021 forthcoming).

If scientific publications are apparently missing, not only Science Shop projects' results are quite invisible for academia, but also the chances of legitimising the units that allowed those projects inside the scientific community get reduced. "Given that the prevailing system for evaluating international research does not contemplate citizen-driven open science projects, it remains something of a challenge for Science Shops to attract researchers on their projects" (Lengwiler, 2008 quoted by Gresle et al 2021 forthcoming).

We share an alternative hypothesis considered by Cooper, Shirk and Zuckerberg (2014): "some publications might not have revealed the fact that they are the result of a participatory research project involving non-professional scientists and citizens (Gresle et al 2021 forthcoming). In one of the Science Shop processes hosted by ISGlobal, InSPIRES leading team, the explicit acknowledgement of the CSO that originated the research had to be requested repeatedly to the scientific team, even during the elaboration of the policy brief delivered to various Civil Society actors as a result of the process. The actual dialogue between a CSO and that scientific team made this project possible, but declaring it in a paper was not considered a priority until the situation could be satisfactorily reversed through conversation.

As claimed by our most quoted paper, Science Shop might not weight in scientific literature, but they might have allowed many case studies published in thesis and a several documents of "grey literature", including wealthy anecdotes that deserve to be "examined, evaluated and published in peer-reviewed journals":

Through these retrospective and external evaluations, researchers could shed more light on how Science Shops have contributed to solving real life problems, jointly generated actionable knowledge, empowered citizens and students, open up new research ideas for scientist, and finally how Science Shop have contributed in bringing closer science to society in a constructive and positive way (Gresle et al 2021 forthcoming).

Some other quotes already shared by our colleagues of the Environmental Social Science Research Group, help us to move from the issue of publications to the broader issues of impact and recognition, identified as relevant for supporting the continuity of Science Shops units in a landscape of budgetary constraints. Here some ideas, all quoted in Bajmócy, Pataki, Horváth and Balázs (2018):





“It is very much appreciated when a researcher will publish an article in a scientific journal about the Science Shop project, but it is the call of the researcher to make the research public. [...] At the start of every project the Science Shop makes an agreement with the project manager and the CSO including the project evaluation. Monitoring the impact of a project is still very hard. [...] It will take a while before the real impact will be visible.” (Social Research and Participatory Action Group; Pablo de Olavide University, Seville, Spain)

To reach and measure true impact, publications (especially academic publications) may “provide inspiration, but might not be the most important way” (Bajmócy, Pataki, Horváth and Balázs, 2018). By the end of InSPIRES project, one of partners recently introduced to the Science Shop approach shares some lessons learned regarding “the other impact communication”:

In other words, no, we cannot remain in a (scientific) article. We have learned that we have to talk to people. Simple, plain language, in a clear infographic, which is what is being done. This is helping us a lot. (...) An infographic that we have taken to the hospitals in a single sheet and only with drawings. (...) It cost us, but we are being able to do it with this financial support; and for the rest of the projects. Reading the article? Not even the doctors in El Chaco (region) are going to read the article which copy has been left there, so the logic is to make an infographic or a very simple presentation. The message (in a current project) is very simple: rapid tests work just as well as a laboratory set up, ask for it to your community, to your municipal government. (Daniel Franz Lozano Beltrán, CEADES, Bolivia, 28/05/2021)

Also by the end of InSPIRES, conversations with one of our most experimented partners partners show some shifts to acknowledge about the added value of community-based research in an academic context:

Yes, (...) you need so many publications, you need so many courses, you need so many. And, if you do well, if you have all the numbers, then you do well. But, in our university, that changed with new rewards and appreciation we have next to this big “check box”. They also appreciate if you do something in a community, they also appreciate if you make your science more public. So, I think that they are exceptional and you see that we're still in transition, because the funny thing is that if you want to become associate professor or an assistant professor, our full professor, you still need that big box. So, you see, we're still in this, I would say, in the struggle. I'm very pleased that at least our university is supporting this and trying to make these shifts (Marjolein Zweekhorst, The Athena Institute, VU, Amsterdam, 8/06/2021)

As explicitly summarized at our Deliverable 3.2, “internal legitimacy” can be build so that a Science Shop structure can be funded or supported by first stream resources at the organization (when applicable):





We are aware that this might be challenging and there is no recipe for doing so. [...] The Living Lab for Health at IrsiCaixa was initially funded by the European grants Xplore Health and ENRRICH. After the end of those projects, the relevance of the Living Lab was visible to the institute and it started getting direct funds for its operation. Currently, one member of the staff is fully funded by IrsiCaixa, whereas the remaining still are funded by European project grants (Muniz Pereira Urias, Vogels, Zweekhorst, 2019).

