

ENHANCING INTERNATIONALISATION THROUGH INTER-INSTITUTIONAL COLLABORATION: INNOVATIVE PRACTICES IN PLANNING EDUCATION

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Abstract

Although internationalisation has been identified as a key transformative factor of higher education at the beginning of the 21st century and is firmly embedded in most institutional missions, there is growing concern amongst educators that internationalisation is being devalued and that the progress of its implementation has stalled. One particularly worrying aspect is a rather limited, predominantly instrumental implementation of internationalisation by institutions subsumed by neoliberal ideologies, economics and rankings, which prioritises international student recruitment over enhancing intercultural understanding, curricula and students' personal development. Responding to calls to re-orient institutional missions, this reflective essay seeks to stimulate a discussion of how aspirations of socially responsible internationalisation (internationalism) and learning for global citizenship may be reclaimed. Drawing on selected cases from the field of spatial planning, the author suggests that interinstitutional collaboration and partnerships could be a valid means to support (explicitly or implicitly) socially responsible internationalisation while also covering institutional performance targets. Cases are interrogated for their rationale (aims, institutional arrangements, focus) to gain an understanding of how they address various aspects of internationalisation and to draw lessons for wider adoption.

Keywords

Innovation, teaching, inter-institutional collaboration, planning education, internationalisation, university social responsibility

1. Introduction

Internationalisation has been identified as a key transformative factor in higher education at the beginning of the 21st century (Gacel-Ávila, 2005). This is largely driven by the notion that students need to be prepared to operate in a world that is more and more internationally and interculturally connected and globalised (UN Habitat, 2009; Sykes et al., 2015). While universities have featured considerable levels of international relationships and culturally diverse workforces from their early days (e.g., Peel and Frank, 2008), the internationalisation trend of late exhibits new dimensions and scales (De Wit and Hunter, 2015). As such, the internationalisation of higher education has become a “process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education” (Knight, 2003, p.2). More recently, De Wit and Hunter (2015, p.3) suggested that this process is to be conceived as *intentional and inclusive*, i.e. by “enhanc[ing] the quality of education and research for all students and staff, and to make a *meaningful contribution to society*” (emphasis added by author). In sum, the modern internationalised university: (a) serves a global community by welcoming and attracting talented, international students and scholars, (b) addresses local as well as global problems, which often cannot be investigated in isolation, through research and social engagement, (c) ensures inclusive, intercultural learning and competency development in and through the classroom and curricula, and (d) fosters a more peaceful world by increasing mutual understanding.

While institutions insist that internationalisation is paramount to attain competitiveness, it should come as no surprise that different interpretations of the internationalisation agenda are promoted by different stakeholders within as well as outside institutions. Some literature distinguishes between ‘internationalisation’ (driven by neoliberal profit-seeking motives) and ‘internationalism’ (focusing more on intercultural competencies) (Jones, 1998), although this terminology is not adopted in this essay. As a result, strategies and interventions vary and inevitably, different internationalisation aspects incur different issues, costs, and benefits which, in turn, affect stakeholders unequally. For example, increasing the percentage of international students will represent a welcome financial and reputational gain at the institutional level, but classes with large proportions of international students tend to increase workloads and present a burden to individual educators having to offer additional learning support on a day-to-day basis (Peel and Frank, 2008; Sykes et al., 2015). Without their efforts being rewarded, educators can become resentful towards the internationalisation strategies favoured under entrepreneurial-competitive institutional governance models that lead to classrooms inhabited by large proportions of international students. Moreover, the presence of international students alone does not automatically induce intercultural learning; this requires facilitation and adaptation of teaching materials and approaches for which adequate institutional support needs to be available (Jones and Brown, 2007). A failure of institutions in Western countries to provide curricula that cover different national contexts can also make it difficult for international students to return successfully to their home countries, contributing to the brain drain in developing economies (UN Habitat, 2009; Sykes et al., 2015).

Given the wide-spread propensity at institutional level to focus on internationalisation in terms of mere quantitative performance (such as international student recruitment, numbers of student exchanges and degree mobility) – at least in the Anglo-American-Australian context, Brandenburg and De Wit (2011) have bemoaned a gradual deterioration of substance and subsequent devaluation of internationalisation. In order to re-establish the credibility of the internationalisation project, De Wit and Hunter (2015) call for a strengthening of the academic, political and social rationales of the internationalisation of higher education with a focus on enhancing the quality of learning such that “our students will be prepared to live and work in a global world.” (Brandenburg and De Wit, 2011, p.17). A quality focus may also help stem the latest threats to internationalised education deriving from anti-immigration and nation-centred sentiments that have arisen in the USA and a range of European countries (Altbach and De Wit, 2018).

This paper seeks to stimulate a discussion on how inclusive and socially responsible internationalisation and learning for global citizenship might be reclaimed in the current climate of commercial institutional policies, the commodification of knowledge, and isolationist national political tendencies. Drawing on selected cases of innovative initiatives in the field of urban and spatial planning education, the author argues that inter-institutional and international collaborations with multiple aims and agendas could enable academics to invoke synergies and compliance with broader institutional agendas while also developing quality learning and curriculum internationalisation for staff and students. This in turn allows all involved to focus on learning

and becoming. The latter – becoming – has been identified in addition to knowledge and skills as a necessary aspect for individuals to be able to cope in a globalised, complex world (Barnett, 2009).

