

UNLEASHING THE POTENTIAL OF SSHA – HOW TO INTEGRATE SOCIAL SCIENCES, HUMANITIES AND THE ARTS INTO PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

Thursday, 30 January 2020
Allianz Forum, Pariser Platz 6, 10117 Berlin, Germany

LESSONS LEARNED

The workshop “Unleashing the Potential of Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities - How to integrate Social Science, Humanities and the Arts into professional knowledge exchange” brought together inspiring practitioners from various disciplinary fields and different countries. This summary wraps up the main recommendation from the discussion during the plenary and the impact café session.

Key Question I:

How to create more awareness for knowledge exchange amongst SSHA academics and students

- » Success stories and role models offer orientation: Inspire academics and students for the vast transfer potential of SSHA by showing the applicability of their work in the real world. Use concrete examples and success stories and create on- and offline show-rooms to demonstrate the contributions of SSHA to real world challenges.
- » Language matters and is a door-opener: Communication plays an important role in reaching SSHA academics and students. Address these target groups by using appropriate language and framing, e.g. transfer means “solving problems” instead of “commercialization of technology”.
- » Knowledge exchange professionals need to adapt to target group: disciplinary cultures differ in the SSHA; they meet and interact in other places, they cooperate with other partners. Find them where they meet, do not expect them to find you; understand their motivation and objectives.

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Key Question II: How to support knowledge exchange in SSHA from the institution?

- » Services differ from traditional technology transfer: Develop suitable and lean transfer processes by offering “one face to the customer” and easy to reach contact persons and services for SSHA. Proactively inform about existing services and resources. Develop specific funding schemes tailored to the needs of academics from SSHA. Administrative burdens and a lack of information should never restrict researchers or students who are willing and motivated to step out academia.
- » Incentives, appreciation and visibility are needed: Establish monetary and non-monetary incentives for transfer in SSHA. Intrinsic motivation is by far the most relevant factor, but the combination of awards, bonuses and non-monetary rewards is also important. Aim to increase the visibility of projects and involved people both online and offline, e.g. inform about successful knowledge exchange as well as role models on the landing page of the website, in newsletters and other publications.
- » Resources matter: Provide students and researchers with sufficient time to engage in transfer. Not only money, but also time is often a limiting factor; offer transfer active researchers reduced teaching or administrative tasks and give students credit points for participating in knowledge exchange activities.

Key Question III: How to stimulate the development of start-ups from SSHA

- » Reframe Entrepreneurship: Create a more positive image of entrepreneurship and its inclusion of experimentation and failure. Focus not only on economic but also on societal value creation as well as social entrepreneurship. Invite successful role models (e.g. founders and alumni) in order to share their experiences and to inspire students and researchers.
- » Promote entrepreneurship of SSHA: Show the diverse contributions and assets of SSHA for start-ups. Inform less technology or business-oriented disciplines about the large amount of service-oriented, non-technology start-ups.
- » Infrastructure matters: Bring together interdisciplinary teams by offering rooms and infrastructure to meet and experiment. If resources and technical infrastructure exist, create open laboratories and invite students and researchers from all disciplines. To foster the work on real life problems, allow and motivate the participation of external stake holders. Aim to create an inspiring atmosphere and not just another standard looking classroom.

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