



Sveriges lantbruksuniversitet
Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences

Collaboration for research and higher education in Sweden - Why should universities collaborate with industry and the public sector?

WSAN 15:th Seminar

SLU, *Science and education for sustainable life*

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Society, science and collaboration

- Some kind of introduction
- Reflections on societal expectations today, in western countries
- Why collaborate?
- A Swedish context
- What about SLU?
- Discussion

Introduction

- Just an agricultural economist...
- Why universities?
 - Who organise?
 - Who pays?
 - Who decides?
- From education to research
- From government to business

One way of looking at today's perspective

- Universities in western democracy's with tough budget constraints
 - more "bang for the buck"
 - a need for productivity growth
 - a hope for innovations
 - a lack of ideological visions

One way of looking at today's perspective

- Universities as key partners in the transformation of open democratic market economies
 - the entrepreneur as the road model
 - researchers in societal service
 - the triple helix
- Investments in research and education – pay back in jobs, export and taxes!

The case of Sweden

- Rather generous governmental funding and significant investments in R&D
- No cuts in research funding; funding available through competitive processes
- A significant increase in the importance of collaboration, co-production and business influence

The case of Sweden

- The latest research bill stress the importance of collaboration very clear, buzz word...
- Incentives for universities in terms of "excellence payments"
- Still very limited amounts channelled via "collaborative performance"
- Probably a stronger influence because of changed conditions among research agencies (where business contacts matters)

Where is SLU in this context?

- History matters (here as well)!
 - from production oriented collages including functions of a research institute, to a production oriented university, to a research oriented university
- Today internationally recognised and excellent research, limited education and less collaboration than previous, even if it is much compared to other universities

Where is SLU in this context?

- External collaboration specialists (“collaboration associate professors”)
- Four future platforms
 - Future Foods, Future Forests, Future Animals, Nature and Health, Urban Futures
- A number of Centres with collaboration as core business
- “Partnership Alnarp” – “SLU Partnership” arenas´ for collaboration
- Numerous initiatives for research collaboration, not the least within the forest sector

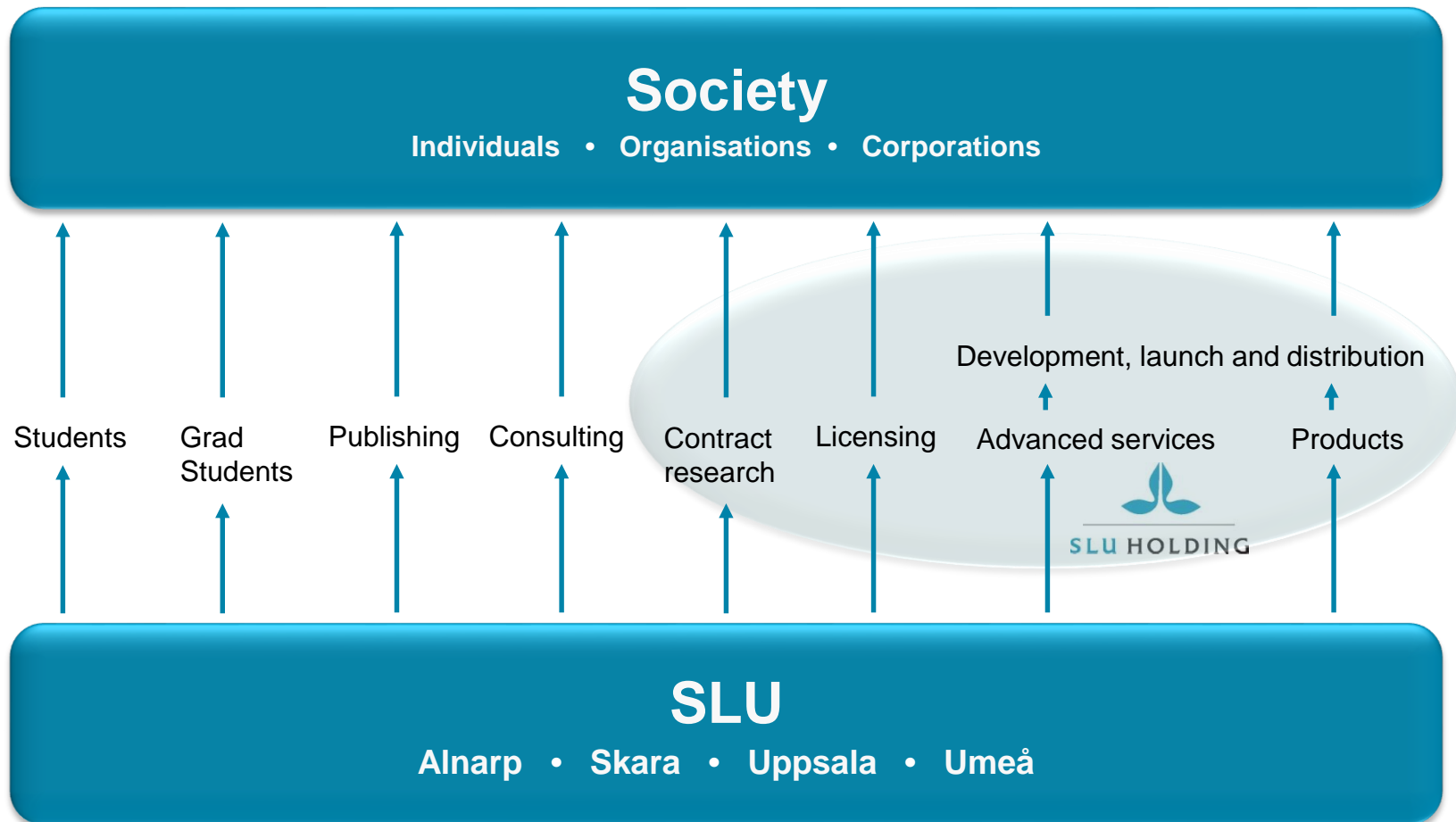
Where is SLU in this context?

- A specific organisation for collaboration related to field studies in agriculture
- Collaboration with rural actors and network for "Rural Sweden"
- A Holding company working with innovation support, SLU Holding
- Establishing science parts on campus, Green Innovation Park

Where is SLU in this context?

- Multifaceted flora of activities and initiatives
- A rather unclear organisational structure for external collaboration, but a kind of board at university level, and its siblings at faculty level
- We have identified five focus areas within the university strategy, for collaboration, and we have resources to work with them
- We benchmark with other universities and we include collaboration in our coming research quality review

Transfer of knowledge, know-how and solutions



Environmental monitoring and assessment – EMA collaboration with authorities

- Delivers science-based decision support
- Guided by social needs
- Constantly evolving
- Ten programs

Concluding remarks

- What is collaboration – actually?
 - common problems, or common goals
 - understand your partner – widen your understanding
- Why collaborate – actually?
 - many of today's problems are complex and trans- and interdisciplinary – you need partners to cope with them
 - society expects universities to collaborate and they will incentivize us to do so
 - shared happiness is double happiness!

Discussion

- Which are the values that the collaborative partners can contribute with?
- Where are the differences and similarities between university and industry driving forces for new knowledge and innovation?
- How can university governance contribute to stimulate these driving forces?
- How can university administrators support the collaborative processes?