Offering some theoretical context, the first section reviews drivers and conditions for collaboration in general. Second, issues in internationalisation in spatial planning are briefly recounted. Third, a review of five cases of curricular and learning-focused internationalisation in planning education employing inter-institutional collaboration and partnerships¹ are presented and analysed to better understand the conditions that aided their success and sustainability. Dilemmas, challenges and opportunities of collaboration for internationalisation are discussed and lessons drawn to assist wider adoption.

2. Collaboration in Higher Education

The literature on the ‘collaborative advantage’ in the world of business, research, development and production is extensive and growing (Kanter, 1994; Loan-Clarke and Preston, 2002; Hansen and Nohria, 2005; Skinner, 2018). Collaboration is also common in academic research, especially with funders, including EU research programmes frequently stipulating collaborative bids involving different institutions or disciplines. However, the benefits of cooperation and collaboration between higher education institutions for education and programme provision are neither as obvious nor as well documented and remain less prominent. Modest cooperation between different departments within a university typically exist, but by and large there tends to be less cooperation let alone collaboration for the purpose of creating synergies in programme delivery between institutions. Exceptions include strategic international alliances and collaborations between developed and developing countries’ institutions, featuring, for example, overseas franchises and dual degree agreements. Overall, this is to be expected – particularly in national settings that promote a commercial HE landscape - as universities offering programmes in the same subject are de facto in competition (Barnett, 2017) and, unless there are contractual agreements, there is no reward or incentive for individual academics to support other institutions – the occasional esteem-enhancing invited guest lecture or seminar representing excluded.² Academics may also share syllabi informally (to build social collegiate capital) or formally at conferences and workshops focused on pedagogy and education. Nevertheless, Eckel et al. (2004a, 2004b) have postulated that it still may make sense to ‘collaborate’ as the concepts underpinning the collaborative advantage also hold for higher education teaching.

2.1. Motives and Drivers

Cooperative ventures and alliance formation are generally motivated either by a scarcity of resources whereby partners can potentially save on costs and investments by pooling, sharing, and jointly using resources such as facilities, knowledge, or networks (e.g., Saxton, 1997), or by the potential to increase power (prestige), efficiency, or production (Osborn and Hagadoorn, 1997). Examples include inter-institutional cooperation and collaboration in the provision of distance education and the development of online learning materials where a collaborative advantage derives from economies of scale and the pooling of specialised expertise. The burden of substantial upfront investments necessary for the creation of online and self-directed learning resources is easier to bear when shared by several partners. The fact that institutions that have developed sophisticated electronic teaching resources tend to protect their investments by fiercely guarding copyrights of this material and restricting access to fee-paying students and employees of the institution(s) involved in their development shows, on the one hand, the level of value creation and on the other that collaborations between institutions can, indeed, increase institutional competitiveness (Eckel et al., 2004a, 2004b). While efforts are made to provide free access to knowledge and resources created by university research to all members of society via massive open online courses (or MOOCs) for example, any certification of learning derived from MOOCs does still incur costs.

1 While some distinguish collaboration to mean a group of individuals or departments working together towards a single shared goal, and cooperation to mean working together to achieve individual selfish goals – this essay uses the words interchangeably.

2 Part-time tutors/lecturers are exceptions as they, not infrequently, teach at multiple institutions.

Resource scarcity is certainly a growing issue for universities especially where neoliberal government policies and recessions have triggered considerable cuts in state funding to higher education. This means universities increasingly need to develop alternative income sources by raising tuition fees, if permissible, or via other revenue generating activities to sustain operations. White and Hauck (2000) and Hearn (2003) suggest that entrepreneurial, cooperative ventures such as joint degree programmes offered in partnership with other universities (and/or organisations) represent one opportunity to develop additional revenue streams. The report on Internationalisation and Trade in Higher Education (OECD, 2004) endorses the growing importance of this collaborative driver documenting an increasing shift toward a revenue-generating approach in cross-border higher education, such as dual degrees with international partners.

Fairweather's (1988) conjecture that institutions primarily participate in [international] cooperative ventures for matters of prestige and status remains nevertheless relevant. His hypothesis is in line with organisational learning theory, which states that the main motivator for collaboration in loosely coupled systems such as higher education is the ability to develop superior knowledge, or specific programmes with international learning outcomes or work-based dual degrees when institutions partner with industry. Although Kezar (2006) refers to this theoretical framework in an intra-organisational context, there is no reason why the development of superior knowledge should not occur or be relevant in inter-organisational cooperation between two or more institutions disseminating complementary knowledge. Anecdotal evidence suggests that, for academicians collaboration is often motivated to a greater degree by "reputational capital than cash" (Kendal, 2008). This implies that institutions are interested in long-term gains rather than short term profits. Overall, an increased institutional reputation will practically translate into improved opportunities for revenue generation in the long-term.

Further triggers for (international) inter-institutional cooperation and collaboration in higher education are linked to government policy. International student exchange and cross-border education is considered a means to operationalise objectives of national importance such as fostering mutual understanding, developing a skilled immigrant labour force, and building capacity (OECD, 2004). Governments use funding as incentives to influence organisational behaviour and to stimulate the formation of (international) collaborative partnerships. Programmes such as ATLANTIS (EU – USA cooperation in higher education) or ERASMUS (in the EU) facilitate staff and student mobility and promote the development of multi-institutional border-crossing curricula and degrees. The EU Erasmus Mundus scheme specifically encourages the creation of "quality" masters programmes in new kinds of specialised knowledge areas jointly provided by sets of institutions from at least three different EU countries.³ This has been identified as a strategy "to prepare participants from the EU and its partner countries for life in a global, knowledge based society" (van der Wende and Huisman 2004, p.29).

