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**Open social innovation and the ambiguous role of inclusivity:
A case study of a regional inter-sectoral collaboration¹**

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¹ This is a preliminary title, and the data analysis is ongoing.

Introduction

Currently, humanity faces numerous, mutually reinforcing challenges: climate crisis, biodiversity loss, care crisis, racism, sexism, unequal educational and participation opportunities – to name just a few. Social innovations, i.e. the development of new services, products, practices or structures, aim to contribute to solving these social problems (Nicholls et al., 2015). However, dealing with social problems is a complex, ‘wicked’ issue (Ferraro et al., 2015) as they cannot be tackled in isolation from the social systems in which they are already embedded (Mair and Seelos, 2021). Innovative and at the same time ‘usable’ solutions must therefore simultaneously acknowledge the logics of different societal sectors and require the *concerted* efforts of multiple actors (Mair and Seelos, 2021; Pache et al., 2022; Tracey and Stott, 2017). Additionally, empirical studies (e.g., Dobusch et al., 2019; Kornberger et al., 2017; Tkacz, 2012, 2015) have shown that ‘opening up’ of certain processes can create an impression of openness (Heimstädt, 2017) but does not necessarily imply a certain level of inclusivity. By inclusivity we mean that not only the social innovations itself should be beneficial for historically disadvantaged and particularly marginalized groups but also that these groups are involved in developing them in the first place (Shore et al. 2018; van Eck et al., 2024).

Against this background, this paper investigates the case of an open social innovation (OSI) initiative (AdvanceSocial) orchestrated by two actors from different sectors: one being a research unit of a university interested in questions of societal transformation, one being a social welfare organization interested in innovative solutions for social problems as well as the inclusivity of the OSI process itself. The basic goal of AdvanceSocial was to collect ideas for social innovations via an open call and to accompany the generated ideas with the greatest potential through the phase of development and – ideally – prototyping/implementation. To this end, a broad spectrum of

stakeholders was brought together in the context of a 48h-ideas-workshop so that they could work together on innovative solutions to social challenges outside of the constraints of everyday hustling.

The studied case is particularly suited to investigate the relationship between openness and inclusivity in the context of open social innovation processes. This is because the case represents a rather atypical constellation of OSI orchestrators in which the issues of inclusion (and exclusion) and their consequences for the process' inclusivity were the subject of explicit considerations and negotiations.

From inter-organizational to cross-sectoral collaborations

Inter-organizational collaborations have been studied in management and organization studies (MOS) in different empirical contexts and from different theoretical perspectives: For example, research has focused on the specific dynamics of inter-organizational collaborations to explain why some collaborations with similar characteristics thrive and others underperform (Majchrzak et al., 2015). Another field of research has examined how collaboration can help to pool resources and produce solutions to social problems (Sydow and Windeler, 2020; Hardy et al., 2003). Research in the field of learning and innovation (e.g., Anand and Khanna, 2000; Kale et al., 2002) has emphasized that collaboration fosters both the creation of new knowledge, and the transfer of existing knowledge (e.g., Gulati, 1999; Powell et al., 1996). Furthermore, studies have also shed light on the political aspects of collaboration (e.g., Hardy et al., 2003; Hardy und Phillips, 1998). Especially, in the not-for-profit-sector the focus was on how inter-organizational collaboration can sustain or increase influence over other organizations or enable combinations of resources that allow organizations to do things they could not have done alone.

While all the above topics are also relevant for collaborations in the field of OSI, collaborative endeavors aiming at addressing complex social problems also face particular/additional challenges (Pache et al., 2022). As Gegenhuber and Mair (2023) argue, tackling major social problems needs to follow a multi-stakeholder and cross-sectoral approach and thus leaves the organization-centric focus of earlier studies behind. In fact, scholars (Porter et al., 2020; Mair et al., 2023) point out that for stimulating and coordinating multi-stakeholder collaborations across sectors the specific role of the *orchestrator* needs to be assumed. An orchestrator can be a single organization, an alliance or multiple organizations – either way its core task is to “*organize openness*” (Gegenhuber and Mair, 2023; emphasis by authors). In most cases this means formulating and disseminating an ‘open’ call to action and its translations among the various stakeholders. Furthermore, the orchestrator does not only enable the initial collaboration among stakeholders but manages the entire OSI journey: from the idea generation to providing the environment for prototyping and the support for finding implementation/impact pathways (ibid.).

