



UNIVERSITEIT  
STELLENBOSCH  
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# SOCIAL IMPACT STRATEGIC PLAN

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## Executive Summary

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Community service has been an integral part of Stellenbosch University (SU) for decades albeit in different forms and with shifting emphases. Philanthropy and welfare imperatives dominated earlier efforts. During the last decade the emphasis shifted towards Community Interaction (CI), i.e. knowledge-based interactions as part of the curriculum (service-learning) and the co-curriculum (structured volunteerism), as well as the societal relevance of research and innovation. In 2014, the Division for Community Interaction underwent an external evaluation that culminated in thinking of new and innovative ways about Stellenbosch University's role in society. The Institutional Intent and Strategy (2013-2018) (IIS) and later the Institutional Plan (2016-2021) (IP) gave direction to developing this Social Impact Strategic Plan (SISP) - henceforth referred to as the Plan.

In this plan, Social Impact (SI) is grounded in the IIS, which espouses the three strategic priorities of the SU as "broadening access, sustaining momentum on excellence and enhancing societal impact". SU's strategic positioning for the 21st century is anchored in creating and sustaining an environment of inclusivity, transformation, innovation, diversity, and maintaining excellence with a focus on the future.

SI gives impetus to the third priority of the IIS by creating a vantage point for reciprocal impact between the university and society, facilitating the intent of relevance through the core functions of learning and teaching and research and innovation. University expertise is complemented by societal praxis towards collaborative knowledge creation that is innovative and future-focused. This is done through interaction for mutual benefit with external societal partners which is being sought intentionally and selectively.

As a higher education institution, SU considers its responsibility to the country and continent as key in the quest to demonstrate corporate citizenship. This is demonstrated by aspiring to incur systemic transformative social impact as the ultimate goal, through institutional collaborative activities with internal and external role players, while upholding the values of shared responsibility, empathy and leadership in service of others. Social Impact is ingrained in the culture of the university where societal well-being is a core goal and social justice is a commitment.

As an institution in society, SU intends to further its impact on the social fabric of a democratic society in spheres such as the political, economic, ecological, as well as the sphere of civil society including family life, culture, art, education, sport, health, public discourses, public opinion-formation, public policymaking etc. In all of these spheres there are social groupings who have a communal interest and collaborate towards shared goals.

The SI mission at SU is therefore adopted as an institutional strategic priority through which the university commits itself to reciprocally influence, motivate and activate

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stakeholders both in the university and in society towards equitable social change through its core functions and tacit expertise aligned with the formalised local, national and international development goals such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) of the United Nations, the National Development Plan (NDP), Provincial Strategic Goals (PSG's) and Integrated Development Plans (IDP's).

The Plan has three parts. In part one, an overview of the transition from CI to SI is provided. It comprises a brief sketch of the most important features and strengths of CI and the gains that can be built upon within the paradigm of Social Impact.

Theorising and conceptualising is an integral part of the academe and in this instance, a critical analysis of the concept SI is provided in part two of the Plan. A theoretical framework is presented which is followed by conditions conducive to SI practice according to relevant literature. This is followed by a summary of the ideal conditions that are conducive to the implementation of SI in a university. The relevant definitions used in the Plan is included in this part with some clarifying notes.

Part three of the Plan focuses on the implementation of SI based on the principles of SI at SU that are outlined as a point of departure. The alignment to the IIS and the IP follows by outlining the objectives of SI as espoused in the Institutional Plan at SU and identifying eight strategies that align the implementation to the IIS. This alignment indicates the areas of SI that contribute to the achievement of the IIS. A graphical depiction of the SI typology demonstrates the flow of the different types of SI while elaborating on each type. The criteria which distinguish SI from other practices, are succinctly formulated and discussed. The differentiated governance and management structures to support the institutionalisation of SI is outlined and the Plan concludes with the evaluation and appraisal of SI and the financial sustainability of SI. The differentiated governance and management structures to support the institutionalisation of SI is outlined and the Plan concludes with the evaluation and appraisal of SI and the financial sustainability of SI.

As the plan unfolds, it becomes clear that there is an underlying philosophy that the university impacts on different spheres of society where it can incur change on a systemic level through collaboration with others, while allowing others to impact on its own systemic transformation as an institution. Engaged scholarship and engaged citizenship are the internal driving forces to encourage and motivate students and staff to develop and embark on practices that generate social capital in society aligned with and contributing to specific development goals as espoused in international, national and regional development plans. These practices, guided by solid principles, impact in turn on students through transformative learning resulting in signature graduates, while encouraging staff to be engaged scholars and citizens. Specific structures are proposed to enable, direct and support the practices on the different governance and management levels while implementation is guided by processes that will ensure sustainability, monitoring and evaluation.

The scope of the plan is five years, but annual revision might be necessary as its implementation evolves.

## **PART ONE: TRANSITION FROM COMMUNITY INTERACTION TO SOCIAL IMPACT**

### **1. Background**

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In 2004, the first SU Policy and Plan for Community Interaction was adopted. The policy stated:

“Stellenbosch University strives to be an excellent, relevant and engaged university that commits itself to playing a significant role within South Africa, in Africa, and globally through its core functions. Aligned with international trends, the University actively engages in the local and global development challenges whilst producing socially robust knowledge and civically minded graduates in a democratic dispensation.”

The policy was coupled with an operational plan to implement the policy provisions for a Division for Community Interaction (DCI), a Community Interaction Committee of Senate (CIC[S]), Faculty Community Interaction Committees, an institutional CI data base, a code of ethics, a Rector’s Award for excellence in Community Interaction for both staff and students, credit-bearing capacity-building courses and networking and advisory services. The policy was revised in 2009 after an institution wide consultation process.

The CI Plan was implemented between 2006 and 2011 with the addition of flagship projects that are funded annually from the central budget of the University and the provision for an annual Rector’s Award for Community Interaction. In 2013, the University developed and published IIS which affirmed the importance of engaged scholarship with the strong relation to engaged learning and teaching as well as research and innovation. SI was one of the main tenets of this strategic document, which signalled a stepping up of the University’s relationship with other societal institutions and stakeholders.

