

THESIS FOR THE DEGREE OF LICENTIATE OF PHILOSOPHY

“He just doesn’t catch it in his heart.”

Untangling goals and values in inter-organisational collaboration

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CHALMERS UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

Gothenburg, Sweden 2017

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Collaboration is a well-used term in all kinds of settings. The term often encapsulates beliefs around how collective action yields improved results compared to individual action. Such improved results from inter-organisational collaboration now appear utterly taken for granted. Has working with people from other organisations become a value to pursue in and of itself? Abstract overall goals for joint work bolster the make-believe around how people from different organisations easily agree a set of joint goals. In practice there is a web of goals: people bring their own personal goals, as well as the goals that they conceptualise as belonging to their home organisations and to the organisation-of-organisations. I draw on participant observation in two settings of inter-organisational collaboration. My interpretation of practices in the two settings makes clearer how values underpin everyday encounters. I explore how talk of goals in each setting hints at values that people associate with participation in joint work. I suggest that participants in settings of inter-organisational collaboration build in moments to explore and recognise the values that underpin goals. This helps counter idealisation of what it means to work together with colleagues from other organisations. Without such exploratory moments, people risk speaking past each other rather than truly making the difference they hoped their joint work would bring about.

Keywords: inter-organisational collaboration; goals paradox; participant observation; values practices; collaborative practices

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APPENDED PAPERS

As supplementary material to my discussion in the text, I include an already-published article and a reworked conference paper.

Paper 1: Webb, J. 2017. Keeping alive inter-organisational innovation through identity work and play. *International Journal of Innovation Management* 22(5).

I presented an earlier version of the paper at *The ISPIM Innovation Forum*, Toronto, Canada on 19-22 March 2017 where I won the Alex Gofman Best Student Paper Award. I was then invited to submit the paper to the editor of *IJIM*. Shortly after the article appeared in print, I presented it at the 33rd *EGOS Colloquium*, Copenhagen, Denmark on 6-8 July 2017 as part of the sub-theme *The Entanglement of Individual and Collective Identification*.

Paper 2: Webb, J. 2017. Selling the benefits of an innovation platform through practices of impression management.

I presented an earlier version of this paper at the 3rd *Annual World Open Innovation Conference*, Barcelona, Spain on 15-16 December 2016. I intend to further rework this paper for submission to either *Journal of Organizational Ethnography* or *Human Organization*.

| | |
|---|-----------|
| INTRODUCTION: GOALS, VALUES & COLLABORATION | I |
| BACKGROUND | I |
| SOME DEFINITIONS: GOALS & VALUES..... | 2 |
| AIMS & RESEARCH QUESTION..... | 4 |
| OVERVIEW | 4 |
| THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON GOALS & VALUES IN INTER-ORGANISATIONAL WORK | 5 |
| A VALUES-BASED PERSPECTIVE | 5 |
| A DYNAMIC TANGLED WEB PERSPECTIVE ON GOALS | 6 |
| ENTWINING THE TWO PERSPECTIVES TO EXPLORE EVERYDAY COLLABORATIVE PRACTICES | 8 |
| REFLECTIONS ON METHODOLOGY | 9 |
| RESEARCH DESIGN: PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION OF INTER-ORGANISATIONAL COLLABORATION | 9 |
| FIELDWORK: YO-YOING WITH SUSTAINACITY, FULL-TIME WITH THE SUMMER PLATFORM | 10 |
| REFLECTIONS ON THE BACK AND FORTH BETWEEN TWO FIELDS, THE DESK & ACADEMIC CONFERENCES | 11 |
| SUSTAINACITY: A COOPERATIVE VENTURE BETWEEN INDUSTRY, RESEARCH & SOCIETY ... | 13 |
| SUMMARIES OF SUSTAINACITY & PAPER 1 | 13 |
| VALUES AROUND GOALS-IN-THE-MAKING FOR SUSTAINACITY 2.0: IN THE NAME OF BEING OPEN? | 14 |
| “IT’S HARD TO DISAGREE WITH – IT’S BASICALLY TALKING ABOUT PEACE ON EARTH.” | 17 |
| THE SUMMER PLATFORM: A SPACE BETWEEN INDUSTRY, SOCIETY & ACADEMIA | 19 |
| SUMMARIES OF THE SUMMER PLATFORM & PAPER 2..... | 19 |
| VALUES & GOALS AROUND THE SUMMER PLATFORM: IN THE NAME OF LEARNING FROM ONE ANOTHER? | 20 |
| “HE JUST DOESN’T CATCH IT IN HIS HEART.” | 22 |
| CONCLUDING REMARKS: VALUES PRACTICES OF COLLABORATION | 25 |
| ATTRACTING PEOPLE WITH DIVERGENT INTERESTS THROUGH OVERARCHING GOALS/VALUES | 25 |
| MAKING SENSE OF A WEB OF GOALS AS A PART OF COLLABORATIVE PRACTICES..... | 26 |
| VALUES PRACTICES IN EVERYDAY INTERACTION FOR INTER-ORGANISATIONAL COLLABORATION | 26 |
| THEORETICAL & PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS | 27 |
| FURTHER RESEARCH..... | 28 |
| APPENDICES | 29 |
| FIELD REPORT FROM SUMMER 2016 IN EAST LAKE | 29 |
| PERSONAL GOALS & VALUES AS A RESEARCHER..... | 32 |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY | 33 |

INTRODUCTION: GOALS, VALUES & COLLABORATION

Collaboration is a well-used term in all kinds of settings. The term often encapsulates beliefs around how collective action yields improved results compared to individual action. Such improved results from collaboration now appear utterly taken for granted.¹ But what does the variety of goals that people bring with them into joint work mean for organising and managing collaborative activities?² What happens if each person wants something for herself, something for the organisation she works for and to bring about change for the benefit of others?

Talking to Nicholas, one of the people I met during fieldwork, he expressed his frustration that some people did not seem to understand what collaborating was all about in the inter-organisational initiative that he had set up. There was one person who he felt did not “catch it in his heart”. He did not “get it”. Nicholas felt that this man did not understand deep down. He had not taken the ethos of working together to heart. There seemed to be confusion about how creating economic value meshed with activities undertaken in the name of wider values.

Some researchers seem convinced of the need for participants in inter-organisational collaboration to discuss goals and values with one another (Breuer and Lüdeke-Freund, 2017a, Vangen and Huxham, 2011). They encourage researchers to look at the dynamics related to goals and values that shape organising for inter-organisational collaboration. In the coming pages I take up this challenge by looking at the practices of people in two settings of inter-organisational collaboration. I explore what the *it* might be that people do or do not catch in their hearts about inter-organisational collaboration. I discuss the gap between visions of a future and getting on with work today. I write about the values that people are working towards and the goals that they devise and revise as they interact with one another.

BACKGROUND

Researchers who have studied settings of inter-organisational collaboration caution people considering engaging in such partnerships:

Don't do it unless you have to! Joint working with other organisations is inherently difficult and resource consuming...It's most efficient to do it on your own (Huxham and Vangen, 2005:37).

People sometimes take for granted what Susan Leigh Star (2010:604) terms a consensus model – imagining that people first reach consensus and that they then begin to work together. Instead any idea of consensus is fragile (*ibid*). People often want to believe that there are shared goals. As Peter Dachler and Dian-Marie Hosking (1995:6) argue, though, any sense of shared understandings “do not concern overlapping substantive content,[...but] refer to usually implicit agreements about a set of interrelated narratives that serve as an interpretive context”. This means that any similarity in goals in inter-organisational collaboration is “likely to be ephemeral rather than long lasting” (Vangen and Huxham, 2011:755).

Difficulties related to negotiating purposes and managing aims between people from different organisations are the crux of the challenges of organising for inter-organisational collaboration. Indeed, while people often consider divergent ideas as what makes joint work valuable, in practice making those ideas converge is necessary to get work done (Vangen and Huxham, 2011). People find themselves leveraging differences while balancing divergent

¹ Collaboration is hailed across all walks of life. For example, in September 2017, writing in *The Guardian* about the threat to science in the UK from changes to immigration legislation after Brexit, Jeremy Farrar invokes the necessity of collaboration: “Collaboration brings fresh ideas and new perspectives. Bringing people together from diverse backgrounds, often across borders, leads to new ways of thinking, better solutions and faster progress.” www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/sep/30/we-hail-individual-geniuses-success-in-science-collaboration-nobel-prize

² The people of the Oxford English Dictionary define *collaboration* as: United labour, co-operation; *esp* in literary, artistic or scientific work.

stakeholder concerns (Hardy et al., 2005). A goals paradox arises since both the congruence and the diversity of the goals of the partner organisations influence success in collaboration (Vangen and Huxham, 2011). The bases or purposes for collaboration may encompass access to resources, shared risk, efficiency, coordination, learning and a moral imperative (Huxham and Vangen, 2005:5-7). Managers encounter difficulties in coordinating inter-organisational activities when participants become unsettled by the variety of goals that surface in interaction. To coordinate collective action when organisational interests differ, managers can look for complementary goals and values (Gibb et al., 2017). They may be hampered in this though by what some consider as controls from home organisations around sharing and protecting knowledge (Jarvenpaa and Majchrzak, 2016). These controls have impacts on how people are able to interact with their counterparts from partner organisations (ibid). Tensions around such controls and the *goals paradox* shape the potential to achieve the *collaborative advantage* originally envisaged by the partner organisations (Vangen and Huxham, 2011). The partner organisations risk instead coming to a standstill in *collaborative inertia* (ibid). Managers often alternate between two leadership styles: a facilitative type connected to nurturing a *spirit of collaboration* through embracing, empowering, involving and mobilising participants and a type of *collaborative thuggery*, playing politics to influence the agenda (Huxham and Vangen, 2005:78-9). Acting in a spirit of collaboration and of collaborative thuggery are of course not limited to those with managerial roles and mandates. Another way of putting it is simply *cooperative talk* and *assertive talk*, both of which are part of effective collaboration (Hardy et al., 2005).

While it is important in any setting to consider what the people of partner organisations expect from others, Deborah Dougherty (2017) alerts us to the multiple objectives when people tackle societal challenges. Such complex innovation systems appear as an “ecology of organisations, agencies and agents...who grapple with a particular grand challenge even though they have diverse objectives”(ibid:12). Emphasising the effort of orchestrating collaboration among so many people, Dougherty calls for research on how people do manage to come together for societal challenges. Is it *despite of* the many objectives or *because of* the many objectives?

There is much more to the human element in organising inter-organisational collaboration than just the skills and competences of leaders (Salampasis and Mention, 2017). Researchers can also pay attention to values, norms and cultural elements (ibid). When selecting forms of organising, people engage in what Markus Perkmann and André Spicer (2014) term *organisational bricolage*. This is about how people draw on organisational values as a focusing device for shaping organisational forms (ibid). When people from different organisations work together, they draw on various bundles of organisational values in the organisational bricolage that shapes the form of organising. These organisational values are beliefs about the ultimate goals and how they should be achieved. It may be that values are what bring people together and keep them together to tackle societal challenges. It may also be that pursuing lofty *values* that drive complex forms of organising, may go hand-in-hand with the oft-prioritised economic *value*.

The question becomes how people navigate between the goals and values they associate with their home organisations and those that they associate with the organisation-of-organisations. Believing that open forms of organising may be a must for society in tackling societal challenges, some researchers call for a “participative revisiting of openness through a collective engagement of all stakeholders and the redefinition of common values”(Mention et al., 2016). This may mean moving beyond *collaboration capability* for a single organisation of leveraging both internal and external knowledge bases in uncertain and complex environments (Blomqvist and Levy, 2006). Instead partner organisations may be forced to think less transactionally and more relationally when interacting (ibid). It is this muddle of personal and organisational goals and values that makes settings of inter-organisational collaboration so intriguing to me.

SOME DEFINITIONS: GOALS & VALUES

Firstly, a word on language. I follow Vangen and Huxham (2011:734) in believing that “goals are conceived of by individuals but are also often conceptualised as if belonging to organisations”. The same goes for values. As this text is about inter-organisational collaboration,

many of the goals and values I discuss are ones associated with organisations, or with organisations-of-organisations. For me, organisations are enacted through people's practices of organising. Talk of organisational goals and values are a part of these practices of organising – as people interact, they talk about who they are, what they do and why they do it. Similarly, I understand collaborating as a set of practices. Where I use 'organisation' or 'collaboration', it is shorthand for people's practices of organising and collaborating. Beyond organisation and collaboration, the main terms I use are goals and values. This is how the people of the *Oxford English Dictionary* define goal and values:

Goal: An aim or outcome which a person, group or organization works towards or strives to achieve; the object of a person's ambition or effort; (Psychol.) an end or result to which a series of actions, choices, events etc., lead (whether consciously or unconsciously directed), the achievement of which brings reward or satisfaction.

