



# **Training Showcase:**

## **Social Innovation Factory: an accelerator for social innovation & entrepreneurship in Flanders and Brussels**

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[www.rri-tools.eu](http://www.rri-tools.eu)

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## 1 Introduction

Our society faces many complex ‘wicked’ problems that manifest at different domains of our lives, such as the ageing society, social cohesion, and climate change. Governmental bodies, be they local, regional, or global, try to answer these pressing questions with their own instruments: funding of large scale research projects, subsidies to promote actions, or legislation to govern (un)wanted developments. They are increasingly helped by social innovators and entrepreneurs, civil society organisations, and cooperatives that strive to solve these social issues creatively at another level.

Nowadays many people in Europe aspire to tackle calling societal challenges with their businesses, but it’s hard to succeed. In order to sustain and grow a profitable business, more information and commercial skills are needed than expected. This often results in beautiful intentions that fail at the pilot level and will never scale up.

One recent initiative to foster social innovation is [The Social Innovation Factory](#) (SIF), a networking organisation that promotes, guides, and supports social and societal innovative concepts in Flanders and Brussels, Belgium.

Responsible Research and Innovation is in the DNA of the SIF:

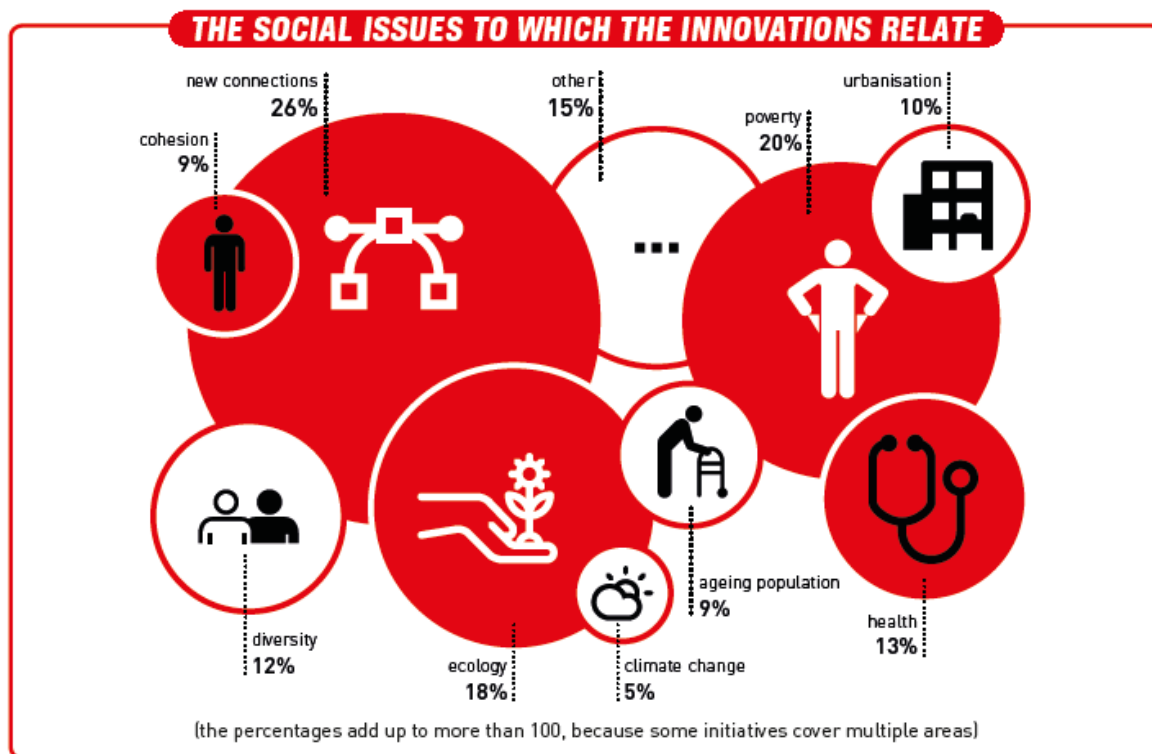
- The organisation is a convener for different stakeholders. It is driven by a diverse community and is open to all individuals and groups.
- It works along an open model where reflexivity and responsiveness are crucial.
- It performs research on social impact and shares the results to foster impact driven activities.

This showcase describes how the SIF succeeds to accelerate a shared culture of responsible innovation in Flanders and Brussels, tackling societal challenges by supporting projects, gathering and sharing information, promoting tools to measure impact, and creating a vast and valuable network of experienced peers with an innovative mindset.

## 2 Social Innovation Factory, an accelerator for social innovation and entrepreneurship in Flanders and Brussels

### 2.1 The Social Innovation Factory at a glance

The SIF is a networking organisation of civil society organisations and social entrepreneurs that promotes, coaches, and supports social and societal innovative concepts. In July 2013 this Flemish-Brussels initiative kicked-off, based on the central belief that individuals, businesses, and organisations (both for-profit and non-profit) have the power to create new strategies, concepts, products, and services that provide sustainable, viable, and profitable answers to the many daily societal challenges we face.