Against this background, DCI underwent its first external evaluation in 2014. The external evaluation in 2014 was intended to evaluate both the work of the DCI and the institutions’ progress in becoming an engaged institution. The external evaluation that was led by an external panel, consisting of one international and two national experts, commended the DCI’s progress and achievements, stating that the “work of the [Division] had permeated [...] certain areas of the University as well as beyond the University” and acknowledging the “broad range of projects and programmes that cut across the core functions of the University”. The panel also commended the “growing emphasis placed on community-based research both by the [Division] and the University”. The positioning and strategic importance of CI across the institution and the inclusion and importance of stakeholder voices were some of the prominent issues that arose from the external evaluation. The

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recommendations from the panel signalled a broadening of permeation and that the notion of institutional engagement should be adopted by both the University and the division.

Community Engagement (CE) or Civic Engagement are internationally accepted terms that describe a university's engagement with society or communities that are within its close proximity through the main functions of teaching and research. A substantial body of literature exists in this regard. The external panel's recommendation that the term institutional engagement be adopted, are therefore aligned to those standards. The recommendations of the external panel are very relevant and were included in further discussions about the repositioning of CI. After considering the term institutional engagement, it was decided to rebrand CI as SI aligned to the IIS's tenet of Societal Impact which is the longer version of 'social' with the same meaning.

## 2. Features and gains of Community Interaction at Stellenbosch University

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CI at SU was considered from two perspectives namely an inward institutional perspective and an outward relational perspective. The Community Interaction Policy of 2009 affirmed the University's commitment to CI and these two perspectives in the quote in par. 2:

The Community Interaction Policy affirms the University's commitment to and relationship with the range of communities with whom it interacts. The policy endorses the University's acknowledgement of its contribution to the injustices of the past and its commitment to appropriate redress and development initiatives<sup>1</sup>.

The policy guided the way CI was structured and aligned. Consequently, the DCI managed, coordinated, facilitated, enabled and supported community interaction at SU. The strategic plan of the DCI was aligned with the IIS and its focus was on integrating CI into learning and teaching, research and co-curricular activities such as volunteer activities. Internally, CI was supported through capacity-building courses and workshops, continuous consultative support to faculties and professional academic support services, a CI symposium and the building of networks to support curricular placements of students in communities. Scholarship of engagement modules are part of two masters programmes. The co-curricular support took the form of a One-stop service for student leaders who were trained to lead student projects and volunteers. The curricular and co-curricular activities were mostly focused on civil society groups and organisations, while the research activities were based on memoranda of understanding (MOU) with local and provincial government. Research relationships are still brokered as part of these MOU's

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<sup>1</sup> Stellenbosch University, 2009. Community Interaction Policy.

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and there is a renewed focus on developing these relationships further. There are still strong links with the Western Cape Department of Education (WCED) through schools across the Western Cape region. Twelve flagship projects were funded annually from the CI budget. Below is a brief list of the flagship projects or visit <http://www.sun.ac.za/english/ci/projects/ci-flagship-projects>

<b>Flagship Project / Vlagskipprojek</b>	<b>Faculty / Division</b>
<b>Jeugsport Inisiatief / Youth Sport Initiative</b>	Maties Sport
<b>Eenheid vir Sielkunde / Unit for Psychology</b>	Lettere & Sosiale Wetenskappe/ Arts & Social Sciences
<b>Ekklesia / Ecclesia</b>	Teologie/ Theology
<b>Afrika Sentrum vir MIV/VIGS Bestuur / Africa Centre for HIV/Aids Management</b>	Ekonomiese & Bestuurswetenskappe/ Economic & Management Sciences
<b>Matie Gemeenskapsdiens (MGD) / Matie Community Service (MCS)</b>	Gemeenskapsinteraksie / Community Interaction
<b>Eenheid vir Godsdiens- en Ontwikkelingsnavorsing (EGON) / Unit for Religion and Development Research (URDR)</b>	Teologie/ Theology
<b>TRAC (Technology Research Activity Centre)</b>	Ingenieurswese/ Engineering
<b>Forel Kleinboer / Trout Small-scale Farming</b>	AgriWetenskappe/ AgriSciences
<b>SciMathUS Post-Matriekjaar / Post Matric Year</b>	Opvoedkunde/ Education
<b>Tygerberg Footprint / Tygerberg Voetspoor</b>	Medicine & Health Sciences / Geneeskunde en Gesondheidswetenskappe
<b>Ukwanda Centre for Rural Health / Ukwanda sentrum vir Landelike Gesondheid</b>	Medicine & Health Sciences / Geneeskunde en Gesondheidswetenskappe
<b>Legal Aid Clinic / Regshulpkliniek</b>	Law / Regte

In addition, the University is part of the Cape Higher Education Consortium (CHEC) through which it has a strong working relationship with the City of Cape Town (CCT) and the Western Cape Provincial Government (WCG). Joint task groups meet on a regular basis and the outcomes of these task groups are joint short courses for staff, a joint formal academic program (Post-graduate Diploma (Teaching and Learning)) and regular research funding calls to the respective universities.

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Nationally, SU through the DCI, played a decisive role in establishing a national forum for community engagement at South African universities known as South African Higher Education Community Engagement Forum (SAHECEF). Through this forum, a National Research Foundation (NRF) call for Community Engagement proposals was established, benefitting many universities' research agenda in the field. The forum also lobbied for the financing of workplace-based learning, and the funding of CE at universities. Internationally, the university is affiliated with the Talloires Network. SU further took the lead in the organising committee of the Talloires Network World Leaders Conference in 2014 at Spier which was co-hosted by CHEC. SU has also co-founded, chaired and hosted two International Symposia on Service Learning branded as ISSL in the past 10 years. On average 8-10 scholars have received scholarships to attend the symposia that were hosted in four different continents namely Africa (Stellenbosch 2005 and 2013), Asia (Ningbo 2011), Europe (Athens 2009) and United States of America (Indianapolis 2007 and 2015). Six books and a paper series of which two books and the paper series are co-edited by SU scholars, have been published as a result of this affiliation. Nationally and Internationally, SU is perceived as one of the leading universities in CE and service-learning (SL). The following section covers the link between CI and SI.

