

How do universities develop interactive capabilities to promote social innovation and development in South Africa?

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Collaborate to innovate

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University interaction with partners other than firms

- Literature on firm capability development, and on university industry linkages
- BUT literature on role of university in social development tends to be normative
- Insufficient empirical evidence how universities in specific contexts develop new capabilities
- View from *inside* universities, of institutional conditions that support, limit and incentivise interaction

A growing policy alignment in NSI

Higher education policy	Science and technology policy
Focus on equity, responsiveness to social justice and promoting public good	Focus on big science, economic demand and promoting global competitiveness
Shift to promote 'community engagement' as integral to academic scholarship	Shift to include a focus on 'broad based social innovation' and technology for poverty reduction
How do universities give effect to the growing policy alignment and an integrated economic and social development mission?	

Two research universities

- Academic compliance model with formal structures and formal procedures
- Academic autonomy with diffusion, brokerage and advocacy model

4 critical aspects to leverage academic capacities into interactive capabilities

- **Insertion into institutional power structures**
 - New senior executive leadership portfolios
 - Senate sub-committees
 - Formal/informal representation at faculty level
 - Operational responsibility = dedicated unit
- **Coherent institutional policy framework**
 - Broadly encompassing and shared conceptualisation => more substantial change and articulation with academic scholarship

- **Coordination and alignment between internal university structures for research, teaching, innovation and outreach**
 - Minimal but embryonic shifts at operational level – lack of clarity at ‘interface space’
 - **University-wide dissemination and incentive mechanisms**
 - Advocacy mechanisms (reporting, annual awards, best practice publications, colloquia)
 - Information sharing and resources
 - Little dedicated university funding
 - Lack of recognition in criteria for academic reward – promotion or appraisal
- => **MISSING: Systemic set of support and incentive mechanisms integrated with institutional strategies and structures**

A work in progress - next steps:

- Compare research university with other types of university
- Systematic evidence of patterns of interactive activity with a range of partners in relation to knowledge transmission, generation and dissemination, in each university