Values: The principles or moral standards held by a person or group; the generally accepted or personally held judgment of what is valuable and important in life.

In a sociological sense, values are what is ultimately good, proper or desirable in human life (Graeber, 2001:1). Values underpin what we understand as ethics and morals in our daily actions, guiding us in standards of acceptable behaviour. Indeed "underpinning the façade of much human interaction is immense substance that is driven by values that are core to our being" (Chandler, 2014:397). Values may be defined as subjective notions of the desirable, or to put it more simply, as what is worth working towards or fighting for (Breuer and Lüdeke-Freund, 2017a). Values are an integral part of identifying with some people and of not identifying with others, as Fredrik Barth (1998 [1969]) writes about understandings of group boundaries.

My specific research interest is in what Gehman et al. (2013:84) term *values practices*: "the sayings and doings in organisations that articulate and accomplish what is normatively right or wrong, good or bad, for its own sake". These practices are ends in themselves, often connected to addressing concerns such as diversity and sustainability. Going beyond the dictionary definition of values as abstract principles, I too adopt a "performative understanding of values as situated in networks of practices" (ibid). Practices of organising and organisational forms are related to values practices, shaped by values-laden discourses through which people set out the ends to be pursued and the actions for carrying them out (ibid:97). This ongoing work seems particularly important for inter-organisational collaboration as the participants bring together values practices from different organisations. In inter-organisational collaboration, the power relations of who decides what ends to pursue and who translates these into actions has significance for whether the participants continue to work together. Collaboration may imply values practices related to sharing, transparency, freedom, integrity, fairness, citizenship, openness and many other values. It does not take much effort to imagine that such values practices may sometimes be in tension with commercial interests or that what one person considers fair is not necessarily what another person does. A variety of values practices are shaped over time in interaction for inter-organisational collaboration that connect to a variety of values. Since values practices articulate what is considered right or wrong, good or bad, it becomes apparent when what some people hold dear is at odds with what others hold dear. For example, particular practices related to enacting transparency and sharing may be important to the people of one organisation. Others may expect other values to characterise collaboration or they may limit transparency and sharing to that between the partner organisations.

As organisational values are about appropriate outcomes as well as appropriate means (Schwartz, 1992), there is something of an overlap with goals. Goals may include aspirations, visions, missions and purposes (Vangen and Huxham, 2011:733). In everyday life, it is not necessarily straightforward to distinguish between goals and values. Some may consider vision and mission statements as reflecting values (Breuer and Lüdeke-Freund, 2017a), others consider they reflect, or at least are closely-related to, goals (Vangen and Huxham, 2011). To some degree this is semantics but, again, when one finds oneself in a more uncertain setting with people from many organisations, understanding different perspectives on what is being pursued long-term

contrasted to what is expected to be achieved in the near-future takes on greater significance.

AIMS & RESEARCH QUESTION

I re-visit the appended papers to disentangle goals and values in two settings of inter-organisational collaboration. Both papers are about face-to-face meetings between people from different organisations as they try to make sense of their work. In different ways the papers are also about the processes of coming to identify (or being asked to identify) with the values of an organisation-of-organisations. Paper 1 is about the negotiation of project activities for the next phase of a fifteen-organisation partnership. Through talk of goals participants also come to understand values, notably those that shape expectations of what participation entails. Paper 2 is about the ways that a team characterises their joint work, hoping to persuade others to join as sponsor organisations. The characteristics presented imply values that attract people to take part in the innovation platform. These values are understood as making participation meaningful.

I adopt the dynamic tangled web perspective of goals from Vangen and Huxham (2011) and the values-based perspective of Breuer and Lüdeke-Freund (2017a) to interpret what the papers say about goals and values in the two settings. I consider how values practices are bound up in personal and collective goals, providing different ideas of appropriate practices for when engaging in inter-organisational collaboration. I wonder:

How do entangled goals and values relate to collaborative practices in the two settings?

Through an intersubjective approach in my research, I pay attention to the micro-processes that can be observed in everyday interaction between people. Such detailed studies of work have the potential to envision organising processes and revitalise old concepts and theories of organising, necessary in today's world of post-bureaucratic organising (Barley and Kunda, 2001). My research is a form of symmetrical ethnology where I write about the work from an interest in the situated practices of organising rather than general principles of organising (Czarniawska, 2017). This research is about localised social life in a particular context. It is about:

a bundle of interrelated terms: practice, praxis, action, interaction, activity, experience, performance [...and a] second, [...] closely related, bundle of terms [focused] on the doer of all that doing: agent, actor, person, self, individual, subject (Ortner, 1984:144).

A focus on relational encounters in their context enables seeing a little of how everyday words move us in our practices and help us decide how to go on with each other (Shotter, 1996). Through my research I describe the relational processes of getting work done. My interest is in the small, mundane details of attempts to create and maintain relationships between people who simultaneously represent a home organisation and an organisation-of-organisations. Collaboration across difference is about going on well together in that difference. While researchers may be tempted to roll up difference, in practice figuring out how to go on with one another is a very real issue that people struggle with every day. As my research represents the practical, everyday sensemaking of my interlocutors, I invite others to reflect on their own practices. I invite researchers to reflect more on the complexity of inter-organisational work.

OVERVIEW

I begin by presenting a values-based perspective where the authors view values as having particular potentials for working processes (Breuer and Lüdeke-Freund, 2017a) and then the dynamic tangled web perspective of the goals paradox that appears inherent in inter-organisational collaboration (Vangen and Huxham, 2011). Next I describe the fieldwork that is the basis for the two papers. I follow this by revisiting the two papers, using the twin perspectives to explore the goals, values and collaborative practices in the two settings. I conclude by summarising my argument about how goals and values are entangled in collaborative practices, before proposing further studies.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON GOALS & VALUES IN INTER-ORGANISATIONAL WORK

I present here perspectives about what it means to organise according to values and about a tangled web of goals inherent when people from different organisations work together. These perspectives have inspired me when revisiting the appended papers and writing this text. The perspectives open up questions to consider in all kinds of settings of inter-organisational collaboration. Together the twin perspectives point to the importance in taking seriously the tensions between different goals and between different values and the implications these may have, both productive and counter-productive. To this end, both pairs of authors argue for the importance of finding ways for each participant to bring up the goals they have for collaboration and to reflect on the values they associate with collaboration. These two practically-grounded perspectives provide lenses for interpreting how entangled goals and values relate to collaborative practices in the two settings.

A VALUES-BASED PERSPECTIVE

Henning Breuer and Florian Lüdeke-Freund (2017a) propose a values-based view on managing.³ They position their perspective in contrast to classic perspectives that take economic value, market differentiation and competitive advantage as central. The values-based perspective is about aligning personal, organisational and societal values. The authors see values as subjective notions of the desirable, or to put it more simply, as what is worth working towards or fighting for. They point to the dual character of values as both a *directive* for action and a *basis* for that action.

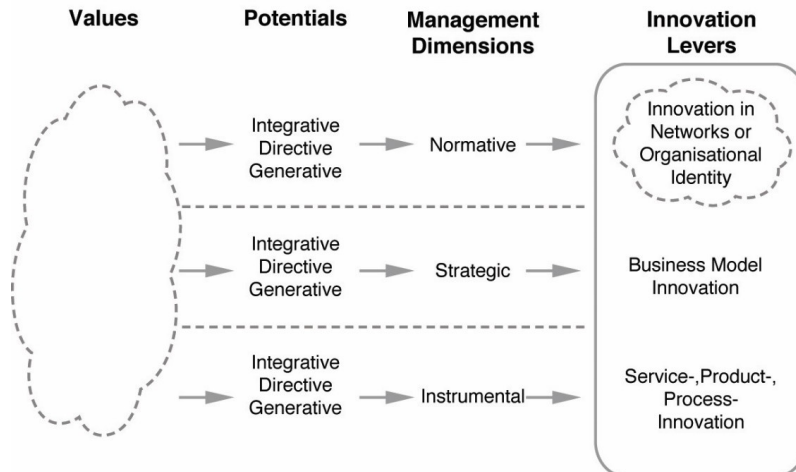
Breuer and Lüdeke-Freund caution that without managing according to what people care about, activities miss their full potential. They urge managers to address pressing problems, by connecting to values such as sustainability and social responsibility. Values must “be specified and put into practice by an individual entrepreneur, company or a network of actors” (ibid:11). Breuer and Lüdeke-Freund call on researchers to pay attention to the impact of values on processes, products, services, business models and networks. Such research could include studying how the value orientations of different companies, as expressed in statements of visions and missions, get mirrored in the definition of goals. This involves an interest in a values landscape where, through interaction with others, each person is working out for herself how to behave, what to care about and which values to adopt. The authors argue that “values are translated into specific orientations within the situated course of ongoing action” (ibid:20). People then adapt these orientations in relation to alternative orientations. Breuer and Lüdeke-Freund are interested in the influence of societal values, stakeholder values, partner values, customer values, competitor values and regulator values on the values landscape. They see all these values as the basis and the medium for joint projects.

Seeing values as having the potential to inspire, direct and even to evaluate action, Breuer and Lüdeke-Freund present a values-based innovation framework (see Figure 1). The framework is made up of three potentials of values that affect everyday work: integrative, directive or generative. Integrative potential is about how:

Values are not glue that outwardly connects otherwise unrelated things, but rather like strings knitting things together. **They run right through the hearts of those sharing them**, pervading every human being and thing. Values achieve integration more than disjunction - values of individuals or groups can either be shared or be related through overarching values. In the case where conflicting values are present, it leads the interacting parties to reflect and acknowledge others’ values systems (Breuer and Lüdeke-Freund, 2017a:20 – bold added).

³ Breuer and Lüdeke-Freund present their perspective in relation to innovation management but I adopt it for my discussion on inter-organisational collaboration. Innovation covers the social processes of introducing new things. For a straight-forward definition of innovation, I turn to Ina Goller and John Bessant’s (2017) idea of innovation as both a thing *and* the process which transforms an idea into a thing. Innovation is “the process of creating value from ideas” and is about “making ideas happen” (ibid:4).

Figure 1. Values-based innovation framework.



Source: Figure 3.2 from Breuer and Lüdeke-Freund (2017a:64).
Reproduced with permission of Palgrave Macmillan.

Such integration means that divergent interests can be resolved at a higher level of converging interests. As values “run right through the hearts of those sharing them” (ibid:20), the integrative potential of values is about an emotional connection. The directive potential is about how values that are grounded in the motivations and desires of stakeholders inform what people work towards in an organisation. The generative potential refers to how new problems and solutions can be conceived when new sets of values are brought into play. As Figure 1 illustrates, there are also three management dimensions of innovation within the framework: normative innovation relates to new organisational identities and new values-based inter-organisational networks (as is of interest to me in both papers); strategic innovation relates to new business models; and operational innovation creates new product and service offerings, new marketing instruments or new processes.

Breuer and Lüdeke-Freund (2017b) are scathing in their dismissal of single-actor perspectives, such as in classic business model concepts, referring to such perspectives as egocentric. They instead urge multi-actor perspectives and more comprehensive value definitions. At first glance, though, the values-based innovation framework appears connected to the potentials of values and the innovation levers for a single organisation, rather than a group of organisations working together. The framework does not show how the identity of a single organisation would relate to the new collective identity of an organisation-of-organisations. It seems that Breuer and Lüdeke-Freund intend the framework to be applicable for organisations engaging in inter-organisational collaboration, but that reasons to collaborate are still from a single organisation’s perspective. There is no reference to learning, knowledge exchange or new relationships, either, but instead rather classic ideas that say little of people. I use the values-based perspective when discussing the two inter-organisational settings so I can consider the relevance of the three potentials of values where there are different bundles of personal and organisational values at play. This is a part too of considering how organisational values affect organisational bricolage when shaping ways of organising (Perkmann and Spicer, 2014) and in understanding how a spirit of collaboration and collaborative thuggery (Huxham and Vangen, 2005) and assertive talk and cooperative talk (Hardy et al., 2005) relate to values practices (Gehman et al., 2013).

A DYNAMIC TANGLED WEB PERSPECTIVE ON GOALS

In writing this text, I have been particularly influenced by the research of Chris Huxham and Siv Vangen on collaborative working and inter-organisational relations. What draws me to their work is their commitment to research-oriented action research founded on the practical concerns arising from the doing of inter-organisational collaboration and their theorising about

how to manage collaborative situations. Over more than twenty years, they have worked on the theory and practice of collaborative advantage (Huxham and Vangen, 2005). Their accounts of the tangled web of goals in collaboration (Vangen and Huxham, 2011) resonates with what I observed with the two settings I describe and discuss in the papers.

