

August 22, 2024



# University-City Connections in Contemporary Initiatives

Master thesis

Kuzee, I.F. (Irene)  
Radboud University

Student number: s1100829  
Human Geography  
Faculty of Management  
Supervisor: Rianne van Melik  
Nijmegen

# Colophon

---

Title: University-City Connections in Contemporary Initiatives

Author: Irene Kuzee

Student number: s1100829

Program: Master Human Geography, specialisation Urban and Cultural Geography

Faculty: Faculty of Management

University: Radboud University

Supervisor: Rianne van Melik

Completion date: August 22, 2024

Place of publication: Nijmegen

Contact information: irenekuzee@outlook.com

Acknowledgements: special thanks to my supervisor; Rianne van Melik, my mentor from Radboud University's Latin school; Martijn Stevens and all respondents for their cooperation.

Front cover illustration: by Ingrid Ensing (Radboud Universiteit & Gemeente Nijmegen, 2023)

# Preface

---

Reflecting on the journey of researching and writing this thesis, I have explored the changing potential that lies at the intersection of universities and cities, collaborative efforts and co-creative approaches. This research focuses on initiatives aimed at connecting city and university, with a specific emphasis on the initiative of Radboud University and the municipality of Nijmegen regarding the Latin school.

By comparing the Latin school with similar initiatives in Dutch cities, this research has provided valuable insights that contribute to the collaboration between university, city and society. I am very grateful to my supervisor, Rianne van Melik, for her guidance and support. Her expertise and encouragement enriched my understanding and shaped the depth of this research. I would also like to express my appreciation to Martijn Stevens my mentor from Radboud University's Latin school and the respondents who generously shared their perspectives, expertise, and experiences.

This thesis represents not only an academic effort, but also a personal and professional milestone from which I have learned immensely. With this research, I hope to spark dialogue to critically reflect on and inspire innovative approaches to creating meaningful collaborations.

Irene Kuzee

August 22, 2024

Master's Student, Human Geography

Radboud University, Faculty of Management

# Abstract

---

This thesis explores the connection between the university and the city through a benchmark study of the Latin school in Nijmegen. The Latin school, temporarily loaned to Radboud University by the municipality of Nijmegen, represents a novel initiative to bridge the university and society. As the school prepares to open in September 2024, this research gives insights into the different aspects of fostering connection.

The study delves into the objectives, collaborative efforts, and co-creative approaches of the Latin school, comparing these with similar initiatives in other Dutch university cities. It aims to identify crucial factors that contributed to the initiatives and offers insights for improvement of the Latin school.

Five primary factors; objectives, collaboration, co-creation, time and space emerge as central to fostering a meaningful connection between the university and the city. The research highlights the importance of top-down support, proactive stakeholder engagement, and flexible, hands-on methodologies. It also underscores the need for personal engagement and the challenges of balancing institutional goals with community needs. Thereby, the concepts of time and space emerged, with time reflecting the impact of temporary or structural initiatives, and space providing insight into the value of non-fixed locations in fostering connections.

The research contributes to the broader debate on university-city engagement and offers valuable insights for other university cities considering similar initiatives. It highlights the importance of mutual understanding, open communication, and adaptability in collaborative efforts. Moreover, it underscores the evolving role of universities in society, emphasizing the need for deeper cultural shifts to achieve meaningful and lasting connections with the community.

# Table of contents

---

## Contents

### **1. Introduction**

1.1 Research objective.....	7
1.2 Research questions.....	7
1.3 Societal relevance.....	8
1.4 Scientific relevance.....	8
1.5 Structure of thesis.....	10

### **2. Literature review**

2.1 Connection between city and university.....	11
2.2 Objectives of fostering connection.....	12
2.3 Collaboration to foster connection.....	14
2.4 Co-creative approaches.....	16
2.5 Connection conceptualised.....	18

### **3. Methodology**

3.1 Research design.....	19
3.2 Respondents and discourse.....	19
3.2 Data collection.....	23
3.3 Critical discourse analysis.....	24

### **4. Insights from contemporary initiatives**

4.1 Objectives.....	27
4.2 Collaboration.....	31
4.3 Co-Creation.....	34

### **5. Insights from Latin school**

5.1 Objectives.....	37
5.2 Collaboration.....	39
5.3 Co-creation.....	42

<b>6. Latin school vs other contemporary city-university initiatives.....</b>	<b>44</b>
---	-----------