### 3. Redefining Community Interaction as Social Impact

In order to think in a new way about university-societal interaction and collaboration, namely within the paradigm of social impact, the following considerations are offered:

- 3.1 *Challenges faced in the use of the concept 'community'*: The last decade was filled with debates in the South African Higher Education (SAHE) sector about conceptual clarity around university-community engagement, and what constitutes the "community" of a university. The problem of a lack of conceptual clarity around community engagement is not only a South African problem; it is experienced worldwide. At the root of everything is a lack of consensus about how the concept "community" is to be interpreted. There are wide-ranging interpretations of this concept. Amongst others it also has negative associations with a deficit approach, a reference to black and poor people only, historical guilt, religious paternalism, philanthropy, something foreign to the academe, etc. In this Plan, the concept 'social grouping' is suggested which may be a group of people who consider themselves to be a community. The notion of 'community' also has a more local focus and does not unequivocally include the political, economic, ecological spheres of society. Neither does it include all the institutions of civil society. The notion of "social" also has a more inclusive connotation.
- 3.2 *Community Interaction and Social Impact*: Given the above, and to avoid the controversies awakened by the concepts 'community' and 'community interaction', it was appropriate that SU employed the concept of 'Social Impact' as

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a much broader and more inclusive concept than the traditional concept of 'Community Interaction'. 'Social Impact' includes, but is broader than CI as it was practiced at SU. The Responsibility Centre Social Impact, Transformation and Personnel's Business plan in 2015 stated that SI can build on the gains that have been made over the last decade by CI whilst enabling the wider focus of SI at the University.

- 3.3 *Partners for social impact:* A 21<sup>st</sup> century university, in the main, engages and collaborates with three groupings, i.e. government, industry and civil society. This is known as the so-called Quadruple helix.<sup>2</sup> In terms of the quadruple helix social impact has in focus all the spheres of a democratic society. This includes the corporate sector; the political sector with all its institutions and roleplayers on local, provincial, national and international levels; civil society with its individuals and institutions from the intimate circles of family and friendship to institutions of culture, art, sport, education, religion, the media, social movements, voluntary movements and non-governmental organisations. Social impact is transformative and developmental, and embodies the features of reciprocity, mutuality and partnership between SU and various stakeholders and role-players in society. Interaction for mutual benefit with external societal partners should be sought intentionally and selectively by the University and does not happen by itself. Partnerships are guided by the strategic priorities and values of Stellenbosch University.
- 3.4 *Basis of social impact:* The best way for any university to interact is on the basis of its learning and teaching, research and innovation expertise (engaged scholarship). Engaged scholarship is already adopted in the IIS and may be strengthened in the broader social impact paradigm. The tacit knowledge and skills of staff and students form part of the mix and opens up the options for engaged citizenship through co-curricular connections.
- 3.5 *Context of social impact:* "How the university interconnects with external partners in terms of engaged scholarship primarily depends on the *context*, not on any predisposition that civil society, industry or government is especially in need of engagement."<sup>3</sup> This context strengthens the notion of reciprocity, equality and collaboration. SI at SU focuses upon the challenges facing societies in South Africa and the rest of the continent, as articulated amongst others in the National Development Plan and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

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<sup>2</sup>Cooper, D. (2011) *The University in Development: case studies of use-oriented research*. Cape Town, HSRC Press., p.355.

<sup>3</sup> Cooper, D. (2011) *The University in Development*, p.355.

## **PART TWO: THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF SOCIAL IMPACT**

### **4. Theories and concepts relating to Social Impact**

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Building on the theoretical insights of the paradigm of Community Interaction, and drawing upon the growing international discourse on the social impact of universities, some theoretical parameters for Social Impact are hereby offered.

**4.1 *Community Interaction:*** CI was based on the theory of interactionism and remains a firm theoretical grounding of SI. The theory of interactionism implies that people who share the same interests are drawn to each other and interact on a regular basis – thus forming social fields (social groups that projects energy) that may ultimately result in community fields which may or may not be communities of practice. These fields are open, dynamic and permeable. Whilst interacting within social fields and community fields, a university may interact with many social fields at once due to the multiplicity of its interests in the different faculties and divisions. Symbolic interactionism denotes that there are different meanings and processes underlying this interaction, which is symbolic to the parties who are interacting and which creates a meaning-making context and may change or strengthen the values and beliefs of those who interact <sup>4</sup>.

**4.2 *Social Impact:*** From the discipline of Psychology, Latané<sup>5</sup>, a psychologist, wrote several articles on social impact theory declares: “The theory... represents an attempt to adapt, integrate, and formalize ideas initially developed by sociologist Stewart Dodd, astronomer J. Q. Stewart, anthropologist-geographer-linguist George Kingsley Zipf, and psychologists Kurt Lewin and S. S. Stevens, among others”<sup>6</sup>. SI is the result of social forces in a force field or social structure. Social forces will have impact according to their strength, immediacy and the number of sources operating at the same time as in a light bulb that is stronger when wattage increases. SI is generically based upon the principle that people influence other people and the biggest number of people who drive the hardest at an issue will be successful. Latané define SI as:

“Any of the great variety of changes in physiological states and subjective feelings, motives and emotions, cognitions and beliefs, values and behaviour, that occur in an individual, human or animal, as a result of the real, implied, or imagined presence or actions of other individuals”<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> Bridger, J.C. and Alter, T.R. (2006). Place, Community Development and Social Capital. *Journal of the Community Development Society*. 37(1): 5-18.

<sup>5</sup> Latané, B. 1981. The Psychology of Social Impact. *American Psychologist*. 36(4):343-356.

<sup>6</sup> Latané (1981:343).

<sup>7</sup> Latané (1981:343).

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- 4.3 *Interpretation of Social Impact*: Latané's interpretation may have positive and negative consequences. To the marginalised, it can be a way to fight for survival in great numbers (as during protests), while for the powerful, it may be a way to retain wealth and power. Reciprocal influencing, however, can be collaborative and of mutual benefit for the parties involved - which underscores the grounding in interactionism. Where people interact, ideas, actions and processes evolve and meaning-making occurs individually (own meanings) and collectively. Collective meaning may be the basis for collaboration and mutual influence, which may ultimately result in practice, best practice and innovation.
- 4.4 *Theoretical model for SI*:<sup>8</sup>Onyx developed a theoretical model for SI based on practice theory. In this theory, practices are defined as: "embodied, materially mediated arrays of human activity centrally organized around shared practical understanding" (such as in a university). In an organisational context:
- "Social impact refers both to the impact as experienced and provided by individuals, but also that of the organisation as an organisation, independently of any single member. The strength and sustainability of the social impact of an organisation will depend in part on the extent to which it is embedded within the host community, at both individual and organisational level"<sup>9</sup>.
- 4.5 *SI in a university*: A university that embraces SI as a strategy, should provide a conducive environment to ensure that SI is integrated into and embedded in the learning and teaching, research and innovation practices of its staff and students.
- 4.6 *Social capital*: Onyx develops a proposed model for SI with seven propositions. The propositions are based on the strong relation between social capital and SI. The concept of social capital has many definitions and is used in different contexts for different reasons. However, there is consensus that social capital refers to "connections among individuals"<sup>10</sup> and "...must be defined in terms of networks that are durable and mutual with norms and sanctions to enforce their interactions"<sup>11</sup>. This points to the importance of collaboration in which individuals and institutions are involved, as a key component of SI. Impact is not achieved through the action of one person, but rather the collective effort of groups of people and institutions, in various relevant social interest fields.
- 4.7 *Values to build social capital*: Values that underscore social capital are trust, reciprocity and agency (the ability to take proactive action). Two forms of social capital are distinguished, namely bridging and bonding capital. Bonding capital