Hence, the composition and characteristics of the orchestrator cannot be overestimated for the success of OSI initiatives (see also Pache et al., 2022). We argue that the orchestrator has a great – and often-time unrecognized – influence on *which kind of* openness is pursued. However, depending on the explicit or implicit openness approach (Dobusch and Dobusch, 2022), OSI processes can differ strongly in terms of the (diversity of) attracted stakeholders, the modes of participation and thus the usability of generated solutions as well as their social relevance (see also Dobusch et al., 2019).

The relationship between openness and inclusivity

Critical literature (e.g., Dobusch and Dobusch, 2019, 2022; King, 2006; Kornberger et al., 2017; Tkacz, 2012, 2015) on openness points out that organizing through and for openness in a self-evident manner (e.g., assuming that ‘anyone can edit’ as in the case of Wikipedia without acknowledging the uneven playing field of potential contributors) can actually enhance inequalities already in place or develop non-intended exclusionary effects (e.g., despite/because of its openness approach the vast majority of Wikipedia’s contributors identifies as male or is situated in the Global North). While literature on open innovation (Acar, 2019) recognizes that any ‘open’ call must correspond with the interests and needs of potential participants, the main assumption is that taking part in OSI processes is an act of voluntary self-selection (Gegenhuber and Mair, 2023). However, this underestimates the extent of unequal distribution of socio-cultural, symbolic and time-related (digital) resources among potential contributors (e.g., Cheng et al., 2019; Lythreitis et al., 2022). This is shown in empirical studies (e.g., Mair et al., 2022) on OSI initiatives where, for instance, participants from metropolitan areas tend to dominate even online hackathons.

Hence, ‘simply’ opening up certain elements of social innovation processes can create an impression of openness (Heimstädt, 2017) but not necessarily implies a certain level of inclusivity. By inclusivity we mean that historically disadvantaged and particularly marginalized groups are not only proactively encouraged to contribute and account for a substantial proportion of the participants but also that practices are in place that make participants feel respected, safe and recognized in their different needs (Shore et al., 2018; van Eck et al., 2024). Put differently, for OSI processes to attract the broadest possible spectrum of participants as well as ideas, they must enact a “cross-sectoral participation architecture” (Gegenhuber and Mair, 2023) that can be understood as inclusive (Dobusch, 2021). However, empirical studies of OSI initiatives have not

yet systematically engaged with the relationship between the openness of these processes and their inclusivity (Pache et al., 2022). Hence, we ask the research questions: *How can OSI processes be organized in an inclusive manner and what consequences does this have for the claimed openness of these processes?*

To answer this question, we turn to the case of an OSI initiative orchestrated by two actors from different sectors, one being a social welfare organization and explicitly interested in the inclusivity of the OSI process. Therefore, this case is particularly suited to answer our research question as in this rather atypical constellation of organizers issues of inclusion (and exclusion) and their consequences for the process' inclusivity were the subject of explicit considerations and negotiations.

The case and methods

This paper is based on a 14-month-long (September 2022 to October 2023) ethnographic study of *AdvanceSocial*, an open social innovation initiative launched, coordinated and organized through a collaborative learning and implementation partnership between a team of researchers (UNI) – all located at the same university with backgrounds in MOS and other social sciences – and members of a non-profitable, social welfare organization (SWO).

Research Setting

In fall 2022, the teams of UNI and SWO – the orchestrators – started *AdvanceSocial*, an OSI initiative which was financially funded by a non-university research institute interested in supporting projects related to open innovation in science. The basic goal of *AdvanceSocial* was to

collect ideas for social innovations via an open call and to accompany the generated ideas with the greatest potential through the phase of development and – ideally – prototyping/implementation (see Figure 1 for an overview of the project). To this end, a broad spectrum of stakeholders such as members of public administrations, companies, social organizations, students, civil society as well as researchers were brought together in the context of a 48h-ideas-workshop so that they could work together on innovative solutions to social challenges outside of constraints of everyday hustling. Altogether, about 200 participants and 30 experts – with a 60 percent share of women in each group – came together and developed 39 ideas for 26 predefined social problems. A particular concern of AdvanceSocial was to involve those groups from the outset who represent the potential target groups of the generated innovations (e.g. care workers, disabled people, people with care needs).