<b>7. Conclusion and discussion</b>	
7.1 Conclusion .....	48
7.2 Weaknesses and limitations.....	50
7.3 Recommendations for further research .....	51
<b>8. References</b> .....	<b>53</b>
<b>9. Appendices</b>	
9.1 Overview of potential benchmarks in the Netherlands from google search.....	60
9.2 Interview guide benchmarks .....	61
9.3 Overview of codes and meanings.....	63

# 1. Introduction

---

Strengthening the connection between the university and the city in a new manner, the Latin school located in the middle of Nijmegen's city centre will soon serve as a part of the university in the city. After decades of use as an architectural office, the Latin school recently became temporarily available for a new purpose. A vibrant interpretation was sought in cooperation with partners who bring their own audience to this unique place. From there, the idea arose from the municipality of Nijmegen to temporarily loan the Latin school to Radboud University. This can also be considered a gift from the municipality to Radboud University in honour of its 100th anniversary (Ensing et al., 2023).14/10/2024 13:09:00

I am intrigued by the Latin school because it aspires to be a place where science and practice intersect, and where education and research become visible and experienceable (Radboud Universiteit & Gemeente Nijmegen, 2023). The joint exploration drafted by the Nijmegen municipality and the Radboud University states that the key principles in this regard are accessibility and openness of the building and activities that will take place. (Radboud Universiteit & Gemeente Nijmegen, 2023). Additionally, I am interested in the advocated co-creative approach described. According to the joint exploration, this approach of co-creation with the users of the Latin school aims to cultivate a sense of belonging, enhancing the overall connection and ownership of the place (Radboud Universiteit & Gemeente Nijmegen, 2023).

The joint collaboration between the university and the municipality on the Latin school is currently in the programming phase. The program and activities at the Latin school will commence from September 2024. However, questions arise regarding how Radboud University and the municipality can achieve their ambitions in a manner that is both effective and impactful. Not only Radboud University seeks new ways to foster connection between the city and the university. Several university cities share similar inquiries. Initiatives are emerging where university locations in city are opened to the public. These initiatives seek collaboration between the university, the municipality, and residents, aiming to strengthen the city-university relationship. These initiatives can be seen as benchmarks—reference points that provide inspiration and insights into how this approach of fostering connection between the city and the university functions. Thereby, these benchmarks can offer insights and inspiration for the Latin school in achieving its ambitions.



Figure 1.1: Illustration Latin school Nijmegen (front cover) (Radboud Universiteit & Gemeente Nijmegen, 2023)

## 1.1 Research objective

This research focuses on the multifaceted dynamics of the university-city relationship within the context of university initiatives opened to the public. The public university initiatives I researched have the collective aim of connecting the university with the city. In this context the term connection refers to the relationship and interaction between the university and the city for mutual benefit and enrichment. It encompasses connection at different levels. Both at the governmental level, between the university and the municipality. As well as at the community level, in strengthening the connection between various groups such as students, residents, scientists and visitors to a city.

Since the Latin school is currently in the programming phase and will open its doors in September 2024, the effect of the location on fostering connection cannot be analysed yet. The project team, comprising policy officers from the municipality and Radboud University, seeks guidance on utilizing the temporal use both impactful and effectively. Therefore, my research will contribute to the development of the Latin school by evaluating its current phase, offering insights into its progress and areas for improvement. Additionally, studying similar initiatives as a reference point within a benchmark study, can provide insights to identify crucial factors and lessons learned. This will enhance our understanding of effective approaches into how different factors influence fostering connection between the city and the university. Subsequently, I will assess these factors in the context of the Latin school's current phase to provide insights into crucial factors or areas for improvement in realising its ambitions.

Central in studying the connection between the university and the city are three influencing factors emerged by me from the literature study. These encompass the factors of objectives, collaboration, and co-creation. The factor of objectives is defined in this study as the established goals, motivations and ambitions related to connecting the city and the university. Additionally, collaboration underscores the importance of collaboration between the key stakeholders, including the university, the municipality, and other key partners, in establishing a university initiative opened to the public. Lastly, the factor co-creation describes the co-creative approach, methods and strategies employed to achieve the objectives.