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<sup>8</sup> Onyx, J. 2014. A theoretical model of Social Impact. *Cosmopolitan Civil Societies Journal*. 6(1).

<sup>9</sup> Onyx 2014:5.

<sup>10</sup> Bridger & Alter 2006:7

<sup>11</sup> Onyx 2014:9

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refers to solidarity amongst people who believe in the same values to the extent that it can exclude others while bridging capital refers to connections across networks which includes sharing of resources and information<sup>12</sup>. Some authors distinguish between other capitals that are closely related to social capital such as human, cultural, economic etc. A study of capitals and how it pertains to universities is a study on its own and may be pursued as part of the implementation process.

**4.8 Propositions for institutional social impact:** Onyx<sup>13</sup> proposes a SI model which may relate to a university's strategy for SI. The seven propositions are summarized here by linking it to the context of a university:

- a. SI is an ongoing process dependent on a complex set of relationships and practices and the development of core values and networks (such as the SU IIS and its operations through the core functions).
- b. The institution itself must be welcoming and possess bonding capital in general and as it relates to those practices (such as the innovation by engaged scholars) and provide the necessary environment to support and enable SI.
- c. An important aspect of the generation of SI is the development of social and citizenship values developed by members as a direct consequence of the organisational practices (transformation leading to equity and equality).
- d. Organisational practices enable the development of personal skills and knowledge (human capital – human resources of a university), and the development of wider social networks, both within and beyond the organisation (bridging social capital).
- e. The symbolic relationship between the institution and the context in which it is situated, is important to nourish and cultivate. Social capital within these stakeholder groups will impact on the institution and vice versa.
- f. The institutional culture as well as the networks and contribution of individual members, contribute to social impact – universities create this through policy and by planning for SI.
- g. The reciprocal relationship with society, will depend on the way the institution position itself and contributes to the social fabric. Society will respond favourably or unfavourably depending on the institution's impact on society.

## **5 Conditions for Implementing Social Impact**

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**5.1** It is clear that a university should have **a deliberate intent and plan to enact social impact**. Starting with itself, the university needs to build both bonding and bridging capital. This means that **human capital development in the university needs to be**

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<sup>12</sup> Onyx 2014

<sup>13</sup> Onyx 2014

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**equitable** and non-discriminatory in terms of categories like race, class, gender, sexual orientation, levels of ability, age etc.

- 5.2 **Interdisciplinary work that has a multi-dimensional impact** on social groupings may take the form of building bridging capital inside and outside the university. **Areas of SI should be identified and focused upon collectively.** How the university functions internally will determine the impact it has on society.
- 5.3 When looking outward, the most basic **prerequisite for building any capital is interaction**, be it personal, virtual or a combination.
- 5.4 Universities need to **determine the scope of their interaction** which could be guided by the proposed quadruple helix of higher education that was referred to in 3.3 above, namely business, government and civil society. While civil society interactions are mostly on micro and meso level, interaction with government and business may be mostly on meso and macro level.
- 5.5 Within these spheres, **collaborative research** opportunities are to be strengthened and extended within the framework of not only science for society, but also science with society.
- 5.6 **Teaching impact may be enacted through internships, mentoring and work-integrated learning**, which will impact on the calibre of graduates that the university produces.
- 5.7 SI builds on the gains made by CI, but differs in scope as well as intensity. Each university will operationalise SI differently according to its strategic priorities. At SU **sound theory and concepts** for SI, and guidelines, models and frameworks for SI practice need to be further developed. **Sound practices** over time which are nurtured in **communities of practice** both inside and outside the university are to be developed.

## 6 Definitions

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For the purpose of this Plan, the following definitions are offered:

**6.1 Social impact:** Social impact is the evaluable change incurred:

- a. through mutually beneficial associations, collaborations and partnerships between the university (staff, students and alumni), and external societal partners in government, industry and the various institutions of civil society – in local and global contexts;
- b. on the basis of the university's tacit knowledge, scholarly expertise and society's wisdom and experience;
- c. through innovative excellent practices that prioritise the active, responsible and critical citizenship of students and staff.

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- 6.2 *Embedded Social Impact* refers to the integration of SI into the essential dimensions of all the academic and co-curricular practices of SU through the notion of engaged scholarship and engaged citizenship.
- 6.3 *Specific Social Impact* suggests that in addition to the embedded SI practice, specific coordinated, interdisciplinary and interfaculty SI initiatives are embarked upon to jointly, intentionally and explicitly address specific societal challenges.
- 6.4 *Systemic impact* aims at evidence-based changes in a societal sphere that leads to increased and deepened efficiency in the system of that sphere.
- 6.5 *Practices* are embodied, materially mediated arrays of human activity centrally organized around shared practical understanding.
- 6.6 *Social grouping*: An aggregate of people who have a communal interest, interact purposefully on a regular basis, collaborate towards a communal goal and may or may not be resident in close proximity of each other or consider themselves to be a community.
- 6.7 *Stakeholder*: Any person, organization, social group, or society at large that has a vital and connected interest in the SI activities of SU and is internally or externally associated with the SU.
- 6.8 *Partnership*: Continued collaboration between a higher education institution and societal stakeholders across geographical boundaries (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of reciprocity.
- 6.9 *Civil society*: The aggregate of non-governmental organizations and institutions that manifest the interests and will of citizens. It includes the family and the private sphere, referred to as the "third sector" of society other than the political and economic sectors.

