



# **Triple Helix collaboration – the Swedish case**

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# CIRCLE

## Centre for Innovation, Research and Competence in the Learning Economy

Established 2004 as part of Lund University, the largest and third oldest (1666) university in the Nordic countries

Multidisciplinary centre of excellence in research on innovation and entrepreneurship

Long term funding from the Swedish Agency for Innovation Systems VINNOVA, the Swedish Research Council for Centres of Excellence and Lund University

Second largest centre in Europe of its kind and ranked as the second best (after MERIT). More than 50 researchers, 70% non-Swedish)

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# VINNOVA - Strong R&I milieus

Regional innovation systems

- Policy to boost innovativeness and competitiveness
- Strong R&I milieus, focus on knowledge creation

Triple Helix

- University – industry – government
- Normative (regional) innovation policy approach

Mode 2

- Interdisciplinary, problem-oriented, application driven research

Regional Proximity/  
Globally connected

- Spatial and organisational
- Global knowledge networks (open innovation)

Emphasis on global excellence

- In knowledge exploration & exploitation



# Conditions for a successful Triple Helix collaboration

## Geography dimension

- Proximities at the regional level
- Spatial distribution of strong HEIs

## Institutional dimension: policy & funding

- Third mission
- Triple Helix policy framework
- Research funding promoting Mode 2
- University autonomy
- Professors' exemption

## Organisational dimension

- Internal organisation of universities
- Increased autonomy of regional government/policy actors



# Sweden – organisational and institutional innovations

- 1997 - Swedish universities have a "Third Task", Higher Education Act 1997
- 2003 - VINNOVA uses Triple Helix as a framework for (regional) innovation policy through CoExpertise programs: VINNVÄXT and VINNEXCELLENCE. Universities that want to access this funding need to be part of a regional Triple Helix collaboration
- Exploration focus – path renewal and new path creation (not path extension)
- Spatially even distribution of HEIs, especially high quality technical universities



## Sweden (cont.)

- Funding of basic research: When the Swedish research council (VR) introduced a program for supporting CoExcellence, universities were given quotas to apply for according to their size
- Applications accepted only from universities, not individual researchers and research groups. This forced universities to show strategic leadership.
- University autonomy for universities to organise themselves as the wish (and not only in departments and faculties)
- Professors' exemption – academic entrepreneurship



# The experience of Lund University

- Triple Helix: The Entrepreneurial University – proactive part of a T-H (regional) coalition – from individual to institutional based collaboration
- Third task – societal engagement in addition to teaching and research
- Mode 2: Universities internal organisation adapting – from departments and faculties to interdisciplinary centres of excellence
- From universities taking on generative tasks to developmental roles (e.g. proactive part in the formation of RIS and Strong R&I milieus)
- Deepening (Mode 2) and widening roles (local-global)
- Both academic and third tasks success – LU has got 14 out of the Research Council's 40 CoExcellence. Spin-off through IDEON Science Park and Medicon Valley – the best researchers are also most active in Third task activities (professors' exemption)



**Thanks for the attention**

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