Two years later, the head of this Living Lab recapitulates the journey towards the intra-institutional recognition that each of our teams seems to be obliged to find in their own way.

Yes, there has been a change. More than ten years ago, at the Community Advisory Committee (of IrsiCaixa), researchers thought they were coming to do a favor to the people of the community. 'Oh, look, I'm going there, yes'. They felt good because they were going there to do a favor, to give, right? And then they have realized that when the research is applied, the contribution is enormous. [...] Norbert (Steinhaus) said a phrase that I remember very well. I asked him, 'How do I make my boss understand me? 'It takes time,' he answered.'" (Rosina Malagrida, the Living Lab for Health at IrsiCaixa, Barcelona, 10/06/2021)

4. But they resist: Resilience of successful science shops

We have been for a long time in the "hard" scenario, I would say. We have tried to do this for a long time, this this change is rather recent. So, now life is easier for us and people appreciate our EU way more than they used to. For a very long time, we were in in a way more difficult position; now it is understood that we have to listen to society. Links are appreciated. RRI was a nice example. And also, the (EU) funding helped. The landscape has changed. (Marjolein Zweekhorst, The Athena Institute, VU, Amsterdam, 8/06/2021)

Trying to unravel the attitudes, practices and conditions that allow some Science Shops units not only to withstand the limitations detailed above, but even to have grown stronger to date, INSPIRES proposed, through its aforementioned Deliverable 2.1, a typology of possible future pathways for science shops. The document focusses on solutions and possibilities that may be useful and serve as an inspiration.

As a result of that exercise, three such pathways were proposed. We begin to reveal the "photo finish" at the end of the formal InSPIRES journey. Today, we ask ourselves how close or far the teams that have brought InSPIRES to life are to these scenarios that have been the fruit of our own analysis: successful operation in a supportive university context; and flexibility and impact seeking outside the university context. As explained before the third identified pathway for successful Science Shops ("finding links to various





science-society initiatives.”) will be fully addressed in the following and last section of this document.

4.1 “Successful operation in a supportive university context”

This pathway brings us to “the traditional narrative of the Science Shop model”, in which university students and researchers learn while addressing social concerns, also allowing and refreshing scientific development. This traditional narrative also includes Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) “as protagonists in the exhibition of a real concern presented under the form of a simple question according with the available expertise”. The research is assigned to students as part of their final dissertation, under the supervision of an experienced researcher (Science Shops background, InSPIRES web page)

As defined, “this pathway builds on the understanding that on certain stipulations, university context may serve as a factor that lies behind success. [...]The stability provides room for focusing on the internal success factors of the established science shops; to develop skills such as: navigating in both the academic and the civil sector, networking, experimenting with new methods, and new ways of communicating the results and having impact; and improving evaluation”. (Bajmócy, Pataki, Horváth and Balázs, 2018).

Definitely the first one, a supportive university context. I think I am very lucky to be in an extremely supportive university context. Our university started two years ago (applying the notion) that all students should be having the opportunity to broaden their minds. And that means that there are more open to complex questions related to society so they can develop not only academically, but also personally and also in their relation with society. So, they really hope to develop, in that way, different kind of students, which are more open to other questions than only pure academic. They want students to have the opportunity at least once in their programmes. So, within that programme, they have at least some assignments. (Marjolein Zweekhorst, The Athena Institute, VU, Amsterdam, 8/06/2021)

Comparison can lead us from one reality to the other, reminding us the implications of a not fully supportive university context. Budget constrains—and even culturally related institutional constrains— also limit the future possibilities for our partners:

We do not have very much support from our university. I don't know, probably there is a different feeling with respect to other countries, like in Northern Europe, where universities are committed to having their relation with society. (Our university) is not against us, but they do not think that it is worthy investing at a Science Shop. I hope that this will change it in the future. Otherwise, I would have to stop doing it. (Franco Bagnoli, UNIFI, 15/06/2021)





I wrote many projects. Now it's 12 years, so I'm a little bit tired about it. It's very hard every time, really. It's very hard every time to wait for funds, every month and so on. It's not so easy. I'm not so young now and. I also would like to be recognised by my university in the sense that I think I work well, I can do a good job for my university, engaging people in making events and creating networks, public engagement, citizen science and so on. So, I'm a little bit angry in this moment because I know that my role could be very important. But if they don't recognise me, I think I have to change. Maybe teacher in high school or something like this. (Giovanna Pacini, UNIFI, 15/06/2021)

