



Mechanisms to involve “Fourth Helix” in Smart Specialisation strategy development : The case of Finnish regions

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Background

- This research has been funded by H2020 Framework Programme of the European Union
 - ONLINE-S3 project, 2016-2018 (<http://www.onlines3.eu>)
 - Science2Society, 2016-2019 (<http://www.science2society.eu>)

Research motivation

- Little in-depth conceptualisation on Quadruple Helix models (e.g. Arnkil et al., 2010; Grundel & Dahlström, 2016)
- Little evidence of Quadruple Helix in RIS3, the participation of civil society on unsatisfactory level (e.g. Aranguren et al., 2018; Kroll, 2016; Marinelli & Perez-Forte, 2017)

Quadruple Helix perspective

The shift from Triple to Quadruple Helix is to:

- Strengthen societal innovation
- Foster democracy

Definition for “4th Helix”:

- consists of groups representing demand-side perspectives such as innovation users, consumers, nonprofit organisations of citizens and workers (Giannelle et al., 2016, Implementing S3 Handbook)

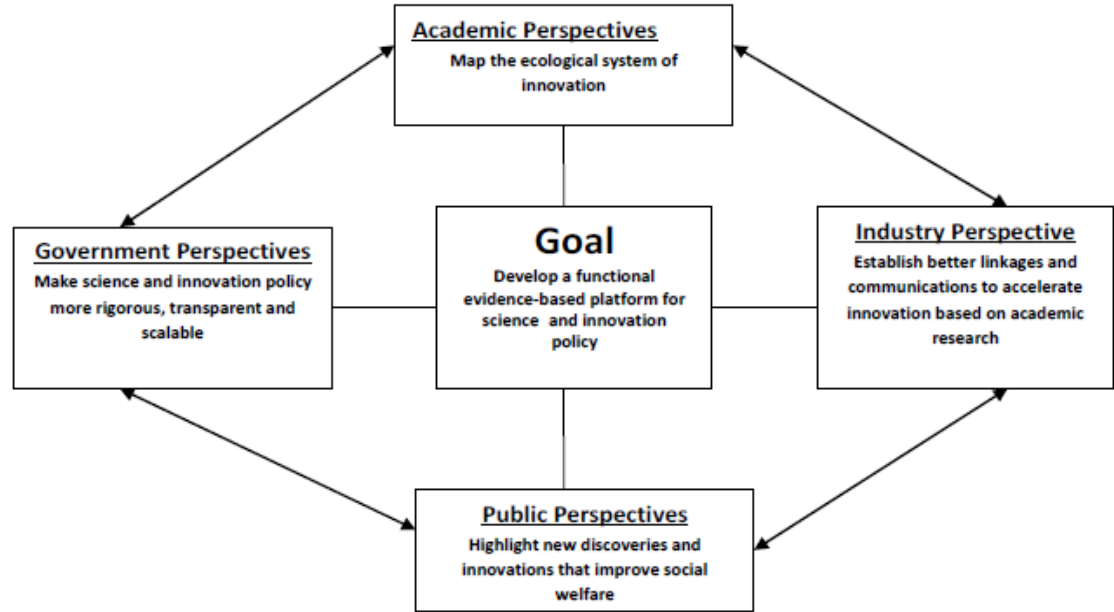


Fig 2: Science and Innovation Policy Scorecard

Source: Yawson (2009)

Research questions

- How to motivate various “4th helix” to engage in RIS3?
- How to facilitate “4th helix” participation in RIS3?
- What are the challenges for QH model in RIS3?