In sum, multiple drivers are at work in an additive way in inter-institutional and international collaboration. Partners may engage in cooperation due to different motives with internationalisation being one of them. However, collaboration is an essential precondition for socially responsible and balanced internationalisation.

2.2. Conditions for Successful Cooperation

As indicated, collaboration between academic institutions can be a lucrative and useful strategy with the potential to increase revenue, knowledge, and reputation; but this does not mean it is easy or straightforward. Successful collaboration hinges on individual competencies as well as group relationships (Kezar, 2006; Shore and Groen, 2009). Setting up cooperative ventures requires vision, leadership, and collaborative working skills such as the ability to identify partnering opportunities and activities, and the patience to build and nurture requisite relationships. "Developing a good fit takes time and requires building trust and becoming familiar with each other's priorities, values, and styles" (Eckel et al., 2004b, p.7). There is a need to understand the different requirements and structural frameworks of partner institutions; this is especially important in international ventures. Cooperation is frequently complicated or even compromised by differences in administrative

3 Between 2004 and 2013, ca 140 inter-institutional Master programmes were created (see https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus_en - accessed February 8, 2019)

processes and regulations governing the institutions involved (Dühr et al., 2016). Since overcoming such barriers requires the costly development and implementation of institutional coping mechanisms, compatibility as in a certain similarity in organisational structure and culture amongst partners increases the performance level and success of collaborations. In other words, partners should be different, yet similar (Beerkens and DerWende, 2007). In applied disciplines, barriers could arise from different interpretations and conceptions of professional roles (Fernandez-Güell, 2015). In order to maximise benefits from the collaboration, an awareness of a programme's foci is important. For example, Fernandez-Güell (2015) suggests it may be comparatively more fruitful for two departments from different countries to collaborate if the joint programme focuses on global issues that affect urban development in both places rather than a joint programme which focuses on local issues. Another key in cooperation and collaboration is the promise of a clearly identifiable reward – financial or otherwise for each partner. From a resource-based view, rewards will be greater if institutions complement each other. So, for instance, a research-intensive institution may cooperate with a teaching university that has a strong base of practitioner-educators. While one institution derives benefits from the practice-based expertise, the other will heighten its status through the connection with research expertise.

Sustaining cooperation long-term relies on the (evolved) trust and belief that benefits will continue to accrue. Following Axelrod (2000), it is predictable that individual institutions are likely to abandon a partnership sooner rather than later if the expected reward does not materialise. If lack of cooperation or fulfilling responsibilities within a partnership is jeopardising the rewards for all, it is useful to develop strategies that ensure adherence to the cooperative agreement through a contract or agreement (e.g., a Memorandum of Understanding) that outlines clear rules, expectations, and responsibilities. Kezar (2006) and Eckel et al. (2004a) highlight that any collaborative activity should ideally be aligned with institutional strategies and that committed individuals at each partner organisation must be identified. Backing from top tier administrators is vital as well. In this vein, Mohrman et al. (1995) suggest that organisational structures and processes at universities in themselves may pose barriers to cooperative ventures, as one cannot impose collaborative behaviour within a context that supports and rewards individualistic work that focuses narrowly on one's home institution. Strategies, mission statements and promotion criteria may have to be re-written such that they explicitly incorporate and foster collaboration. Overall, successful cooperation depends on the interplay of several factors, including institutional and programme complementarity and compatibility as well as individual leadership, collaborative capacity, relationships, trust, and individual incentives. Whether one of these factors will be more prominent is likely to depend on the type of partnership.

3. Internationalisation in Urban Planning Education

While planning educators more and more acknowledge that future practitioners should have exposure to planning issues and contexts outside their home countries (e.g., Pezzoli and Howe, 2001; Goldstein et al., 2006; Dandekar, 2009; UN Habitat, 2009; Scholl, 2012), the context dependent nature of planning knowledge, practice, and culture typically stymies simple transferability of planning knowledge (e.g., Fernandez-Güell, 2015; Othengrafen and Knieling, 2016). This awareness has led to a retraction of academic programmes offered by Western institutions for students from developing countries and dampened an (over)enthusiasm for internationalisation in recent years. It has also prevented thus far – the development and wide-spread adoption⁴ of international accreditation of planning education programmes (e.g., Harrison, 2003; Frank et al., 2012). The debate on whether planning programmes designed to educate professionals for Western, industrialised countries and economies offer knowledge and skills relevant for addressing issues in the developing world (Sanyal, 1989; Burayidi, 1993; Zinn et al., 1993; Afshar, 2001; Watson, 2008; UN Habitat, 2009) or whether such programmes present a kind of academic colonialisation is an illustration of this discourse in the planning field.

Nevertheless, internationalisation in and of planning education is important for a number of reasons. Pezzoli and Howe (2001) and Goldstein et al. (2006), for example, assert that curricula for spatial planning need to raise awareness of the influences of globalisation amongst future professionals. Issues such as climate change or recent large-scale population migration require actions and planning interventions at multinational if not global as well as local level. Planning departments in multicultural cities and internationally operating

4 Some exceptions exist such as the RTPi accredited planning programmes at Hong Kong University; The Chinese University of Hong Kong; University of Botswana (Botswana) and University of Cape Town (South Africa).

consultancies increasingly expect students to be 'globally-minded' with an understanding of international issues (Scholl, 2012) and to have multi-cultural literacies (Sandercock, 1999).

