

Video Transcript

ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN NONPROFITS

Cooperating for social innovation

[Georg von Schnurbein] With the following example, I want to come back to the key dimensions of origin, organization, and outcome. In fact, a collaborative and inter-sectoral approach made this project a huge success – socially and economically.

This is the so-called Gundeldingerfeld in Basel. It was once a machine factory situated in the midst of a residential neighborhood. The company decided in the late 1990s to vacate the facility. In 2000, the Kantensprung Limited Company took over the responsibility to develop the estate into a community center. But 12,000 square meters are a lot of space for a community center. So new ideas we needed.

Pascal, how did you start with this initiative?

[Pascal Biedermann] That was an interesting story. We had an industrial – it was an industrial site a few years ago, and they wanted to sell it, and the pressure of course, was really high. Everybody wanted to build apartments. But they didn't give it to the people who gave more money. They gave it to us, because we had a different idea. We said, we're going to leave it as it is, and we're going to bring new life into it. And this part of the town is very dense. And we said what we need here is free space for the 20,000 people who live in this little Gundeldingen. And so with this idea, we had the chance to find investors. They bought this whole site, and then we brought new life in it in this place with this idea. We were five people with one strong idea, and that's the way we started it.

[Georg von Schnurbein] The vision behind the project was to create a free field for urban development and creative experiments. For example, the so-called 2000-watt-society.

Kantensprung managed to allocate over 60 different partners from business, civil society, and art institutions. It was this mix of partners from different sectors that created a spirit of innovation and creativity, which also attracted a lot of people from the neighborhood. Today, the former dirty machine factory is an oasis in the city.

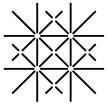
What can we learn from this project in terms of the three key dimensions of origin, organization, and outcome? First of all, the community around was involved from the start in order to capture their needs and expectations. At the same time, their resentments against a risky and unsecure project were captured. The development process was put under the theme 'give the place a new address' which opened up a space for many new ideas.

Second, the organization of a network that was very inclusive: companies teamed up with nonprofit organizations, restaurants, theaters, and handcraft to develop a joint vision.

Finally, the major outcome were processes of integration and social exchange, participation and social learning. But at the same time, the project proved to be a sustainable, ecologically, socially, and economically solid solution for urban development.

How does life work with so many different partners in such a small area?

[Pascal Biedermann] I think that's the key point for us, the diversity of different people. So we have restaurants, we have theaters, we have sports. Almost everything, almost everything. And that's why



people love to come to this place, and that's why our tenants want to stay here. Because they meet so many different people. And we had this from the beginning – the idea, actually, was to bring different aspects from every part of life to this place, and we have achieved that. And that makes it – made it and still makes it very successful.

[Georg von Schnurbein] The initiators of the Gundeldingerfeld used the new knowledge to transfer it into other projects. In the meantime, and with the same approach, they have transformed a market hall, a department store, and currently, a country inn. The diversity of the objects shows how flexible this approach is.