Vangen and Huxham broadly define goals by including aspirations, visions, missions and purposes. They question the practicality of agreeing joint goals since “goals in the collaboration arena [appear] as a tangled web of dynamic, ambiguous, and partially overlapping goal hierarchies” (ibid:752). Frequently this is due to how goals in inter-organisational collaboration relate to large-scale issues facing society, or what Rittel and Webber (1973) term wicked problems. This is often what participants feel makes collaboration worthwhile. Complexity emerges since social issues have a number of ill-defined interrelated elements (Vangen and Huxham 2011:734). Additionally, people bring together constantly-changing goals hierarchies of organisations when they collaborate inter-organisationally. Vangen and Huxham discuss, too, how the *practical* value of goals varies: goals could be a source of commitment for one organisation, justification for actions for another, and performance evaluation criteria for another.

Vangen and Huxham set out the complexity of goals through a framework that affords a way to understand collaborative goal structures. The framework has six dimensions to help distinguish goals from one another (see Table 1) and to show how the characteristics of goals create issues for participants in inter-organisational collaboration. As Vangen and Huxham say, there are fuzzy boundaries between the dimensions that mean that a goal in use is a combination of types. However, attempts to categorise goals help participants in inter-organisational collaboration see how goals “intermingle into a partly hierarchical entanglement, which may be perceived differently by the individuals concerned with the collaboration and is continuously changing” (ibid:750). Vangen and Huxham (ibid:756) caution that “managing goals in collaboration is therefore not so much concerned with a tension between congruent and diverse goals as with working with a combination of them”.

Table 1. Dimensions of goals in collaboration.

| <i>Dimensions</i> | <i>Types</i> |
|-------------------|---|
| Level | The collaboration, the organisations, the individuals |
| Origin | Members, external stakeholders |
| Authenticity | Genuine, pseudo |
| Relevance | Collaboration dependent, collaboration independent |
| Content | Collaborative process, substantive purpose |
| Overtness | Explicit, unstated, hidden |

Source: Table from Vangen and Huxham (2011:744).

Vangen and Huxham consider the goals framework as a practical tool to help with the managing of goals and with disentangling complexity in specific situations. The authors conceive that an entangled web of goals looks differently from the perception of each of the people involved and that such webs are in constant states of flux during everyday interaction for inter-organisational collaboration. Indeed, each person only understands a portion of the goals. As Vangen and Huxham say, “the sheer complexity of the tangled web can lead to expanded and unwieldy agendas, confusion, misunderstandings, or just apathy” (ibid:755). They do, however, see congruency and diversity across a variety of individual and organisational goals as both inevitable and valuable. They argue that there are productive and counterproductive congruencies and diversities, for example, in relation to the level and content dimensions of the framework: “congruence in organisation-level substantive purpose goals...tends to be the spur for initiating collaboration between partners”; while “congruence of individual-level goals and congruence of collaborative process can help overcome lack of momentum arising from

insufficient congruence between organisation-level and collaboration goals” (ibid:754). I use these ideas of the generative potential of the goals paradox when particular goals are congruent and particular goals are divergent to discuss goals in the two settings. Coupled with this, I also consider how different people relate to the practical value of goals (source of commitment, justification for actions, performance evaluation criteria) in the two settings.

ENTWINING THE TWO PERSPECTIVES TO EXPLORE EVERYDAY COLLABORATIVE PRACTICES

The authors of both perspectives underline the importance of joint exploration of goals and values, seeing a role for researchers adopting ethnographic or action research methodologies to help with that exploration. Exploration of goals and values in inter-organisational collaboration may be even more important. Norms, policies, processes and artefacts provide a sense of collective goals and values when working with colleagues employed at the same organisation. Instead, in an inter-organisational group, ways of putting words on what often goes unsaid, help people better understand the perspectives of their colleagues. The standards and principles of values are a part of everyday life that moves people to particular action. The values-based perspective helps me consider what principles may lie beneath a will to work together and the values practices (Gehman et al., 2013) I observed. The tangled web perspective of goals helps me consider the variety of goals, both congruent and diverse, that influence people’s actions as they go on with each other and their work. Together the two theoretical perspectives can help make visible the behavioural foundations for reciprocity (Dolfsma and Van der Eijk, 2017) and more of the human element in organising for inter-organisational innovation (Salampasis and Mention, 2017). They help see how controls from home organisations may hamper collective action and make harder the finding of complementary values (Gibb et al., 2017).

I base my discussion on the ethnographic snapshots presented in the appended papers. The tacking back and forth between goals and values that are personal and collective takes on new dynamics in inter-organisational collaboration – collective relates to both a home organisation and the emergent organisation-of-organisations. What are considered core values of a home organisation are brought together with the values of several organisations. My discussion illustrates the ways in which values and notions of the desirable gave a higher purpose to the two inter-organisational groups. Overall goals are often framed in abstract terms that allow participants to feel that there is one shared goal. While an idea of an agreed goal affords comfort, official or formal descriptions of goals may not reflect the large variety of goals that participants have for participation, as Vangen and Huxham (2011) argue. When conversations take place between participants, more and more goals gradually become apparent as well as values that people associate with those goals. As work is done to persuade people to participate in inter-organisational collaboration, one can also question which of the goals and values are important to which participant and whose goals and values they are. The ways that talk around goals takes place helps make clearer emergent values practices for the organisation-of-organisations. In turn these values practices – what is considered appropriate to say and to do in the setting – underpin collaborative practices.

The values related to collaboration provide some explanation for the collaborative practices people see as central. It is through “being in relationships, being connected” (Dachler and Hosking, 1995:14) that participants make meaningful the way of organising, discussing goals of their work. This is also part of understanding the values that people are pursuing through organising that way. When I re-visit the two papers, I refer to Breuer and Lüdeke-Freund’s (2017a) potentials of values and Vangen and Huxham’s (2011) dimensions of goals, to consider how goals and values are entangled in the two settings. The perspectives allow me to consider each setting separately and to then draw some general conclusions about how goals and values relate to collaborative practices and the practical implications of this in settings of inter-organisational collaboration.

REFLECTIONS ON METHODOLOGY

Before I turn to my interpretation of goals and values in the two settings, I first describe my fieldwork methods. I strive to meet the challenge Barbara Czarniawska (2016:618) sets researchers for a “flexible, forever changing, dialogical reflection over the way research is done and what research is done”. This written self-reflection is in anticipation of the imagined question: *Why did you do the research this way?* The question I set out in the *Introduction* makes clear that I do not seek to answer the question about how entangled goals and values relate to collaborative practices in general, but only in reference to the two particular settings. Vangen and Huxham (2011:734) state that methods such as action research and ethnography allow theorising about inter-organisational collaboration from naturally occurring data. My research has encompassed such methods. Below I outline my studies with The Summer Platform and SustainACity which the appended papers are about.

RESEARCH DESIGN: PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION OF INTER-ORGANISATIONAL COLLABORATION

The methods I used to study the practices of inter-organisational collaboration were through time with people working in inter-organisational activities. As much of my fieldwork involved observing people carrying out their work in meetings, my fieldnotes covered *talk* as part of the doing of inter-organisational collaboration. I supplemented this with online fieldwork – emails, social media and websites – as well as some conversations, arranged in advance, to supplement more casual chats during participant observation. In Table 2 I summarise the field studies that the papers are about.

Table 2. Summary of papers with corresponding methods for fieldwork and analysis.

| <i>Paper</i> | <i>Study design</i> | <i>Fieldwork methods</i> | <i>Materials</i> | <i>Analysis methods</i> |
|--------------|---|--|---|--------------------------|
| 1 | Yo-yo fieldwork over six months at nine meetings connected to SustainACity (coordinator group, steering group, partner group) | Participant observation Conversations | Fieldnotes and analytical memos Secondary material, such as emails; project documentation; presentation slides; formal reports; web pages; and posts to social media. | Grounded theory-inspired |
| 2 | Full-time fieldwork over seven weeks with The Summer Platform, preceded by participant observation at four meetings and followed up with three recorded conversations a month later | Participant observation Conversations | Fieldnotes and analytical memos Secondary material, such as photos; emails; project documentation; presentation slides; formal reports; web pages; posts to digital tools and applications; posts to social media; video and audio recordings; materials produced jointly with interlocutors; transcripts. | Grounded theory-inspired |

My wish to explore more than just *what* people say led me to design the field studies around participant observation rather than interviews. I analysed fieldnotes that provide the details of what people said, when they said it, who else was present, and how others reacted (including those who remained silent). I drew on these fieldnotes to write short descriptions of encounters in the two papers.⁴

⁴ I set out more on my personal ambitions for fieldwork and writing up in the appendix *Personal goals and values as a researcher*. I also present a fuller account of the background and methods to one of the field studies in the

Figure 2 illustrates the deskwork and fieldwork related to the appended papers. I began fieldwork for both studies at the same time and continued over the same six months, April-September 2016. I presented Paper 2 at a conference in late 2016 and Paper 1 in Spring 2017. I rewrote Paper 1 for submission to a special issue a month after presenting it at the conference. I began in earnest to consider a topic for this text during the summer of 2017. I redrafted Paper 2 on the side of drafting this text.

Figure 2. Fieldwork, paper-writing & licentiate thesis-writing from April 2016-November 2017.

| | | | | | |
|------------|---------------------|---|---|---|----------|
| April 2016 | SustainACity | | 1 | 1 | Nov 2017 |
| | The Summer Platform | 2 | 2 | | |
| | Licentiate | | | | |

FIELDWORK: YO-YOING WITH SUSTAINACITY, FULL-TIME WITH THE SUMMER PLATFORM

The two field studies provided operational data (Van Maanen, 1979). I typed fieldnotes systematically based on in-the-field jottings in notebooks. While typing these fieldnotes, I also typed accompanying in-process analytical memos (Emerson et al., 2011). I gathered additional documents to supplement my own observation. I catalogued field material in NVivo to make it easily searchable. The studies are distinct from one another though: I worked part-time with the people of SustainACity, going to meetings every now and again, keeping in touch online, in a form of yo-yo fieldwork (Wulff, 2002), whereas I worked full-time in the field over a short period with the people of The Summer Platform, with some introductory and follow-up conversations either side. The intersubjective conversations that my fieldwork included, helped shape meaning for me and for my interlocutors as we discussed and jointly reflected. This was everyday sensemaking and interpretive sensemaking coming together, a form of validating my research with my interlocutors as we worked together to make sense of activities. Our reflections during conversations allowed me to understand the multiple interpretations of moments and to be humble about my own interpretation.

This approach to fieldwork fostered closeness with interlocutors and a form of knowing from within through dialogical sensemaking (Cunliffe and Scaratti, 2017). Adopting an inductive approach, I took my lead from what mattered to people and from what awakened my curiosity. My analysis emerged from becoming attuned to what was surprising during fieldwork and that could serve as an analytical starting point (Alvesson and Kärreman, 2007) and from recognising patterns in social life – actions, reactions, events (Engelke, 2008). I then got close to the field material during writing processes when analysis proper began (Emerson et al., 2011). I was inspired by grounded theory in my approach to the analysis. I presented thick description (Geertz, 1973) in the papers to invite readers to interpret what I observed too, and to assess for themselves the credibility of the text (Cunliffe, 2010:231).

Fieldwork with the people of SustainACity

The main method in this study was observation at the regular meetings of the coordinator group, the steering group and the partner group of a partnership of fifteen organisations working together on sustainable public transport. I did not observe project activities but rather meetings where representatives from the partner organisations discussed the overall partnership. As the website for the partnership states, SustainACity is “an exciting cooperative venture bringing

appendix *Field report from Summer 2016*. Combined these appendices help illustrate my research approach where I value reflexivity and close relationships with my interlocutors, and am mindful of the ethics of my research.

together industry, research and society in the development and testing of solutions for next-generation sustainable public transport.”

This study totalled around 40 hours of fieldwork, some of which was conversations before or after meetings with my main interlocutors, Louise and Thelma. During these conversations, we reviewed the meetings and talked about what action they would take next in their roles as coordinators. By summarising what I observed during meetings, I facilitated “collaborative inquiry and learning-in-action in order to cogenerate actionable knowledge” (Coghlan, 2011:79).

Paper 1 emerged from my curiosity about when the eight coordinators spoke from the perspective of their home organisation and when they spoke from that of the organisation-of-organisations, SustainACity. I turned to identities research to analyse what was going on between the coordinators as they negotiated goals.

Fieldwork with the people of The Summer Platform

The explorative study with The Summer Platform was close to a window study (Czarniawska, 2014:79) where I observed as much as I could of what was going on in a set of fieldsites. I was open to the opportunities that emerged in the field, treating the fieldwork as an iterative learning process for me and my interlocutors (Edmondson and McManus, 2007). I was able to gain an emic understanding (Harris, 1976), a view from within, of the everyday work of interlocutors. In promotional materials, the three employees at InTheKnow describe The Platform as “an open innovation platform for future innovators to help organisations with values-based innovation” and “a space in-between industry, society and academia”. When I first began fieldwork, I simply wanted to understand more about what this meant in practice.

