

## Documentation of the CASE workshop

*Learning from regional challenges with regard to sustainable development -  
A Master's programme on Sustainability-driven Entrepreneurship and Innovation*

**Date:** Tuesday, 12th of January 2016, 12:30pm to 4:30 pm

**Place:** Kirche am Campus (campus church), Feldmannskam 1, 49377 Vechta

Time	Agenda
12.30	Lunch and welcome coffee
14.00	<p>Start of workshop</p> <p>Official welcome and introduction of the CASE project by Prof. Dr. Marco Rieckmann, University of Vechta</p> <p>Short input by Juliette Braun, reference person for economic development of the City of Vechta</p> <p>Presentation of a draft for the Master's programme for Sustainability-driven Entrepreneurship and Innovation (Petra Biberhofer, Vienna University of Economics and Business, and Michael Ambros, University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences)</p> <p>Exchange and discussion in small groups on the Master draft and on regional challenges for sustainable development, innovation and sustainability-driven entrepreneurship</p>
16.30	Conclusion



## A Master's programme on Sustainability-driven Entrepreneurship

### Project team presents first outline in Vechta

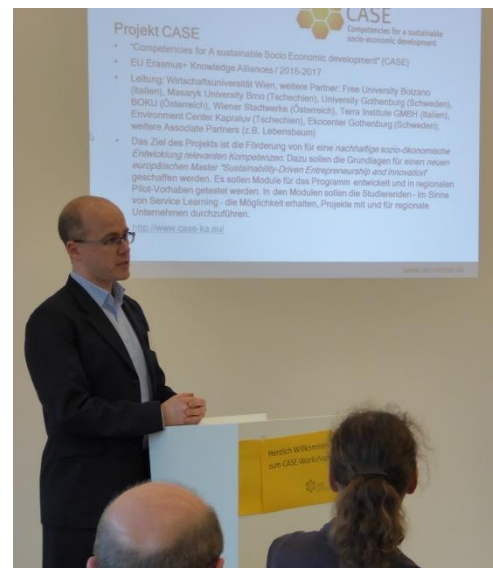
On Tuesday the 12th January 2016, 33 participants exchanged their ideas about the first draft for the Master's programme on Sustainability-driven Entrepreneurship in Vechta. Within the EU-financed CASE project, Prof. Dr. Marco Rieckmann and Lisa Bockwolfdt (University of Vechta) invited teachers and students of the University of Vechta as well as (economic) partners of the Oldenburger Münsterland to this event.

There are ten universities and economic partners from five European countries which work in the CASE project under the direction of the University of Economics in Vienna. The aim of the project is to develop an innovative concept for a European Master's programme, called "Sustainability-driven Entrepreneurship". It shall be shown how a Master's programme could look like where students of different fields can work together with regional partners and participate as entrepreneurs in the social transformation for sustainable development.

After a short greeting and introduction into the project by Prof. Dr. Marco Rieckmann, Juliette Braun, the reference person for economic promotion in Vechta, outlined the regional characteristics and challenges for entrepreneurship and sustainable development in the Oldenburger Münsterland. Following this, the first outline for the Master's programme was presented to the guests as a "work-in-progress" that should be discussed on the basis of some guiding questions: What is needed for implementing such a Master's programme at the University of Vechta? How can students be attracted to such a programme? How can regional partners, especially enterprises, profit from this programme and how could co-operations look like?



Greeting of the Workshop Guests in Vechta by Petra Biberhofer (University of Economics in Vienna) and Prof. Dr. Marco Rieckmann (left foreground). (photography: University of Vechta / Daubenspeck)



Welcome and introduction by Prof. Dr. Marco Rieckmann (University of Vechta). (photography: University of Vechta / Daubenspeck)



This project is financed by the Erasmus+ Programme

All in all, the feedback was positive. “We are very delighted about the fact that so many participants are interested in collaborating with the project”, Lisa Bockwoldt summarises.

The draft for the Master’s programme will be developed further with the help of the workshop results. From the upcoming summer semester on, some modules, especially some teaching co-operations with enterprises and small “start-ups” are going to be tested at the six participating universities. For example, there will be a course at the University of Vechta, called “Sustainable development in the Oldenburger Münsterland: Solving Problems with the help of innovative projects”. Until the end of the project in 2017, the finished concept of a European Master’s programme should be presented. Beside the concept development, the project will also think about a possible implementation at the participating universities.