Curriculum internationalisation in the sense of developing globally competent planners, however, is not trivial (Looye and Sesay, 1998; Sykes et al., 2015). It requires considerable engagement by educators and resources (Jammal, 1993; Dandekar, 2009). In order to internationalise curricula, educators themselves require direct (international) experience (Auffrey and Romanos, 2001). Internationalisation in planning education has thus far relied mostly on field-based teaching, which entails limited accessibility due to its resource implications (Hoey et al., 2017). The increasing need and demand to incorporate international perspectives, and intercultural experiences and competencies in curricula more broadly exerts novel demands on programme delivery and curricula, which may be difficult to fulfil for institutions affected by a climate of fiscal austerity and government funding cuts in many Western European countries, and also elsewhere (e.g., Altbach et al., 2011).

That said, selected planning departments in UK, Australian, and New Zealand based institutions have established reasonable income streams through teaching international students either on their home or on satellite campuses. In the case of teaching foreign students on satellite campuses, valuable international experiences are gained by academics shuttling between locations, which can shape more internationalised curricula for the long-term (see also Sykes et al., 2015). Income from international tuition fees (if applicable) could be ringfenced to strategically pay for internationalisation in a comprehensive fashion. Building on Frank and Symonds (2008) who have argued that inter-institutional collaboration could create significant synergies in efforts to provide a curriculum containing up-to-date content on domestic and international topics, another approach may be for institutions to share resources and duties, i.e. collaborate, to achieve higher quality results and more inclusive, socially responsible internationalisation.

4. International Collaboration Case Studies

Several innovative initiatives⁵ in planning education are examined. In all five cases, institutions from different countries are delivering teaching jointly and thereby support curriculum internationalisation and learning. The analysis focuses on how and why the collaborative activities were set up, the supporting institutional arrangements, perceived benefits, and potential barriers. While the cases were chosen to illustrate a variety of possible approaches, motives, and collaborative intensities, ranging from degrees to joint projects, from bilateral arrangements to multi-institutional networks, and involving individual students as well as larger cohorts, no claim is made that all possible typologies are covered nor all world regions. Three cases involve solely European countries, one collaboration is pan-Atlantic between US and European institutions, and the fifth one links three world regions (US-Europe-SE Asia). Another selection criterion was that the collaborations had endured for at least three iterations and possibly longer. Information on the case details were collected through interviews with key actors, website site searches, and where available from student feedback.

4.1. Network for European and US Regional and Urban Studies (NEURUS)

The NEURUS⁶ is an example of a collaboration of an international consortium of faculties from three European and four US-based universities that is committed to promoting comparative studies of urban and regional development issues. The collaboration facilitates and supports mobility, for purposes of research and study, of a modest number of students and fellows amongst the partner institutions. Unlike standard year abroad schemes in the US, the NEURUS focuses on graduate students who will spend a single immersive semester at one of the partner institutions conducting a comparative research project in urban development.

The network was established in 1998 with seed funding from the US Department of Education and the European Commission Directorate General XXII (Education, Training and Youth). It initially consisted of six universities, three in Europe and three in the USA. Since project funding ceased in 2002, the consortium has become self-funded with occasional external monies obtained by individual scholars (e.g., Fulbright). Nevertheless, it has

5 Standard student exchanges (e.g., Erasmus mobility) or study abroad programmes were excluded in this essay.

6 See NEURUS website: <http://www.neurusinfo.org/about-neurus.html>

sustained operation for a remarkable two decades and still continues. A programme evaluation (Goldstein et al., 2006) reveals that contrary to expectations, all partner institutions managed to achieve the target of sending/receiving three students per year during the time when funding was available and have maintained an average of two exchanges per annum and institution thereafter.

Management structures are informal and devolved whereby each institution has a designated coordinator who is responsible for marketing, recruiting, and advising students. Students prepare for their credit-bearing mobility semester by enrolling in a specially developed distance learning module prior to their time abroad. This distance learning module requires three critical essays on comparative planning topics. Each institution also provides a range of support mechanisms for visiting students in terms of orientation and supervision. Academics from all institutions meet for one-week long seminars each Autumn (Europe) and Spring (in US) reviewing student projects and discussing research methods.

While rewards for the partners appear small from an external point of view, they seem to be accrued steadily and evenly amongst partners. Over 20 years, the network has organized around 40 seminars and facilitated the exchange of 217 students – this no doubt contributes to their institutions' internationalisation goals. Additionally, network partners' benefits include new course development and research (Goldstein et al., 2006), particularly as a grant from the ATLANTIS programme in 2004/5 provided the resources to create a certificate degree. Another factor contributing to the network's sustainability is its multi-dimensionality. The strong thematic focus – i.e. being a community of interest centred on comparative study methods and development issues caters to the research interests of the academics involved not solely to internationalisation and teaching. An interview with one of the consortium representatives highlighted the strong social bonds that exist amongst network members. Many of the individuals involved in developing the network knew each other well having studied and/or taught at the same institution – “there is a University of Illinois Urbana Champaign connection” (Silver, 2011; 2019), which helped to provide the high levels of trust and collegiality that have been identified as important for successful cooperation (Axelrod, 2000; Eckel et al., 2004a; 2004b). Another benefit is the opportunity to nurture such friendships during the annual seminars. Consortium membership has been stable with a few institutions joining and one dropping out. These changes do not reflect disenchantment with the collaboration but are due to the academics involved moving posts and taking the network with them and others having been associated with the network as students or fellows wanting to contribute and join to share in the prestige of being associated with the programme.