## **PART THREE: TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR IMPLEMENTING SOCIAL IMPACT**

### **7 Principles of Social Impact**

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- 7.1 **Collaboration** is a key principle of SU's SI which values collective action to enact SI. The absence of collaboration with stakeholders, neither inside nor outside the university will not be acknowledged as SI. As a 21<sup>st</sup> century university SU collaborates with all spheres of a democratic society, as articulated in the so-called Quadruple Helix referred to above, namely **government, industry and civil society**.

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- 7.2 This Plan subscribes to the **ethical conduct provisions** of SU which must be strictly adhered to when interacting with stakeholders.
- 7.3 SU embraces the principle of **reciprocity** which denotes an impact on both the university and society in a mutually beneficial way in all the spheres of society.
- 7.4 SI contributes to society in different **domains**. Faculties will impact on their respective relevant domains where they excel in collaboration with others.
- 7.5 The basis of SU's SI is its learning, teaching and research expertise and embraces the notion of **engaged scholarship**.
- 7.6 SU acknowledges the **voluntary engagement** with the community by students and staff as part of initiatives by their departments, sections, residences and societies. The continuation and autonomy of such activities are supported, within the organised framework created by this Plan.
- 7.7 SU is committed to meet the criteria, directives and stipulations of the Higher Education Quality Committee set for **community engagement of higher education institutions**.

## 8 Objectives of Social Impact

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The objectives of SI, aligned with the IP are longer term objectives that will be reviewed annually in the rolling institutional plans. Some progress has been made in the conceptualising of SI but further research is necessary. The objectives are:

- 8.1 Conceptualising and theorising SI in higher education
- 8.2 Establishing integrated, systemic SI practices in faculties, professional academic support environments and student structures.
- 8.3 Strengthening and expanding institutional partnerships for increased SI.
- 8.4 Demonstrating accountability through evidence-based evaluation of impact on society.

The theoretical and conceptual framework (Part two) provides a preliminary lens to view SI. More theorising and research is necessary to develop SI as an area of scientific inquiry. The development of practices is a much longer term endeavour and this plan does not provide an exhaustive framework for building practice. It is expected that, as SI grows and evolves, best practice will manifest. SU has built many relationships over time with a wide range of partners and different types of associations, collaborations and formal partnerships. Within the SI paradigm, these partnerships might deepen and expand. One of the areas which has not been developed fully, is how to measure or evaluate SI. Developing performance indicators and a strategic management indicator for SI is a priority.

## 9 Alignment of Social Impact to the Institutional Intent and Strategy

The table below depicts the alignment with the IIS and indicates all the areas where the university may impact internally and externally. Each area represents a strategy to achieve the goals of SI. Some of the strategies were already enacted through CI and have progressed substantially over the last decade (See par. 2). The areas in the black sections are prioritised for the next three years. The areas in white text indicate impacts on external stakeholders and the black text impacts on internal stakeholders and processes.

<b>SOCIAL IMPACT ALIGNMENT TO THE INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGY AND INTENT</b>				
<b>Attributes:</b>	<b>Inclusive</b>	<b>Innovative</b>	<b>Future orientated</b>	<b>Transformation</b>
<b>Vision</b>				
<b>Expertise/ Competence base</b>	Promote inclusive development and innovation	Institutionalise engaged scholarship	New knowledge markets	Staff responsible citizenship
<b>Diversity</b>	Broadening of access	Reach new spheres of society	Creation of Educational And vocational opportunities	Social change and social justice
<b>Student success</b>	The establishment of comprehensive rural platforms and multipurpose centres	Strengthen preparation of learners for university studies	Graduate attributes	Critical citizenship
<b>Systemic Sustainability</b>	Social Impact strategic Plan Collaborative culture	Social Impact Knowledge Platform Financial Sustainability	Brokering & management of specified categories of partnerships	Building social capital

The areas of impact were identified over many years of working closely and nurturing relationships with civil society. The community leaders in and around Stellenbosch

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articulated the educational and vocational opportunities strongly and specifically requested more support from the university to schools in order to improve the number of students studying at SU from these communities. The rural platform imperative specifically focuses on recruiting and training rural health practitioners for rural areas while offering students a longitudinal clinical exposure in rural hospitals, clinics and communities.

The collaborative nature of SI offers potential for the development of two main types of SI programmes.

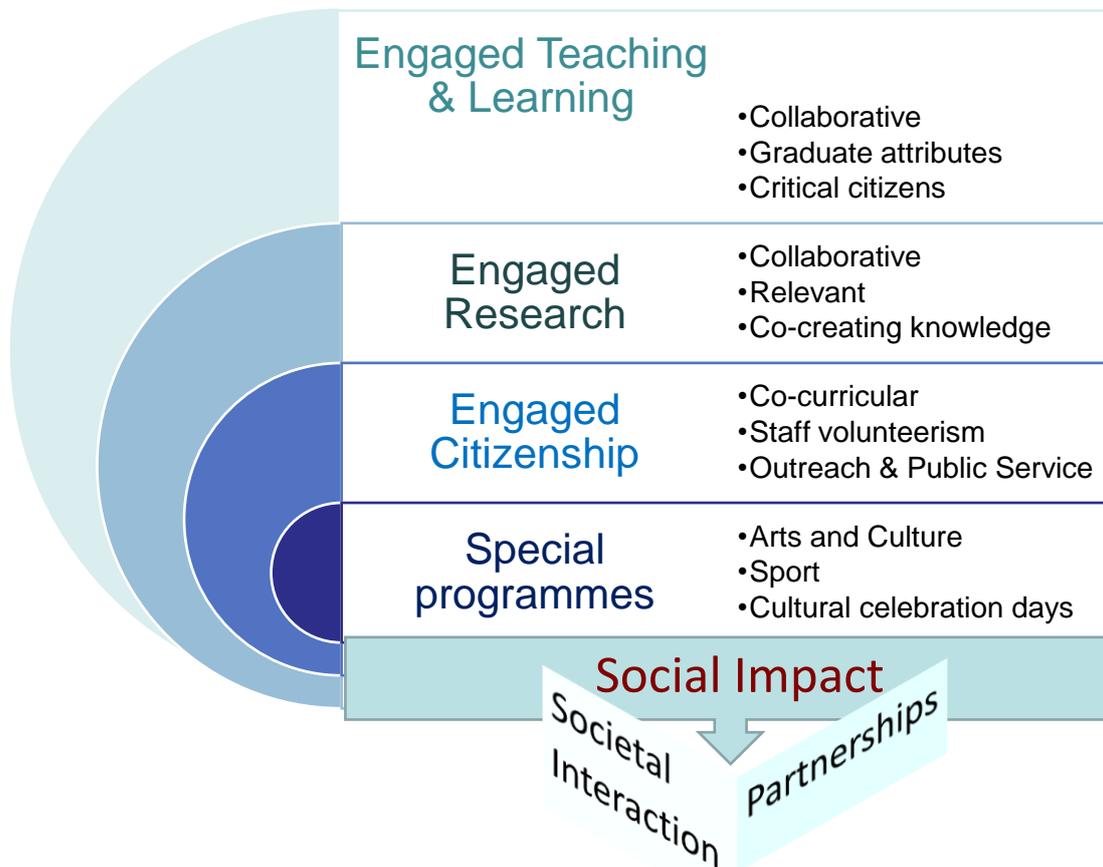
1. Faculty specialised programmes, consisting of connected initiatives from different departments in a faculty: These programmes may take the form of or develop into multipurpose centres where students and staff may participate to enact a multi-disciplinary impact. These centres may be existing ones that may be transformed to accommodate more departments and other faculties such as the Legal Aid clinic and the Welgevallen Psychology clinic.
2. Thematic Institutional programmes, consisting of multiple initiatives that focus on the same sector or sphere in society: The current school support programme of Stellenbosch University Centre for Educational Pedagogy (SUNCEP) and Hope@Maties supplemented by other initiatives across the SU is an example of such a thematic programme. Partnerships with government and business will play a critical role in realising these initiatives and programmes. An imperative for the successful take-up of SI opportunities, is a conducive access point for stakeholders. The DSI (See par. 13.2 below) focuses on building relationships externally through networking, but the uptake of external role-players need to further be facilitated through a central access point such as the planned Social Impact Platform (Par. 14).