This concern was meant to be considered through the creation of a learning and implementation partnership between UNI and SWO who brought in different expertise, skills and networks – all necessary for a potentially inclusive OSI process. The UNI team played a dual role in this partnership as is common for action research and design processes: On the one hand, certain UNI team members – under the guidance of the third author – proactively contributed to the conception and implementation of the OSI initiative. On the other hand, two other UNI team members – the first and second author – took on the exclusive role of the scientific observer to investigate the collaborative conception and design of the process. This implied collecting data throughout the entire process, which we will describe in detail in the next section. By taking on this dual role, the UNI team was able to contribute its scientific expertise related to topics such as open organizing and inclusion/exclusion and could at the same time sharpen and expand its own understanding of the specific dynamics and peculiarities of OSI processes.

The SWO team was part of a welfare organization that has about 1,700 employees and is divided into four sub-divisions focusing on the issues of work assistance, refugee and migrant support, health and social services as well as support of disabled people. In its 35-year history, SWO has always seen itself as a driving force for social change and as a pioneer in the development of innovative social services. SWO is also part of a broad network of other welfare and non-profit organizations, NGOs and political actors. By becoming a part of the orchestrating alliance with the UNI team, SWO contributed its expertise related to social issues and its deep knowledge of the regional ‘social scene’ while at the same time gaining experiences with OSI processes.

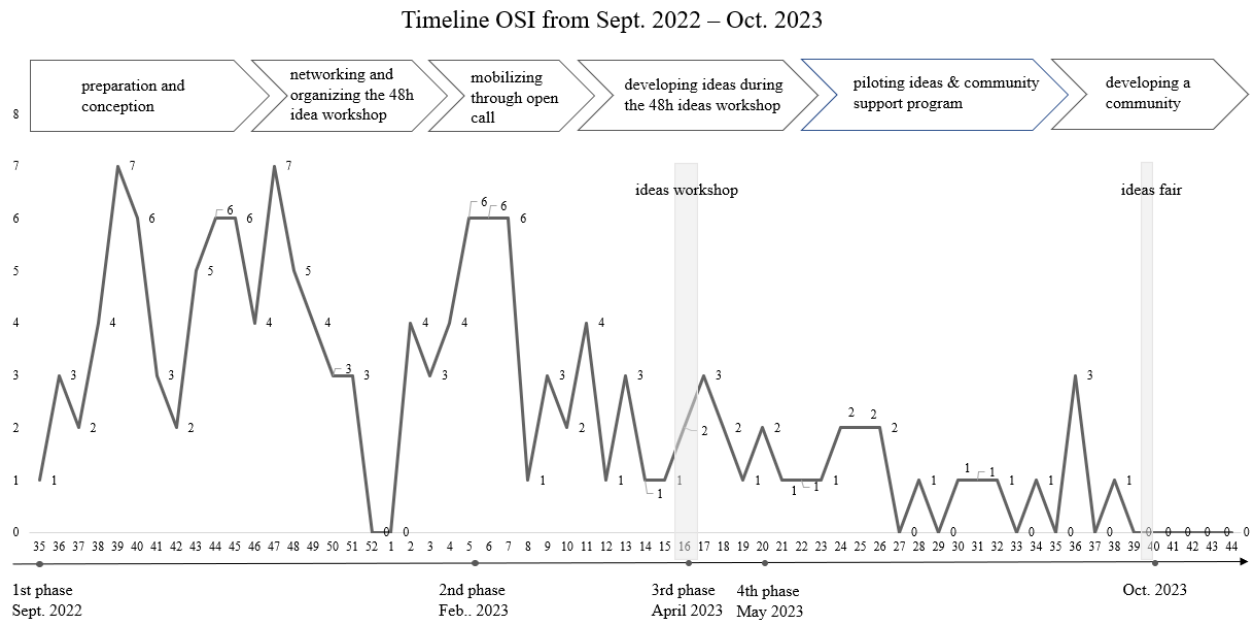


Figure 1: Timeline of OSI initiative and number of all meetings of the orchestrators (in various constellations).