## 1.2 Research questions

In order to guide the research objective, a research question has been formulated. The main question driving this research is: What factors contribute to fostering connection between the university and the city comparing contemporary initiatives in Dutch university cities to the Latin school in Nijmegen?

To delve deeper into this overarching question, several sub-questions will be explored:

1. What are the **objectives** of benchmarks and the Latin school regarding fostering connection between the university and the city?
2. How is the **collaboration** between key stakeholders of benchmarks and the Latin school, regarding fostering connection between the university and the city experienced by the project managers of the initiatives?
3. In what ways are the benchmarks and the Latin school adopting a **co-creative approach** to contribute to fostering the connection between the city and the university?

### 1.3 Societal relevance

Research on the connection between university and city through an initiative opened to the public can yield valuable insights for the programming and implementation of the Latin school in Nijmegen. Radboud University, with the municipality of Nijmegen in a collaborative role, has expressed the need for insights into the programming phase and guidance on effectively utilizing the temporary space to achieve a significant impact. Therefore, the policy advisor of Radboud University, who has been appointed as the project manager of the Latin school, asked me to conduct research on this topic. However, the significance of this research extends beyond the Latin school. This research can contribute to a broader debate and serve as a valuable study for other university cities in search of insights into connecting the city and the university or considering establishing a university location opened to the public.

The desire to work on strengthening the connection between the University and the city is a temporary development (Williams, 2017). Various scholars highlight the current zeitgeist, which calls for an evolving relationship between the city and the university, in which the university's role is shifting from a robust institution to a socially engaged, impactful, and accessible entity within the city. For instance, Hebbert emphasizes the importance of transparency and accessibility of the university, which not only contributes to the knowledge economy but also enhances the well-being of both students and city residents (Hebbert, 2018). Walker (2013) highlights the role of universities as spaces for fostering capabilities and social citizenship, especially in the face of growing inequality. Similarly, Nichols (2015) stresses the necessity of community-campus collaboration in fostering positive relationships and interactions with society.

This research can provide insights into various aspects in strengthening this connection. Firstly, it offers an understanding of the objectives that university cities have in establishing a university initiative opened to the public. It can contribute to highlighting the importance of connecting the city and the university and shed light on why this objective is essential explained by contemporary initiatives. This is crucial, as recent studies indicate that leveraging the connection between the university and the city can enhance the university's societal contribution (Hebbert, 2018). Moreover, the study can provide insight into the significance of collaboration between the university and key social partners, such as the municipality, serving as a reference point for similar initiatives elsewhere. Effective collaboration is essential for addressing complex urban challenges and promoting mutual benefits for both the municipality and the university (Rathenau Instituut, 2020). Furthermore, this research can offer insights into co-creative approaches. Co-creation is a widely discussed concept in geography and planning, but its broad interpretation can pose challenges for effective implementation (Jones, 2018). Examining benchmarks utilising a similar approach can provide insights for other university cities, enabling them to learn from the challenges and opportunities highlighted by the research. Therefore, this research not only addresses the needs of the Latin school project but also provides valuable insights into the broader debate on the evolving role of universities in strengthening their connection with the city.

### 1.4 Scientific relevance

This research is scientifically significant as it explores the complex dynamics of shared objectives, co-creative approaches, and collaborations between the universities, municipalities, and other key social partners. At its core, this study aims to enrich existing literature by situating itself at the intersection of these debates. By addressing the importance of fostering connection between the city and the university in setting objectives, highlighting the collaborative structures within this connection, and the role of a co-creative approach in urban planning, it advances theoretical understandings in these domains. Through its exploration of alternative approaches and critique of prevailing assumptions, this research contributes to ongoing discussions on the role of universities in urban development (Martínez-Acosta et al., 2023).

Understanding this intersection is crucial based on current research findings. Scholars like Williams (2017) highlight that universities and municipalities are increasingly striving to strengthen the connection between city and university. Nichols (2015) supports this view by emphasizing the importance of city-campus collaboration in fostering positive relations and encounters with society. Conversely, Hebbert's (2018) study reveals that, among other factors, the modernist planning approach to campus construction has widened the gap between the city and the university. This gap limits opportunities for meaningful connections between city and university. Moreover, co-creative strategies have been recognized for their potential to foster positive social change (Carpenter & Horvath, 2022). Previous research has examined community-university and city-university engagement through participatory processes, stressing the importance of collaboration in addressing urban challenges and enhancing community engagement (Bhagwan, 2020). However, several studies, among others, a case study on The Philippi CityLab in Cape Town (Brown-Luthango, 2013), conclude there is a lack of understanding approaches to involve communities meaningfully and sustainably in the development of a university initiatives opened to the public.

