

Now you see them Now you don't

The Case of the Disappearing ASU

Macro

- Growth economies are enterprise economies
- HTSMES core of Enterprise economies
- University sector source HTSMES:ASUS

What we thought we knew

Micro

- ASUs provide the essential building blocks in the Enterprise economy
- ASUs are a growth population in such economies
- Provoke new approaches to innovation / investment

ASUs

- Assumptions around economic good, , new sectors , independent growth and persistence over time
- Source of future European product champions
- With at the core the academic entrepreneur
- who drives change and tied to science

Presenting Irish Growth Model

- Based on attraction of MNC subsidies in predicted high growth areas
- Not based on indigenous sectors :
Construction
- No focus on SME /HTSMES or ASUs

Irish Conceptualisation of innovative change

- In Revolutionary societies foundation myths legitimise change
- Emphasise and possess understanding of the benefits of radical change
- Civil war societies understand need for consensus
- Radical shifts to the knowledge society presented in these opposing terms

Cultural Governance models

- Positive affirmation of radical change
- Inclusiveness and the need to sustain consensus
- Public sector source of innovation , funding and control
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Ireland the innovation model

- 1994 Creation of Foresight think Tank FORFAS\
- Establishment of Irish Council Science Technology and Innovation
- Created agenda which linked investment in future science as requirement for economic growth
- Defined priority areas as BIO Nano ICT

Foresight Report

- .The Knowledge society is envisaged as a pyramid “ Where industry , the higher education sector, government and society are the four interlinking faces forming a partnership at all levels .However a gap at the apex of the pyramid has been identified ,the need for a world class research capacity of sufficient scale in a number of strategic areas within our universities and colleges and research institutes and industry “

Outcomes facts

- Establishment of Science and Technology product champion agency
- Science Foundation of Ireland
- Budget 2 billion over 5 years
- Remit unclear
- Governance out side all existing systems

Outcomes SFI interpretations

- Shift in intellectual perspective
- Lack of esteem for native innovation and industry
No mention of ASUs
- Shift in geographical focus from the EU to the USA
- Innovation sustained within centralised planning framework
- Enhancement of dependency coupled with revolutionary imagery

SFI

- Organisational norms culture and appointments all from the USA
- All senior management from the US
- All development and selection systems created based on US models
- 12 member executive board involved no industry or SME members .Five from the US .The Irish members lacked both knowledge and position power

Research Roll out Continuing the Revolution

- Individualisation “A Market system for science based on creativity The genius of the American system is that it allows young people to have grants and to be freed from superiors or senior leaders
- This broke the existing cultural norms in which senior professors made all decisions

The Roll out Exclusion

- Funding limited to Bio sciences and ICT created a two tiered science community
- Less focus on EU funding lost the SME agenda
- SFI gained science and technology funding dominance
- Expertise imported from abroad “the zoo model “

Missing agendas

- No discussion of R and D up take up capacity
- Late discussion of need to create customised transfer and support mechanisms for differing recipients
- No official road map for the first three years

The Agenda

Director SFI

- Mimicking Carolina model of creation of Science Engineering and Technology centres CENTS in a “ whole variety of areas which will have strategic value for Ireland “
- The Irish system is trying to learn lessons from the USA in order to get a leg up the learning curve “” as a bold experiment for Ireland to try to do “

Consequences

Academic

- Down grading of existing science teams and academic disciplines in terms of resources and career opportunities
- Impoverishment of non lab based discipline areas
- Creation of customised labs in University sector plus staff plus funding out side existing university governance frameworks
- Distortion of academic decision making models

Consequences Corporate

- Irelands economic strengths are in the operational aspects of manufacturing and services .This is particularly true of the foreign owned sector which accounts for most of our exports and which for the most part produces goods that were designed else where to satisfy market requirements that were specified else where and sold by other people to customers with whom the Irish operation had little contact and over whom it has little influence Ahead of the Curve 2003

SFI New Goals: Overt and Covert

- Overt Creating a science spine
- Shifting and refocusing cultural icons to highlight scientific achievement
- Covert linking CERTS research to MNC agenda
- Re-conceptualising CERTS as marketing tools for Ireland Inc.

Not innovation but Organisational Continuity

- In our agenda we were looking for the wrong thing in the wrong place
- Not future European product champions
- Were we looking at best at reinventions of MNC Subsidiaries in Ireland
- Science funding as location strategy
- Highly educated work force

The finding Irish ASUs

- Temporary marketing vehicles
- Little need enterprise skills
- No persistence over time
- Not the new economic drivers
- of the Knowledge economy

What went wrong

- Restricted scope . Not just labs
- Lack of esteem for Indigenous sectors
- Marginalization of indigenous knowledge capitol
- Lack of relevant expertise in central policy development
- Questions re transferability of external models

Black Holes

- Where are the product champions ?
- What are the development profiles of ASU
What are the pay back figures
- Why was the remit not challenged
- What can be transferred
- Can Bureaucratic systems trigger innovation

Missing elements

- The monitoring of risk as a key aspect of modernities, reflexivity the celebration of high consequence risk resulting from globalisation must exist if the system is to function Giddens 1991
- This seminar opens up this monitoring
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