Participants discussing the Master draft in small groups. (photography: University of Vechta / da Costa Silva)



## Results: Small groups

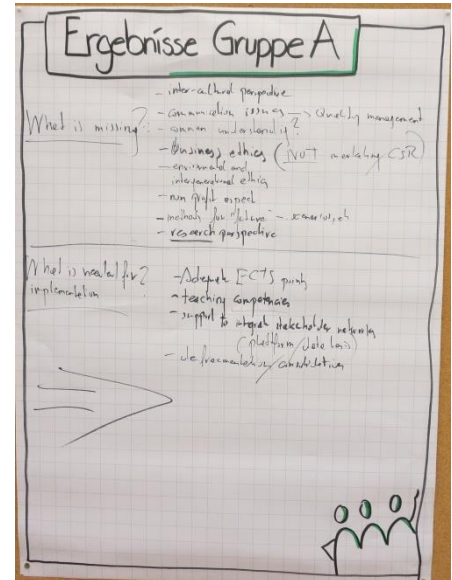
### A. Teachers

What is missing?

- intercultural perspective (integration of non-European concepts)
- aspects of communication and quality management
- preparation of a common understanding of central concepts from natural sciences
- business ethics, environmental ethics and intergenerational ethics
- non-profit orientation (Social Entrepreneurship)
- methods for future scenarios
- research perspective / research-based learning

What is needed for an implementation?

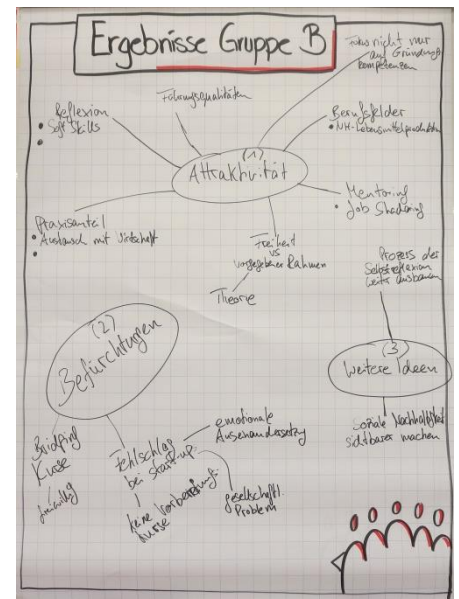
- ECTS points adjustment (bigger modules, min. 5 CP)
- development of competencies for teachers (teacher training)
- support for integrating a stakeholder network into the programme
- deciding between M.Sc, M.A, MB or a certificate programme



## B. Students

When would a Master's programme like that be attractive for you?

- special support for "self-reflection, further development and soft skills"
- not only a sole focus on founding competencies, but also on leadership qualities, for instance
- if different job fields, e.g. sustainable food production, are clearly stated in the programme description (i.e. what students can do after the programme), specific competencies can be taught to make them do well on the job market. It should be apparent to employers what they can expect from graduates
- providing framework for orientation: good relationship between freedom and a given space for theory
- practical part and the opportunity for exchanging ideas with different partners i.e. through practical work in the economy during the programme (e.g. Service Learning)
- mentoring and job-shadowing, international orientation of the programme and the chance for exchange with other universities/students



What would be your fears choosing this Master's programme?

- bridging-courses - voluntary
- cohort size and different disciplinary backgrounds
  - o need for preparation courses
- start-up failure
  - o emotional examination is needed
  - o society has a problem with failure

What else would be interesting for you and which parts should be expanded?

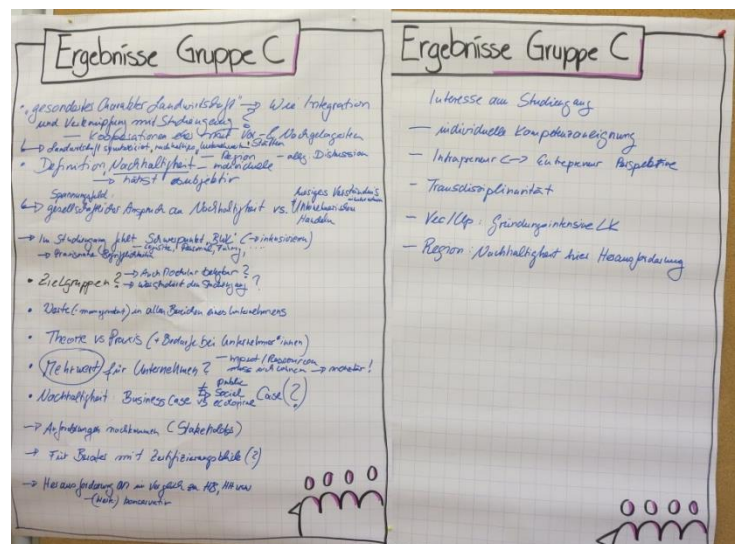
- the Master's learning culture:
  - o making mistakes is okay, integrate obstacles and point out that there is not always a solution (weak of failure)
- nevertheless, solution oriented work within the programme through practical co-operations and focus on projects is interesting and important
- expand process of self-reflection
- visualise social sustainability



