Institute
FairShares Institute
for Cooperative Social Entrepreneurship

The FairShares Institute for Cooperative Social Entrepreneurship is a Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF) project at Sheffield Business School (SBS) within Sheffield Hallam University (SHU).

Vision
“to eliminate poverty, promote social justice by building communities in which every adult has the opportunity to become a co-owner of the organisations on which they, their family and community depend.”

Each FairShares project has as its goal the creation of a sustainable co-operative enterprise that enfranchises four primary stakeholders (founders, labour, users, investors).

Mission
“to engage in critical testing, development and application of the FairShares Model and disseminate the results in an intellectual commons for the benefit of educators, researchers, entrepreneurs, managers, members and professionals engaged in cooperative social entrepreneurship.”

The project’s vision and mission were agreed by an initial steering group to align with the goals of the FairShares Association (UK) and FairShares Labs project (Germany).

The logics of the FairShares Model
Sustainable co-operative projects that enfranchise four primary stakeholders.

Every FairShares project is developed to give recognition to the people who found it, invest their labour in it and/or become users of its goods and services.

If established as a separate legal person, a FairShares project can be structured to support financial investments by members and supporters.

The purpose of this brochure is to set out the achievements of this HEIF project to make the business case for a permanent institute within Sheffield Hallam University.
Examples of FairShares in Practice

FairShares has already become the focus of international projects such as:

- AnyShare Society - a sharing economy platform in the USA (www.anyshare.coop)
- Resonate - a music streaming platform in Ireland (https://resonate.is)
- The Human Needs Project - rebuilding communities near Nairobi, Kenya (www.humanneedsproject.org/)
- Evolutesix - a developmental coaching network based in Europe (https://evolutesix.com)

During this HEIF project, further local adaptations of the FairShares Model have been catalysed to stimulate more cooperative social enterprises owned, governed and managed by their primary stakeholders.
Wealth and power sharing

We will research the structure of companies, cooperatives, associations and partnerships that advance equality and equity between members, stakeholder groups and trading partners. We are interested in how the wealth created is shared fairly amongst founders, producers, users and investors to promote mutuality and reciprocity.

Specification of social purpose(s) and auditing of impact(s)

We will research how members are empowered through constitutions to establish and evaluate social value creation (such as specific improvements to their own, their community’s and wider environment’s health and well-being).

Ethical review of the choice of goods and services offered

We will research how members are encouraged to think carefully about the well-being that their joint enterprise creates (or could create) through designing and offering products and services.

Ethical review of production and retailing processes

We will research how products and services are developed using production and retailing processes that positively affect members, society and the environment.

Social democratic ownership, governance and management

We will research how ownership is extended amongst all primary stakeholders who are directly affected by operations so that they have a clear right to participate in decisions on how the (natural, human, social, intellectual, economic and financial) capital they contribute is managed.
Primary Research

The origins of FairShares research lies in a series of doctoral studies undertaken by staff at SBS. In SHU’s 2014 Research Excellence Framework (REF) submission, one of SBS’s impact cases noted the use of concepts in them to develop the FairShares Model. When the FairShares Model gained traction amongst practitioners, the FairShares Association was formed to build bridges between academics, students and social enterprise consultants working on (or within) the social economy.

Since REF 2014, SBS staff have continued to research and produce publications on the theory and practice of FairShares. In 2015, a book (The Case for FairShares) was published for members of the FairShares Association. Shortly after, the first journal paper on ‘The FairShares Model’ was published in Croatia.

During this HEIF project, a new book chapter (“The internationalisation of the FairShares Model”) was completed to support our first contribution to a knowledge transfer project (“European FairShares Labs for Social and Blue Innovation”). Further publications are under development, including another book chapter (“Social Economy, Sustainability and the FairShares Model”) for a book on social enterprise that will be published in Japan.