A Bolivian university-related future alternative. Among many other statements we could choose to describe the relationship between some of our partners and the universities that host them in some way, we chose an innovative alternative that comes to us from Bolivia. In the modest context of a nascent faculty, our CEADES colleagues find this possibility:

The Faculty of Nursing of the University of San Simon participated in an InSPIRES Open Call project. It is a recently created faculty, before it was only a career, now it has its own structure. And one of its requirements is to have a research institute. [In alliance with this body] community research can be extremely cheap. In the case of nursing -because of the training that a nurse has, which involves a lot of relationship with the community- the nursing institute can basically be structured as a Science Shop unit, and we are developing just that work with the support of CEADES. (Daniel Franz Lozano Beltrán, CEADES, Bolivia, 28/05/2021)

4.2 “Flexibility and impact seeking outside the universities”

This pathway goes outside the academic operational environment, where some of our partners have found freedom and flexibility to address “commitments and issues they deem to be the most important and meaningful” (Bajmócy, Pataki, Horváth and Balázs, 2018). The Environmental Social Science Research Group (ESSRG) experience itself shows this journey from a university dependent context to becoming a small company established by researchers of different disciplines looking for autonomy and enjoying working together on the boundaries of environmental and social sciences. “And we have grown like this, project after project, closer to the original idea”, says Bálint Balázs, ESSRG Senior Research Fellow (11/06/2021).

Yes, it's a matter of people but of course you need an enabling context, you know. I kind of context that is helping you to do things. There was an enabling context for us, it was the mission of our Public Health institution. The Civil Society rising up, the revolution, that happened ten years ago. Many things that helped us to really do it. Of course, so you need both, you need people and you need the context. (Hichem Ben Hassine, Institut Pasteur de Tunis, 28/05/2021)





The idea of an “enabling context” here expressed illustrates what some groups might be asking in order “to turn towards direct impact seeking”, and possibly related subsistence. At the other hand, of course, new challenges emerge with new sources of funding seeking and new organizational structures required.

I'll try to be transparent, you know. The reality is what it is, you know? So, we don't have the money (after InSPIRES) to pay (the staff). I have a very, very small budget, it's running out in October. Until then, I'll try to find new funds or I will have to accept that our Science Shop will be, you know, ruled by people that are just giving time as volunteers (Hichem Ben Hassine, Institut Pasteur de Tunis, 28/05/2021)

Recently, The Living Lab for Health at IrsiCaixa received its 8th consecutive negative answer after a submission for competitive funds. “Eight no's, and one to know” (Rosina Malagrida, 10/06/2021). And yet, there is a small but significant amount of funding that this team and ISGlobal jointly secured after they began their collaboration through InSPIRES. This process, which has led to the creation of *The Barcelona CaixaResearch Living Lab*, will be developed in the following section.

Meanwhile, at ISGlobal, the team that conducted InSPIRES also hopes its institutional support to be committed and materialized. “We have been asked to present a strategy document” (Anne-Sophie Gresle, ISGlobal – Hospital Clínic de Barcelona, 16/06/2021). Days ago, the team launched a survey to all ISGlobal community, explaining that “a task force composed by members from the InSPIRES project, the Innovation department, the Science Culture Unit and the Urban Planning, Environment and Health Initiative is currently working on a proposal for the creation of a ‘Participation Hub (name under development)’ to act transversally within ISGlobal to promote and support co-creation and participatory practices in our research and innovation projects in order to better respond to the needs of our communities and ensure we remain competitive for funding schemes”.

5. Networking as our Conclusion

So, in 2016 I was in Barcelona for the first HEIRRI project conference, and there I met Anne-Sophie during a break. She heard me speaking French with another guy. We discussed and we liked each other. One month and a half after she called me. And she said: ‘we are submitting a European project on Science Shop, and are you interested?’ And I said: ‘yes, but what is exactly a Science Shop?’ (Hichem Ben Hassine, Institut Pasteur de Tunis, 28/05/2021)





OK, I am also a physicist. I worked in an enterprise for many years. What I always wanted was to come back to the university. [...] And I had my lucky moment: I met Franco [Bagnoli]. Together we started collaborating for a science fair and started working together with our first European project on Science Cafés. [...] Later, we met Bálint [Bálasz]. (Giovanna Pacini, UNIFI, 15/06/2021)

Networking is about establishing relationships that ideally should have both a work and a personal component. We all have a cognitive part and an emotional part, don't we? Networking should be a win-win. I think it's very similar to friendship, isn't it? (Rosina Malagrida, The Living Lab for Health at IrsiCaixa, 10/06/2021).