Data Collection

The first two authors have collected data throughout the whole OSI initiative. They participated in and made fieldnotes as well as audio recordings of meetings of the orchestrators, they conducted

semi-structured interviews with key members of both teams at several points in the process, they actively participated in the 48h-ideas-workshop and follow-up meetings during the implementation phase, and they conducted two quantitative surveys among the participants of the OSI initiative (after the 48h-ideas-workshop and the ideas fair). At the beginning of the collaboration, one of the authors visited the SWO headquarter for several weeks to get to know the organization and observed the ‘micro-organizing’ meetings between members of the two teams which took place at SWO. Also in this case, the author made detailed fieldnotes.

Additionally, SWO and UNI team members as well as student participants were asked to write personal reflections (about 2 pages) on taking part in the 48h-ideas-workshop guided by predefined questions to stimulate reflection. Furthermore, those student participants who stayed on board throughout the whole implementation program following the 48h-ideas workshop were asked to submit a second reflection after the OSI initiative had ended.

Finally, we also collected the messages posted to the official communication channel (e.g., Discord) of the initiative and relevant documents such as protocols of meetings, website presence etc. (for an overview see Table 1).

Data Source	Type of Data
19 semi-structured interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews took place at different points in time of the OSI initiative: during the preparation phase, shortly before the 48h-ideasworkshop, and after the ideas fair. • Interviewees: 6 members of the orchestrators (SWO & UNI teams), UNI/SWO team; 1 SWO internal member responsible for marketing; 5 teams who participated in the OSI initiative; one expert of the social sector who took part in the OSI initiative.
1 focus group interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The final reflection of the process was conducted as a focus group interview with 6 members of the orchestrators (SWO & UNI teams).
367 hours of observations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 409 pages of fieldnotes of meetings between the orchestrators, as well as between sub-groups of SWO & UNI team members, the 48h-ideas-workshop, the ideas and other relevant meetings during the whole OSI initiative (e.g., stakeholder networking meetings).

49 written reflections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflections written by UNI/SWO members as well as students who participated in the 48h-ideas-workshop; additional reflections by students after the ideas fair at the end of the initiative.
2 quantitative surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first survey was conducted among the participants after the 48h-ideas-workshop; the second survey took place at the end of the OSI initiative after the ideas fair.
2774 online messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital trace data of the communication channel of orchestrators and the participations of AdvanceSocial.
101 public social media entries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Posts on social media platforms to promote the OSI initiative and disseminate information.
156 documents (e.g., agendas, protocols)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal documents produced by the orchestrators.

Table 1: Data source and data types collected in course of the OSI initiative.

Data Analysis

We are currently still in the process of data analysis and have focused on the semi-structured interviews with the orchestrators in this version of the paper. We applied a team-based approach to inductively analyzing our data. We used open coding (Strauss and Corbin, 1990) to identify anything that the interview partners described as related to their openness understanding as well as to certain organizing practices that were directly or indirectly addressing the needs and interests of historically disadvantaged and particularly marginalized groups. Building on these open codes, we compared and clustered them, thereby reconstructing two key categories characteristic for the openness understanding of the OSI orchestrators and three categories of practices that we label as ‘inclusive’ that were mentioned by the interviewees as relevant to and supporting historically disadvantaged and particularly marginalized groups. In the next section we describe these categories in detail.

Preliminary findings

Openness as thoroughly positive and shown in a diverse composition of participants

Being aware of the fact that there is no generalizable openness per se (Dobusch & Dobusch, 2022) implying that actors and communities more or less consciously develop their own openness approach, we explicitly asked the SWO and UNI team members at the early stages of AdvanceSocial what openness means to them. Two aspects of their openness understanding stood out in the sense of a shared view among the team members: on the one hand they approached openness as something exclusively positive; on the other hand, they described openness as manifesting in a specific composition of the participants of the OSI initiative.