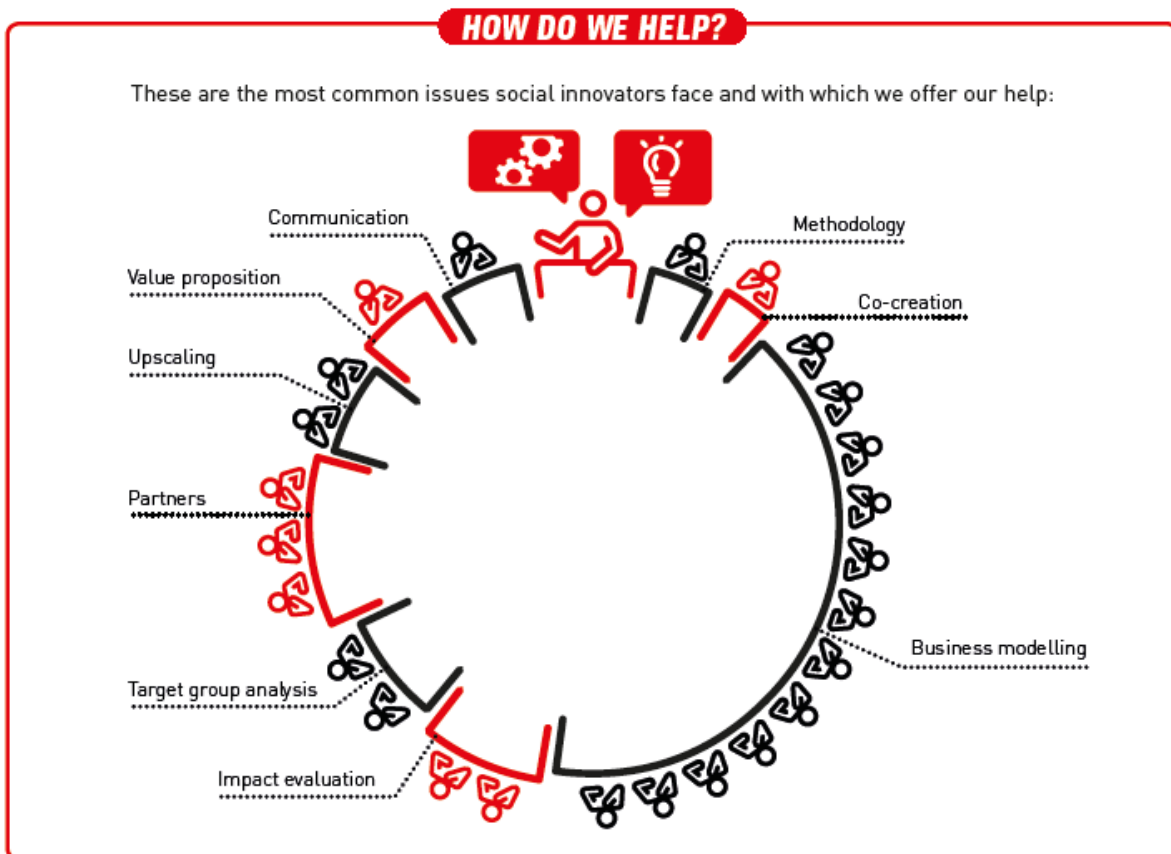


Source: Accelerating Social Innovation (2015, p.8)

The SIF receives funding by the Flemish government as a region specific initiative. This financial support is quite unusual. It guarantees that the SIF is an easy accessible networking and accelerating platform open to all social – mostly pre-start-up – initiatives, especially when people are insecure about their ideas and don't know they are actually a social venture.

The SIF provides access to knowledge and expertise through its continually growing learning network. It explores the features of successful social business models and social impact bonds as ways to facilitate positive and profitable social impact. By supporting and actively discussing the possibilities and impact of social innovation with many societal actors, the SIF hopes to establish a true social innovation culture in Flanders.

All the SIF expects in return is active participation and mutual sharing of the existing knowledge and expertise of its members to help others realise their innovation. Only by sharing knowledge and skills with others, is a peer-to-peer learning network established. The SIF holds a central position in this peer-to-peer network by actively facilitating (cross-sectorial) learning processes and managing co-operation between civil society, academics, governments, and businesses.



Source: Accelerating Social Innovation (2015, p.8)

*“It’s important for us not to act as a super-institute. We only facilitate and let it happen. We trust in the capacities and power of the ever growing community that features so many skills and experiences.”*

**Kaat Peeters, general manager**

The popularity of social innovation and the work of the SIF is reflected in these facts and feedback: in more than 100 events they inspire and challenge over 3,000 participants per year, reaching over 8,000 people to date. 64% of the innovators report that their concept has become more solid because of the SIF, 100% recommend the peer-to-peer learning, and 78% would not have found the right partners without the SIF. For every euro the Factory receives in government funding, it generates €3,33 of private funding for social innovation and social entrepreneurship. Due to the support, social innovators can launch their concept faster, be more (financially) solid, and be more effective in society or, later on, the market.