As already announced at InSPIRES Deliverable 2.1, “international networks are sources of inspiration and learning, and may provide funding opportunities” (Bajmócy, Pataki, Horváth and Balázs, 2018). In this sense, Science Shops teams remember they are not in isolation and can work as parts of networks. Honestly summarized by Balázs: “We are small and we would like to find those people around us who are engaged in the same problems and spaces in which we are interested in. And we are seeking cooperation so that we can be stronger together” (11/06/2021).

The issue of networking is not raised by InSPIRES partners and other members of the Science Shop movement because of the diverse opportunities it opens up for members of a community of practice, but because of its proven capacity to lead small units or groups (nodes) into environments of opportunity where the dream of continuity beyond a purely economic dimension can come true.

As is the case within a Science Shops project, in which the fundamental thing is the communion of diverse actors, when different Science Shop units or structures are articulated, the local work is strengthened, shared and supported by other units. A network, a true community of practice, emerges between teams that share values. And when InSPIRES arrives to its formal closure, the visualization of a network that prevails even without financial support aims to Living Knowledge, The International Network of Science Shops:

Living Knowledge certainly persists. It has existed for twenty years now and will continue to exist because all those who formed it are undoubtedly [active]. Whether they function to a greater or lesser extent, depending on the funding they get... sure. But it exists, it exists. (Anne-Sophie Gresle, ISGlobal – Hospital Clínic de Barcelona, 16/06/2021)

Today [when Living Knowledge Festival finishes] I can tell that during this week I have felt we take part of something. InSPIRES may also have served to reinforce the network, to strengthen the family. (María Jesús Pinazo, ISGlobal – Hospital Clínic de Barcelona, 02/07/2021)





Networking takes so much time and to dedicate oneself to this task in a high-quality way may not always be recognised by the heads of our institutions (Florence Belaën, UDL, 08/06/2021 and Rosina Malagrida, The Living Lab for Health at IrsiCaixa, 10/06/2021). Referring to any network into which InSPIRES partners might be integrated, Florence Belaën called for such a network to be "not impositive of one single model, not hierarchical". For this for this same colleague, InSPIRES partners do not constitute a network right now. "It is a project, maybe a community, but not yet a network" (08/06/2021).

Objectively, this is difficult to deny, but there are other real networks that InSPIRES partners have helped to establish as proposed from the beginning of the project. Partner UNIFI helped creating the Italian Network of Science Shops "for the need to 'joining forces' to achieve the following objectives: to disseminate the idea and the initiatives of the network to other Italian universities; to increase the visibility and knowledge of the science shop methodology towards interested stakeholders (CSOs, Municipalities, universities, industries, etc.); and to search for funds on national and international calls.

The Italian Network of Science Shops is like a baby for me. All of us wanted to create a real network and collaborate to improve this network. It's a hard moment because we met face to face just two times. [The network was officially launched right before the Covid-10 pandemics]. I think that we need to stay together (Giovanna Pacini, UNIFI, 15/06/2021)

As the main product of another European project, the UNIFI team helped establishing the Italian Network of Sciences Cafés more than a decade ago. At some point, this network was able to obtain small state funding for running costs. Some of its units are still operating today, mainly on a voluntary basis.

Under the leadership of CEADES (Bolivia) and with the participation of IrsiCaixa and ISglobal, InSPIRES also celebrated the birth of the Ibero-American Communities and Science Network. The network was officially launched on 20 August 2020 with the participation of the Centro Latinoamericano de Aprendizaje y Servicio Solidario, CLAYSS (Argentina), the Oswaldo Cruz Foundation, FIOCRUZ (Brazil), Soluciones Integrales y Estrategias de Innovación en Salud, SIEDIES (Ecuador) and the above mentioned InSPIRES partners.

According to its founding members, the Ibero-American Communities and Science Network has been created to: 1) Exchange research experiences with communities in the fields of health and environment that have as their main objective "a change in the quality of life of the people involved". 2) Analyse the different adaptations of the Science Shop model in the Latin American environment. 3) Generate joint work in formal and non-formal education spaces based on the concepts of open, innovative and responsible





science, identifying the most pressing issues in Latin America. 4) Disseminate different research methodologies with community participation and their benefits in academic and non-academic environments, in order to reduce the existing gaps between the scientific world and civil society.

Complementing this set of objectives, another purpose is also made explicit among the co-builders of this network. As before mentioned in the case of the Italian Network of Science Shops, the network is also seen as an instance that can bring members closer to funding opportunities.