Regarding the first aspect, openness was associated if not equated with innovation which is perceived as a thoroughly positive thing: *“By openness I really mean an open mind (...) gaining new insights and impressions and I feel innovation is always good and progress, development, new perspectives, it does not automatically have to be something technical, it can simply be something that does good.”* (interview, SWO member) However, this ‘positive baseline’ associated with openness is at the same time necessarily ‘empty’ because of its orientation towards the future, towards something that has not yet come. This is shown in the statement by a UNI team member on how he perceived the launching of AdvanceSocial: *“At the beginning you don’t really have anything, in our case fortunately money [from the research funding], with which you can do something. And otherwise, it’s really asking from the ground up: ‘What do we want to do? Who do we need for doing it?’ Building a whole structure from scratch.”* (interview, UNI member)

Maybe because it is a key characteristic of processes labeled as ‘open’ that their specific outcomes cannot – and should not? – be preempted in advance, the SWO and UNI team members focused in their openness approach on how the specific composition of the participants taking part in

AdvanceSocial should look like. What everyone agreed on was that the participants should exceed already known circles of acquaintances and networks: *“I do believe that we are signaling that everyone is welcome and that everyone can make a contribution. And that it is also our wish that as many people as possible take part so that it is as diverse as possible.”* (interview) Similarly, another UNI team member emphasized that openness means to *“to gather more people than the usual suspects and that the purest form to do this is usually through an open call. You say in public ‘Hey can you help me solve a problem?’ For example, I call for participation via social media or other online formats so that I can reach a lot of people.”* (interview, UNI member)

In a nutshell, the orchestrators approached openness as a precondition for the creation of (social) innovation, concretely manifesting in the broadest and most diverse range of participants possible. At the same time, the interview partners questioned the self-evident assumption that an open call would represent an adequate instrument to reach all potential participants, especially historically disadvantaged and particularly marginalized groups. This became manifest in a quote by a SWO team member who pointed to the potential limits of an open call: *“[S]ocial media is the only way to get out there. But not everyone is on social media. So not everyone is aware of it. So, I’ve often discussed this (...) what’s the balance between ‘Yes, we’re an open process’ and, ‘Yes, we can’t leave everything to chance’?”* (interview, SWO member)

Practices of inclusive organizing as necessary to support and restrict openness

In order not to leave ‘everything to chance’, the orchestrators kept discussing and engaging in practices of – what we label as – ‘inclusive organizing’ while the OSI initiative was unfolding. Three practices of inclusive organizing stood out in particular: (1) defining specific target groups,

(2) mobilizing historically disadvantaged and particularly marginalized participants, (3) designing the 48h-ideas-workshop according to a variety of needs.

Defining specific target groups. The practice of defining specific target groups was crucial in the preparation phase of AdvanceSocial as well as the phase of concrete mobilizing activities. This is because explicitly specifying who are the desired participants of the OSI initiative has consequences for the whole framing of the initiative (what is it for?), the choice of communication channels as well as it potentially affects the specific modes of participation implemented for generating innovative ideas. In this regard the orchestrators were more or less consciously oscillating between claiming to strive for general accessibility ('everyone can take part') thereby actively avoiding determining certain target groups on the one hand and identifying relevant stakeholders who were historically disadvantaged and particularly marginalized on the other hand.

The striving for general accessibility manifested in statements such as that everybody irrespective of their age is welcome to participate in AdvanceSocial: *"So legally speaking, anyone who is able to understand the principles of our project can get involved. This means either to write an email or take a look at the homepage. And if you're really interested and want to find out more, (...) you can also take part in this weekend [the 48h-ideas-workshop]."* (interview, SWO member) At the same time, the orchestrators emphasized the need to formulate specific target groups to design the OSI initiative in an *"inclusive"* manner (interview, UNI member). Most of the time the mentioned target groups were resembling the clients already served by SWO such as people with disabilities, socioeconomically disadvantaged people, people with caring responsibilities, migrants or refugees. A member of the SWO team emphasized that it was crucial to explicitly include those groups in the OSI initiative while also mentioning doubts whether they would have the resources

to do so in the first place: *“I think it would be important that such groups to really be involved (...). Because they often can't have a say, especially people at risk of poverty, and of course the question is how realistic it is that they have time for something like this, so yes, but I think that would be important.”* (interview SWO, member)