## 2.2 From idea to action: the SIF support

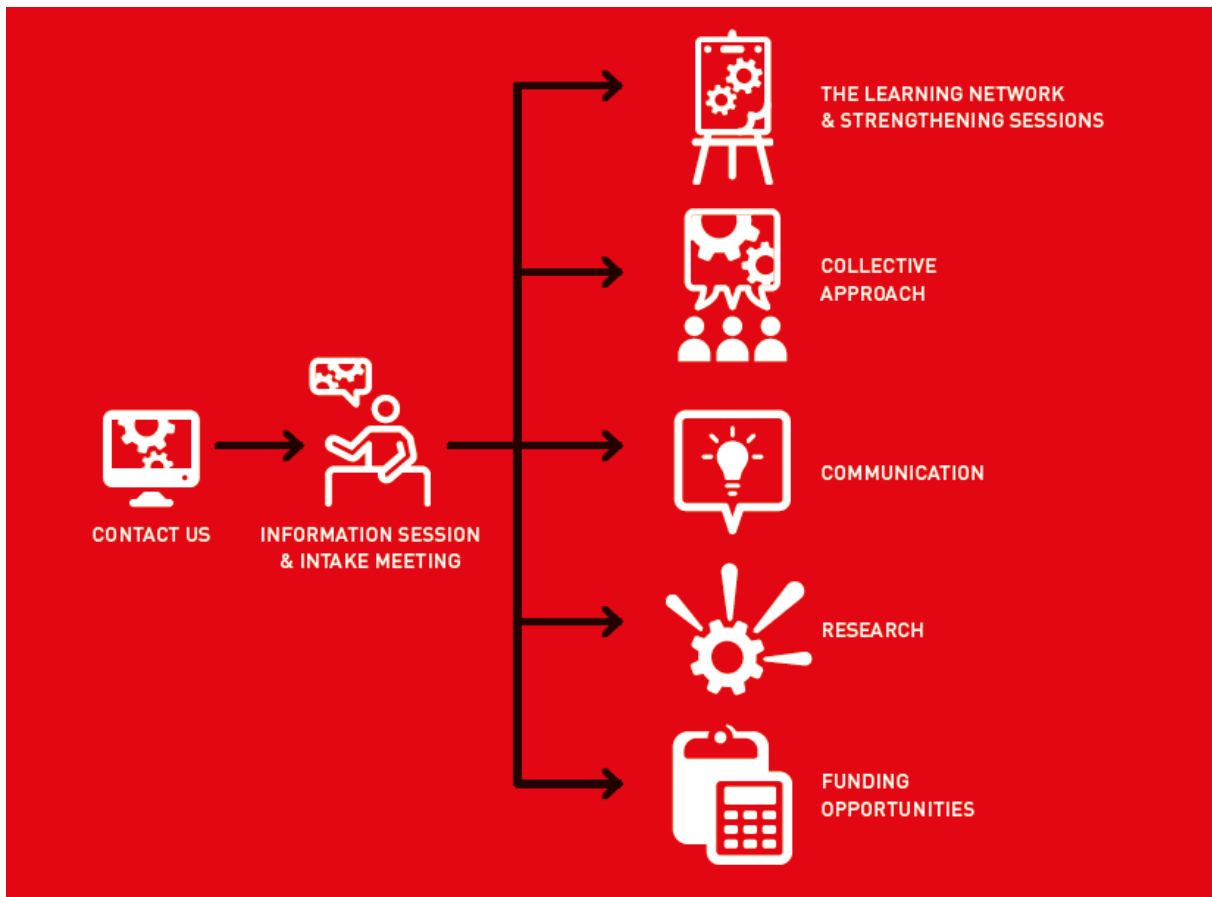
The SIF supports and empowers over 150 social entrepreneurs and/or start-ups a year, with an average involvement time of six months. The services include:

- A support model consisting of intake meetings and participation in a learning network that uses its own unique currency (SIF) to manage and catalyse peer support.
- Events and workshops (160 between 2013 and 2016).
- Access to research, surveys, opinions, and needs-based advisory services.
- A resource centre that holds publications, toolkits, and guidelines.

People, organisations, or businesses with an innovative idea are advised to engage with the SIF in the following four sequential steps:

1. **Contact** the SIF. Through the website [www.socialeinnovatiefabriek.be](http://www.socialeinnovatiefabriek.be) the applicant fills out a small questionnaire and submits it.

- If the application relates to a (potential) social innovation, the applicant is invited to an **information session**, which is organised every six weeks. During these sessions participants are given information about the SIF model and the help they can expect. The ability to speak openly is essential at these meetings, so all participants sign a statement of non-disclosure.



Source: Accelerating Social Innovation (2015, p.10)

- At the end of the information session the participant can schedule a one-to-one **intake meeting** with a SIF process manager. During this intake meeting the process manager aims to understand the innovation and the motivation of the innovator. Empathy is a key quality of the process manager. Not only the expertise that is needed for starting the project, but also the knowledge or expertise the innovator has to offer to the learning network is identified. This is an empowering moment: both the CEO of a big enterprise and a newly graduated person have their own



qualities and experiences that can be helpful for others. A description of this expertise is stored in a custom made database for the process managers to consult for the formation of a specific learning network.

During the intake both possibilities and uncertainties of the innovation are explored. What is the concept and what are the challenges that are addressed? The idea is assessed according to these vital building blocks that constitute social innovation:

- **SOCIAL:** the societal impact should be the primary focus of the concept. Is it mission-driven and socially inclusive, and does the participant have any ideas about social impact measurement?
- **INNOVATIVE:** is the concept new or likely to generate renewal for society as a whole, or for a specific sector?
- **IMPORTANT:** does the concept provide a solution to a real and significant social issue? Is it scalable or replicable?
- **SOLID:** is there a realistic idea about covering the costs? Is there financial solidity and an integrated business model? Does the concept involve non-monetary resources?
- **PARTICIPATORY:** can the project be carried out by the innovator with a team and/or partners? How about co-creation?

Source: Accelerating Social Innovation (2015, p.11)

It is important to stress that not all of these aspects are mandatory. However, the experience of SIF demonstrates that the most successful and impactful social innovations pay sufficient attention to all of these aspects.

Once the possibilities and needs are clear an action plan is conceived, giving extra attention to the areas and ways in which the idea can be enhanced through knowledge, partnerships, training, or funding.

4. After the intake the SIF offers several optional tools to **support** the innovator to gradually transform its idea into a profitable social business:
  - Together innovators constitute the **learning network**, where they interconnect, are introduced to enablers, experts and potential partners who can help to find answers to various questions in order to accelerate the

development of the concept. The learning network is managed with a ‘virtual currency’: in exchange for knowledge and expertise, participants commit to sharing their knowledge and expertise with future participants. This way the learning network grows with each intake, allowing innovators to tap into a broad and diverse pool of expertise.

*“The Social Innovation Factory organises a peer-to-peer network. It is driven by the community, the heart of our organisation. They provide the skills and expertise they bring along and are willing to share with each other. Our task is mainly managing the logistics of the programme.”*

**Kaat Peeters, general manager**

The SIF process managers meet on a structural basis and activate their collective intelligence, creativity and network with the aim to offer the best advice and detect the best matches for the social innovators. People are matched based on their knowledge (whether professional or private) about social issues (poverty, diversity, mobility, etc.), expertise in specific fields (such as business modelling, marketing or community-building) and their active networks.