The Ibero-American Network has dissemination and training as its two arms; but the third arm has to do precisely with being able to raise funds to generate projects. This is not something we dream of, but something that should happen at some point. If we don't [manage to obtain funding], we want to join forces and be able to share something very interesting within the network: the contacts that each institution has. (Daniel Franz Lozano Beltrán, CEADES, Bolivia, 28/05/2021)

Finally, in Africa, another InSPIRES partner worked from the beginning to achieve the goal of strengthening networking in the region even after European funding had ended:

The Institute Pasteur de Tunis established links with Science Shops operating in Bénin, Sénégal, Niger and Canada, specially thanks to Florence Piron from Canada, with whom IPT presented a panel session during the LK8 in Budapest in May 2018. After that, two meetings were organized in Montpellier (France) and Dakar (Sénégal) with the contribution of IPT in order to identify the key actors of this network. In April 2019, IPT and UdL organized the InSPIRES spring school with the involvement of the most important Science shops of French speaking countries. Many Science shop from this network submitted projects during the open call launched by InSPIRES in 2019. One of them was awarded and involves 10 French speaking science shop. The French speaking network is more and more active also thanks to the coordination done by Science Citoyenne, which created a website dedicated to the French speaking network. Finally, this network is alive and continue to develop common actions and some of them are leaded by IPT, like a cycle of webinars. (Hichem Ben Hassine, Institut Pasteur de Tunis, personal communication, 12/06/2021)

It is the wish of the outgoing InSPIRES co-ordination that these networks develop in a free flowing way but still articulate, in some way, with Living Knowledge (María Jesús Pinazo, ISGlobal – Hospital Clínic de Barcelona, 02/07/2021). Concluding a recently published paper, “(...) results showed that a network-of-networks approach to SPIs can help science to meet policy demands more effectively, and to provide more robust outputs to evidence-based policy decision. However, we also realized a divergence between the willingness and the actual capacities of actors to contribute to a network-





of-networks style (...), which highlights that contributions to boundary work are highly dependent on individual and organizational capacities” (Kelemen *et al*, 2021)

It’s time to remember that InSPIRES Deliverable I.2 left the door open for a third future pathway for successful Science Shops: “finding links to various science-society initiatives.” Under the networking notion, this pathway amplifies the encounter possibilities of Science Shops units inviting them not only to find match with another Science Shop unit, but with various initiatives which whom they share ideas on commitment towards social impact, democratization of science, and co-creation. “(...) There are numerous ‘niche actors’ already in the research and innovation landscape. (...) Science cafés, living labs, fab labs, hacker and maker spaces, participatory action researchers, citizen science, further science society initiatives and projects of universities and public research institutions, intermediary and consultancy firms, etc. are important learning sources and partners, both in terms of methods and the pursued values” (Bajmócy, Pataki, Horváth and Balázs, 2018).

A Living Lab, for instance, has already emerged thanks to InSPIRES. The Barcelona City Council and “la Caixa” Banking Foundation have signed a partnership agreement to advance and strengthen the City Council’s plan for science Barcelona Ciència. The experience of the two Spanish partners of inSPIRES project, IrsiCaixa and ISGlobal, will serve as a starting point. The agreement included the creation of the The Barcelona – CaixaResearch Living Lab, thought as meeting point for many different actors, such civil society organizations, non-organized citizens, academic institutions and researchers.

For the last EU- Science with and for Society (SwafS) call, six out of partners of InSPIRES presented a new proposal, this time including other four Living Knowledge members. BRidging Inspiration anD ChanGE (BRIDGE) aimed to co-create “bridging projects” between Science Shops, Citizen Science, Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR) and other approaches, engaging citizens in interaction with the other actors of the “quintuple helix”. BRIDGE also aimed to perform research on these projects’ process and transformative impacts in different local and transnational communities, as well as on their relationship with the notions of propensity to change and collective self-efficacy which was thought to allow studying bonds from innovative perspectives. The partners were ready to develop the projects with groups in situations of vulnerability, echoing the United Nations SDGs overriding message “to leave no one behind”.

BRIDGED was not funded, neither some other projects that gather several InSPIRES partners among diverse institutions, often linked to the Living Knowledge Network. However, the members who brought InSPIRES to life still believe that a project to bring them back together can emerge. “*Definitely, yeah. I hope that this team can meet again, but for that we need to find ways to keep being and work, and maybe expand with like-minded people*” (Marjolein Zweekhorst, The Athena Institute, VU, Amsterdam, 8/06/2021).





Beyond InSPIRES and coming back to the interviews conducted with 80 experimented practitioners of the movement, it is evident that we are dealing with “particular people (with visions, skills and values); people who are eager to step out of their comfort zones and motivate others to do so; people who are inspired and provide inspiration for others; (and people for whom) the most important relation is their relation to the community” (Bajmócy, Pataki, Horváth and Balázs, 2018).

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