4.2. International Doctoral College – Spatial Research Lab

A similar initiative is the 'International Doctoral College' – a collaboration of six university departments (in three German speaking countries – Austria, Germany and Switzerland), which aims to enhance and internationalise doctoral education and training in spatial planning (Internationales Doktorandenkolleg/Forschungslabor Raum, 2012). Research in the field of spatial planning frequently requires a knowledge of mixed methods and working with a team of experts across disciplines. Providing support infrastructure in terms of supervision, or research methods training can be difficult especially in smaller departments as planning schools often are. Moreover, with limited numbers of doctoral students there is a risk that individuals have very isolated learning experiences and few opportunities for international exchanges, exposure to wider academic debate, and lack of a transparency of the standard of achievement, which the Bologna process is recommending for the third cycle of education in Europe (Koch-Christensen, 2005).

The motive for creating the 'International Doctoral College – Spatial research lab' was to overcome these issues by creating a different format of doctoral education. In contrast to the NEURUS, which was created after securing a seed funding grant, the instigators involved in this collaboration deliberately shunned external funding to avoid administrative workloads and restrictive moulds being imposed by funders. Administration is informal; whereby a rotating Chair for the programme is selected from amongst the collaborating institutions over the entirety of a three-year (doctoral training) cycle. To create synergy, all dissertations within one cycle address a topic under an overarching theme and doctoral students are supported by up to three one-week long seminars covering research methods and topical issues in the first two years. Seminars are hosted in rotation by each of the partners and designed to support students' research. The first intake, in 2007, comprised approximately 30 students across six participating institutions (University of Stuttgart, Germany; ETH Zurich, Switzerland; HafenCity University Hamburg, Germany; Institute of Technology at the University of Karlsruhe, Germany; Technical University Vienna, Austria; Technical University Munich, Germany). While participating

doctoral candidates gain their credentials under the regulations of their home institution, they profit from the discourses at joint doctoral seminars along the way. The doctoral research lab is presently in its third iteration (2017-2020).⁷ In addition to the research seminars, the supervisor team added field trips to locations relevant to the overarching topic (Scholl, 2019) in this latest iteration. Again, leadership, institutional similarities (e.g., German-speaking), and prior social contact represent success factors here. The number of partners remained stable over time, although there were some institutional changes. As in the previous example, these changes derived from academics retiring or changing posts. While collaborations regarding doctoral research training exist elsewhere such as the Wales doctoral training partnership (walesdtp.ac.uk) to create economies of scale for the training of social scientists, the cross-border collaboration of institutions adds an internationalisation perspective.

4.3. Collaborative International 'Live' Projects

'Live' projects known also as 'workshops,' or 'laboratories' are teaching activities whereby students act as consultants for a community organisation, local authority or similar type of partner. While highly valuable for learning, 'live' projects are resource intensive (e.g., Forsyth et al., 2000; Kotval, 2003) and international live projects incur additional complexities in their delivery. Nevertheless, with planning schools under pressure to increase the level of international experiences for students while also having to offer practice-based curriculum elements, international live projects represent a promising pedagogical approach that can satisfy both needs by bringing students from different cultures together for one-two weeks of project work. In fact, such projects are increasingly a feature of European planning education programmes – often supported by funding from Erasmus and Erasmus+ schemes. They are generally run once or twice but often cease once project funding runs out.

The live project example presented here derives from a network building project between three institutions (one UK, one US, and one Indonesian University) for which the joint teaching activity, a live project with students was conceived as integral to research and capacity building activities. The research element of the project provided a focus for the live project and meant that multi-national student teams were tasked with exploring the potential contributions of green infrastructure in promoting sustainable development. Following grant stipulations that activities should focus on issues in the low-income partner country, UK and US students travelled for two weeks to Jakarta (Indonesia) to work with students and faculty from the University of Indonesia and local government officials to develop solutions using green infrastructure approaches to address water and air pollution issues amongst other things.

As the educators for this collaboration came not only from different institutions but also brought different approaches to planning to bear – the first workshop revealed a considerable mismatch in expectations and problem-solving approaches. The host institution embraced an urban design approach in their education and expected students to conduct a site analysis followed by a physical design proposal, whereas the UK and US educators envisioned that students would engage in social science oriented primary data collection followed by the development of strategies and policy recommendations. The conflicting expectations added complexity and were critiqued by students as confusing. It further added stress to working in an already challenging context. The intensive discussions that ensued amongst students and academics, however, ultimately enhanced the results of the project with teams creating proposals that incorporated both design and policy elements. In subsequent iterations, student guidance and workshop structure embraced the traditions of all schools from the start enabling true intercultural learning and enhancement.

The primary aim of the project was to offer students a research-led international experience (working with students from another country at home or abroad), while testing out research hypotheses and data collection methods as a way of supporting the research project and contributing to capacity development. Students benefited not only from exposure to different national cultures and traditions but also different kinds of knowledge and expertise from the different institutions as well as local practices. In turn, academics had the opportunity to reflect on the merits of the different pedagogies and were able to enrich their own institutional

7 See also: <http://flr.wzw.tum.de/index.php?id=2&L=1>

practices. The field work experience for US and UK students was unique and could not have been arranged easily (if at all) without the Indonesian partner. The collaboration between foreign and native students allowed unique access to local populations through the local language. Student feedback has been very positive. US and UK students most frequently commented on how working with their Indonesian counterparts helped them expand their horizons and deepened their understanding of urbanisation challenges in developing economies; while Indonesian students voiced appreciation of the discussions with, and viewpoints of, their counterparts and the opportunity to practice their English.