- The **collective approach** is all about creating this good match, providing a ‘safe’ space and setting the scene through a method that enables peer-learning. In order to profit optimally from the existing network and competences, diverse meetings are organised, such as:
  - Peer tables where innovators in comparable domains meet.
  - Bootcamps to train certain skills together and intensely.
  - Or one-to-many sessions, offering extra assistance on difficult subjects.
- **Communication** and marketing of the social enterprise is developed and facilitated by the SIF, sometimes even in co-operation with national media partners.

- Also **research** is executed by the SIF, for example on the evaluation of social impact in order to test impact measurements in different working environments and on different topics.
- And **funding opportunities** for social innovators are actively pursued, linking them with funding bodies and social investors.

### 2.3 From idea to action: three inspiring cases

The SIF does not offer a pre-fixed standard model of support or training. The innovator and his or her process are the starting point. Sometimes the precise request or service needed takes some time to crystallise, sometimes only one session suffices, sometimes half a year full of support and sessions is not enough. So that makes the contribution of SIF very specific and tailor-made.

What kind of social enterprises are started and helped by the SIF? These three very divergent practices give a taste of it.

Project	Description	Phase	SIF support
<b>TEJO</b>	Free, quick, anonymous, and voluntary psychological assistance for young people.	Scale up	Initially to help achieve financial stability without losing its mission and identity, but due to personal circumstances SIF mainly promoted TEJO
<b>Solidare-it</b>	Puts people who need help in touch with people who want to help. The online platform is a genuine social network.	Pilot	Various actions regarding stakeholder engagement, pro bono advise on legal construction, communication strategy, and linked with several enablers and investors
<b>De Stuyverij</b>	Buzzing 21 century community centre where people work, learn, connect, and innovate.	Scale up	Organisation of specific strengthening sessions on co-creation and social impact, marketing opportunities, and linked with potential investors

### 2.3.1 TEJO: Accessible psychotherapeutic help for young people

In Flanders, the Centres for Mental Health (CGG) offer young people with mental health problems second line care. Unfortunately, they often have to wait for weeks for a first appointment at the CGG – and the therapy only really starts with the second appointment. “That’s unacceptable”, says Ingrid De Jonghe, lawyer, criminologist, psychologist, behavioural therapist, and founder of TEJO. “The waiting lists are far too long, especially in times of increasing mental health problems as a result of difficult family situations, growing pressure to perform, and an excess of stimuli. Existing care provision is unable to cope. We provide first-line care – or rather ‘zero-line’: the door is always open. A request for help that is only answered weeks later makes no sense.” TEJO’s support is also anonymous – within the limits of professional ethics and the law: if necessary a referral is made. This approach – fast, anonymous, free of charge, on a voluntary basis – is quite unique in the care sector.

With five TEJO ‘cores’, a forum network has been created. “We work on the basis of a social franchising model”, continues Ingrid. “In order to keep everyone in line, we very rigorously ensure that everyone adheres to the same good practices. TEJO operates as a lab to make therapeutic care a short and powerful intervention that young people can really benefit from. Individual support has to be brief and solution-oriented. Our working group on therapeutic process management is our think-tank. We are constantly on the look-out for new ways to give young people guidance as quickly and effectively as possible. Also, our starting point is skills, not problems. It’s simple, flexible and collaborative: we take a very solidarity-based approach, and young people can always sense that. I believe that what we do really works.”

TEJO has two hundred professional therapists working for it at six centres. “In our headquarters in Antwerp alone, we have already helped over 2,500 young people in more than 10,000 appointments. We want to give a clear signal to the government and society, that we ourselves, as committed volunteers, want to take action and get things moving, and in this way make our work mainstream within the mental health system.”

[www.tejo.be](http://www.tejo.be)

### SIFs contribution to TEJO

Ingrid de Jonghe connected with the SIF during one of their first events. She had already started TEJO, but could be helped to improve its financial and managerial organisation and make it more robust. Compelled by its success, she was searching for ways to expand TEJO without losing its unique mission and identity.

Respecting the needs of the organisation and innovator, the SIF only recently started to think about specific strengthening sessions to obtain these goals. This means that *de facto* the support of SIF consists of promotion of the concept on various occasions.

### 2.3.2 Solidare-it!: online platform to mediate help

Everyone can use some help now and then. The good news is that most people like to help. Yet supply and demand often seem to be mismatched in a big city like Brussels, despite all modern means of communication. The internet platform Solidare-it! aims to put people from Brussels who need help in contact with people who would like to help. Jan Janssen is one of the volunteers driving the project. “Initially we focused only on people from disadvantaged groups, but we have moved away from that idea somewhat. Via Solidare-it! anyone from Brussels can ask for help. It could be families with financial problems or an old lady who needs to move house, or it could be you and me.”

Solidare-it! chose an online platform due to the many possibilities it offers for bringing people into contact with each other. But what about people in Brussels who have little to do with the internet or lack computer skills? “For these people, we are focusing on the numerous social organisations active in the capital. Through their network, they can help with the search for *ad hoc* assistance for their target audience. Many local associations these days have to conform with fewer subsidies and resources, although the group they are serving is not usually decreasing. By calling on those in society who are keen to get involved, they can achieve their social objectives more easily. “The difference from traditional volunteering is that we are focusing on one-off assistance. Many people want to help others, but usually at a time that suits them and without first having to enter into a long-term commitment to an organisation. Our online supply and demand platform gives them that

opportunity. It will be great if lasting contacts or friendships also grow out of Solidare-it!, but that is not our main goal.”

[www.solidare-it.org](http://www.solidare-it.org)

### **SIF contribution to Solidate-it!**

There was a clear need for support by Solidare-it! as they wanted to know more on stakeholder engagement, and learn more about its most solid financial and organisational model.

The support of SIF for Solidare-it! is ongoing, so maybe already outdated. However, to date many actions have been taken: SIF organised a workshop on stakeholder engagement and three strengthening sessions on financing and co-creation, they linked them to several interesting peers, enablers, funding bodies, created funding opportunities, received advice on its optimal legal structure and (media) attention.