My primary method was participant observation over a seven-week period in Summer 2016. This totalled 270 hours of fieldwork and 200 typed pages of fieldnotes. I also arranged conversations after fieldwork ended with my three main interlocutors: Ian, Mark, and Nicholas. We jointly reflected on the summer during these conversations. They were a check on my own interpretation and emerging analysis. I recorded these three conversations that each lasted between 90 minutes to two hours.

For my first analysis of the material, I was keen to use Erving Goffman’s (1959) framework of theatrical performance to explore practices of impression management. I read through my fieldnotes, coding in NVivo, and also wrote central themes and moments on sticky notes. I put the sticky notes on the walls of my office as a way of getting close to the material during the writing of a conference paper in Autumn 2016. One year later, in tandem with the writing of this text, I slightly re-drafted the paper.

REFLECTIONS ON THE BACK AND FORTH BETWEEN TWO FIELDS, THE DESK & ACADEMIC CONFERENCES

What a researcher can say from her research is shaped by her methodological choices. Methods have theoretical implications built in. Veering “towards the particularistic side” through my fieldwork, I got close to “the challenges...as situated actors face[d] them” (Hoholm and Araujo, 2011:937-8). The way in which my interlocutors made space for me to carry out the fieldwork, inviting me to observe meetings and everyday work, means we, myself and my interlocutors, shared experiences. The modes of temporal immersion in the two sets of fieldsites allowed me to share present time with interlocutors as well as expectations of the future and memories of the past (Dalsgaard and Nielsen, 2013). This allowed insights into how the perspectives of my interlocutors are constituted *in* time and *of* time, perhaps illustrating clashing temporal orientations (ibid:129), as well as constituted *in* and *of* particular spaces. I hold myself accountable ethically and politically for the social consequences of my research, both in the doing and in the written representation. I refer to all people and organisations by pseudonyms.

Debriefing with my supervisors and peers at Chalmers provides a check on interpretations shaped with my interlocutors during fieldwork, as does comments on draft papers. I was lucky enough to take a course in research methods which put into question all aspects⁵ of my summer

⁵ This was the methodology course *From field to desk* led by Andreas Diedrich and Barbara Czarniawska at University of Gothenburg. When I say that all aspects of my fieldwork were put into question, I mean, for example,

in East Lake and my research with the coordinators of SustainACity. Presenting the papers at academic conferences also encouraged me to reflect further, both through responding to the reviewers' comments of the extended abstracts, as well as to the comments of those who listened to my presentations of full papers. For Paper 1, I also received comments from journal reviewers and presented the paper during a meeting of the SustainACity coordinators in April 2017. The writing of this text has followed a similar winding path filled with conversations: there have been endless versions of the research topic I would address and the combination of papers I would include. This dialogical reflection (Czarniawska, 2016) with interlocutors and colleagues, and invitation to readers to assess the credibility of the text, are my ways of working with scientific rigour.

that after reading some ethnographic descriptions from my fieldwork with SustainACity, Barbara first asked: "Louise and Emma? Why not Thelma and Louise?" I didn't have a good answer. I took up the new pseudonyms when finalising Paper 1. After 'Thelma' and 'Louise' read the paper, they seemed happy with their new names. As part of her comments on the paper, 'Thelma' emailed: "You gave us the biggest laugh yesterday when we read the names you gave us! My husband told me later that from now on he wouldn't let me and Louise drive on our own anymore." I can't imagine giving them any other pseudonyms in my papers about SustainACity now!

SUSTAINACITY: A COOPERATIVE VENTURE BETWEEN INDUSTRY, RESEARCH & SOCIETY

In the coming pages I re-visit Paper 1 to discuss the goals and values connected to SustainACity during meetings about the next phase of the partnership in Spring 2016. I consider: *How do entangled goals and values relate to the collaborative practices of the people of SustainACity?* I begin with summaries of the setting and of my main discussion in the appended paper. Referring to Breuer and Lüdeke-Freund's (2017a) potentials of values and to Vangen and Huxham's (2011) dimensions of goals, I summarise the values and goals that seem to be at play during the meetings of the coordinators of SustainACity in the paper. I conclude by discussing how entangled goals and values affected the collaborative practices of the coordinators of SustainACity.

SUMMARIES OF SUSTAINACITY & PAPER 1

Table 3 summarises some information about SustainACity as at the time of the fieldwork, April–September 2016.

Table 3. Description of SustainACity during period April–September 2016.

| <i>Characteristics</i> | <i>Description</i> |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Background | The partnership began in Spring 2013. In June 2015, a new bus route in the city centre began testing prototype electric and electric-hybrid buses, and demonstrating services and infrastructure, such as charging facilities for the buses and an indoor bus-stop. |
| Goals | <p>“The aim of SustainACity is to make use of electric buses and new connected services and products to create attractive public transport solutions and urban developments. All the partners are expected to take part in activities in these areas and in many cases the activities involve mutual dependencies between the different partners. At the same time, none of the partners can tell the others what to do.” <i>Excerpt from a public report published by the SustainACity partner organisations.</i></p> <p>“With the goal of reducing CO² emissions by 80% by 2020, seven plug-in hybrids and three fully electric buses are used on a test route, which connects two university campuses in _____. The route is around 8km long and we have 100,000 passengers per month, with high satisfaction levels among drivers and customer satisfaction levels of 100%. The project is a collaboration between 15 partners.” <i>Excerpt from a description of SustainACity in a public report published by a European Commission-financed project on electric buses in Europe</i></p> |
| Fifteen partner organisations | TechUniversity, CityAuthority, RegionalGrowthAgency, RegionalAuthority, NationalEnergyAgency, CityAreaDevelopment, RegionalPublicTransportCo, WestSciencePark, EastSciencePark, AutomotiveCo, EnergyCo, CampusPropertyCo, AcademicPropertyCo, BusOperatorCo, TelecomCo |
| Partnership organisation | <p><u>GreenTime</u>: Two consultants (Louise & Thelma) employed by RegionalGrowthAgency, TechUniversity, RegionalAuthority & AutomotiveCo to act on behalf of all partners, overseeing and supporting activities when called upon by the steering group</p> <p><u>Coordinator Group</u>: Representatives for AutomotiveCo (Caroline), TechUniversity (Neil), RegionalPublicTransportCo (Becky), RegionalGrowthAgency (Johnny), CityAreaDevelopment (Jen) and TelecomCo (Peter), with Louise & Thelma from GreenTime representing the other partner organisations</p> <p><u>Steering Group</u>: Senior representatives for AutomotiveCo, TechUniversity, RegionalPublicTransportCo, RegionalAuthority, CityAuthority and TelecomCo that meet six times per year.</p> <p><u>Partner Group</u>: Senior representatives for the fifteen partner organisations that meet annually.</p> |

Sitting in on my first meeting of the coordinator group for SustainACity in April 2016, I felt thrown into a world of goals. There were different timescales, some building on past success, some about shaping something new, some about moving from one way of operating to another. I began my memo summarising that meeting with:

Themes for the day are talk about the goals for the next phase.

Also plans ahead of annual partner group meeting in just over two months' time.

Theme of what happens to the 'test & demo arena' when it's been tested and demoed. Who pays to continue? So simultaneously on coming up with new ideas for what to test in next phase and how to handle a move into business as usual for the 1st phase.

In Paper 1 I zoom in on how the coordinators for SustainACity negotiated between goals from their home organisations to find collective goals. Through two snapshots, I illustrate how the coordinators drew on the interests and motivations of their home organisations in negotiating activities for the next phase of SustainACity. I show how people learnt about the goals of other partner organisations and how a match-making of interests then shaped goals for the partnership that were pursued by two or more of the partner organisations.

Simultaneously representing a home organisation and the organisation-of-organisations, the coordinators moved between organisational identities. I theorise a cycle of identity work (Sveningsson and Alvesson, 2003) and identity play (Ibarra and Petriglieri, 2010) that involves both provocation and invitation, in turn re-shaping the identities of SustainACity and the partner organisations. I argue that the variety of goals gives energy to the partnership. This is a starting point for my discussion that follows about what the conversations presented in the snapshots suggest of the values connected to partnership for the people of SustainACity and about how the coordinators coped when encountering multiple goals and values.

VALUES AROUND GOALS-IN-THE-MAKING FOR SUSTAINACITY 2.0: IN THE NAME OF BEING OPEN?

During the period of fieldwork, SustainACity was publicised as a cooperative venture related to sustainable public transport. In general, then, the partnership may connect to the broad bundle of values within discourses on sustainability, such as those underpinning the UN Sustainable Development Goals. However, I believe that one interpretation of the two snapshots of the coordinators' discussions is that they are about values of *openness*, *diversity* and *collaboration*. It is to a discussion of these values that I now turn. Much of Paper 1 relates to how the partner organisations, or potential partner organisations, would interact with one another, perhaps not surprising as the coordinators are tasked with making sure activities happen within the partnership. A public report published by the partner organisations stated:

All the partners are expected to take part in activities...and in many cases the activities involve mutual dependencies between the different partners. At the same time, none of the partners can tell the others what to do.

Within the statement above there appear to be particular values shaping what participation in SustainACity entails for a partner organisation. There are values underpinning collaborative practices. In attempting to understand how this drove interaction between the coordinators, in Table 4 I translate the values I see in Paper 1 into examples of what I call *values statements* – normative expressions of what ought to be. Alongside the values statements, I also set out examples of goals that I understand from the interaction. Some of these goals were explicitly stated, others are my interpretation. This helps show how the coordinators navigated between entangled values and goals in their discussion about activities for SustainACity 2.0. There are many other values and goals that could be interpreted from the snapshots but I present just a few examples in Table 4. Some of the goals also fit across the values statements but I have listed each goal alongside only one values statement. I have set in bold text a values statement adapted from the public report that the partner organisations published. I take this as a start for understanding how values practices (Gehman et al., 2013) related to participation in SustainACity.

Table 4. Some example goals and values from the material about SustainACity presented in Paper 1.

| <i>Values</i> | <i>Examples of values statements</i> | <i>Examples of goals</i> |
|---------------|---|---|
| Openness | The overall partnership benefits from expanding to include new partner organisations. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To communicate transparently about activities within the partnership to potential partners. - To be visible as engaged in the area of sustainable public transport. - To market the region as at the forefront of sustainable solutions and mobility. |
| Diversity | New city neighbourhoods are best designed to minimise segregation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To combine expertise and resources from different partner organisations in tackling social issues. |
| Collaboration | Each partner organisation decides which other organisations to work with and on what projects. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To gain external input and contacts for business development. - To demonstrate a model for public-private cooperation on sustainable public transport. |
| | Partnership in SustainACity is underwritten by thorough dialogue and the sharing of long-term intentions and own resources. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To agree a broad portfolio of activities as part of SustainACity. |
| | The organisational priorities of partner organisations are connected to SustainACity. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To learn more about the organisational priorities of other organisations - To prioritise new activities through participation in SustainACity. |

When considering the goals related to the value of openness in Table 4, becoming a partner organisation in SustainACity appears relates to the normative dimension of the values-based innovation framework (Breuer and Lüdeke-Freund, 2017a). Openness is a notion of the desirable. It makes the partner organisations, and in turn the partnership, the city and the region, look *good*. Talk of openness in the snapshots in Paper 1 comes mainly from one coordinator, Johnny, representing his home organisation of RegionalGrowthAgency, as well as RegionalAuthority and CityAuthority. These are public sector organisations, answerable to taxpayers, and driven by values closely related to the wellbeing of the city's citizens. However, there is little talk of citizens in relation to openness. Instead it appears to be more about the branding of the city. As I show in Paper 1, Johnny's understanding of openness and his efforts to push for bringing in new partner organisations contrasted to how Caroline from AutomotiveCo understood openness. Caroline felt that from AutomotiveCo's perspective, being open was already demonstrated through working with other partner organisations on particular activities. This view was more connected to the example values statements and goals I have listed as connected to the value of collaboration. Openness was a part of collaborative practices in SustainACity, then, but not translatable for some of the coordinators to the goals that RegionalGrowthAgency wanted to achieve. This suggests that while openness is a value with a directive potential for the people of SustainACity, it sent them in different directions.

Likewise, the value of diversity is emphasised by the coordinator from one partner organisation, CityAreaDevelopment, in the material I present in the paper. CityAreaDevelopment is a semi-public sector organisation, set up by CityAuthority but run as a company, and imagined as *owned* by the city's residents. In the paper I show how the other coordinators responded when Jen, representing her home organisation of CityAreaDevelopment, talks about the vision for the re-development of an industrial area of the city. As Jen talks about priorities for CityAreaDevelopment, she awakens possibilities for

joint activities. She is able to relate to a goal of learning about the priorities of other organisations. Jen wishes to achieve a goal on behalf of CityAreaDevelopment in developing an area of the city. Her goal, as shown in Table 4, may be to mobilise other partner organisations so combined expertise and resources can be put into activities. This means that the value of diversity is tied up with one of the organisation's goals. I would argue that diversity is also entangled with the value of collaboration since giving space to partner organisations to pursue their own agendas is central to the collaborative practices of SustainACity. The idea of each partner organisation deciding what activities to engage in implies that an openness to the priorities of partner organisations is a part of the collaborative practices in the setting of SustainACity. Such an openness is, of course, easier said than done.