All institutions have committed their own funding to continue the collaboration beyond the funding period. Rewards for the different partners are different but accrue on all sides and include two documents, which were derived from the students' project reports. The UK institution embedded the activity into an existing mandatory course and the live project's value derives from contributing to regular, credit-bearing teaching, providing a high-quality student experience as well as developing relationships with colleagues abroad for research collaboration. The US institution has long standing relations with the Indonesian partner and this workshop is one of many activities which maintains momentum in a collaboration that attracts international doctoral talent to the US as well as research projects. The Indonesian partner is under pressure to internationalise and publish more in English and the collaboration helps to fulfil these institutional obligations.

4.4. Institutional Partnerships Delivering Degree Programmes

The final two examples concern international, inter-institutional collaborations for degree programmes. While collaboration for dual degrees nowadays proliferates – frequently between developed and developing countries, the selected examples feature multi-lateral collaborations. The first is an Erasmus Mundus Joint Masters established following a call by the European Commission's Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) to create degrees that would be offered by a minimum of three EU higher education institutions. The second is an idealistic bottom up experiment co-financed through a number of small-scale donors and drawing on social relationships and good will.

The two-year Master in Science in International Cooperation in Urban Development (Mundus Urbano⁸) is one of several interdisciplinary masters programmes in the field of Architecture, Urban and Regional Planning. Mundus Urbano commenced operation in the first funding tranche of the Erasmus Mundus Master Course (EMMC) initiative (2007/8) and has now run continuously for over a decade. Over this time, the programme has enrolled an average of 25 students per annum from 80 different countries with a broad spectrum of disciplinary backgrounds including architecture, planning, geography and political science. The programme is delivered by a consortium of four institutions: Technical University Darmstadt (TUD, Germany), University Grenoble Alpes (UGA, France), Universidad Internacional de Catalunya (UIC, Spain) and Università degli Studi Roma Tor Vergata (URTV, Italy). The first year is taught by the Faculty of Architecture at the TUD and conveys fundamental knowledge in understanding "space, society and technology in urban development in the context of globalization" (Mundus Urbano, n. D.). Thereafter, students will re-locate for semester one of year two to develop their specialism, which is provided through the partner institutions. Students selecting Urban Development Economics continue their studies at URTV in Italy; students specializing in (Emergency) Housing and Environmental Urban Development study at UIC in Barcelona (Spain); and students focusing on Urban Management and Social Programs attend UGA Grenoble (France). In semester two of year two, students are expected to pursue an internship or field research, or possibly a period of study at a non-EU partner university and submit a thesis (or a final exam in the case of Rome). Aside from the formal partnership between the four European institutions, each institution maintains a range of informal links with universities outside of Europe which will accept and support students' projects and fieldwork while enrolled on the Mundus Urbano.

In line with the international development focus of the curriculum, the programme's language of instruction is English for all core elements with some optional courses taught in the local language of the host institutions which contributes a valuable internationalisation aspect. During a phone interview, the programme director (based at TUD) indicated that without the inter-institutional collaboration it would be impossible to offer

8 see also: www.mundus-urbano.eu

the programme's high-quality curriculum. The seed funding provided the impetus to start the programme and was instrumental in alleviating the costs associated with the setup, the establishment of administrative structures and procedures for such a complex endeavour, and also provided student scholarships. The initial funding period for Erasmus Mundus courses was four years, after which programmes were to become self-sustaining. Each Erasmus Mundus programme is different in terms of structure, number of partners and their contributions, but all follow guidance on contractual relationships and administrative reporting as part of the grant conditions. As such, the structure of the institutional relationship is well defined and formalised. Administratively, the funding follows the students, i.e., partners receive a share for administrative costs proportionate to their contribution to the overall programme as well as funding for each student selecting their offered specialism.

The second example, a two-year master's degree under the title of architecture.studium.generale or 'Reiseuni. lab'⁹ represents an idealistic experimental degree that was inspired by Humboldtian ideals whereby universities combine research and teaching (Fallis, 2007, p.29). The degree course developed at the Brandenburg Technical University in Cottbus seeks to provide a broad professional education for architects and urban planners by merging a classical educational journey with intensive interdisciplinary project-based studies to foster graduates' ability and competencies in problem-solving and uptake of responsibilities in society. Curricular and conceptual leadership and administration was held by Brandenburg Technical University in Cottbus (also the degree awarding institution) but the majority of students' study time was spent at partner institutions. After an induction period in Cottbus, students embarked on an educational journey of three semesters spending seven weeks each at seven partner institutions across Europe and the Middle East (e.g., Tallinn University of Applied Sciences; Universidade Autònoma de Lisboa, Politechnika Wroclawska; Universität Innsbruck; Universidad de Sevilla, Tel Aviv University; Universität der Künste Berlin). At each location they worked in changing project teams under the supervision of the local host institution's academics on a local project before having one week to move to their next location. The final five months were spent on an individual master's thesis, which was focused on deepening one of the projects.

In the initial version of the program, 36 students in two cohorts completed the course (2010-2012, 2011-2013). Students paid a modest amount of tuition fees for the course while additional sponsorship was obtained from a wide variety of organizations for workshops and activities in the different project locations. Expectations for input from partner institutions were significant for comparatively little re-imburement. Opportunities for partner institutions to incorporate the activity into their own teaching or collaborate with the 'roving' student cohort were limited and diminished the potential for any non-monetary rewards in terms of knowledge or reputational gain. Furthermore, while the student cohorts of the first two intakes were highly motivated and exceptionally talented, a significant amount of the time contributed by the host institutions went unpaid, which made the arrangements unsustainable for several of the partner institutions and their educators (Mironowicz, 2011; 2019).