### **2.3.3 De Stuyverij: communal space for cross fertilisation**

De Stuyverij is a social venue and space for meetings and events, a home-from-home in the city where anyone who wishes can come to work, learn, and play. For local residents, this community centre in Kortrijk is a place that inspires, activates, and connects. Everybody is welcome at the open sessions that are organised regularly to do something, learn, and have fun together. But at the same time, De Stuyverij is developing into an urban or citizens' laboratory, where local people, businesses, and government bodies meet. Ideas and good practices for social entrepreneurship and social innovation are there for the taking in the attractive multifunctional XL living room.

“We're not a café, not a restaurant, and not a traditional community centre either. De Stuyverij is primarily a friendly place where young and old, families, cultures, people with plenty of time – or not much time – can go to 'stuyven' (or 'to pollinate'): by which we mean learn from one another and build bridges between people of all sorts”, says founder Eefje Cottenier, who opened the centre together with her husband in late 2013. Since then, De Stuyverij offers excellent flexible workspaces for anyone with a project with a social or

creative flavour, or for parents who are self-employed or work from home. Eefje Cottenier is seeing her social enterprise continuing to grow: good ideas are strengthened and worked out in detail in the accessible citizens' laboratory that De Stuyverij has become. Local residents and other visitors devise socially innovative ideas, such as solidarity-based child care, alternative currencies, or activities in the local parks. They are able to develop these further together through workshops, experiments, discussions, brainstorming sessions and projects, and are coached by professionals from the business world. So is this the community centre of the future, or something more?

[www.destuyverij.be](http://www.destuyverij.be)

### **SIF contribution to De Stuyverij**

When De Stuyverij first opened its doors, Eefje was searching for a fitting franchising model that allowed her to scale up. She pitched at the SIF that supported her with: the means to perform a feasibility study, participation in a research project on societal impact, strengthening sessions on social impact, participation, and co-creation, mediation, and introduction to impact investors and outreach on several events and publications of the SIF.

It is evident that the De Stuyverij model works. Eefje is actively involving governments, businesses, and civil society organisations to learn from one other about social entrepreneurship. Meanwhile De Stuyverij will probably open new centres in Roeselare and Gent this year.



### 3 The RRI aspects of the SIF

The Social Innovation Factory incorporates many valuable elements of RRI in its vision, mission, and every day functioning. Some are inherent to the concept of ‘social innovation’ and are present in many [social incubation initiatives throughout Europe](#): they all encourage a transversal approach, stimulating social innovation, and social entrepreneurship on important societal challenges ranging from poverty, loneliness, diversity, ageing population, climate change, mobility, food systems to energy, education, etc. But other aspects are a deliberate feature of the SIF approach.

#### 3.1 The process dimensions of RRI in the SIF approach

What does the functioning of the Social Innovation Factory raise with regard to the process dimensions of RRI? Let’s explore the properties, values and learning points of the SIF approach for each aspect of RRI:

##### **Diversity & Inclusion**

Social innovation concerns all: young, old, rich, poor. What is needed to tackle a societal challenge can be found in very surprising solutions, or with unusual actors.

SIF manages to accelerate social innovation in a constructive and inspiring way. It makes a difference by actively supporting and facilitating interaction, co-operation, and co-creation. To achieve this SIF builds a network of highly driven people with diverse expertise fields around an innovative idea and facilitates dialogue and deliberation between these creative minds. Collective intelligence is too often neglected, but is embraced by the SIF as a very powerful tool for creating enthusiasm, insights and a movement of like-minded people across sectors, organisations, and themes. This approach clearly addresses the basic aspirations of RRI: to tackle these complex and ‘wicked’ problems in a deliberative, inclusive, and sustainable way.

There are no specific efforts to increase social diversity; however, the learning network consists of a very diverse and varied population ranging from small, local non-profit, or

community projects to big companies. The SIF is able to attract this broad audience because the threshold to participate is not dependent on its member's financial status. Especially in this uncertain phase of their business development process innovators are not eager or even able to invest hundreds of euros in consultancy. The SIF currency that innovators obtain by sharing their skills or expertise with other peers in the network lowers the threshold for everybody to participate. This interesting reciprocal system, that encourages everybody to bring their skills to the collective, functions as a clear safeguard to open up the organisation and its services to all individuals and groups. As long as they are willing to share their talents as well in the learning network...

No special attention (or data collection) is directed towards the inclusion of women or minorities. But it is clear that social entrepreneurship in general attracts more women than ordinary entrepreneurship.

### **Openness & Transparency**

The organisation communicates about its own knowledge and capacity building in a transparent way that avoids jargon and specialist language. It organises multiple meeting opportunities and shares valuable experiences and tools for social innovation. In its collaborative campaign 'Radical Innovators' with national media partners, like the Flemish quality journal *De Standaard*, the SIF addresses thousands of people and invites them to join and share and nurture their innovative idea. Also the research on social impact that the SIF is performing is being shared in order to foster impact driven activities.

However, the SIF is not a fundamentally open organisation and functions in that respect as a real incubator: it allows fragile ideas to grow in a secure, optimal supportive climate. Confidentiality is respected as there may be issues regarding competition (NDA) and sensitive internal processes. Only when the social service or technology is publicly launched, its general findings, recommendations, and tools are disclosed and disseminated.

The specific SIF methodology is not publicly revealed. This social business model tool is only offered in a workshop, which attendees pay for in euros or in knowledge. However, the SIF website shows the criteria of social innovation and offers clear insight into their service.

### **Anticipation & Reflection**

Because good intentions are not enough to make a difference, the organisation challenges innovators to think their concepts through: What is their mission? Is the social impact that they strive for clear? What is their revenue model? Which partners and stakeholders are involved?

The SIF is also exploring a redesign of the funding process that would be based more on the societal impact and societal value brought about by social innovations and less on their economic value. And it also performs action research to test impact measurements in different working environments and on different topics.