As we will see in the subsequent section on the *practices of mobilizing historically disadvantaged and particularly marginalized participants*, because of this overlap between the original clientele of the SWO and the specified target groups of the OSI initiative, the orchestrators – in particular the SWO members – were quite confident in how to reach those groups. However, despite or because of this resemblance the orchestrators never explicitly decided that these were the official target groups of AdvanceSocial as a UNI member explains: *“I think that at the end of the day, it was never really said what the target group was or wasn't, because we didn't want to decide who is included and who is not. And I think that's interesting, this conscious non-decision (...) yes, we know we want to have people with disabilities, and we can do that. Yes, we know we want women. We don't just want 30 percent as typical for hackathons, but we want 50 percent, I know that. And I think everyone agrees on that anyway.”* (interview, UNI member)

Mobilizing historically disadvantaged and particularly marginalized participants. While the focus on certain historically disadvantaged and particularly marginalized groups was never fully official policy it had a huge impact on which framing the orchestrators developed to make sense of AdvanceSocial for potential participants. The most important building block was that they came up with a different name and format for the time compressed ideas sprint – the centerpiece of many OSI processes – which is commonly organized like a ‘hackathon’. A hackathon is a relatively short period of time such as 24 or 48 hours where people collaboratively work on developing a

project/addressing a challenge for which there is no time, energy, and attention in day-to-day business. Originally invented in the programming community such hackathons are first and foremost organized as online events.

Such an exclusive online format was problematized by the SWO members from early on, stating that the employees, volunteers, and clients of social welfare organizations can neither be assumed to be ‘digital natives’ nor that they would be familiar with the term ‘hackathon’. Consequently, in a first step the orchestrators came up with a different name for the ideas sprint and called it a ‘48h-ideas-workshop’ or simply ‘ideas workshop’: *“Now we have as a framing ‘ideas workshop’. And I think with the help of [SWO] it became quite tangible and very very understandable.”* (interview, UNI member) In a second step, the orchestrators decided to organize the ideas workshop in form of a hybrid event, meaning to enable (exclusive) online participation but at the same time put priority on offline participation on site: *“Well, my original impression was actually that it [would] only happen online. Because hackathons are essentially an online tool where people around the world often work on a project, to put it very simply, yes. But for the community and for a better understanding of [AdvanceSocial], I think it's very important that the [first day] of the [ideas workshop], for example, is perceived as a very strong analog event, so that people can find each other there and a certain community can form.”* (interview, SWO member)

By reframing the ideas sprint as ‘ideas workshop’ and deemphasizing its dependence on online competences, the orchestrators aimed at positioning the OSI initiative as an intelligible form of engagement for disadvantaged and particularly marginalized groups as well as for social welfare actors and other stakeholders more anchored in the offline world. In addition, the orchestrators engaged in target group-specific mobilization practices in which the accessibility of the initiative’s website occupied a prominent role. For instance, with the help of a regional government body they

were able to make the website available in *Leichter Sprache* (easy-to-read language) so that people who experience difficulties with the German language or with reading more generally can understand the website's content more easily. Also, the web design was aligned with the needs of people with visual impairments: *"The expectations are that we make [Advance Social] as inclusive as possible, so that nobody feels excluded just because (...) they couldn't read the information in advance. Or that they couldn't get the information because it wasn't visible in high contrast, or they couldn't click through the website. That's kind of the claim, that the barriers to being informed and participating are actually gone."* (interview, SWO member)

In sum, the practices of mobilizing historically disadvantaged and particularly marginalized participants further manifest ambivalence regarding the relationship between openness and inclusivity. While the practice of making the website as accessible as possible for people with varying skills and needs does not necessarily affect the initiative's openness claim, however, the positioning of its sprint as a 'non-hackathon' might do so. This is shown in a statement by a UNI member who reflects on the advantages and disadvantages of the chosen framing: *"We have consciously decided not to use the term hackathon but ideas workshop because we wanted to adopt a broader approach. But now you have the other problem, that the term must be explained to everyone. (...) I think this simply underlines (...) you're not going to please everyone anyway. And the question is, and we'll see how many participants actually turn up, whether choosing a specific brand as the framing, because you believe it is more inclusive, ultimately leads to no one feeling addressed anymore."* (interview, UNI member) Similarly, a SWO member raises the question whether the group of tech people is sufficiently mobilized by the orchestrators: *"I'm just missing the tech start-up sector a bit now (...) I believe that there could be more interest from this scene."*

(interview, SWO member) Hence, we see that mobilizing efforts towards certain groups might unfold – albeit not intended – exclusionary effects towards others.