It appears that integrative, directive and generative potentials of values were all at play (Breuer and Lüdeke-Freund, 2017a). Openness was directive for RegionalGrowthAgency and diversity was directive for CityAreaDevelopment. If any one value had integrative potential to bring the fifteen partner organisations together, it appears to be the value of collaboration, which as I have mentioned above, intersected with ideas about openness and diversity that were reflected in the practices of working together. The value of collaboration also has the directive potential, grounded as it seemed to be in the motivations and desires of the partner organisations, providing direction for what the coordinator would work towards on behalf of their home organisations through the partnership. The generative potential of the value of openness that CityAreaDevelopment had is hinted at in the excitement of the coordinators in hearing from Jen. This suggests that several partner organisations might engage in project activities with CityAreaDevelopment, helping design new solutions to minimise segregation in the new area.

To understand more about the goals connected to these values, I now turn to assessing the example goals across the dimensions that Vangen and Huxham (2011) present in the tangled web perspective. Considering the dimension of *level*, it is clear that the web of goals in SustainACity encompasses goals at both the collaboration level and at the level of partner organisations. My discussion in the paper about the navigation between organisational identities is about how the dynamic between goals at the two levels gave energy to the joint work. Individual level goals, related to individual incentives, career progression and personal causes, are less apparent. This may be as, rather than volunteers, the coordinators for SustainACity had been mandated to the role by their home organisations (ibid:744).

The conversations about the explicit invitation on the SustainACity website to companies and research institutes to join in, perhaps indicates the *origin* and *authenticity* dimensions of goals. Here a statement is made that, when put to the test, turns out not to be genuine – some of the coordinators do not want to put effort into meeting with potential partner organisations but instead to concentrate on activities with current partner organisations. This may illustrate that the way SustainACity is portrayed on the website is about a goal that originates from an external stakeholder rather than from the partner organisations. It is a cover story or a pseudo-goal. From the snapshots in the paper, it is not clear who this external stakeholder may be that was in mind when the statement was originally included on the website. Perhaps, as Vangen and Huxham (2011) suggest is often the case, it is for appearances to national or regional government agencies. Such organisations could be considered important in terms of potential funding for joint activities under the umbrella of the SustainACity partnership.

Discussions about openness may also relate to the dimension of *relevance* – whether the achievement of a goal by a partner organisation is dependent on partnership within SustainACity or whether it could be achieved in other ways. Representing RegionalGrowthAgency, Johnny wants communicating transparently to potential partners to be part of SustainACity. His fellow coordinators seem to feel that this is irrelevant for their home organisations. Perhaps they felt that Johnny should pursue the goal of supporting other companies working within sustainable transport through other projects or partnerships. Openness, in the way Johnny understands it, seems not to be something that the other coordinators can identify with. This reminds me of Vangen and Huxham's (2011:746) comments about the importance of recognising which organisational goals can be pursued as part of

collaboration. In order to sort through the many goals that the fifteen organisations between them hope to achieve through SustainACity, dialogue is necessary. Such dialogue can make clearer the different types of practical value goals can have for different people (Vangen and Huxham, 2011). Perhaps to justify participation in SustainACity, RegionalGrowthAgency needs goals related to openness. The other coordinators were unable to see how the openness agenda that Johnny was pushing at this time was practical for them in terms of a source of commitment, justification for actions or as performance evaluation criteria. There were goals related to other values that they were committed to, that their organisation would evaluate participation in SustainACity with and which justified actions within the partnership of SustainACity.

In terms of the *content* dimension of goals, there is a mixture of goals related to collaborative process and to substantive purpose. As I have already set out, much of the material in the paper related to how a value of collaboration had been connected to particular practices. This shaped the examples of goals in Table 4. The goals are both about how the partner organisations will work together and what they will achieve through that work.

“IT’S HARD TO DISAGREE WITH – IT’S BASICALLY TALKING ABOUT PEACE ON EARTH.”

The cycle of identity work and play that I discuss in Paper 1 helps with understanding how people cope when encountering multiple goals and values in inter-organisational collaboration. In my analysis in the paper, I associate openness with exploration, using Segrestin’s (2005) ideas about exploratory partnerships. This was one of the central values of the collaborative practices in SustainACity that I observed: that joint interests are shaped and revised along the way, benefitting partner organisations and the partnership as a whole. Not all of the coordinators were as comfortable with this as others. There was an emergent way of organising where openness involved a willingness to potentially engage in activities far from the usual everyday business priorities of the partner organisation. This also put the people of the partner organisations in new relationships with one another, to co-create rather than to transact as suppliers, producers, customers and contractors. Such inter-organisational collaboration for sustainability has the potential benefits of learning, relationship-building, joint problem solving, joint innovation and joint value creation, efficiency, resource sharing, cost sharing and capacity building and survival (Sharma and Kearins, 2011). It is not surprising that a large variety of goals and values emerge in relation to all these potential benefits. This is the complexity that Vangen and Huxham (2011:734) say arises since social issues have a number of ill-defined interrelated elements. The complexity itself in tackling large-scale issues facing society is what participants feel makes collaboration worthwhile. Part of the processes of work together are to explore which goals can be pursued within the scope of the partnership. In the case of SustainACity, this was about exploring who else wanted to work jointly on goals, taking one partner organisation’s goal to become an inter-organisational goal, shared and shaped between partner organisations.

In the case of SustainACity, values practices setting out what was considered right and wrong in how and why to work together (Gehman et al., 2013) shaped expectations of appropriate goals. The snapshots I present show how it was difficult for Johnny to accomplish goals related to openness to new partners. This may have been about controls from Caroline’s home organisation, AutomotiveCo, around sharing and protecting knowledge that limited openness to new partners (Jarvenpaa and Majchrzak, 2016). Having reflected more since writing Paper 1, I understand that the particular ideas around what counts as participation in SustainACity are values-laden and context-specific. Putting in money and own resources to deliver visible, tangible results (bus-stops, bus routes, charging infrastructure) are valued by some partner organisations far more than talk to get to know each other’s priorities and to generate ideas for joint project activities. Ideas around a test and demo arena are also values-laden. For example, it is hard for TechUniversity to incorporate researchers’ long-term research interests into SustainACity when some of the other partner organisations are focused on the testing of prototype or concept products that they have already developed in-house. This means that even when the people of each partner organisation are participating on the terms they intended and as fits with organisational goals, people from other partner organisations do not necessarily

accept that participation as enough. This raises the question of what counts as participation, who decides what counts, and how exchange and reciprocity are part of collaborative practices (Dolfsma and Van der Eijk, 2017).

To an extent SustainACity is a *boundary organisation* bringing together organisations who would not usually work together and helping them to adapt to new organising practices (O'Mahony and Bechky, 2008). There are struggles for control since, despite each partner deciding what to get involved in, this is a serious undertaking with much money being put into the activities. It matters that the partnership is perceived externally as successful – whether in terms of the novelty of products and services related to sustainable public transport, or showcasing the city and region as working successfully in partnership with other organisations on social challenges. These high stakes create moments when people engage in collaborative thuggery (Huxham and Vangen, 2005) and assertive talk (Hardy et al., 2005), pushing colleagues from partner organisations to make commitments through goals and then to ensure that those goals are achieved on time. Every now and again disagreements arise as someone takes for granted that everyone will agree, and then someone responds with the issues they see with a particular course of action. I provide an example of this in Paper 1 when Louise refers to the wording of the vision for SustainACity, saying: “It’s hard to disagree with – it’s basically talking about peace on earth.” Johnny then does question the internal feel of the vision.

Such moments remind the people of SustainACity to slow down and listen to each other if they are to influence transitions to sustainable public transport by continuing to work together. Heeding each other’s goals is important. These practices help nurture a spirit of collaboration (Huxham and Vangen, 2005) through cooperative talk (Hardy et al., 2005). Collaborative practices seem to be about moving between interlinked cycles of identity work and play, cooperative talk and assertive talk, and a spirit of collaboration and collaborative thuggery. As Hardy et al. (2005) say, while action is often privileged as a sign of effective collaboration at the expense of talk, it is talk that establishes the foundations for action in effective collaboration. Finding ways to get close to everyday talk helps with understanding collaborative practices in a setting like SustainACity that appears to be an exploratory partnership (Segrestin, 2005) where people shape joint interests through interaction. As I have briefly discussed, such talk may be viewed as the sayings and doings of values practices, helping to articulate and accomplish what is perceived as good or bad (Gehman et al., 2013) in a setting of inter-organisational collaboration. Where values practices related to joint work are formed around the idea that no partner organisation can tell another partner organisation what to do, there is a dilemma in how to find direction for the partnership. A broad bundle of values and related values practices may have the directive potential to assist.

THE SUMMER PLATFORM: A SPACE BETWEEN INDUSTRY, SOCIETY & ACADEMIA

In the coming pages I re-visit Paper 2 to discuss: *How do entangled goals and values relate to the collaborative practices of the people of The Summer Platform?* I begin with summaries of the setting and of my main discussion in the appended paper. Referring to Breuer and Lüdeke-Freund's (2017a) potentials of values and to Vangen and Huxham's (2011) dimensions of goals, I summarise the values and goals that seem to be at play during encounters between the team and people from current or potential sponsor organisations. I conclude by discussing how entangled goals and values affected the practices of the people of The Summer Platform.

SUMMARIES OF THE SUMMER PLATFORM & PAPER 2

Table 5 summarises some information about The Summer Platform at the time of fieldwork in June-August 2016. The Summer Platform was a temporary team, sponsored by three organisations, and managed by an intermediary firm, InTheKnow. The team worked on projects related to the challenges of low incomes and short life expectancies in a Swedish suburb. This was the second consecutive summer that InTheKnow partnered with sponsor organisations to hire a team of high school and Masters students.

Table 5. Description of The Summer Platform during June – August 2016.

| Characteristics | Description |
|---|--|
| Location | East Lake, Gothenburg, Sweden |
| Period | Eight weeks, June – August 2016 |
| Goal | An open innovation platform for future innovators to help organisations with values-based innovation. |
| Intermediary company | <u>InTheKnow</u> , private consultancy service founded in 2003 by Nicholas |
| Fifteen people working together as <i>The Summer Platform</i> | Two owners (Ian 55; Nicholas 63) and one junior colleague (Mark 27) at InTheKnow. All three of North European nationalities. <u>Four project leaders/ Masters students</u> , one 2015 MSc graduate, three completed first year of MSc programmes in 2016. Aged 23-29. Four different European nationalities. Temporarily employed by InTheKnow for eight weeks. <i>Rebecca, Amy, Christopher, Lewis</i> . <u>Eight project assistants/ high school students</u> , all students of the high school located nearest to East Lake, where some are learning Swedish as a second language having completed high school in other countries before migrating to Sweden. Aged 18-21. Eight different nationalities from Europe, Latin America, Middle East and Africa. One Swede, others moved to Sweden between 8 months to 7 years ago. Temporarily employed by InTheKnow for seven weeks. <i>Elizabeth, Louisa, Sid, Jacob, Jeremy, Michelle, Maria, Ruth</i> . |
| Partner organisations | <u>Kallar</u> , private property company listed on the Stockholm Stock Exchange, with housing in East Lake. Provided funding to <i>The Platform</i> . Owner of two projects. Main contact: <i>Steve</i> , Property Manager in East Lake. <u>Bricks</u> , public property association with housing in East Lake, part of a larger group that is run by the city of Gothenburg. Provided office space in East Lake to <i>The Platform</i> over the eight weeks of the summer. Owner of one project. Main contact: <i>Bob</i> , 35, Director of Property Management, North-East District of Gothenburg. <u>CodePics</u> , global software company, specializing in design, engineering and entertainment software, headquartered in the US, with office in Gothenburg. Provided funding to <i>The Platform</i> . Owner of one project. Main contact: <i>John</i> , 63, Global Head of Strategic Projects. <i>Ralph</i> , 47, Director of Customer Engagement Services and in charge of Gothenburg office. |
| Summer 2016 projects | 1. Planning for construction of new houses: how to design shared spaces for residents (sponsored by Kallar). 2. Development of Kallar's recruitment organisation: how to get young people into the world of work (sponsored by Kallar). 3. Physical arena for connecting people: how to connect people with ideas to experts and technology (sponsored by Bricks). 4. Increasing physical activity in East Lake: how to use the natural landscape for adrenalin sports (sponsored by CodePics). |

When I met Ian, Nicholas and Mark from InTheKnow in April 2016, they were hoping that AutomotiveCo would let them use a soon-to-be-released digital application. This app would serve as inspiration for developing a digital service for immigrants in Sweden. Nicholas told me about his negotiations to set up this project between AutomotiveCo and a public authority. This was why the trio from InTheKnow described The Summer Platform as an open innovation platform. I was curious about what this meant to them and to the people who had signed up their organisations as sponsors for the summer. By the time June 2016 came around and my full-time fieldwork began, it was clear that AutomotiveCo would not be involved as one of the main sponsor organisations. I remained intrigued about what would happen in a collaborative space purposefully shaped for work between industry, society and academia.