### **Responsiveness & Adaptive Change**

When the SIF started in 2013, all processes and services were not yet well-defined and still developing. It is a perfect example of learning by doing, adapting theories to practices and fine-tuning the toolbox. Uncertain about its final content and form the newly hired employees had to develop what they promised and needed themselves.

Luckily a new and small organisation like the SIF can adjust and change procedures and processes quite quickly according to the needs of its clients. Connecting different types of stakeholders and sectors through the learning network, peer tables, and events enriched the understanding of each other's perspectives, needs, and concerns.

## **3.2 Discussion and learnings on the SIF approach**

The SIF model interestingly proves that responsible research and innovation does not contradict the ambition of making profit or running a company; these go well hand in hand and even stimulate viability, progress, and co-operation. There is growing awareness that the acceleration of social innovation is achieved not primarily with additional money, but through knowledge transfer, and network opportunities. It opens up opportunities that would otherwise have been left unexplored and creates equal connections where co-creation flourishes. Social innovation and entrepreneurship is very challenging and a tailored

approach for innovators is a prerequisite. They have to be able to learn and grow their project at their own pace.

*“The little gems are yield in unexpected projects. In first instance, based on the intake, we don’t expect too much. But only as time evolves and the social innovator develops its skills and ideas, the real value becomes apparent.”*

**Kaat Peeters, general manager**

In nearly three years the SIF reached many of its goals and changed the entrepreneurial landscape of Flanders. The learning network is much used and valued by innovators. The social business model tool has been developed and is being fine-tuned. And the organisation has set up a reflection group on social impact and about 125 one-on-one sessions that team experts with innovators on specific questions. Other workshops and tools are being developed. Currently the SIF also offers workshops on pitching and financial planning. In each workshop peer-to-peer learning systems are integrated.

But all these successes come with lessons: the most important one is the rigidity of practices. It is hard to change an entrepreneurial landscape. And it is hard to think out-of-the-box and introduce innovative ideas. The core platform of the SIF, the mutual learning network where innovators contribute and consume, is only possible when they are allowed to dedicate time and energy to help each other. However, this reciprocal labour is subject to legal haziness. The virtual currency is introduced to deal with this grey zone. But the administrative hassle is considerable and it takes a lot of time to take away the suspicion some social entrepreneurs have concerning this virtual transaction that must in the end be presented in real currency. This system of a communal currency to ‘pay’ for services is not ideal and could be improved.

## 4 Workshop training exercise

This section now sets out how the SIF showcase might be used in a training workshop. This showcase may be conducted with (1) the participation of one stakeholder group – obviously business/entrepreneurs and industry alone – or together with one other partner stakeholder, like policy makers, researchers, or civil society organisations to facilitate cross-sectorial learning. But as social innovation is a topic that concerns and interests many people, you may also want to (2) involve all of the stakeholder groups RRI Tools addresses in an introductory general session. At the end some (3) optional stakeholder specific exercises are provided.

These come with suggested timings: depending on the knowledge levels of participants, this showcase would probably be used for a half-day event. Ideally there would be approximately 20 participants and two trainers. As this case study starts with a PowerPoint presentation and video material, trainers are advised to make sure required facilities to show videos are available at the training venue.

Depending on how conversant the workshop participants already are with RRI, and how conversant the trainer(s) want them to be, prior to the workshop participants can be asked to visit the SIF website – [www.socialeinnovatiefabriek.be/nl/english#sthash.VjJdNRdX.dpbs](http://www.socialeinnovatiefabriek.be/nl/english#sthash.VjJdNRdX.dpbs) – and asked to read the RRI Tools *Policy Brief*.

### 4.1 Training scenario for industry & entrepreneurs

#### Plenary briefing and pre-discussion

##### 30 minutes

This plenary session of the workshop should be used to outline what the showcase consists of, what the module exercises are going to be and – if necessary – to briefly (re-)familiarise trainees with some of the main issues that RRI is trying to address based on the RRI Tools *Policy Brief*. The video that explains the working of the SIF could be shown: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=GrNkICuGMtA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GrNkICuGMtA).

*Action:* Split the group into smaller groups of approximately four people.

The exercises that will be discussed in the ‘multi-stakeholder scenario’ below may be used, but we suggest offering a more elaborate training which uses a selection of the resources of the RRI Toolkit:

**Accelerate social innovation with RRI Tools**

**2 hours – 4 per group**

Ask the participants to pick one of the case studies per subgroup – TEJO, Solidare-it! or De Stuyverij – described in chapter 1 (and more information is available on their respective websites).

The RRI Toolkit contains several resources that are interesting and helpful to accelerate social innovation. We focus in this training on a rich toolkit, the Social Innovation Journey Toolbox, assembled by the TRANSITION project (Transnational Network for Social Innovation Incubation). This EC funded project was carried out by a network of European expert organisations and explicitly aims to support and scale social innovations.

In this training we use a selection of the 13 tools that compose the toolbox.

Case study	Challenge	Tool	Alternative
<b>TEJO</b>	important to scale, without losing authenticity	Capital system methodology	Social copy strategy
<b>Solidare-it!</b>	focus on stakeholder engagement, finance, and co-creation	Stakeholders map	thinking out of the comfort zone
<b>De Stuyverij</b>	<b>focus on co-creation and scaling</b>	<b>Co-design plan</b>	<b>storyboards and touchpoints</b>

For all these case studies, the following more general tools – that give a feeling of RRI and social innovation in a limited timeframe and well described by the TRANSITION project – may be used to assess this social innovation as well:

- Social business model canvas.
- Social innovation scanner.
- Social copy strategy.
- The responsible innovation grid.