### *10 Social Impact typology*

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SI is enacted through a variety of vehicles of which engaged scholarship and engaged citizenship forms the basis of SU's SI. The academic basis of the typology is anchored in engaged scholarship (aligned to the IIS) which denotes: High-quality scholarship from university academics; Scholarship of one or more forms; Engagement of both university academics (and students) and the societal partner collaboratively involved so that there is a mutually beneficial partnership between university and society; Intentional public benefits. Engaged citizenship includes engaged scholarship, but also includes the personal responsibility of people to be engaged in everyday life through one's inherent natural abilities to care for others generally known as tacit knowledge.

Engaged scholarship manifests into engaged learning and teaching and engaged research and innovation, while engaged citizenship manifests into volunteerism and special programmes (see graphic below):



**10.1 Engaged learning and teaching** refers to a form of teaching and learning which may take a curricular or co-curricular character, is assessable for academic credit and includes structured reflection by learners and educators. It is embedded in reciprocal benefit for all involved and encompasses all pedagogical practices that favour experiential type learning where knowledge is socially constructed and activity based. It aims to facilitate student transition from university to workplace, is associated with collaborative teaching practice where professionals in practice become mentors and co-educators of students and provides opportunities for collaborative research that focus on teaching practice. Students are mentored to be a new generation of engaged critical citizens and social change enablers.

**10.2 Engaged research** is research employing inclusive participatory and collaborative methodologies, such as participatory action research; as well as research addressing prominent themes of the Sustainable Development Goals and the National Development Plan, such as social cohesion and nation building, human development, poverty and inequality, transformation, social justice, state capability, educational outcomes, jobs and livelihoods, innovation, sport and healthy lifestyles,

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health care and sustainability. Engaged research promotes science with society rather than science for society. SU acknowledges that generating knowledge for the sake of knowledge itself is important and may have indirect SI, but SI through research is best achieved through engaged research.

*10.3 Engaged citizenship*, e.g. student volunteerism as a structured, co-curricular learning experience; staff and alumni volunteerism as instances of responsible active citizenship; and public service rendered by SU staff based on their fields of expertise increasing the capacity of societal organisations and institutions.

*10.4 Various SI special programmes* in faculties and in the broader university advance the SI of the University. In addition to faculty initiatives examples of university-wide initiatives are Maties Sport, INNOVUS, the museum and Woordfees with its accompanying entities, namely Woorde Open Werelde, the BUYA Project and the university choir.

*10.5 Societal interaction* and the *building and servicing of partnerships* with external social partners with whom SU interacts in a mutually beneficial way, is a cross-cutting component of SI. Societal interaction is an imperative for engaged scholarship. Through partnerships access to university facilities and development opportunities are new offerings. The university engages in bottom-up civil society based projects that build agency and solidarity in social groupings in its close proximity. It enacts change by focusing on building social capital which will enable these groups to take responsibility for their own development. The university partners with government and business through innovative practice knowledge that supports economic development and infrastructure development in sustainable ways.

This typology provides a structure for initiatives to enact embedded, special and systemic SI that focus on all the areas of impact indicated in the IIS alignment table above. Even though research and teaching may be individual initiatives, they may be aligned to faculty and thematic programmes.

## 11 Criteria for Social Impact

Despite the embeddedness of SI in the core functions, specific criteria distinguish SI from everyday practices. These criteria point to the way in which all SI practices will be planned, executed and evaluated.

**11.1 Collaborative interaction between the university and a particular social grouping, organisation or institutions.** The philosophy underscoring this criterion is that engaged scholarship can only exist where there is direct or indirect engagement with society and the challenges of society. The change that SI implies, is grounded in relationships.

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- 11.2 The active involvement of students and staff in SI initiatives offering curricular, research and other opportunities.** For students these opportunities should enhance the development of Stellenbosch University graduate attributes, namely enquiring minds, lifelong learners, holistic persons, dynamic professionals and responsible citizens.
- 11.3 Actions are based on sustainable asset-based development processes and practice informed by formalised local, national or international development goals.** The importance of sustainability of development programs and the practices warrants the criterion. Local goals are normally espoused in the IDP's of municipalities. Provinces may also have PSG's. However, the SI of SU focus uses the NDP and the SDG's as a framework of reference for SI. This does not imply that SI initiatives should ignore the expressed needs of partners. The reciprocity principle underscores the importance of benefit and participation of all stakeholders of a particular initiative.
- 11.4 Outreach initiatives broaden access to educational and occupational development opportunities to those who were previously denied access.** Outreach initiatives are specific initiatives that are aimed at agency enhancement and emancipation of specific groupings in society. These initiatives often culminate in programmes that broaden access to educational and/or occupational development opportunities especially to those who were previously denied access to these opportunities. These initiatives should be coordinated with existing projects and programmes in society.
- 11.5 Charitable initiatives are not standalone but an enabling mechanism of sustainable development processes.** Charitable initiatives such as clothing drives and once-off provision of resources strengthen existing programmes in society. Therefor these initiatives should not be standalone and continuing but rather an enabling mechanism of sustainable development processes.