Research Approach

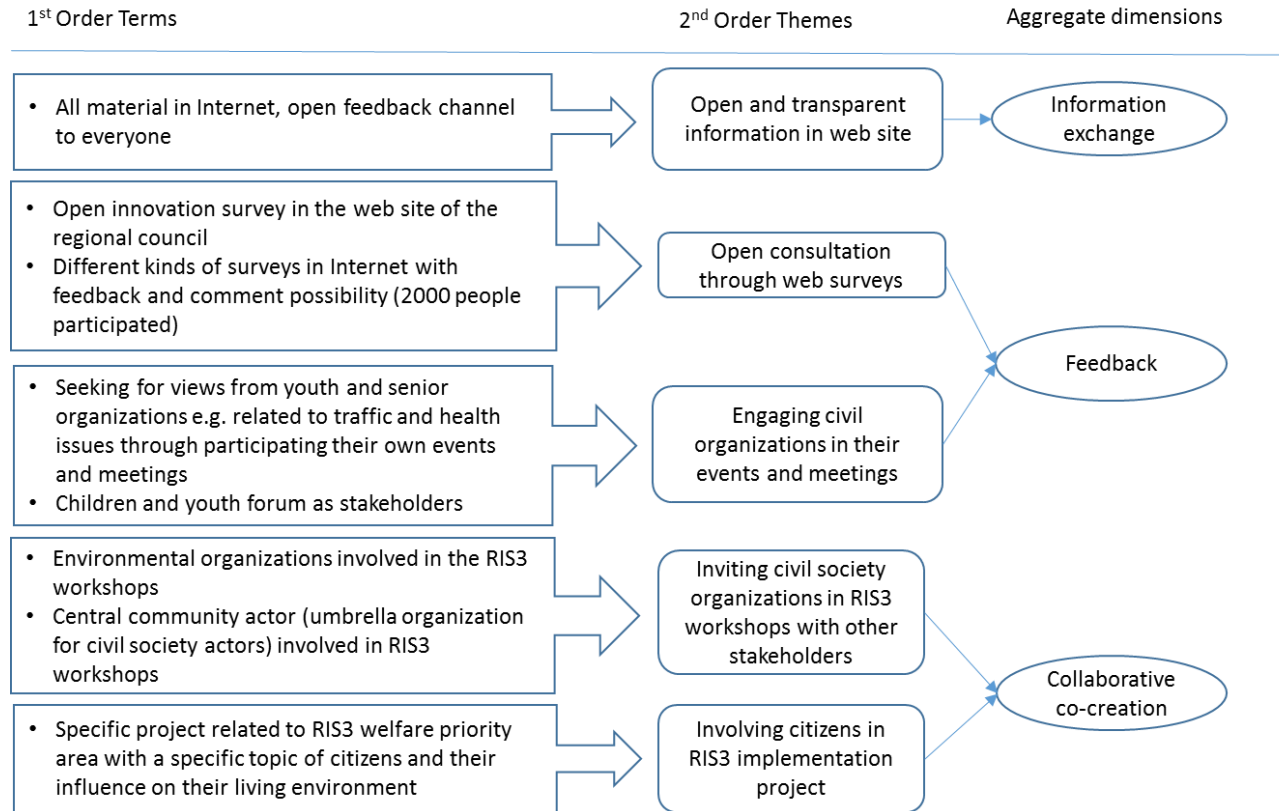
- Bottom-up, explorative research design based on multiple case study
- 18 semi-structured interviews with 23 RIS3 facilitators in 17 Finnish regions in August-October, 2017
- Regional RIS3 reports, presentations and publications

Case background, Finland

- Innovation leader (EU innovation scoreboard)
- GERD* 6 bn € (2016), 55 % private sector funding
- Centralised governance in terms of national guidelines, strategies and funding
- High degree of regional autonomy in the design and implementation of regional policies
- Regional councils facilitate RIS3 process, typically conducted as part of regional strategy program work
- Long tradition of Triple Helix collaboration in R&D

* gross domestic expenditure on R&D

Key findings – facilitating “4th Helix”



Motivating “4th Helix” as expressed by regional RIS3 facilitators

- Explain clearly how the collaboration benefits the 4th helix and tailor-made the message to different stakeholder groups within the 4th Helix
- Make the participation easy and convenient e.g. use existing working groups, organisations etc.

Challenges for QH model as expressed by regional RIS3 facilitators

- *”The administration can experience it as a heavy workload to engage civil society organisations as this requires focusing workshops around specific themes such as environment, in which there exists active civil society organisations”.*
- *“We have invited civil society organisations in the work, but they have not participated – most likely due to having little knowledge on smart specialisation and their role in it. There is clear need for increased communication.”*
- *We have not engaged citizens as active actors in regional innovation strategy process. This is though challenging as citizens don’t usually know what regional program and smart specialisation are.”*
- *This is an exciting topic and we were thinking to seek broad responses for a European wide web survey, then we realized that the survey was full heprea for most people. The language of the survey was such that it required familiarity of terms such as RIS3, EDP, smart choices, ecosystems and thus professional respondents.*

Conclusions

- Additional effort and new approach is required from regional administration to implement QH model
 - Divide work into specific themes that relate to experience and interest of 4th helix actors
 - Communicate clearly the opportunities and benefits of collaboration – influence regional development & decision-making
 - Communicate the expectations for collaboration – information sharing, consultation and dialogue or collaborative co-creation
 - Use common vocabulary, avoid professional terms

Limitations and suggestions for future studies

- Main limitation derives from the focus on one country
 - While key mechanisms for QH facilitation appear generic, the implementation need to reflect local institutional settings
- Suggestions for future studies
 - Study QH experiments & models in other contexts
 - Investigate the impact of 4th Helix participation on RIS3 outcomes