Supported by the Centre for Regional Social and Economic Research (CRESR) in SHU’s faculty of Development and Society, the steering group of the FairShares Institute led an application to become institutional members of the EMES Social Enterprise Research Network. Our successful application demonstrates that the research we produce is internationally recognised for its quality and impact, and that EMES will recognise both the FairShares Institute and CRESR as centres of excellence for third sector research. During this HEIF project, we secured an agreement with EMES to host their 2019 International Social Enterprise Research Conference. This will bring 400 of the world’s leading social enterprise researchers to Sheffield Hallam University.
Knowledge Transfer Projects

We have secured involvement in several knowledge transfer projects. The one most closely aligned with our mission - which part-funded this HEIF project - is an Erasmus+ project (“European FairShares Labs for Social and Blue Innovation”). During the HEIF project, we have embedded FairShares intellectual property (IP) into documents describing the methodology for creating FairShares Labs in Hungary, Croatia, Germany, Netherlands and the UK. We have secured further funding to support pilot FairShares incubators (including one in Sheffield).

Concurrently, the IP created to support FairShares Labs is being used by practitioners in other countries to create FairShares companies, cooperatives, associations and partnerships. During this HEIF project, 16 new organisations prepared rules to incorporate social enterprises in Canada, Ireland, Kenya, Mexico, New Zealand, Spain, UK, USA and Zambia. There are now ten cooperative projects, seven proposed companies, two partnerships and one association applying the FairShares Model.

FairShares IP also supports work with local cooperatives and social enterprises. Firstly, a FairShares Rules generator and a FairShares Diagnostic tool is helping Faithstar LLP in Sheffield to convert itself into a FairShares partnership. Secondly, learning and development tools for FairShares Labs are being used with The Co-working Co-operative CIC in Sheffield to enhance member participation within a new cooperative governance system. The HEIF project helped us secure funding through the Sheffield Innovation Programme (SIP) managed jointly by Sheffield Hallam University and the University of Sheffield. We are negotiating further SIP projects during 2018 to assist local social enterprises.
Learning and Teaching Programmes

The proposed institute will provide specialised courses for people who wish to learn about cooperative social entrepreneurship. This will contribute to the United Nations Global Compact and its programme of sustainable development goals (SDGs). The HEIF project contributed to the development of a number of partnerships to advance education on cooperative social entrepreneurship. These partnerships arose out of relationships we have developed with pioneers in this field: the Co-operative College (Manchester, UK) and Social Enterprise International Ltd (North Yorkshire, UK).

Two important income streams for the future of the institute will be the MBA/PgC Cooperative Leadership and Social Entrepreneurship, and the Mondragon International Experience Programme.

MBA/PgC Cooperative Leadership and Social Entrepreneurship

The Sheffield Hallam MBA/PgC in Cooperative Leadership and Social Entrepreneurship is designed to help people build their skills, knowledge and experience in the management and development of cooperative and social enterprises. The PgC provides a progression path to either the full Executive MBA at Sheffield Business School or the Master of Management: Cooperatives and Credit Unions at Sobey School of Business (Saint Mary’s University, Halifax, Canada).

This HEIF project supported delivery of a Co-operative Executive Education Programme with the Co-operative Management Education Programme at Sobey School and Co-operative College (Manchester). We have also progressed the validation of awards that will be hosted by Sheffield Business School (SBS) and co-delivered with the Co-operative College and Sobey School. This three-way partnership provides a unique offer: the first social entrepreneurship programme to fully integrate the co-operative economy into its curriculum, and work with cooperative movement leaders to deliver a blended-learning experience.

Mondragon International Experience Programme

During this HEIF project we also hosted the Mondragon International Experience Programme twice (Feb - April, Oct - Nov). This programme continues. Students from a cooperative university in the Basque region of Spain (Mondragon) attend Sheffield Hallam for a six week study programme ("Mutuality, Sustainability and the Social Economy"). This forms part of their Business Studies degree at Mondragon University and comprises lectures, field trips and cultural visits organised by SBS with Cooperative College and Mondragon University. We have signed an Erasmus Exchange agreement with Mondragon University to support this work. We plan to run the study programme annually from 2018.