All tools are described and available in the toolbox: [transitionproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/SIJ-TOOLS.pdf](https://transitionproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/SIJ-TOOLS.pdf)

### Plenary feedback and discussion

#### 1 hour – 5 minutes per group plus 10 minutes Q&A

A rapporteur from each group will briefly explain the use of the tool (or tools, if applicable) for the selected SIF case study to the plenary session and get feedback from the rest of the workshop. Answer the following questions:

- How can social innovation profit from RRI and its tools?
- What RRI [process dimensions](#) can you identify in the case study you selected?
  - Diversity & Inclusion
  - Openness & Transparency
  - Anticipation & Reflection
  - Responsiveness & Adaptive Change
- How does the implementation of these requirements help make the start-up or scale up of this social innovation/enterprise more responsible and why?
- Which [learning outcomes](#) are most prominent?
- And which learning outcomes will you take with you from this workshop?

## 4.2 Multi-stakeholder training scenario

### Plenary briefing and pre-discussion

**30 minutes**

This plenary session of the workshop should be used to outline what the showcase consists of, what the module exercises are going to be and – if necessary – to briefly (re-)familiarise trainees with some of the main issues that RRI is trying to address based on the RRI Tools *Policy Brief*. The video that explains the working of the SIF could be shown: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=GrNkICuGMtA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GrNkICuGMtA).

Discuss in plenary the following questions:

- Which elements of RRI are highlighted by the video?
- Which organisations (in your country) also foster social innovation?
- Which organisations (in your country) embrace RRI or showcase RRI elements?
- What is the difference of their approach and impact?
- What are the differences between, and the possible synergy, of social innovation and RRI?

*Learning outcomes:* This session starts to address All Stakeholders “Be able to explain the concept of RRI, and (some of) its component parts” and “Be able to identify the opportunities offered by RRI ...” outcomes. The next sessions will help to address some of the individual stakeholders’ and some of the other All Stakeholders learning outcomes.

### Optional: meet the innovator

**15 - 30 minutes**

If possible, it would be very illustrative to invite and interview a local social innovator to elaborate more on the personal drivers as well as the benefits and downside of social entrepreneurship.

*Action:* Split the group into smaller groups of approximately four persons.



### **The social innovator in all of us**

#### **30 minutes – 4 per group**

We start the discussion in subgroups with the 'Method of the Hand'. This is a very useful ice-breaker the Social Innovation Factory uses itself in peer-to-peer meetings and training.

Every participant reveals more of themselves by expressing (related to social innovation):

- Thumb: What are you good at?
- Index: Where do you want to go?
- Middle: What do you avoid?
- Ring: What are your loyalties?
- Pink: What are your unknown habits?

And finally the fist: what is your social innovative power?

Now we know the participants (and hopefully also their innovative potential) better, we turn to the Social Innovation Factory and Social Innovation in general.

### **Outline a social innovative business case**

#### **1 hour – 4 per group**

Ask the participants to pick one of their innovative ideas or companies as an example for this exercise. If this is not possible, think about a common problem (for example traffic, waste, food, care) for which you can imagine a social innovation. Discuss and outline a business case for that company to convince the board – and through them, the shareholders – of making developments in the company towards responsible innovation.

- Explore what is socially innovative about this venture.
- Discuss how the criteria of social innovation (chapter 1, p. 9) could be applied to your own company/organisation/problem.
- Which criteria are already well implemented and which are not?
- What could be improved?

Identify important partners outside of the company that may be of help in these developments.

- Discuss who these valuable partners may be.
- How can they contribute?
- When should they be contacted and involved?

Draft a socially innovative business case.

*Learning outcomes:* This session builds on the understanding of the Industry learning outcomes.

### **Plenary feedback and discussion**

**1 hour – 5 minutes per group plus 10 minutes Q&A**

In case of multiple groups, a rapporteur from each group will 'pitch' their business case to the plenary session and get feedback from the rest of the workshop. Use the questions formulated above.

An interesting but optional question you may ask after this exercise is to indicate together what the strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and pitfalls are of social innovators/entrepreneurs in general, or the social innovative culture in their country.

## **4.3 Optional stakeholder specific follow-up exercises**

**1 to 3 hours, depending on the goal and thoroughness of this exercise**

Following the workshop, further training could be effected using exercises to broaden and enrich the application of social innovation for different stakeholders. Some possible stakeholder specific exercises might include:

### Policymakers:

The SIF is funded financially by the Flemish government as one of the areas of focus for the development of Flemish entrepreneurship. This support, that covers the salaries of a

maximum of eight employees to maintain and grow this network, overhead, and the office, has been granted for 4 years and needs to be matched with 20% of external resources.

As time goes by the SIF needs to think of its own business plan. Why is it important to continue this support? Or what other constructions could be interesting, that won't jeopardise the core values of SIF? Try to write a convincing policy recommendation.

### Researchers:

Increasingly researchers from different backgrounds are interested in designing products or services that tackle societal challenges. Define which challenges are central to your discipline and brainstorm on the way research could contribute to these social ventures.

You are putting together a research proposal. Explain in what way the SIF or its methodologies could be an interesting partner or method for your own work and how to integrate this. How can you ensure that the principles of RRI are foregrounded in your proposal? How will you ensure that RRI is not simply an 'add-on' to your work, but is genuinely embedded in it?

### Industry:

Always interested in viable and feasible social innovations, you already follow the SIF for quite some time now. Not all products and services they support are interesting, but some are potentially profitable and could be an asset for your company. Explain what characteristics this product or service should have. In what way would it fit in your business profile and strategy? And flag up what you see as the main pitfalls of social innovation. Brainstorm on possible ways to deal with these difficulties.

Try to link this to the principles of RRI.

### Civil society organisations:

Social innovators are working on products that have some bearing (for good or, perhaps, not so good) on the areas that your organisation exists to advance and/or protect. A potential

co-operation seems feasible and valuable. Think about the ways a CSO can be involved to enrich and strengthen the process or product with insights, expertise, and memberships, and suggest at what stage(s) this might be useful. What could be your asset in the social innovation peer-to-peer learning community? How can you make this alliance with social innovation robust?