The fieldwork brought into view practices of impression management. In Paper 2, I zoom in on how Ian and Nicholas, the initiators of The Summer Platform, tried to convince others to partner with them as sponsor organisations over a longer-term. The initiators demonstrated the innovation platform with the help of the 12 students temporarily employed over seven or eight weeks of the summer. The team simultaneously worked on projects connected to a Swedish suburb and participated in meetings with potential and current sponsor organisations where they introduced themselves and their project work. I conceptualise the practices of impression management by using Erving Goffman's (1959) framework of theatrical performance. Through ethnographic snapshots and interview snippets, I illustrate four characteristics of The Summer Platform – multicultural; transdisciplinary; working with people not for people; and personal growth. Directed by Ian and Nicholas, the team presented these characteristics frontstage to current or potential sponsor organisations, as well as worked on them backstage as part of project work. These characteristics relate to team composition, working processes and knowledge exchange. They serve as a starting point for my discussion that now follows about what values and goals the team presented to potential sponsor organisations in trying to attract them to participate, as well as the underlying values and goals in interaction with current sponsor organisations.

VALUES & GOALS AROUND THE SUMMER PLATFORM: IN THE NAME OF LEARNING FROM ONE ANOTHER?
During the period of fieldwork, InTheKnow were trying to convince other organisations to partner with them as sponsor organisations as well as manage the relationships with the people of the three current sponsor organisations. In general, The Summer Platform may be connected to the broad bundle of values within discourses on innovation. I believe that the material I present in the paper more closely relates to values of *collaboration*, *learning* and *diversity*. It is to a discussion on these values that I now turn. One statement about The Summer Platform was:

An open innovation platform for future innovators to help organisations with values-based innovation.

Within the statement above there appear to be particular values shaping collaborative practices – the students, termed future innovators, are to help sponsor organisations. Much of what InTheKnow and the students presented as characteristics of The Summer Platform was about values related to how people interact with one another. One could ask of what relevance these had if one took seriously that the students were to help the sponsor organisations, rather than personally benefit or to tackle social issues in the suburb of East Lake through the summer projects. While the paper is mainly about the goals that Nicholas and Ian had for the innovation platform, there are also other goals implied in the encounters I describe. In Table 6, I translate the values I see in Paper 2 into examples of what I call *values statements* – normative expressions of what ought to be. Alongside the values statements, I also set out examples of goals that I understand from the interaction. Some of these goals were explicitly stated, others are my interpretation. This helps show how the team navigated between entangled values and goals in encounters with stakeholders. There are many other values and goals that could be interpreted

from the snapshots but I present just a few examples in Table 6. Some of the goals also fit across the values statements but I have listed each goal alongside only one values statement.

Table 6. Some example goals and values from the material about The Summer Platform presented in Paper 2.

| <i>Values</i> | <i>Examples of values statements</i> | <i>Examples of goals</i> |
|---------------|--|--|
| Collaboration | Tackling societal challenges requires collaboration. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To connect private and public organisations in same industries through joint projects. - To create ways for university students to engage in projects on societal challenges. |
| | Achieving social transformation requires including new perspectives. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To bring together business, academia, local authorities and NGOs in projects. |
| | Achieving business objectives requires including new perspectives. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To convince customers/tenants about project ideas. - To increase the economic value of property. |
| Learning | Employees benefit from encountering new perspectives. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To engage in corporate social responsibility activities. |
| | Young immigrants deserve guidance and support. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To provide summer jobs to young immigrants that will inspire them to new career choices. |
| | Breaking down social barriers requires that people meet and learn from each other. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To make a suburb more attractive to residents and visitors. - To tackle social challenges related to low incomes and short life expectancies. |
| Diversity | Multicultural, transdisciplinary teams create better results. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To reach out to potential employees. - To attract more international and low-income students to universities. |

The values associated with The Summer Platform appear related to shaping an identity and legitimacy for the platform and providing reasons for sponsor organisations to take part. While Nicholas and Ian may share these values and make them part of their description of what values-based innovation means, it is not necessarily the case that (all) these values are important, or equally important, to the sponsor organisations. Expressed as values statements, they do appear hard to disagree with. My perception is that Nicholas and Ian had used these values to attract particular people to the platform – namely John, Steve and Bob, the main representatives of the three sponsor organisations during the time of my fieldwork. These people had then convinced their home organisations to join as sponsor organisations. In the paper, there are some hints of the instrumental reasons of why an organisation may participate as a sponsor. Goals related to increasing the economic value of property or reaching out to potential employees are perhaps ways that John, Steve and Bob persuaded their colleagues of the benefits of participation in The Summer Platform.

The topic of the paper means that I look particularly at how Ian and Nicholas brought a group together. This relates to what Breuer and Lüdeke-Freund (2017a) describe as the integrative potential of values. I do not explore in detail whether the values also had directive or generative potentials in helping the team and their stakeholders conceive of new solutions when it came to the four projects they worked on. However, the values did provide some directive potential for the students temporarily recruited. The students helped InTheKnow present the characteristics of The Summer Platform to stakeholders by enacting them or at least talking about how they were enacting them. This was a large part of the work that they did during the summer and it required the students to connect with the values that Nicholas and Ian wanted them to represent. That the team worked together to put on a show for stakeholders is an aspect of what collaborative practices came to be in The Summer Platform. The encounters were intended to

produce a particular impression of the values enacted by those participating in The Summer Platform. Ian and Nicholas hoped that the encounters would attract new sponsor organisations interested in pursuing the same values. The sayings and doings in these encounters between those working for The Summer Platform and those they met, were values practices.

My assessment of the example goals across the dimensions that Vangen and Huxham (2011) present in the dynamic tangled web perspective, is impacted by how the paper is about the impression Nicholas and Ian wanted to create of the potential of The Summer Platform: many of the goals are at the *level* of collaboration. Some relate to how goals can benefit a particular organisation though, such as convincing tenants about projects. Considering the *origin* dimension of the goals, raises the question of how to consider Ian and Nicholas: are they members of the inter-organisational collaboration or are they external stakeholders? Many of the goals originate with Ian and Nicholas, even though they relate to goals a sponsor organisation might pursue, such as reaching out to potential employees and engaging in corporate social responsibility activities. In terms of *relevance*, many of the goals are presented as collaboration-dependent – it is only through collaboration that the goals can be achieved. In the setting of The Summer Platform, collaboration appears as a value in and of itself. Pursuing collaboration has an integrative potential – in order to collaborate, people look for others to work with, believing that this yields better results (results being possible to define, it goes without saying, in a vast variety of ways).

In terms of *content*, the goals were about both substantive purposes or outputs and collaborative processes of *how* the members would do the work. The characteristic that the team presented that related to working processes – *working with people, not for people* as I label it in Paper 2 – was central in encounters where the team tried to manage the impression that others formed of The Summer Platform. In terms of the dimensions of *authenticity* and *overtness*, by exploring the practices of impression management I have hinted that my perception was that there were some goals that were perhaps pseudo goals for Nicholas, Ian and stakeholders to The Summer Platform. There were some goals that remained unstated and hidden, at least some of the time to some people. During the summer, Nicholas and Ian both often talked about creating value in a way that was not possible for a large organisation to do. The pair had goals for the collaboration that they made explicit in particular moments with particular people. They valued some goals more highly than others, perhaps being prepared to engage pragmatically in giving lip service to goals that for them were really closer to pseudo goals (such as helping CodePics market its products to the students) than to authentic ones. Likewise, they perhaps hid or left unstated some of their goals with organising The Summer Platform so as to leave space for other people to project their own goals onto their home organisation's participation as sponsor.

While one framing of what The Summer Platform was about was for future innovators to help sponsor organisations, the learning of the students and the learning of those they met, was also a part of goals. It seemed that Ian and Nicholas wanted InTheKnow to be a hub firm in network learning for collective action (Gibb et al., 2017). The hub firm status of InTheKnow meant though that they had difficulty in encouraging the people of the sponsor organisations to participate in the summer projects. Network learning as a potential source of competitiveness for sponsor organisations was a part of what was being sold (ibid:16) by Nicholas and Ian. As the two initiators were so central in orchestrating the collaborative practices though, it was hard for the people of the sponsor organisations to achieve goals of shaping joint interests and learning from each other's organisational practices. Learning was very much mediated by Ian and Nicholas.

"HE JUST DOESN'T CATCH IT IN HIS HEART."

When I met with Ian, Nicholas and Mark separately in September 2016 to reflect on the summer, I sensed disappointment from each of them about the limited ways in which people from the sponsor organisations had participated over the summer and how they had reacted to the work on the four projects afterwards. It was then that Nicholas talked to me about how Ralph and Steve had not caught in their hearts what he and Ian were trying to achieve through organising The Summer Platform. Bob and John were two who had caught it, according to Nicholas, as they

had participated during the first summer. Nicholas found his relationship with Steve harder. Steve had been persuaded by Bob to bring in Kallar as a sponsor organisation in the second year, but, from Nicholas' perspective, he did not seem to have caught in his heart what collaboration entailed. Nicholas reasoned that this was because Steve had not spent much time in East Lake working with the students on the projects. For Nicholas it was also incredibly frustrating that Ralph claimed his main interest was in helping the high school students, but had then asked in a meeting after the summer: "What value are you actually delivering?" Nicholas saw this as his fault for not communicating "our real values" to Ralph. Nicholas was very aware of how the people from the sponsor organisations were motivated by different reasons. He still felt that there must be a way to describe The Summer Platform that would help him attract people who caught in their hearts what he and Ian were working towards in their visions for The Platform. The idea of one big team was important to both initiators of The Summer Platform but they seemed to feel that some people did not actually want to work *with* others (one of the central characteristics that I discuss in Paper 2), but expected people to instead work *for* them. This is perhaps not surprising given the idea that future innovators help organisations. Ralph's question about the value delivered was a moment of assertive talk (Hardy et al., 2005) or collaborative thuggery (Huxham and Vangen, 2005) when he pushed his agenda. This talk disrupted for Nicholas the spirit of collaboration (Huxham and Vangen, 2005) – the one united team he wanted The Summer Platform to be.

Ian frequently talked about "pulling" people towards working with them. The challenge though was whether the people they attracted did turn out to be driven by the values he assumed they were from meetings before the work began. Packaging a variety of values around The Summer Platform did attract people and influence them to sign up their employer organisations as sponsors. My perception though was that Ian and Nicholas did not get to grips with the entangled goals and values that the people of the sponsor organisations brought to The Summer Platform. During the few weeks of the summer projects, talk about measuring the value that The Summer Platform delivered (to use Ralph's terms), was not brought up directly. After the summer ended, Nicholas and Ian received questions like the one from Ralph about what the money they had put in as sponsor organisations had helped bring about. This valuing of outcomes rather than processes was of course hard to manage after the summer had ended. It speaks to the point that Vangen and Huxham (2011) make through the *content* dimension of the tangled goals perspective – that goals may be about collaborative processes or substantive purposes. As goals of both sorts, and varying across the other dimensions too, are entangled, is what Vangen and Huxham (2011:756) mean about the necessity of realising that "managing goals in collaboration is therefore not so much concerned with a tension between congruent and diverse goals as with working with a combination of them".

Through The Summer Platform, Nicholas and Ian put people from sponsor organisations in contact with young people. They also employed a temporary team to work on a set of short-term projects to benefit residents of a particular place. The Summer Platform, connected to the value of learning, was much about people interacting with one another, regardless of which organisation they worked for. While imagined as an example of organising as a quadruple helix, bringing together people from public and private sectors with people from universities and communities (Marcovich and Shinn, 2011), The Summer Platform was only loosely such a form of organising. For example, the universities were represented by students working summer jobs rather than anyone employed by the universities sponsoring or contributing to the activities.⁶ There does not seem to be a term that quite fits this setting, where there was a team, artificially created perhaps as a proxy for a user community in some ways.⁷ This is perhaps why there was such a challenge for Ian and Nicholas to describe The Summer Platform. Much was mediated through their own practices. People turned to them for sensegiving (Gioia and Chittipeddi, 1991)

⁶ See page 7 of Paper 2 where I briefly mention how my presence over the summer and employment at Chalmers meant I contributed to the impression that The Summer Platform connected universities and companies.

