

# Supporting social innovation in the European Social Fund

## A case study of the Swedish competence center

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sociala innovationer partnerskapet för



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# Key concepts



## **EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND (ESF)**

ESF is the European Union's main instrument for supporting jobs, helping people get better jobs and ensuring fairer job opportunities for all EU citizens. This is achieved through project funding on the regional, national and international levels.

## **SOCIAL INNOVATION IN ESF**

“...the development and implementation of new ideas concerning products, services, practices and models, that simultaneously meets social needs and creates new social relationships or collaborations...”

European Union 2021, 2:8



# Background

- **All EU member states** are expected to support social innovation in their national ESF programs, to encourage innovative solutions and make policies more responsive to social change.
- **The Swedish ESF program** includes a specific program area for social innovation, with project funding for development of new solutions in labour market, education and social inclusion.
- **A national competence centre** for social innovation has been established with funding from The Swedish ESF Council to assist projects, managing authorities and ecosystem actors.

# COMPETENCE CENTER FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION SWEDEN

## MISSION

To establish a support function that promotes effective, lasting and value-creating social innovations in ESF+, through knowledge, tools and exchange.



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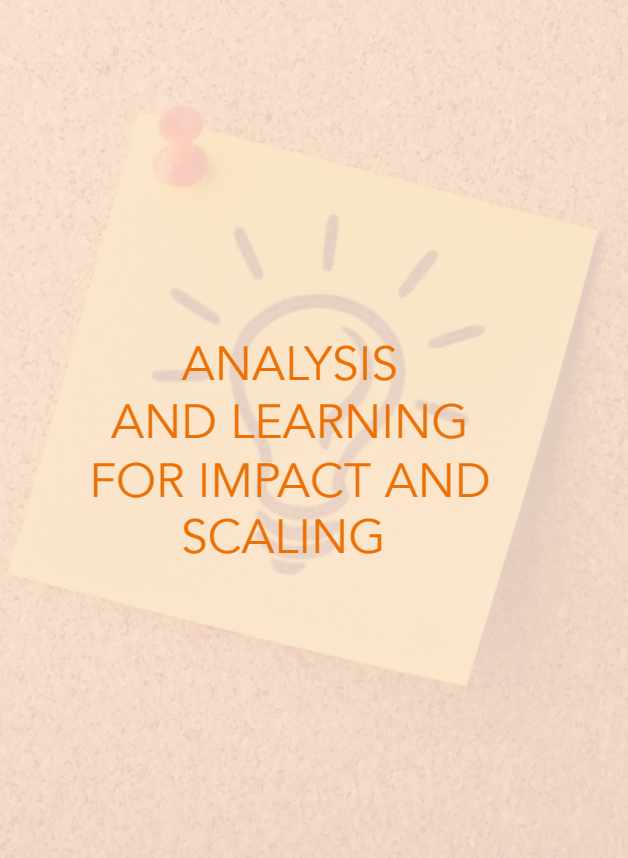


