CASE STUDY: Finland

“Open innovation platforms as policy tools fostering the co-creation and value creation in knowledge triangle”
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Open innovation platforms as policy tools fostering the co-creation and value creation in knowledge triangle

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Summary:
The Finnish case study focuses on the role of open innovation policy platform (OIPs) s to illustrate the operation of the KT framework. In KT context the OIPs may be seen as a collaboration model that HEIs’ may deploy when they interact with the surrounding society and economy, i.e. fulfil their “third mission. The goal of these platforms is to organise value creative innovation processes through the open innovation platforms. The main hypothesis is that the evolution from science parks and cluster (sectoral) based policies with science based and semi-closed development projects led by a few big companies are moving towards more agile and user driven processes of innovation, where open innovation and platform models are  key elements of the new practice.

Broader transition aim
Open innovation platforms provide a new generation of co-creation spaces facilitating the interaction among the research, education and innovation thorough bottom-up process. Recently evolution extends from local activities towards regionally linked networks of open innovation platforms (Tampere region) and further to national policy agenda (National 6Cities strategy). The value proposition of OIP approach is to engage much broader knowledge base to innovation activities while offering the “city as a living lab” and user oriented open innovation services for the use of the firms and other actors (clients). Further, it organise the increasingly open public data bases and public procurement practices in order to enable both new business applications as well as development of public services in this context.

The future challenges and systemic sore-spots may be simplified to the four themes; 1) emergence of OIP networks, 2) OIPs’ capability to create “network effects” and further foster the civic engagement, 3) cultivation of open innovation culture among the local firms, public organizations, and start-ups, and 4) capabilities to offer public sector’s open data and public procurement processes as new sources for innovative business development and public service renewal. In the following these themes are shortly discussed. Actively investing in learning is hardly ever done. Still, both cases show signs of policy learning.

Policy lessons:
- The active change agent in the case of the Demola project was not the university, but the regional development agency (owned by the University of Technology) and industry who have fostered the university-industry collaboration, or even “civic engagement” in practice.
- There is clear lack of incentives for the universities to foster civic engagement, which may partly explain the situation.
- OIP approach to reach out from the HEIs towards much wider society and its renewal.
- Civic engagement goes beyond the business oriented KT approaches. This requires new indicators and performance measures for the HEIs in order to foster their activities in this co-operation with the society.
- Pressure to create collaboration models has so far emerged mostly from outside of the HEIs
- The innovation and economic activities continue to agglomerate into city-regions along with social and urban problems.
- Therefore, fostering of innovation activities through open innovation and co-creation processes that engage the wider group of users and other stakeholders to the processes, far beyond the university-industry-government collaboration in business development, is a crucial (and systemic) question.