⁷ User in the sense of newcomer to Sweden or resident of one of Gothenburg's perceived marginalised suburbs. See Table 6 for some example goals that may relate to the way the students may have been perceived as proxy users.

about the values and goals of collaboration, yet Nicholas and Ian understood that The Summer Platform could not only be about their own goals and values. They did not want it to be only their goals and values. They also suggested values that they perceived would attract sponsor organisations and would help the students be able to approach people working in East Lake who they wanted to involve in the projects. It appeared as if Ian and Nicholas were trapped as they tried to bridge creating *value* and creating *values*. They attempted to combine commercial interests with social interests, entangling values of learning, diversity and collaboration in the variety of goals put forward to people from potential or current sponsor organisations with the help of the students.

Interesting too in the case of The Summer Platform was that values were very much about speaking to individuals, rather than meshing with organisational values. Even though Ian and Nicholas tried to find ways to convince people that organisational goals could be achieved through The Summer Platform, participation in The Summer Platform seemed mainly to benefit people personally. It was about inspiring people to new career choices or new ways of working, as I show in Table 6 with example goals around the value of learning. As entrepreneurs successfully having started several companies in the past, Nicholas and Ian were concerned with creating value for everyone involved as well as for residents of the suburb. They seemed to welcome different agendas but not quite find one value around which sponsor organisations could converge. The Summer Platform, from what I understood from Ian and Nicholas about their disappointment after the summer, did not live up to their hopes of a space between industry, society and academia and of creating a boundary organisation (O'Mahony and Bechky, 2008). That summer, despite how close the students became, there were not enough people from the sponsor organisations who caught in their hearts what participation could be about. While Nicholas and Ian were organisational bricoleurs, drawing on values to select forms of organising (Perkmann and Spicer, 2014), they perhaps needed co-bricoleurs from the sponsor organisations who were interested in participating more and with whom they could harness what Breuer and Lüdeke-Freund (2017a) might consider as the integrative potential of values – using organisational values as a focusing device to shape the collaborative practices of The Summer Platform (Perkmann and Spicer, 2014).

CONCLUDING REMARKS: VALUES PRACTICES OF COLLABORATION

To approach the question of how entangled goals and values relate to collaborative practices in the two settings, I first presented the goals in organising as SustainACity, an organisation-of-organisations between fifteen partner organisations, as entangled in values of collaboration, diversity and openness. I then discussed some of the effects of this and the possible reasons due to the type of exploratory partnership. I next presented the goals in organising as The Summer Platform, an organisation-of-organisations between three sponsor organisations, an intermediary firm and a temporarily-employed team, as entangled in values of collaboration, learning and diversity. I discussed some of the effects of this and the possible reasons due to the initiators from the intermediary firm acting as sensegivers mediating the goals and values.

Both the settings I have discussed are examples of collaboration between people from the public sector, private sector and universities. Both settings are also in a second iteration of sorts – SustainACity was beginning what the coordinators saw as a second phase to set goals over the coming two years, The Summer Platform was the second summer in a row where InTheKnow had secured funding for eight weeks, working with some of the sponsor organisations from the previous summer and one new one, as well as trying to secure longer-term sponsoring agreements. Some people in both settings already had a history to draw on as they engaged in going on with one another, having perhaps a clearer idea of the variety of goals and values and a sense of how this variety shaped collaborative practices. Some people were newer and were initiated to the settings, one way or another, by those with a longer experience.

I now turn to more general ideas about entangled values and goals in inter-organisational collaboration. I consider the relationship of collaborative practices and values practices. I conclude by proposing four further studies to explore entangled goals and values in settings of inter-organisational collaboration.

ATTRACTING PEOPLE WITH DIVERGENT INTERESTS THROUGH OVERARCHING GOALS/VALUES

Both of the settings can be described as if there was one overarching, unifying goal – cooperation for sustainable public transport in one, and for future innovators to help organisations with values-based innovation in the other. What Vangen and Huxham (2011) might call a collaboration level goal, Breuer and Lüdeke-Freund (2017a) might see as connected to integrative potential of values. Such overarching goals mean that diverse interests can be resolved at a higher level of convergent interests. It provides the everyday illusion of consensus that participants seem to need in inter-organisational collaboration. This is about a higher purpose that they are working towards through their participation (Ollila and Yström, 2016). As such, the overarching goal may be better described as a value. The value enables participants to externally put on a front of a shared vision. While this front may be researched through interviews and surveys, spending time observing as people get work done, makes clearer the diverse interests, translated into activities, that are squeezed under that overarching value. Participants come face to face with different goals and must find a way to go on with one another (Shotter, 1996).

The idea of having one overall goal may be a communicative and political tool to appease stakeholders, rather than to assist participants as they go about their work with one another. This is precisely what Vangen and Huxham (2011) describe in the *origin* dimension of goals in inter-organisational collaboration – that external stakeholders rather than participants sometimes set a goal but that goal then has little, to borrow one of the values potentials from Breuer and Lüdeke-Freund (2017a), directive potential. There is integrative potential, too, of course, in a palatable, politically correct statement of what partners are working towards, compared to what may be more about pursuit of commercial interests or the reflected glory of being associated with a particularly well-liked organisation. Strategic and instrumental aspects are never far from sight, with participants working hard to pursue a package of goals related to what they hope to achieve for their home organisation. However, the overarching goal/value keeps these other goals at bay: one of the productive congruencies in relation to the level and

content dimensions of the dynamic tangled web perspective is that “congruence in organisation-level substantive purpose goals...tends to be the spur for initiating collaboration between partners” (Vangen and Huxham, 2011:754). This leads to the creation of a boundary organisation with a shared goal, or perhaps value, that people can converge around (O'Mahony and Bechky, 2008). As I have explored, finding a way to go on with each other in practice is not straightforward though when there is a web of goals.

MAKING SENSE OF A WEB OF GOALS AS A PART OF COLLABORATIVE PRACTICES

When an overarching goal attracts participants with divergent interests, participants struggle to negotiate goals that link their interests. We may assume that people have talked and agreed goals but as Huxham and Vangen (2011) say, in inter-organisational collaboration it is more a question of *managing* a web of divergent and convergent goals rather than *agreeing* goals. My starting point was the question of what keeps people working together when they realise that their colleagues have goals that differ from their own. I believe that this is the *it* that people catch in their hearts and keeps them working together. Catching this something in the heart seems to engage people in persevering together because they believe they are pursuing the same values. Without being able to feel connected to the practices around pursuing the web of goals associated with an overarching goal, collaboration may break down.

The central aspects of what collaboration entails vary from one group to the next. It is specific to each setting. People shape the aspects of collaborative practices in interaction with one another over time, learning for example to be sensitive about when to push an agenda from their home organisation (collaborative thuggery and assertive talk) and when to listen as they work to shape a collective agenda for the organisation-of-organisations (nurturing a spirit of collaboration and cooperative talk). In each situation there are constraints on what it is possible to say. One such set of constraints may relate to ideas around what participation entails – in the case of SustainACity, for example, the idea that each partner organisation decides for themselves what activities to initiate or to get involved in. These sets of constraints will be specific to a context and reflect values that people associate with a setting of inter-organisational collaboration. A sensitivity and curiosity about the priorities and processes that other people have, for example, could be part of norms for how to behave in a particular partnership. Indeed, as I argue in Paper 1, engaging in inter-organisational collaboration may be about cycles of identity work (Sveningsson and Alvesson, 2003) and identity play (Ibarra and Petriglieri, 2010) for the identities of home organisations and the organisation-of-organisations. Hearing about each other's goals may spark joint exploration of unforeseen possibilities.

While Breuer & Lüdeke-Freund (2017a) are concerned with potentials of values, there may be downsides to values-based activities, too. Learning more about each other's interests may be provocative, challenging and uncomfortable. Such moments are a part of what keeps alive collaboration between people as they make sense of how these relate to what they had assumed was a collaboration level goal and what I have discussed above as an overarching value. There are interlinked cycles of identity work and play, cooperative talk and assertive talk, and a spirit of collaboration and collaborative thuggery as people navigate between the personal and the collective, and between their home organisation and the organisation-of-organisations. Instead of engaging in practices of impression management to project a particular definition of inter-organisational collaboration, it may be more fruitful to spend time exploring how to break down fronts so that participants can come nearer to one another. Instead of working at maintaining a particular organisational identity, participants can play with possible identities in a spirit of exploring together an identity for the organisation-of-organisations.

VALUES PRACTICES IN EVERYDAY INTERACTION FOR INTER-ORGANISATIONAL COLLABORATION

I have discussed how collaboration itself appears as a value in settings of inter-organisational collaboration. There may be moments during joint work that have the potential to bring about values conflicts, when people realise that they have different perceptions of what the practices of work together would entail. These moments raise dilemmas as people struggle to both

represent a home organisation and to try to understand the perspective of a colleague from a partner organisation. It might be when a new person joins and questions what people take-for-granted about their ways of working together, or when someone suggests changing the scope of the partnership and inviting new partner organisations to participate. Such moments may put into question the values underlying the ethos of collaborative practices. Through such moments participants may come to understand that people had different values all along of what they hoped to pursue with others through the partnership. Indeed the idea of jointness – how to share, who to share with, what reciprocity there would be – may be subject to very different controls according to the different home organisations' working environments.

Collaboration appears a value underpinning people's everyday practices, both perceived as directing action and as a basis for that action, but understood in different ways by different people. The value of collaboration is enacted through particular values practices, such as a willingness to invest own resources in joint activities and to make long-term commitments. The value of collaboration may be entangled with other values, such as with learning, openness and diversity as in the settings I have discussed. These are notions of the desirable that are closely related to goals for joint work. I understand collaborative practices as being what Gehman et al. (2013:84) term values practices: "the sayings and doings in organisations that articulate and accomplish what is normatively right or wrong, good or bad, for its own sake." The challenge in inter-organisational collaboration is to bring together the values practices from the partner organisations into the organisation-of-organisations. Some will catch it in their heart, others will not. These values practices are what help orchestrate the multiple objectives when people come together for societal challenges (Dougherty, 2017) and when partner organisations interact on a relational basis rather than a transactional one (Blomqvist and Levy, 2006).

THEORETICAL & PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

My comments above imply that, within settings of inter-organisational collaboration, there is 1) an overarching value that people are working towards but which can mask the complexity of goals, 2) cycles of making sense of a web of goals that re-shape organisational identities for participating organisations and the organisation-of-organisations, and 3) a way of working together that may be considered as values practices. These values practices both direct participants in their work and are the reason for that work. This means that to understand what motivates people to participate in inter-organisational collaboration, researchers may wish to pay closer attention to the tangled web of goals and values that underpin collaborative practices by designing studies shaped around attitudes, behaviours, judgments and activities that reflect underlying value orientations (Breuer and Lüdeke-Freund, 2017a).

Values connected to collaboration are increasingly written into the worlds that politicians and the decision-makers of government agencies create through policies connected to funding research and development. Government agencies in Sweden prioritise particular forms of organising for innovation, encouraging joint applications that include project partners from research, public and private organisations. This requires attracting different organisations to want to take part, which in turn requires an overarching value (expressed as a goal) that people can relate to the values and goals of quite different organisations. The outward-facing collaboration level goal may be targeted at stakeholders such as funding providers. Researchers would do well to design further studies that allow critical inquiry below the surface of inter-organisational collaboration. This seems particularly important when considering whether public money is reaching the most suitable people or a wide enough pool of people to tackle societal challenges from the many perspectives that appear to be required.

Managers of inter-organisational collaboration would do well to shape moments that allow participants to raise their goals and values so as to encourage processes of shaping collaborative practices and of understanding better the values underpinning joint work. It is through frank discussions of goals and values that participants can realise the benefits that attracted them to participate in collaboration. Perhaps more than with team-working within an organisation, in settings of inter-organisational collaboration, it becomes especially important to find ways to talk about expectations of what participation entails. The assumptions shaping each person's

expectations mean that exploring how collaborative work is valued and what practices are imagined is vital.

FURTHER RESEARCH

Below I set out a few ideas for how to explore additional aspects of entangled goals and values in settings of inter-organisational collaboration.

A researcher could study a case of inter-organisational collaboration over a few years, by identifying a small sample of interviewees to meet with at regular intervals. During these interviews, the researcher could repeat the same interview protocol with a focus on questions of values and goals. The researcher could even draw out with the interviewee a map of the relationship of goals and values. Collecting data from a sample of interviewees would allow a series of episodes or snapshots, encompassing perspectives from a sample of participants in the case of inter-organisational collaboration. This could provide insight and a process view (Langley and Tsoukas, 2010) of how values and goals change over time, and how that process is implicated within the dynamics of practices between organisations. This study could be especially interesting when coupled with data that could indicate or measure performance of the inter-organisational collaboration. This would help identify the relationship between entangled goals and values and performance over time.

