

Rethinking Impact of Industry-Society Cooperation: Framework of circular knowledge economies

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How can Universities of Applied Sciences move beyond counting projects, outputs, and short-term results, and show impact that truly matters to industry and society? This interactive breakout session invites participants to rethink impact as an ongoing cycle of knowledge creation, application, reflection, and renewal.

The session introduces a circular knowledge economy framework for understanding how applied research, education, industry partnerships, and community engagement can reinforce one another over time. Rather than viewing knowledge as something transferred once from university to business or society, the framework shows how knowledge can circulate through partnerships, generate economic and societal value, and return to institutions as new learning, research questions, curricula, and innovation opportunities.

Participants will work with the framework in relation to their own institutional contexts. They will identify where knowledge and value already circulate, where cooperation is interrupted, and how partnerships can be designed to create more durable, meaningful impact.

The session is designed for participants involved in applied research, industry collaboration, institutional strategy, innovation ecosystems, curriculum development, or regional engagement. Participants will leave with a clearer language for explaining impact, a practical lens for reviewing current cooperation models, and concrete ideas for strengthening industry-society collaboration in their own institutions.