## 5 Key issues for trainers

### 5.1 Using this showcase

Although this showcase has been envisaged as being used in a workshop scenario, it may also be possible to use it as part of an innovation incubation programme, delivered either face-to-face or online.

### 5.2 Learning Outcomes from this showcase

The RRI Tools project has developed an ambitious set of learning outcomes that it would like to see addressed by those training stakeholders in the principles and practice of RRI. These are set out in the RRI Tools [Learning Outcomes document](#), and made explicit in Section 2 of that document. They are divided into outcomes for All Stakeholders and stakeholder specific outcomes. Trainers should be familiar with this document, and be prepared to amend and augment it as they deliver their training and deal with particular situations.

Under the All Stakeholders set of learning outcomes, this showcase clearly addresses Outcome 3 “Understand the processes that can aid the achieving of the outcomes RRI is expected to generate.” It also explicitly addresses Outcome 5 “Understand the opportunities that RRI can provide, particularly the new perspectives that working with other stakeholders may provide.” Depending on how training using this showcase is delivered, it is quite probable that many of the other outcomes will be addressed, although some of the specific agendas that RRI encompasses are not explicitly addressed – especially Gender equality and Open Access – but does not contradict these agenda’s.

In terms of stakeholder specific outcomes, insofar as the SIF is itself a networking organisation of civil society organisations and social entrepreneurs, most of the understandings for Industry and Civil Society Organisations are covered in this showcase. This showcase can help people from (social) business and industry to “Understand how to embody RRI in the day-to-day processes of innovation.” and to “Understand the importance of incorporating diverse and relevant viewpoints into innovation projects.” At the same time people active in the broad field of civil society organisations can get empowered to

“Understand what unique and societally insightful perspectives CSO can bring to the research and innovation processes.” and “Understand how to be involved with the processes of research and innovation, at all stages, including helping to formulate the agendas pursued by the research and business communities.”

Apart from these two stakeholder groups, especially the research community could be very interested in this showcase, as it is often engaged in or even initiator of social innovations. The co-creation methodology could also be very inspirational to develop further RRI understanding amongst the other stakeholder groups.

### 5.3 Adapting this showcase

Despite its rich history in communal enterprise, social innovation and incubation is far from an exclusively Flemish/Brussels phenomenon. Social innovation originates from the US and to a lesser extent the UK, where social challenges are not automatically the domain of the national or local government. But, also due to the financial crisis in 2008, it has become hot and booming in large parts of Europe, adopted, adapted, and nourished and by innovation networks, living labs, incubators, accelerators, impact hubs, crowdsourcing, and crowd funding platforms. Please have a look at [www.socialventurers.com/category/organizations/](http://www.socialventurers.com/category/organizations/) to get an overview of all support organisations for social entrepreneurship.

It could be interesting to get into contact with a national social innovation organisation of your own country and apply or adapt this showcase to your local needs and circumstances. There may be features of this showcase that are simply not applicable, as it is too specific for the SIF methodology, but it is definitely possible that trainers making use of this practice could adapt it as their local or regional circumstances require.

### 5.4 Limitations of this showcase

The Social Innovation Factory Showcase is intended only to illuminate some aspects of developing a climate for responsible research and innovation by means of social innovation, and is not a complete solution to how to do this. It needs to be used in conjunction with the RRI Tools *Policy Brief*, with (parts of) the *Quality Criteria*, the *Catalogue of Good RRI*

*practices*, the *Report on the analysis of opportunities, obstacles and needs*, and relevant items in the comprehensive toolkit produced by the RRI Tools project. This showcase, by itself, does not lead to familiarity with the RRI Tools Toolkit.

## Appendix 1: Useful resources

- (1) Watch the video (in English) on how the SIF works:  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=GrNkICuGMtA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GrNkICuGMtA)
- (2) Check their (English) website:  
[www.socialinnovationfactory.be/nl/english#sthash.GHVI0sjl.dpbs](http://www.socialinnovationfactory.be/nl/english#sthash.GHVI0sjl.dpbs)
- (3) Read the RRI Tools blog on the SIF:  
[blog.rri-tools.eu/-/social-innovation-facto-1](http://blog.rri-tools.eu/-/social-innovation-facto-1)
- (4) Get inspired in the RRI toolkit:  
[www.rri-tools.eu/-/social\\_innovation\\_factory\\_insp\\_practise](http://www.rri-tools.eu/-/social_innovation_factory_insp_practise)
- (5) Watch a registration of a RRI Tools presentation of the King Baudouin Foundation (Bénédicte Gombault) and SIF (Kaat Peeters) in Lisbon, April 2015:  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=37vPzMbczfl](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=37vPzMbczfl)
- (6) Want to know more? Buy their book:  
[www.politeia.be/nl-be/book/social-innovation-factory-accellerating-social-innovation/SOCIAL958Z.htm](http://www.politeia.be/nl-be/book/social-innovation-factory-accellerating-social-innovation/SOCIAL958Z.htm)
- (7) Or visit one of their or similar social innovation events in your country:  
[www.socialinnovationfactory.be/nl/agenda#sthash.YLsNnC5u.dpbs](http://www.socialinnovationfactory.be/nl/agenda#sthash.YLsNnC5u.dpbs)
- (8) Want to know more about the beneficial construction of an accelerator being financed by government?  
[www.socialventurers.com/tag/brussels/](http://www.socialventurers.com/tag/brussels/)
- (9) Have a closer look at this website to get an overview of all support organisations for social entrepreneurship:  
[www.socialventurers.com/category/organizations/](http://www.socialventurers.com/category/organizations/)
- (10) And the global network of organisations supporting early-stage social entrepreneurs:  
[www.gsen.global/](http://www.gsen.global/)
- (11) The OECD will shortly publish a book portraying 20 social innovation organisations across Europe.  
[www1.oecd.org/innovation/](http://www1.oecd.org/innovation/)



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