A further possible study could be collaborative research (Shani et al., 2004) where a design researcher, such as an interaction designer, works with the managers of an inter-organisational collaboration to design and test tools that can guide participants in talking about their goals and values with one another. Such tools could make tangible and visible the variety of goals. This study could incorporate a design perspective, iteratively prototyping and developing tools. These tools could then be tested and developed further in additional settings of inter-organisational collaboration. As the participants would use the tools on an ongoing basis, the researcher may need to develop tools for different stages in an inter-organisational collaboration. This study would have particular practical relevance, helping to build further on the values-based perspective and the tangled web perspective.

A third potential avenue to explore could be one where a researcher diagnoses the values and goals in the manner of a clinical inquiry (Schein, 1995). Through interviews with participants in inter-organisational collaboration, the researcher could then present a report that would make clearer the variety of goals and values and make proposals for how to handle this. This study design has the advantage of the outsider being able to reveal what participants themselves are either not aware of or are not able to talk about with their colleagues in the collaboration. The findings would assist participants in being able to describe and relate to the values landscape.

The fourth research design I propose is one surveying the initiators of inter-organisational collaboration about the values and goals that they intended in the collaborative practices of the initiative and how successful this package of values and goals was in attracting the desired number and variety of partner organisations. A large-scale survey could reveal similarities across particular societal challenges on how initiators frame the values. Likewise, national surveys could contribute an understanding of the relationship between values and goals and success in funding applications. Using additional data sources would help indicate the effects of funding particular settings of inter-organisational collaboration.

APPENDICES

FIELD REPORT FROM SUMMER 2016 IN EAST LAKE

This is an amended version of the field report I wrote in August 2016 for my supervisors at Chalmers. Offering a view of what participant observation meant to me while in East Lake, the report helps demystify my approach to fieldwork in that particular setting with the people I met. Writing a field report helps with moving from participant observation to analysis to writing up. It is also a useful starting point for reflection on methodological choices.

Finding the field. I first heard about The Summer Platform after Sanne [my supervisor] met Nicholas at a networking event. Nicholas' interest in the space between industry, society and academia connects closely to the interests of our research group [Managing in-Between]. In April 2016, I talked to Nicholas and his colleagues Mark and Ian about the possibility of a full-time ethnographic study during the summer when I was freed from term-time commitments. They welcomed my participation and seemed happy to hear how much time I would spend on the study. We kept in touch during the rest of April and early May. Fieldwork tentatively began in late May when I joined them in interviewing some Masters students and at a meeting of the sponsor organisations.

Fieldsites. The majority of the full-time fieldwork from late June 2016 was in East Lake at an office on the main square, loaned by Bricks, one of the sponsor organisations. Additional fieldwork was in other sites in East Lake that we, The Summer Platform participants, visited (such as the Doctors' Surgery, the offices of the sponsor organisations Kallar and Bricks in East Lake, the local church) or in central Gothenburg (e.g. CodePics office, InTheKnow office). Social events were at homes of participants or in bars and restaurants in central Gothenburg.

People. I felt considered as a sixteenth member alongside Nicholas and Ian (the entrepreneurs), Christopher, Mark, Lewis, Rebecca and Amy (the Masters students); and Maria, Louisa, Elizabeth, Sid, Jacob, Jeremy, Michelle and Ruth (the high school students). This was participant observation where I added myself (the PhD student) to the mix of people working in East Lake. Nicholas included my nationality [British] when presenting the thirteen nationalities that the team represented. Age-wise, we spanned 18-63 years. Some of the high school students, aged 18-21 years, had already finished school in other countries and were studying Swedish at high school in order to qualify for university in Sweden. Others were completing the standard high school requirements in Sweden, having moved to Sweden before completing high school education. One was a Swede still at high school. The Masters students, aged 23-29 years old, included Lewis and Mark who had graduated in summer 2015. Mark had been employed at InTheKnow since he graduated and was a Masters student during The Summer Platform in 2015. During the summer, there were perhaps forty people who we came into contact with during meetings, including the representatives from the sponsor organisations. The vast majority were white, middle-aged, Swedish men, representing the companies or organisations they worked for. We met some of the residents of East Lake during activities at the bus and tram stops that we arranged to get feedback on ideas. We also met people working in East Lake.

Situations and events. I observed some of the setting-up work before the sixteen of us began working in East Lake – interviews for the Masters students, a meeting of the sponsor organisations, Masters students' introduction meeting and a barbeque at Nicholas' house for the previous year's Masters students to meet the 2016 Masters students. Otherwise, the research took place 20 June – 12 August 2016. I followed whatever activities were taking place. I observed workshops or presentations, meetings with external stakeholders, teamwork as a whole group or in smaller project teams, and formal presentations of projects. As the office space was so small, I could often position myself so I could tune in and out of different conversations and activities (in English and Swedish). However, a large part of the summer the sixteen of us were

engaged in the same activity, meaning that many passively listened to a presentation by someone or looked on as a few of the more extrovert people discussed ideas.

Languages. English was the working language over the summer, giving me a clear advantage as a native speaker. Ian, Mark, Lewis and Nicholas spoke Swedish between themselves since three of them had Swedish as a native language. They often stood around the high desks that Ian, Nicholas and Mark worked at and this brought them together as a particular group, one I considered as the management team. Swedish and English were second or third languages for most of the students. Most people had at least a basic level in Swedish, so could translate for those who preferred Swedish to English. There were other shared languages (e.g. French, Arabic) that people spoke in pairs during breaks.

Participant observation and being in the field. I was never allowed to be just an observer. People were interested in knowing what I thought and what I was writing down. While I stopped myself from commenting on the content of the project work, from the start I participated in discussions between the five Masters students and with Ian and Nicholas about organising activities. While Nicholas invited me many times to have a lift in his car to and from East Lake along with Ian, Mark and Lewis, I only went in the car once, preferring instead to travel home on the tram with Chris, Amy and Rebecca and reflect on the day with them, rather than be associated with those people who I saw as the management team. I found many opportunities to talk with people individually, in pairs or in small groups. These were often when walking or travelling by tram to a meeting, getting a coffee from the kitchen or buying lunch. Everyone seemed open to chatting with me in this way. These were everyday conversations, ones where we chatted about whatever was preoccupying whoever was involved in the conversation, rather than research questions I had.

My introductions to people I met during the summer were partly professional – anthropologist, PhD candidate at Chalmers and research interests (which changed each time I described them) – but I also included my nationality and time in Sweden to match what people asked of the students. After the UK referendum about the country's membership of the EU (Brexit), I would joke that I was thinking about becoming Swedish. I did not labour the point to people I only met briefly about being a researcher. They may have thought that I was working on the summer projects, rather than there for part of my doctoral research, observing the people working on the projects.

I was something of a big sister to the high school students, chatting with them most often about learning Swedish, university applications and getting settled in Sweden. Freed as I was from working on the projects, I was also a bit of a joker figure, often teasing people in what I hope was construed as a friendly way. I tried to make situations feel lighter. I perhaps could have done more to care for the project assistants, especially as they were younger, when they seemed anxious or unhappy. I chose not to act as I did not want to come between the pairs of high school students and Masters student working together on a project. I was very emotionally involved in the everyday of the participants, particularly conflicts between the Masters students. Although for the most part I did not intervene, I took home my disappointment, sadness and frustration and talked through my feelings each day with Mårten [my partner] and in one call with Anna [my supervisor]. I often needed a reassuring hug from Mårten as I beat myself up about my lack of action when I observed behaviour that I felt was unfair. This meant that I was *in the field* constantly for two months, even when at home, either talking about my day or typing fieldnotes. I was up late each day typing the fieldnotes and lay awake at night thinking, reflecting, analysing.

Materials. The main material I gathered were fieldnotes typed up from in-the-field jottings. The fieldnotes covered observation of space and place, of individuals (gender, age, body language, tone of voice, dress codes), and of social practices (use of technology, use of artefacts). The bulk of the notes was about the details of what was said, who said it, when it was said, who else was present, and how others reacted (including those who remained silent). At first, I wrote jottings in a notebook that I then typed up as detailed fieldnotes in the evenings. The typing of fieldnotes

led me to write memos about the aspects I was becoming interested in, the questions emerging or the possible theories and concepts to use. Later in the summer, when the participants' project work involved them in sitting at their laptops at a table, I did the same, partially typing jottings about what was going on, or sometimes typing detailed fieldnotes from earlier jottings.

I gathered emails, took photos, made one audio recording and two video recordings. I also recorded the conversations after the full-time fieldwork ended. I had access to documents uploaded to the online shared folder and to the online project planning tool. I was part of a group chat on a communications app to which participants (including me) uploaded photos, videos and audio recordings from team discussions and also from activities outside of work. After the summer, Mark invited me to the group page on a social media site so that all 16 participants could stay in touch. I also made screenshots of news items published online by the sponsor organisations about The Summer Platform, and of the posts to another social media site during the week when Mark hosted the account of a Gothenburg social innovation group. I systematically catalogued most of these materials in NVivo.

Ethics. While the fieldwork methods were familiar to me, I had the challenge of working with young adults. It was especially important for me to be sensitive about how my being there affected my interlocutors. I repeatedly emphasised that I was there as a researcher and that I was paid and employed by Chalmers. I emphasised to the Masters students that if my presence made them uncomfortable, I hoped they would ask me to leave. I asked permission to follow along to meetings or join in. I was always told that I was welcome, as another person who could be later asked for their perspective on how a meeting had gone or who could defuse the tension of some moments. Before the summer proper began, I met the main representatives of the sponsor organisations during their first joint meeting. None of them raised any questions about my presence nor asked about confidentiality. This reveals the level of trust they placed in me, although the nature of the setting meant that I did not come across any sensitive company information during the summer. I will carefully consider my analysis of people's actions and provide them with pseudonyms in any writing to protect their privacy.

Initial themes. Some questions I noted down as part of memos, in the order they occurred to me during fieldwork:

- In what ways is The Summer Platform about shaping a learning experience?
- How does entrepreneurship connect to what happens in The Summer Platform?
- What kind of emotion work is involved in creating value in The Summer Platform?
- How does the frontstage presentation of self relate to the backstage making sense of work together?
- How does The Summer Platform relate to symbolic action for the sponsor organisations involved?
- What are the domains of expertise that give legitimacy to The Summer Platform?
- What is the emotion work for each participant involved in parading their difference?
- How do employees of the partnering organisations perform for the participants? (role models, inspirers?)
- How is East Lake another character in the story of The Summer Platform?
- How are various social contracts enacted between different people connected to The Summer Platform?
- How do the characters of Steve, Bob and John contrast with each other?
- What has the space in-between come to mean to The Summer Platform participants in their projects?
- What are the various ways that 'platform' is understood by participants of The Summer Platform?
- What are the differences (use of props, production of props) in the performances of the four different project teams?
- What does the unifying idea of "our generation" mean for the participants of The Summer Platform?
- How has my own presentation, and the presentation of me by others, changed over the summer?

PERSONAL GOALS & VALUES AS A RESEARCHER

Working towards a licentiate in Technology Management has felt incredibly alien after studying Social Anthropology at Masters level. I've questioned my own values and goals. While participant observation remains dear to me and is the basis for the design of the research, I've dropped the anthropological theorising. This rather casts me adrift from the goals and values that I associate with the full package of ethnography – not just the method of participant observation, but also the ethnographic storytelling. I believe in a research goal of making theoretical points from rich descriptions of what I have observed in the field – it is from this illumination that the *reliability* of anthropology comes (Engelke, 2008). My experiments with ethnographic writing appear as anecdotes when held up to the conventions of Technology Management, at least that is how I interpret the reactions to my writing from some colleagues. I knew I would not write a monograph when I started the job, but I had not fully taken in what that would mean. I remain dissatisfied with my efforts to distil hours of fieldwork to short pieces of writing.

I associate reflexivity with how I represent others in my writing (Clifford and Marcus, 1986) and how I impact people during fieldwork. I believe that research can be improved by being clear about one's standpoint (Harding, 2004, Harding and Norberg, 2005)⁸, the powers one has in relationship with one's interlocutors, the responsibilities that being a researcher entails and the ways that one's standpoint impacts the choices and interpretations made during research. I expect people to care about how my assumptions shape my scientific research, but not in terms of how I control my interests. Instead my own experiences and feelings are part of the research process.

⁸ Here comes the confession of my social location that Sandra Harding (2004:304) warns is unsuccessful. I am a white, middle class, straight, well-educated, British woman in her late thirties who has settled in Sweden for close to a decade. I have the fortune of being a native English speaker. Colleagues and interlocutors have accepted me as a credible researcher. I emphasise myself as non-Swede, new to Gothenburg, new to Chalmers, new to Technology Management, to take a position as an outsider and to invite my interlocutors and my colleagues to explain what is going on for me. However, I have replicated the conventional philosophies of social science, taking authority, in the appended papers. Presenting at international conferences is what I appraise as indicating my success in translating what surprises me during fieldwork into research topics of interest to a wider community of researchers.

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