Designing the ideas workshop according to a variety of needs. When developing the format of the ideas workshop and its concrete modes of participation, the most consequential decision was to host it as a hybrid event. Thereby, the orchestrators aimed at managing the balancing act to enable participation for people who were bound to a certain location and thus dependent on online participation as well as to encourage ‘technology-distant’ groups of people to take part in the OSI initiative. However, organizing the ideas workshop as a hybrid event did not necessarily mean that the whole thing can be meaningfully understood as inclusive. In contrast, the hybridization made the orchestrators face new – if not additional – challenges: *“Exclusive online hackathons really have a lot of advantages (...) because you want people to take part from all parts of the region. (...) In terms of organizing [the hybridity] is of course an extra effort, where you must see what will work well for us and what won't, because we have limited resources.”* (interview, UNI team)

For instance, to ensure that the event location was accessible without barriers, the orchestrators had to carefully arrange the space allocation and acoustics. For this they sought advice from a wheelchair user and asked her to make an onsite inspection of the venue: *“And of course, if you want to include marginalized groups, then you must get a bit creative and see how exactly you can do that. Well, you also must talk to people who know their way around and organize it.”* (interview, SWO team) Another idea that was eventually not used was to arrange for sign language interpreters if needed. Next to issues of impairments and forms of disablement possibly negatively affecting potential participants, the orchestrators also paid attention to religious differences that could

impact one's participation. For instance, the orchestrators were trying to take religious holidays and diets into account when setting the date of the ideas workshop and planning its catering.

Apart from trying to cater to the different needs of historically disadvantaged and particularly marginalized groups, hosting the ideas workshop as a hybrid event immediately created two additional groups that also needed to be acknowledged in their varying needs: the online and offline participants. However, a potential divide between these two groups was not fully anticipated by the orchestrators: *“One question I always asked myself was how we could perhaps have created a better connection between the offline and online spheres at the ideas workshop. Because I had the feeling that they were two different tracks, so to speak. And actually, the aim would have been for the teams to be able to form hybrid teams. And I don't think we were very well prepared for that.”* (focus group interview, UNI team)

One reason for this unpreparedness could have been that the available resources were already tied up elsewhere and thus there was neither time nor energy or attention for proactively connecting the online and offline members. Already before the ideas workshop, the orchestrators were reflecting on how much more resources are needed for a hybrid event: *“You realize the closer the event gets the amount of resources you need, but if you really want to do justice to diversity you need to double the resources.”* (UNI team)

Discussion & Outlook

When looking at our research question on how OSI processes can be organized in an inclusive manner and what consequences this might have for their claimed openness, our preliminary results

hint towards a complicated relationship that needs more systematic unpacking than we were able to show in our preliminary analysis.

For instance, when looking at the inclusive practice of translating the website into easy-to-read language this did not alter or restrict the ‘openness’ of the call but rather supplemented – enhanced – it. However, improving the accessibility for disabled people or people less familiar with the topic of OSI more generally, was dependent on the support by a regional government body that took on the task of translation without charging for it. Already this example shows that ‘opening up’ – sending out an ‘open’ call – is confined in its outreach potential depending on the profile of the orchestrator(s) and the sector(s) they are a part of. Trying to reach potentially disadvantaged or particularly marginalized groups was in most of the cases dependent on spending additional resources for purchasing (outside) expert knowledge and translation skills. Similarly, organizing the ideas sprint as a hybrid event is most of the time depending on the provision of (enormous) additional resources.

What is striking in this regard are two things: First, that trying to organize OSI initiatives in a somewhat inclusive manner is depending on so many additional resources. Second that the orchestrators – one of them being firmly anchored in the social sector and aware of the needs and interests of historically disadvantaged and particularly marginalized groups from the start – did not anticipate the number of additional resources necessary. What makes things even more difficult is that the ‘inclusivity pathway’ of an OSI initiative is primarily set in the conceptualizing and preparing phase. It can be slightly altered in the mobilizing phase but will more or less have developed its particular inclusion-exclusion configuration by then. This hinders orchestrators in effectively engaging in inclusive practices at later points of the process. At the same time orchestrators are hesitant in the beginning of an initiative to define specific target groups which

could help them to better allocate resources from the start as they perceive such an approach as contradicting openness agenda of ‘everyone can take part’.

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