Developing knowledge transfer for the third sector: models and measurement

Alex Murdock¹, Fergus Lyon², Charles Jardine¹, Michael Knight¹, Robin John¹

¹London South Bank University, London, United Kingdom, ²Middlesex University, London, United Kingdom

Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTP) have been a feature of the academic landscape in the UK for the past 30 years. KTP serve to meet a core strategic need and to identify innovative solutions to help business grow.

KTP’s involve a concept of partnership with 3 parties:

**Company partner** - this is usually a company (including not-for-profit) but in some cases it can be a health or education organisation or Local Authority. KTP supports a broad cross-section of UK firms, regardless of size.

**Knowledge-base partner** - this is a higher education institution college or research organisation (public or privately funded).

**KTP Associates** – Each partnership employs one or more high calibre Associates (recently qualified people), transferring the knowledge the company is seeking into the business via a strategic project (source KTP Online).

Though there are 1000 such partnerships in operation they have been almost entirely with public and private sector organisations. The creation in the UK of the Third Sector Research Centre (via the Economic and Social Research Council of England and Wales) brought the possibility of extending KTP’s into third sector organisations. A key part of the work of the Centre was seen to be in Social Enterprise (Peattie and Morley 2007) This paper links the initial work of the KTP’s of the University of Middlesex and London South Bank University with major third sector organisations in the UK. The work has a social enterprise focus and in particular is linked to the government public service delivery agenda.

The third sector organisations involved in the KTP’s are particularly concerned about developing better ways to measure the impact and outcomes of the work which they do. Social Return of Investment is central to the work being undertaken with the organisations. (New Economics Foundation 2004, Sanfilippo and Kjell 2008)

The work being undertaken is expected to produce models and measures which will assist these third sector organisations in their work and in particular will address common agendas around public service delivery. The paper will bring together the initial work of a number of KTP associates and university supervisors in identifying the range of SROI models and their potential application to third sector organisations involved in public service delivery. The organisations encompass a range of client groups.

**References**


Websource
www.ktponline.org.uk