### C. Regional (economic) actors I

What do you think is interesting about the suggested Master's programme?

- acquisition of individual competencies
- dualism of intra- and entrepreneurship perspectives will be beneficial not only for prospective founders, but also for existing companies
- transdisciplinarity: the Master's programme has practical relevance in and for companies, sustainable entrepreneurship
- it is tempting to look at sustainability and socio-economic entrepreneurship as a whole, the topic has an important regional aspect with a diverse point-of-view at the same time
- could educate consultants for certification
- integrate more:
  - o value management in all parts of a company
  - o knowledge about business studies for logistics, staff, leadership and others



What would co-operations look like?

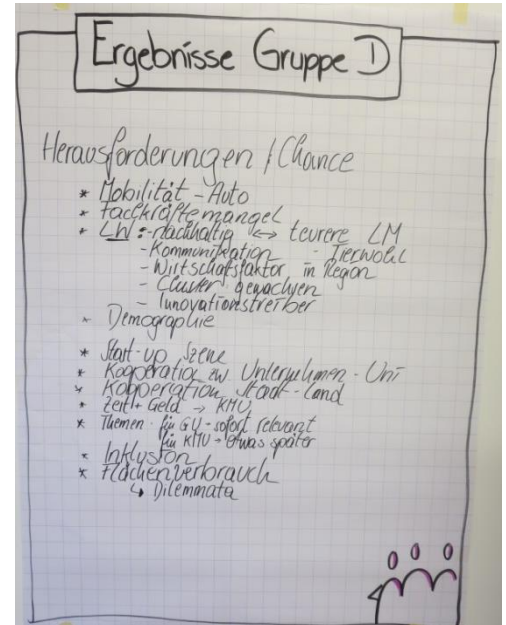
- the districts of Vechta and Cloppenburg have high rates of business creation, leading throughout Germany, strong entrepreneurial spirit → though mostly small companies or family businesses → Master's programme for this region would be interesting
- How can the Master's programme be combined with agricultural businesses/farms that have a special character? → upstream and downstream production; exchange of ideas about sustainability
- Master's programme should be communicated with concepts and language easy to understand → use concepts in communication that are close to practical experience (e.g. "accompany young founders who have great ideas")
- Requirement for companies? How do you get companies (from theory to practice)? What is the added value for participating companies?



## D. Regional (economic) actors II

Which regional challenges and chances do you see regarding sustainability oriented entrepreneurship and innovations?

- mobility
- lack of qualified personnel
- agriculture
  - o sustainable vs. expensive food
  - o communication
  - o well-being of animals
  - o economic factor in the region
  - o grown structures
  - o regional drivers of innovation
- demography
- start-up scene
- co-operation between companies and university
- co-operation between city and country
- time and money in small and middle size companies
- topics of sustainability should be relevant for big companies from the beginning and for small and middle size companies later
- inclusion
- dilemmas with surface usage



What do you think is exciting about this Master's programme?

- benefit
  - o long-sightedness
  - o requirements of the region
  - o trends
  - o specific and close to businesses
  - o business succession
- motivation
  - o economic problems
  - o technical solutions
  - o innovations/ search for ideas
  - o requirement for small and middle size businesses (need for qualified personnel)
- dilemmas
  - o staying economical vs. students trying out things
  - o find common ground and start a dialogue
  - o three dimensions of sustainability
- co-operation





**CASE**

Competencies for a sustainable  
socio-economic development



**Universität Vechta**

*University of Vechta*

- region provides resources → start-ups provide ideas → students work on ideas and test them
- team building e.g. students with adolescents, interdisciplinary, with artists



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