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# ACTIVITY AREAS



SUPPORT  
AND EXCHANGE  
– PROJECTS



ANALYSIS  
AND LEARNING  
FOR IMPACT AND  
SCALING



SUPPORT OF THE  
ESF-COUNCIL  
AND OTHER  
KEY ACTORS



SUPPORT OF  
THE ECOSYSTEM  
OF SOCIAL  
INNOVATION



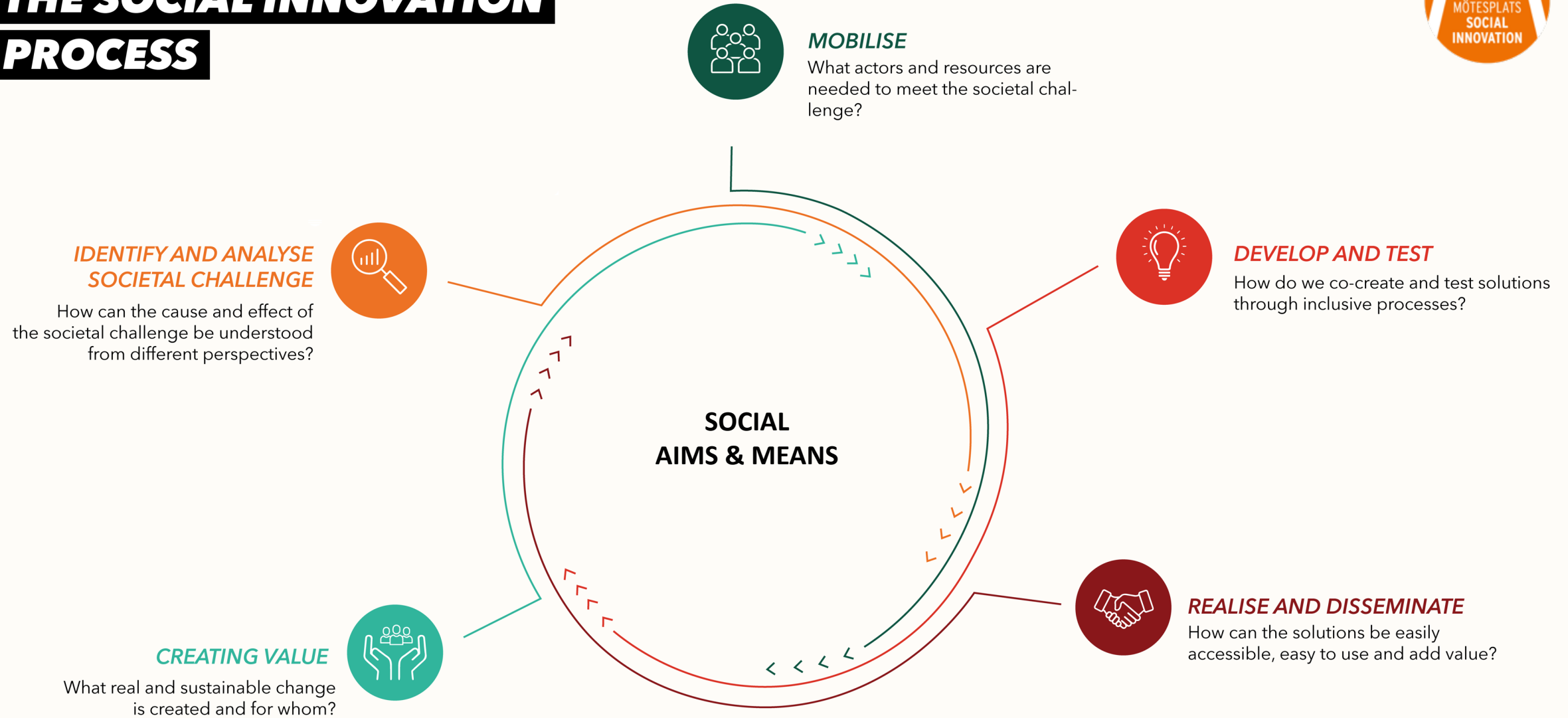
## Purpose

The purpose of the study is to provide new knowledge on the support of social innovation in ESF, through a case study of the Swedish competence centre efforts on the project, program and system levels.

