

Three most common Science Shop Models

Elizabeth Tryon
Morgridge Center for Public Service
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Institutionally-based Model

CURL (Community University Research & Learning) at Loyola University Chicago is an example of what is possible to do with the Science Shop model connected to a college. CURL is part of what was formerly known as Policy Research and Action Group (PRAG) a consortium of universities including Loyola, UI-C, Northwestern, DePaul and Chicago State University, working in collaboration with many different community partners. Initially it received extensive funding from the MacArthur Foundation and Department of Education, COPC (Community Outreach Partnerships, and the Consortium Corporation for National Community Service (Strand, et al, 2003). After several years each educational institution could see greater public relations benefit in maintaining separate identities, and broke off into individual Science Shops with one college or university partnered with several community-based organizations (CBOs).

The CURL Center opened in January 1996, with a \$1.5 million grant and endowment from the McCormick Tribune Foundation. In 2000, the Foundation awarded a \$2.5 million challenge grant to guarantee that CURL would be a permanent part of Loyola's research, education, and linkage with Chicago communities (<http://www.-luc.edu/curl/About.html>).

- There are more than 50 community partners and faculty from 30+ disciplines involved in collaborative research using a team model.
- CURL currently has an endowment of over ten million dollars. Projects and funding often come to them because of their reputation for a central focus on the Community-University relationship (Nyden, 2008).
- About twenty-five projects are generally in various stages of development.
- Pool of Loyola graduate students work there for a stipend and tuition remission.
- Also there are at any time one to three pre-doctoral candidates and anywhere from fifteen to twenty undergraduate students as work-studies.

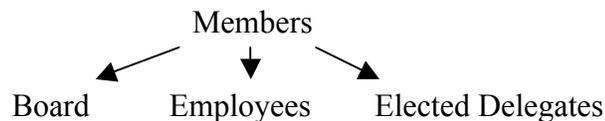
Research is always coming from the community and according to Nyden,

“It’s kind of neat to be dependent on them for the ideas. The kind of work we do; I would have a hard time doing the research, but when we work with our networks we get access to the knowledge. The big thing is to recognize the community knowledge base – we have an obligation to do this work to promote civic engagement.”

External Model

One of the longstanding entities of its type in Germany, the Bonn Science Shop is organized as a non-governmental organization (NGO). Because it has little external funding, money is always a struggle. Despite that, they are able to employ a professional staff of twenty-five people in a collective, flat structure, with fifteen of them at least partly involved in research or project activities (Steinhaus, 2007).

WilaBonn decision structure



Each project has a “Council of Delegates” with a manager, committee, and project team. “Delegates are elected from the group of members for the decision-making process in Bonn Science Shop affairs. They do cooperation projects with the University of Bonn, the University of Applied Science in Siegburg but also with the University of Applied Science Lippe und Höxter or the University of Pedagogy in Karlsruhe. 70% of the income that funds their operating budget is derived from a “Labour Market” service (two journals with employment vacancies, job tips), and they also host Job and Education fairs on renewable energy. Steinhaus also reported that some foundation money came from the Bundesstiftung Umwelt (Federal Foundation for Environment) and also from smaller foundations like Sparkassenstiftung (a foundation of a regional bank)

Trainings also help to pay the rent. Their seminars deal with different topics:

- Vocational training for teachers and educators (environmental pedagogy, forest kindergartens); also training of soft skills (language skills, voice and speech training); how to apply for a job, project management, or how to find a publisher.
- Other workshops are part of externally funded projects, such as workshops on community decision making (e.g. on the topic of land use). (Steinhaus, 2008).

The Hybrid Model

A hybrid Science Shop model, or one that is a blend of university and community-based, independent non-profit in use today in Canada is the Trent Centre for Community-Based Education in Peterborough, Ontario. Trent Centre (TCCBE) is separate from the universities, but funded in part by Trent University, as well as a multi-year foundation grant, and *Service Canada*. TCCBE is an “independent third-party broker” that contracts with the U-Links **Centre for Community-Based Research**, the university, and the community agencies in the region to provide services for community-based education. U-Links is a project of the Haliburton County Community Co-operative (HCCC), a non-profit corporation formed by local citizens that is

committed to undertaking and sponsoring entrepreneurial projects that support economic, cultural, social and environmental development in Haliburton County.

“The way this works is that there is a project agreement with the TCCBE, signed by the host NGO; the student; and the supervising faculty. It’s a student-involved core program delivery.” (Barr, 2008).

- Interested organizations submit project proposals requesting assistance to the TCCBE or U-Links. These requests are reviewed by a Community Advisory Committee with University representation, based on the specified criteria.
- Once approved, these project opportunities are posted on the websites listed above for students and instructors to consider. Students look at projects when they are registered on the website. They have to be in the right course - a lot of projects are written into the syllabi. The time commitment needed for project completion can vary greatly (e.g. 20 or 200 hours). Community-Based Education projects can be carried out as a thesis, a full or half credit course, or as a shorter-term assignment within a course commencing at the beginning of any session. (See TCCBE website at <http://www.trentu.ca/academic/tcbe/>)
- Results must be made public. Two full-time staff may broker 45 projects at once, with two student interns doing administration – entering the database information, etc. The staff hosts “office hours” one or two afternoons a week for NGO’s at a local coffeehouse.

This is, like PRAG, an extremely well-run and managed system for streamlining the work of various educational institutions and community partners, and possibly one that could be duplicated if matching funds could be found to add to each educational partner’s contribution to such an entity.

Sources:

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