The programme was discontinued following a reorganisation at Brandenburg Technical University¹⁰ and re-started in 2015 with new arrangements and partners under the joint leadership of Tallinn University of Technology and Universidade Autònoma de Lisboa leading to a dual degree. Only time will tell if this new arrangement will be more sustainable based on lessons learned from the first iteration. The concept is certainly interesting. There was also concern that students were travelling too much of the time with the intensity of the forced relationship amongst the cohort causing tensions and issues hindering students' studies.

5. Discussion and Reflections

Internationalisation – in the sense of integrating global dimensions into all aspects of higher education is an important aim for institutions at the start of the 21st century (Gacel-Ávila, 2005; UN Habitat, 2009). Implementing socially responsible and comprehensive internationalisation requires care (Jones and Brown, 2007) and can

9 <https://www.reiseuni.eu/report/index.htm>

10 https://www.reiseuni.eu/report/1.02_reiseuni/reiseuni_02.htm#reiseuni_2.1

be thwarted if institutions focus on aspects that prioritise economic rationales over social and intercultural knowledge dimensions (e.g., Brandenburg and De Wit, 2011).

In the field of spatial planning additional difficulties to internationalise exist (e.g. Peel and Frank, 2008; Fernandez-Güell, 2015), including the fact that degree courses are generally designed to educate professionals to standards that reflect local/national context rather than international contexts making an explicit international profile for graduates less desirable. Planning education programmes, on the whole, are less amenable and attractive in terms of internationalisation compared to business or engineering degrees, for example. Consequently, internationalism in the field of planning requires thoughtful justification and has enjoyed slower progress compared to other subjects and disciplines. Considering recent critiques of internationalisation in HE, slower implementation may have been a blessing in disguise. Rather than single minded strategies, it spurred creative, multi-dimensional approaches often employing collaborative formats to enact internationalism as elaborated by the case studies above. The cases exhibit various types of collaborations and different institutional arrangements (Table 1). Two broad categories can be distinguished: those that involve shared programme elements (NEURUS, Intl. Doctoral College, Collaborative Live Project) and those involving the joint delivery of an entire degree course and award (ERASMUS MUNDUS, Reiseuni.lab). Looking at the relative success of the cases and the theoretical concepts underpinning successful collaboration, there are some important lessons to be learned from these groupings for future implementations of collaborative internationalisation.

First, joint degree programmes require more formal administrative arrangements than cases that adopt shared programme elements. The Erasmus mundus case – being a jointly delivered two year programme, exhibits comparatively strong and formalised arrangements that provide contractual clarity for responsibilities and rewards; this is in line with the high input efforts (administration), the importance of financial gain as reward, and the need to manage risks of programme failure due to partners, for instance, free-riding. In fact, in the Reiseuni.lab case the vague contractual arrangement may have contributed to the need to stop and re-start the programme. For all the other cases, less costly and more informal administrative approaches which relied on strong social relations and trust were in use, and this appears to have been sufficient as there were either few students involved or no monies to be exchanged for the activities. The strong reliance on social relationships is both a strength and potential weakness as the retirement of leaders may cause the network to falter. In cases of similar short-term, focused activities where social relations amongst partners are not as strong, it may be advisable to also put clear contractual responsibilities in place; something that many institutions favour under collaborative provision guidance.

Second, rewards are important in academic teaching related collaborations but not necessarily economic gain. Successful collaboration between different higher education providers can have significant benefits including enhanced internationalisation. The factor motivating individuals and the institution to engage in a collaborative effort depends on whether the average perceived (and actual) outputs (gains from the collaboration) exceed inputs (efforts to start and continue collaboration). It is interesting, that with the exception of the Mundus Urbano, perhaps, none of the cases appear to be driven predominantly by financial motives. Instead, instigators of the collaborations sought to invoke independent and intercultural learning, personal development and broadening students' horizons through curriculum enhancement, which often is easier to achieve when working fruitfully with partners.

The fact that collaboration cases have continued beyond their start-up funding further corroborates academics' strong interest in gains other than financial ones. Clearly, the creation of externally recognised superior knowledge and quality is prioritized and seen as vital to the health of the collaboration. An evaluation of the Erasmus Mundus Masters scheme showed that only about half of the 39 courses sampled and surveyed remained active beyond the period for which they received financial assistance (Voelkl and Pinocchio, 2017). This suggests that the creation of superior knowledge and financial gain are not mere substitutes but are intrinsically linked. In other words, only those programmes that offer superior, novel learning experiences attract sufficient student numbers to guarantee economic viability.

Table 1: Overview of Case Studies

	Partners & Duration	Drivers	Rewards	Arrangements & Conditions /Success Factors
NEURUS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 partner institutions to start, growing (currently 13) • 20+ years 	Interest in internationalisation and comparative studies	Graduate student mobility, exchange, research, course development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal, no funds exchanged • Trust, personal links and reputational gain
International Doctoral college	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 institutions • 3 cohorts with approx. 30 doctoral students (each cycle 3 years) 	Innovate doctoral education in spatial planning	Exciting projects, better student experiences which is ultimately good for reputation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal, low key, time limited, but with clear responsibilities for each partner • Similarity of institutional structures; leadership; trust; personal links; reputational gain
Collaborative Live Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3-4 partner institutions • 4 repetitions (2016-19) 	Research project – involvement of students to test methods / approaches	Enhances student experience, programme marketing; international experience; combine teaching, research and outreach; testing hypothesis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal but with workshop and travelling students received financial subsidy for first iterations; institutional bilateral MOUs • Reputational gain; leadership; personal links; rewards
Erasmus Mundus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 institutions: • 1 lead, 3 partners • 10+ years 	Call for proposals; seed funding to establish new programme; scholarships; internationalised degree	Prestige to partners, share of income proportionate to effort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly defined responsibilities via contract and annual reporting requirements during funded period • Financial and reputational gains
Reiseuni.lab	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 institutions and other partners • 3 cohorts with interruption 	Idealistic; new internationalised curriculum; broad, liberal education – independent learning competency	New student experience; joint degree; innovation; combined teaching and research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partners are paid for service of hosting student cohort but funding basic and schedule disruptive to hosts; more structured setup in re-started version – dual degree • Complex arrangement based on personal links, social capital but with insufficient recognition / rewards for partner Institutions