We are now negotiating a second study programme with the Social Enterprise Academy in Nigeria.
The Future of the FairShares Institute

We propose that the FairShares Institute for Cooperative Social Entrepreneurship should provide a home for the community of academics, entrepreneurs, managers and professionals engaged in research, knowledge transfer and education on cooperative social entrepreneurship at Sheffield Hallam University. The institute will create an environment for nurturing teaching associates, research fellows, readers and professors as they engage with each other to develop the field.

Fulfilling SHU's Strategy and SBS's PRME Agenda

The five research themes we set out earlier contribute to the university’s strategy to shape futures, create knowledge, lead locally and engage globally to build a great university.

- **Themes 1 (Wealth and Power Sharing) and 5 (Social Democracy)** advance and develop SBS research on the characteristics, governance, ownership and management of the **social economy** (member-owned/led enterprises such as cooperatives, mutual societies, employee-owned businesses, credit unions, cooperative banks and other associations and foundations that engage in social enterprise).

- **Theme 2 (Social Purpose / Auditing)** advances SBS research on **responsible business**, including - but not limited to - individual and corporate social responsibility (CSR). This theme supports research into enterprise creation, corporate and community reporting, social auditing, impact investing and integrated accounting. SBS have to evidence commitment to this theme for EPAS and AACSB accreditation.

- **Themes 3 (Ethical Goods/Services) and 4 (Ethical Production/Consumption)** advance/develop SBS research on the integration of **ethics** and business, with specific reference to the United Nations 2030 **sustainable development goals**. SBS have to report on this commitment bi-annually in our PRME SIP report to the United Nations, and evidence commitment for EPAS and AACSB accreditation.

**Our Academic Panel Includes:**

- Dr Rory Ridley-Duff, Sheffield Hallam University, UK
- Dr Shann Turnbull, International Institute for Self-governance, Australia
- Dr Nina Boeger, University of Bristol Law School, UK
- Prof Michael Neary, Lincoln University, UK
- Dr Jeroen Veldman, Cass Business School, UK
- Dr Joss Winn, University of Lincoln, UK
- Dr Steven Pattinson, Northumbria University, UK
- Dr Suzanne Grant, (New Zealand), previously at Waikato University
- Prof Bronwen Morgan, UNSW, Australia
- Dr Michael Bull, Manchester Metropolitan University, UK
- Prof Takashi Yamamoto, Kwansei Gakuin University, Japan
- Prof Jo Barraket, Swinburne University of Technology, Australia
- Prof Lars Hulgard, Roskilde University, Denmark
- Neil Fletcher, Sheffield Hallam University, UK

**Our Practice Panel Includes:**

- Graham Mitchell, Ooooby UK Limited, UK/New Zealand
- Andrew Picken, Social Enterprise Europe Ltd, EU/UK
- James Perry, LocoSoco, UK
- Cliff Southcombe, Social Enterprise Europe Ltd, EU/UK
- Shahida Siddique, Faithstar LLP, UK
- Josef Davies-Coates, United Diversity / The Open Co-op, UK
- Judit Bedőné Károly, ECOsynergy Ltd, Hungary
- Gavin Bell, Belfast City Council, Northern Ireland
- Eric Doriean, AnyShare, US
- Graham Boyd, evolutesix, UK
- Roger Schmidtchen, VSBI e.V., Germany
- Stefanie Trzecinski, KOPF, HAND + FUSS gGmbH, Germany
- Karin Oparaocha, KOPF, HAND + FUSS gGmbH, Germany
- Jumbo Klercq, The Elephant Learning in Diversity BV, Netherlands
- Rob Jameson, AnyShare Society, US
Applying the FairShares Model to the FairShares Institute

We believe in learning and researching through active engagement. We have applied the FairShares Model during the planning process. Below we show our adaptation of the model for the FairShares Institute. We will recruit/refresh the steering group that founded these plans (‘Stewards’), attract Labour (‘Scholars’) engage with Users (‘Learners’) and, starting with Sheffield Hallam itself, secure HEI supporters (‘Investors’) to create a hub. This will advance multi-stakeholder design principles and sustainable development goals in social enterprise research and business education.

If you want to be part of this social venture, join the Community Forum on the FairShares Institute Loomio Group (https://fsi.loomio.org) or contact us.