## 12. Governance of Social Impact

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### *12.1 Governance at institutional level*

Since SI is interwoven in almost all aspects of the university's functions and it is an institutional strategic priority, its governance is per University Statute the responsibility of the Senate of the University. Senate should establish a standing Social Impact Committee of the Senate [SIC(S)]. The SIC(S) rules stipulate the composition and mandate of the SIC(S). The SIC(S) govern the strategic operationalisation of SI and is representative of faculties, student structures and relevant support divisions.

### *12.2 Governance at faculty level*

- a. Deans of faculties are responsible to ensure that SI actions adhere to the provisions of the Plan.

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- b. The Plan mandates the establishment of a faculty committee to govern the SI strategy, goals, values and implementation of SI in the faculty in accordance with this Plan.
- c. Faculties identify focus areas in their field of expertise where they will have the maximum impact on society in particular domains.
- d. SI is included in the appraisal of staff as determined by each faculty and their contribution to the successful implementation of this Plan's terms of reference. Collaboration between departments in a faculty and across faculties is facilitated by the faculty committee responsible for SI.
- e. Fiscal resources for SI is managed and distributed by the dean in collaboration with the SI committee that decides which strategic initiatives to support financially.
- f. Faculties make provision for consultation with societal partners within their own management frameworks through structures such as advisory boards.
- g. Ethical queries that cannot be resolved at faculty level, should be referred to the head of the Division for Social Impact (DSI).

### *12.3 Governance at student level*

- a. Students participate in SI through curricular and co-curricular activities.
- b. Curricular social impact happens through engaged learning and teaching activities that is credit-bearing and part of the curriculum. These activities are governed by faculty structures, the institutional programme advisory committee and with support from DSI representatives in each faculty.
- c. Co-curricular and volunteer activities are governed by a partnership between the Student Representative Council (SRC) and the Division for Social Impact (DSI). The SRC is the highest body of student representation at the University.
- d. The student organizations are responsible for managing their own SI initiatives in accordance with the SISP framework with support and guidance from the Onestop Service of the DSI.

### *12.4 Governance in Professional Administrative Support Service (PASS)*

- a. PASS line managers are responsible to ensure that SI actions adhere to the provisions of the SISP. PASS provide enabling support to faculties and students to enhance SI.
- b. PASS divisions make provision within their own management frameworks for staff to be involved in SI activities where transfer of skills and professional and tacit expertise may lead to social change.
- c. PASS are strategically positioned to enhance social entrepreneurship and become vehicles of systemic social impact in their fields of expertise.

## 13. Management of Social Impact

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### *13.1 Vice-Rector: Social Impact, Transformation and Personnel*

SI is located within the Responsibility Centre of the Vice-Rector Social Impact, Transformation and Personnel (VR:SITP) who accepts institutional responsibility for SI. This location ensures close collaboration between the Rector's management team (RMT) which includes top management responsible for the core functions of learning and teaching and research and innovation.

### *13.2 Senior Director: Social Impact and Transformation (SD: SIT)*

The Senior Director: Social Impact and Transformation who manages, amongst others, the operational functions of the Division for Social Impact (DSI), advises and reports to the VR:SITP. The DSI furthers the imperative of SI across the institution by creating a conducive environment to enhance societal interaction and facilitate impact. The Division functions as the primary entry point of the SU's SI and *facilitates, supports, and enables* SU Faculties and PASS environments to develop initiatives into programmes across the core functions, volunteer activities and special projects of the SU. The DSI brokers and maintains relationships that grows into sustainable institutional partnerships with a wide variety of stakeholders in civil society, business and government.

### *13.3 Strategies and activities for Social Impact*

The strategies that emanate from the IIS alignment are as follows:

(Strategy 1-4 aims to enable SI through the core functions and volunteerism. Strategy 5-8 are crosscutting and will enhance the first four strategies).

- **Strategy 1:** Institutionalisation of engaged scholarship
- **Strategy 2:** Facilitate volunteer opportunities for all stakeholders
- **Strategy 3:** Broaden access, increase participation and create development opportunities to previously excluded communities focusing on the 'lost generation' between school and tertiary education.
- **Strategy 4:** Establish and enhance the impact of rural platforms, multipurpose centres and ensure the sustainability and impact of specialised programmes.
- **Strategy 5:** Establish, maintain and nurture intentional partnerships with selected partners in a quadruple helix paradigm.
- **Strategy 6:** Establish a Social Impact Platform (SIP) coupled with the formation of overarching thematic programme management.
- **Strategy 7:** Formulate and maintain strategic plan, structures and resources to ensure the sustainability of SI
- **Strategy 8:** Encourage social innovation and entrepreneurship

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The strategies form part of the business plan of the DSI on a rolling annual basis. The DSI has unpacked each of these strategies with priorities, goals, activities and timeframes in its strategic plan and annual business plan. Faculties and PASS environments may link their planning for SI to these strategies.

The DSI is the first entry point to the university for a variety of stakeholders, namely civil society, business, government and higher education. Civil society representatives perceive the university as a resource from which they can benefit, while the other three stakeholder groupings mostly seek opportunities to partner and benefit from the knowledge ecology of which the university is a major contributor. The DSI plays a major role in brokering these relationships between stakeholders as well as university-societal stakeholder partnerships.

### *13.4 The DSI's functions are:*

- a. Build capacity for interaction and collaboration within the university (for academics, students and professional academic support service staff) and with external partners;
- b. Offer support to faculty SI committees and advise deans on SI related issues in the faculty;
- c. Provide administrative support to the SIC(S);
- d. Identify appropriate and credible partners and broker collaborative initiatives, programmes and research opportunities to staff and students;
- e. Develop relationships with civil society, industry, local, provincial and national government and facilitates memoranda of agreements between them and the university;
- f. Maintain and nurture relationships for mutual benefit (building of social and relationship capital);
- g. Support and advise the VR:SITP on the Plan revision and development;
- h. Provide and maintain a monitoring and evaluation SI platform;
- i. Advance and profile SI activities in and beyond the institution.