Third, all cases foster explicitly or implicitly internationalisation of curricula and student learning. However, the three cases not involving full programmes provide multidimensional rewards at many different levels – satisfying a wide range of stakeholders and creating redundancies for risk mediation.

The NEURUS consortium, for example, aims to foster a better understanding of different dynamics in the US and Europe while also advancing comparative study methodologies. The collaborative activities of the network thus provide learning and research-led internationalisation through reflective discussions at seminars and one-to-one supervision of student participants. The development of global and international understanding is likely deeper than that which would be achievable through standard mobility activities especially since the learning is supported by guided online study activities. The initiative enhances both the knowledge of a self-selected group of students and that of educators. Findings from student reports regularly make their way into the courses of associated academics and, as such, foster an implicit internationalisation of the curriculum taught to wider student groups (Silver, 2011). With no equivalent programmes at the scale of those offered in Europe (such as the Erasmus Mundus) this long-standing initiative is a valuable approach to internationalising graduate education and document it via certification.

The International Doctoral College case similarly offers a multidimensional approach to internationalisation centred around research and comparing approaches of individuals from different institutions. In addition, an atmosphere of competition amongst doctoral candidates and providing transparency in standards is achieved while young researchers can start building professional networks in a supportive environment. The collaboration's success hinges on personal relationships, leadership, and institutional similarity (German language and Germanic institutional structures) with complementary knowledge offerings.

The live-project example brings together student cohorts from three different institutions and also integrates research and learning. For the first iterations student travel was cross-financed from a research and network-

building grant. This illustrates that, while internationalisation was one of the drivers in motivating the case, it was not the primary one. The focused discussions and debates amongst faculty and students from different nationalities seeking to solve a real-life problem facilitated deep and genuine development of international competencies and understanding. Indeed, it involved not only a discovery of different problem-solving approaches but also the unravelling of philosophical differences and what different groups value and prioritize. The team had to overcome significant issues of institutional differences in addition to addressing concerns surrounding the management of live projects more generally such as balancing the work needed in project preparation, not overusing sites and communities and finding new sites that fit the curriculum or research if necessary. Working in a collaborative inter-institutional environment, it is more likely to find different location and sites amongst partners while maintaining research interests as well as share workload burdens.

In sum, the internationalisation achieved in each of the cases (with perhaps the exception of the Reiseuni.lab) appears to be not only comprehensive but also inclusive, involving contributions from and benefits for all partners in a relatively balanced fashion.

Based on the theoretical arguments by Eckel et al. (2004a, 2004b) and Axelrod (2000), an unbalanced reward structure may manifest itself in the partnership exhibiting instability. Using continued existence as the measure – the least stable appears to be the Reiseuni.lab course. This may be due to the fact (in parts at least) that benefits for partner institutions in this arrangement were less clear, pronounced, and multi-dimensional than in the other cases where desirable rewards seemed to accrue for all partners and towards a range of strategic and desirable goals.

Drawing on the case studies, another factor – related to rewards is relevant to the successful and continued implementation of comprehensive internationalisation. Internationalising activities need to be embedded ideally as a credit-bearing element so as to ensure recognition for both faculty and students. In addition, associating the activity to multiple targets in the strategic plans of institutions is also important as this creates opportunities to justify efforts and resources along different lines pleasing different stakeholders. Modest numbers of students/researchers being involved as is the case in most of the examples allow a focus on quality over quantity, which is seen as favourable for comprehensive and socially responsible internationalisation (De Wit and Hunter, 2015; Altbach and De Wit, 2018; Marinoni, 2018).

In all cases the international experience would lack quality without the collaboration, yet the two cases offering 'internationalised degrees' – the Mundus Urbano and the Reiseuni.lab would not be possible without the support of partner institutions in other countries. The hybrid examples of institutional collaboration (International Live Project, International Doctoral College and NEURUS, especially) that blend research, capacity development, student learning, and educator development provide interesting templates for promoting and implementing content and learning-focused (curriculum) internationalisation. It is suggested that these malleable projects can succeed even when cross-currents of neo-liberalist internationalisation and isolationist tendencies countervail due to their relative small scale, external funding injections, and links to educators' innate interests.

In the longer run, if we are to develop inclusive and socially responsible internationalisation that will truly help students to operate effectively and ethically in a globalised world, student learning from these and similar cases will need to be evaluated systematically and over time. While it may be helpful not to assess, rank and justify every activity, an intermediary means to re-orient internationalisation may involve the use of assessment frameworks as considered in the AESOP initiative¹¹ of assessing programme qualities, which includes an assessment of a programme's international foci, or the pilot evaluations for Dutch-Flemish programmes (Aerden et al., 2013).

11 https://www.aesop-planning.eu/news/en_GB/2018/06/05/readabout/aesop-quality-recognition

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