Together Abroad University Representation in Brussels

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Ida Heebøll

Christian Walther Bruun

... also starring Torben Høøck Hansen, University of Copenhagen





- In Brussels who is there?
- In Brussels how are they represented?
- Two cases
- Our advice to universities planning to open EU representation in Brussels





WHY DO UNIVERSITIES HAVE BRUSSELS REPRESENTATIONS?







Branding

Early information

Network



IN BRUSSELS – WHO IS THERE?







- Identifying the university representations
 - EUA, IGLO, ERRIN no results
 - 276 possible offices (regional representations, membership organisations, individual university offices and national research offices)
 - Individual "guestimation"

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• Definition:

- Individual universities have a representation if the office is physically located in Brussels or close by
- They have less than 20 universities as members

Some degree of uncertainty and excluding IGLO members.







• We found 103 universities represented in Brussels. Per country this is the picture:



Number of universities represented



- On average universities with Brussels representation have twice the amount of EC Contribution based on the first 2400 EC signed grant agreements and 786 beneficiaries (incl. Swiss) in Horizon 2020
- 40 of the represented universities have no signed grant agreements in Horizon 2020



EC Contribution



IN BRUSSELS – HOW ARE THEY REPRESENTED?







- Explorative study
 - 12 interviews with university representations
 Geography, size, experience, membership
 - Identification of variables/parameters
 - Bundling, developing types and extracting characteristic
 - Comparison





- We have interviewed the following representations
 - Capital Region Denmark EU Office (creoDK)
 - European University Association (EUA)
 - Greater Birmingham and West Midlands Brussels Office
 - Neth-ER (Netherlands house for Education and Research)
 - North Norway European Office
 - OPERA. Alliance of 4 Universities



creo







- We have interviewed the following representations
 - Småland-Blekinge South Sweden
 - South Denmark EU Office
 - The EuroTech Universities Alliance
 - The League of European Research Universities (LERU)
 - The Pomorskie Regional EU Office in Brussels
 - University of Wolverhampton
 Project Support Office Brussels







The Branch





 The Branch is often a small representation (1-2 people) working as a part of the university



EU-funding,

- supporting EU-project development
- early intelligence
- not lobbying or topic lobby



Small degree of change at the universityBrussels employees often visits the universityBased on a contract and has a high degree of control



Challenge: Low capacity at the representationAdvantage: Close to home institution and able to act quick





The Bureau



• The Bureau is often a small representation (1-2 people) working as part of an office with diverse partners



- EU-funding and intelligence,
 - Brussels network
 - topic lobby
 - no focus on member synergies



Some degree of change at the university/ies. Mainly based on contract Medium-high degree of control



Challenge: Detachment -> Connection and communication to home university. Advantage: Easy start-up and established network.





The Club



The Club is often a medium-sized representation (2-7 employees) based on a shared agenda (closed)



Mainly profile/visibility, EU-funding and lobbying,

- mainly intelligence
- member synergies and profiling
- lobby at WP/SP level
- no proposal aid



High degree of organisational change at the universities Based on **membership Low-medium degree of control**



Challenge: Communication to university and conflict of interest Advantage: Synergies between members, stronger voice in partnership, branding



The Union



• The Union is a big representation (7+) based on a **shared agenda (open)**



Lobbying,

- intelligence
- lobby for policy and framework conditions
- no proposal aid



Some degree of change at the universities Based on membership Low degree of control



Challenge: Diversity in membership, **conflict of interest**, and **low capacity** at member level **Advantage:** Reasonable **capacity at representation**, **strong voice** in the EU-system



South Denmark European Office





Comparison

| <i>"</i> " × | Aim | Control | Lobby level | Challenges | Advantage |
|--------------|--------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|---|--|
| The Branch | Funding | High control | No lobbying/Topic | Low capacity at representation | Knows home institution Small, but quick |
| The Bureau | Funding | Medium-high degree | Торіс | Low capacity at university Communication to and from university | Well established platform – easy start-up. |
| The Club | Profile/visibility | Low-medium control | WP/SP level | Communication to university Diversity in membership | Increased synergy Strong voice and branding |
| The Union | Lobby | Low control | Policy and framework | Diversity in membership Conflict of interest Low capacity of | Strong voice Capacity |



 According to our typology, the universities we identified in Brussels are organised differently





TWO CASES









A "Bureau" case

South Denmark European Officie representing University of Southern Denmark





About South Denmark European Office

- Established in 2007 with university representation since 2013
- 10 employees (1 for university)
- Monthly meeting in Denmark
- Result Contract with 4 focus areas:
 - 1. Information and analysis
 - 2. Visibility and collaboration
 - 3. Influence
 - 4. Match and councelling







Benefits



- Carving out strategic level of university that is focussing on one thing – EU funding
- Much more focus on Horizon 2020 than earlier
- General support to researcher
- Much greater EU visibility







Challenge 1

COMMUNICATION: What are the right channels of ongoing communication?





SDU Strategic Groups for Horizon 2020

Industrial Leadership

Nanotechnologies, Advanced Materials, Biotechnology and Advanced Manufacturing and Processing Information and Communication Technologies Access to risk finance

Innovation in SME's

Societal Challenges

- Health, demographic change and wellbeing
- -Food security, sustainable agriculture and forestry, marine and maritime and inland water research and the bioeconomy

Secure, clean and efficient energy

Smart, green and integrated transport

Climate action, environment, resource efficiency and raw materials

Europe in a changing world - Inclusive, innovative and reflective societies

Secure societies – Protecting freedom and security of Europe and its citizens

100 researchers active





Challenge 2

Lack of focus means that too many projects are started with the danger of no substantial follow up.







Possible solution

Idea – to choose 3-5 focus areas and focus efforts on strong positions such as:

- Welfare technology
- Drones
- Robotics

Each area should have a dedicated person coordinating





A "Club" Case

creoDK – Capital Region Denmark EU Office









About creoDK

- EU research office in Brussels, establishedin 2008
- Representing
 - University of Copenhagen
 - Technical University of Denmark
 - Copenhagen Business School
 - Capital Region of Denmark
- 5 employees
- 4 year strategy
 - Lobby and policy
 - Visibility and branding
 - Information and competences





Benefits



- Early warnings time is money!
- Translation of EU-lingo and trends
- Brussels presence is opening doors
- Working in a partnership gives a stronger voice







Focus and priority

- Strategic focus areas:
 - Chosen bottom-up
 - Scientific foundation
 - Focusing resources
 - Creating close relations in Copenhagen and Brussels
 - Creating legitimacy
 - Stronger voice in partnership activities







.... so summing up





DISCUSSION





OUR ADVICE FOR UNIVERSITIES PLAN-NING TO OPEN EU **AN REPRESENTATION** CCEODK South Denmark European Office





Define objectives in advance: what is the purpose of having a representation in Brussels? Combine objectives with appropriate type of representation

Funding – yes BUT remember other "hard-to-measure" (internationalisation, change of culture, synergies etc) benefits

Organise your home institution to match activities at Brussels representation

Be patient and strategic - it can take time before results are evident

Choose your Brussels team according to your objectives





Thank you!

Contact information:

Ida Heebøll creoDK (<u>ida.heeboell@regionh.dk</u>; +32 476 898 329) Christian Walther Bruun (<u>cwb@southdenmark.be</u>; +32 477 77 75 87)