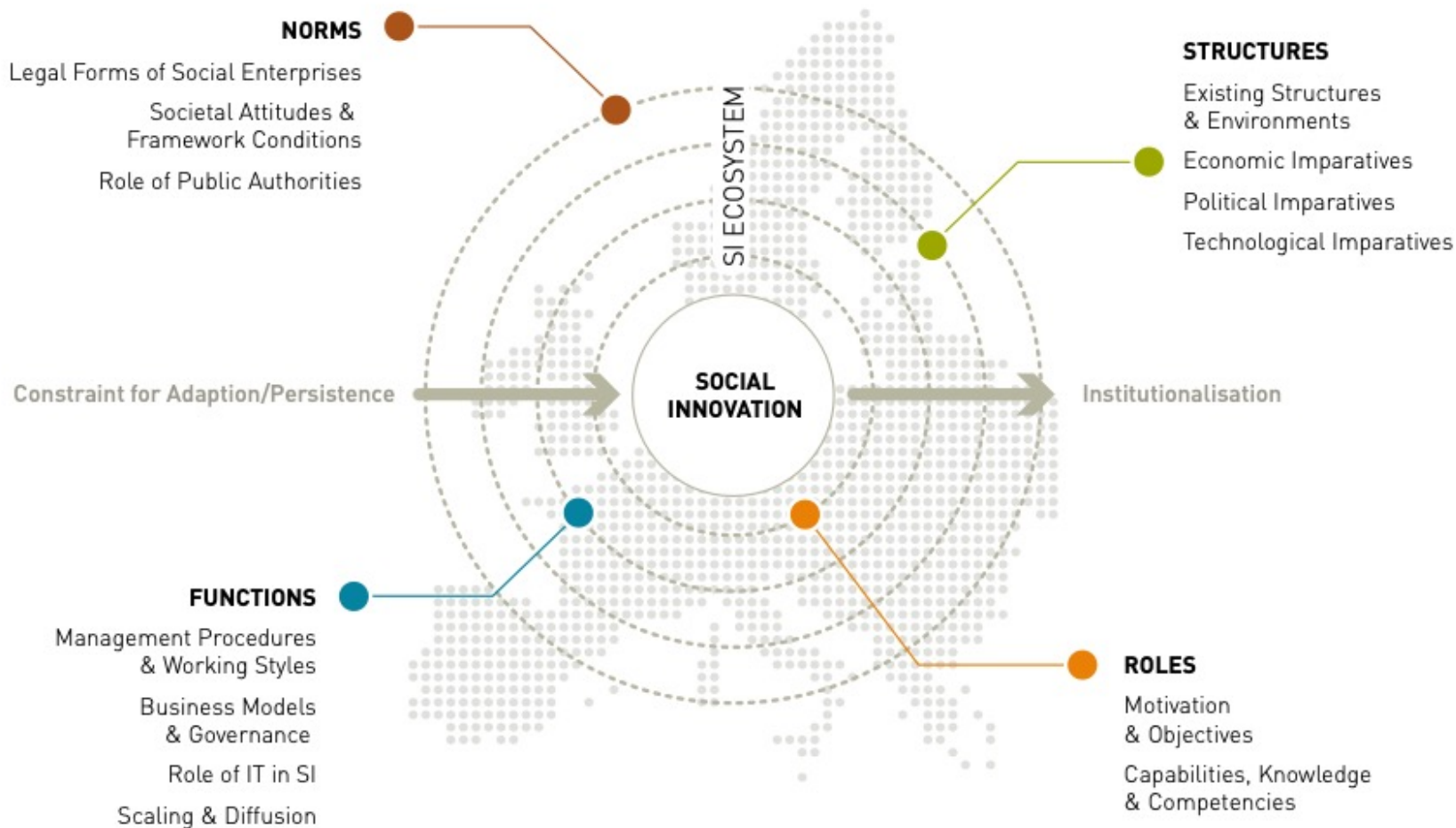
## Methods

Participatory observations  
Document studies  
Dialogue sessions

# THE SOCIAL INNOVATION PROCESS



# Ecosystem of Social Innovation

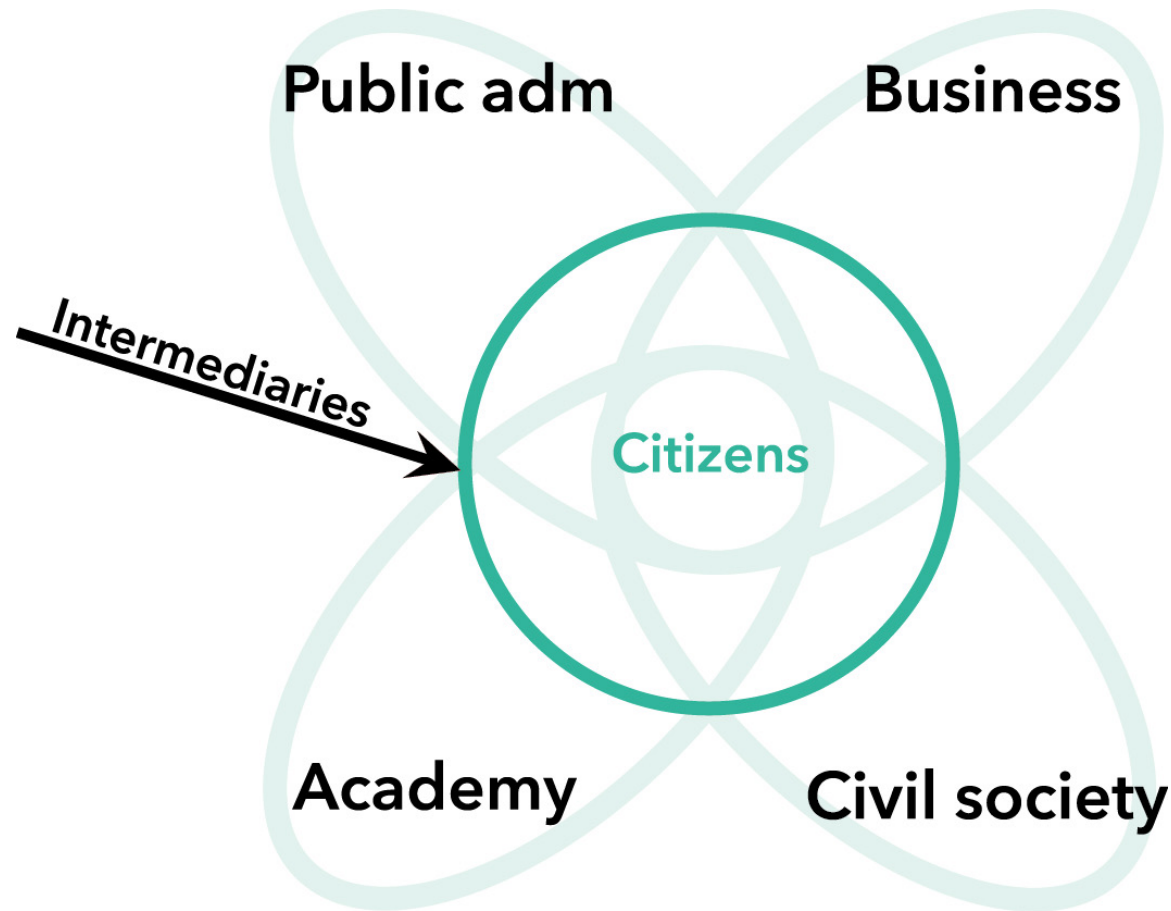


- **Meta-mapping** of the Swedish ecosystem of social innovation
- **Provision of knowledge and reflection** to the Swedish ESF Council's administration and resource distribution in the program area for social innovation
- **Insufficient political support** and funding for social innovation in Sweden
- **Combined support** to projects, managing authorities and ecosystem actors
- **Highlighting, facilitating and bridging** their respective spheres in the Swedish ecosystem of social innovation

The onion model (Eckhardt et al. 2017:75)



# Penta Helix Model



- **Involves all sectors** from the Swedish ESF Council, Malmö University, Coordination Associations, project owners and other ecosystem actors
- **Functions as an intermediary** by operating across sectorial and organizational boundaries
- Notion of different societal spheres as **interwoven and winding**
- **Involves citizens indirectly** as participants in ESF projects

The penta helix model (developed based on Björk 2015)

# Thanks for listening!



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