### *13.5 Internal linkages of the Division for Social Impact*

The good current working relationship between the DSI and the following SU entities must be maintained, nurtured and extended:

- a. **Faculties:** A dedicated DSI representative collaborate closely and continuously with each faculty in terms of institutionalising SI through the core functions and support the faculty SI committees. Faculties are represented in the Social Impact Committee (Senate).
- b. **Division of Research Development:** especially in terms of the enhancement and visibility of engaged and community-based research.

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- c. **Division for Learning and Teaching Enhancement:** especially in terms of engaged learning and teaching (e.g. service-learning and work-integrated learning).
- d. **Student Affairs:** especially in terms of student volunteer work and leadership development.
- e. **Human Resources Division:** especially in terms of staff volunteerism as a component of the SU Staff Wellness initiative.
- f. **Division of Prospective Students and SUNCEP:** especially in terms of schools' development programmes and recruitment, as well as hosting the Schools Interaction Forum as an institutional co-ordination mechanism.
- g. **Development and Alumni Relations:** especially in terms of identifying relevant SI projects for funding, as well as alumni volunteerism and funding.
- h. **Information Technology, Human Resources, Institutional Research & Planning divisions:** especially in terms of the Social Impact Knowledge Management System.
- i. **Corporate Communication:** especially in terms of profiling and highlighting SU's SI initiatives.
- j. **Finance** in terms of developing a sustainable financial plan for Social Impact.
- k. **InnovUS:** especially in terms of social innovation and knowledge sharing about short courses.
- l. **Transformation Office:** especially in terms of linking institutional transformation initiatives with broader, related societal initiatives.
- m. **Maties Sport.**
- n. **Wordfees** and related Arts and Culture Entities.

## 14. Evaluation and appraisal of Social Impact

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14.1 The establishment and roll-out of a Social Impact Platform (SIP) is planned which entails a data warehouse based on the science shop<sup>14</sup> model where stakeholders interface. The input function provides for posting of opportunities while the data query provides for uptake of opportunities. Stakeholders may enter their details and offer opportunities to others to participate in their initiatives while others may take up the offer and participate. Both internal and external stakeholders of SU have reiteratively articulated the need for such a system where stakeholders can communicate with each other on an electronic interface platform.

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<sup>14</sup> Science Shops are not "shops" in the traditional sense of the word. They are small entities that carry out scientific research in a wide range of disciplines – usually free of charge and – on behalf of citizens and local civil society. The fact that Science Shops respond to civil society's needs for expertise and knowledge is a key element that distinguish them from other knowledge transfer mechanisms. (See <http://www.livingknowledge.org/science-shops/about-science-shops/>)

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- 14.2 By taking the collective needs into account, the SI-platform will be a collective tool which can then be used for business analysis, operational reporting, monitoring and evaluation and for publication purposes.
- 14.3 It is expected that thematic programmes will emanate from single and group initiatives that are channelled through the platform. The DSI will facilitate and coordinate the collaboration in the thematic programmes.
- 14.4 Monitoring is done through the registration of initiatives of one or more persons that are posted on the platform which includes an evaluation feature with evidence-based indicators of systemic impact.
- 14.5 SI initiatives are evaluated according to the criteria as set in the Plan. As collaboration is an imperative, it is expected that faculties will develop SI programmes based on the expertise of the initiatives that emanate from departments (See par. 3). Multi-disciplinary thematic programmes may develop across faculties which pertains to a particular sphere in society (such as health).
- 14.6 All SI initiatives and programmes under the auspices of the University must be registered on the SIP to ensure quality and ethical management.
- 14.7 The contribution of individual staff members to SI programmes should form part of their performance indicators governed by each faculty's guidelines.
- 14.8 The SIP includes an approval process which is mandatory for all SI initiatives. It includes three steps:
  - a. The Division for Social Impact approves the initiative in terms of completeness of information.
  - b. The Head of Department approves the initiative in terms of collaboration, validity and relevance in the department and the information contained in the record.
  - c. The Dean of the Faculty approves the initiative in terms of collaboration, validity and relevance in the faculty and the information contained in the initiative record.
- 14.9 A performance indicator for SI needs to be developed. It is proposed that the logic model for evaluation be adapted and developed into a rubric of evaluation that will calculate the performance indicator.
- 14.10 Each initiative that is registered on the SIP should include inputs, expected outputs and outcomes. Activities and practices will indicate how the initiative is or will be implemented. The first level of evaluation will be the alignment to SI criteria and the sustainable planning of the initiative as outlined above. The second level will be the appraisal of the objectives and whether they have been achieved. The alignment to formalised goals (e.g. PSG's) will earn a higher score on level 2. The third level of evaluation will be evidence and impacts on a systemic level in a particular sphere of

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society aligned to formalised goals. The development of such an indicator is in its' incubation phase and needs to be further explored.

**Figure 1**  
**The logic model of evaluation**

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impacts
What goes in, resources	What happens, program implementation	specific, immediate and countable products of the program	benefits of the program as identified in the program objectives	Sustained, significant change in effects in the wider environment beyond the immediate boundaries

## 15. Financial sustainability of SI

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The VR:SITP and the SD:SIT, in collaboration with the RMT, faculties and PASS environments take responsibility to ensure the financial sustainability of SI in the institution. Embedded SI, which is embedded in learning and teaching and research and innovation, should be factored into the sustainability planning of an academic programme or a research initiative. The DSI build and maintain relationships with organisations that offer collaborative opportunities for both core functions and at least partial research funding.

Given the above, it is clear that the financial sustainability of SI should be a priority. It is proposed that a financial plan for SI encompass the following and provide for:

- the establishing of a SIP
- re-channelling support of flagship projects to faculties and an annual budget for faculties;
- extension of support for service-learning and work-integrated learning modules;
- extension of support for collaborative, engaged research projects;
- mainstreaming the support for co-curricular SI with volunteer opportunities for both students and staff; and
- a concerted effort to solicit 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> stream funding for thematic and special collaborative programmes.

## 16. Conclusion

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This plan is not exhaustive and may serve as a guideline for the implementation of SI at SU. More research and theory building should be done to build this new field of inquiry, especially in South Africa. Based on this theory building Key Performance Indicators for Social Impact

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need to be finalised. Internationally the notion of social impact in a higher education context already exists which provides a frame of reference for work in this field in future.