Thereby, studies indicate that effective collaboration between key stakeholders is crucial for strengthening the connection between cities and universities, enabling a better understanding, addressing, and solving of complex urban challenges, and promoting mutual benefits for all stakeholders involved (Pauer et al., 2020). However, a case study on two different host city municipalities of the Simon Fraser University highlights that a challenge exists in the complexity of establishing genuine collaboration between the university and government (Curry, 2016).

Furthermore, the scarcity of studies on Dutch initiatives on university initiative opened to the public is notable. Understanding the Dutch context is essential to address the unique circumstances and dynamics within the Netherlands regarding city-university connections. While global or European case studies may offer valuable insights, they often lack direct applicability to the Dutch education system. Dutch university campuses and the Dutch education system are unique, as the Netherlands is perceived as a leader in modernizing higher education policy and has been introducing the most 'entrepreneurial' policies among European countries (Rymarzak et al., 2020). The comparative research shows that Dutch university campuses have significant autonomy over their campus management providing them with flexibility and opportunities for growth (Rymarzak et al., 2020). Furthermore, the spatial configuration of Dutch campuses is characterized by openness and public accessibility (Yaylali-Yildiz et al., 2022). Research conducted on the Uithof campus in Utrecht emphasizes that this openness encourages integration between the university community and the wider urban community (Yaylali-Yildiz et al., 2022). These unique characters underscore the importance of localized research.

The predominance of single case studies further exacerbates this issue. Without comparative benchmark studies, identifying best practices and assessing effectiveness becomes challenging, hindering informative exchange, the identification of strengths and weaknesses, and thereby impeding informed decision-making regarding new or contemporary initiatives (Huggins, 2010). Therefore, there is a need for research that positions itself at the intersection of debates on objectives of fostering connection between the city and the university, city-university collaborations, and the role of a co-creative approaches by delving into contemporary initiatives in the Dutch context to advance theoretical understandings in these areas.

## 1.5 Structure of thesis

The thesis begins with an introduction to the research topic: the connection between universities and cities, focusing on contemporary initiatives including the Latin school on its role as an initiative of the university opened to the public, collaborative programming, and the adoption of co-creative approaches.

The literature review critically examines existing theories on university-city connections. It reviews literature on different objectives universities may have in strengthening this connection, the complexity and relevance of collaboration between the university, the municipality, and other key partners, and co-creative approaches.

Methodologically, the thesis adopts a qualitative approach in the form of a benchmark study, studying similar initiatives to the Latin school as reference points. Qualitative data are collected through policy document analysis and seven semi-structured interviews with project managers of contemporary initiatives, including the Latin school. The data is analysed using Fairclough's critical discourse analysis techniques. This approach allows for a nuanced exploration of how language and discourse shape perceptions, experiences, and dynamics within the initiatives.

The empirical findings are discussed in relation to the theoretical findings from the literature review. Additionally, the findings from the benchmarks are compared to the findings from the Latin school to provide comprehensive insights. The conclusion and discussion synthesize key insights, highlighting contributions to theoretical advancements and offering recommendations for the Latin school and practitioners involved in similar initiatives.

Appendices contain supplementary materials such as interview transcripts and coding schemes, ensuring transparency, and supporting the robustness of the research methodology.

## 2. Literature review

---

### 2.1 Connection between city and university

Central in studying the connection between the university and the city are three influencing factors identified by me through the literature review conducted for this research. The three factors influencing connection encompass: objectives, collaboration, and co-creation. The factor of objectives is defined in this study as the established goals, motivations and ambitions related to connecting the city and the university. Additionally, collaboration underscores the importance of collaboration between the key stakeholders, including the university, the municipality, and other key social partners, in establishing a university initiative opened to the public. Lastly, the factor co-creation describes the co-creative methods and strategies employed to achieve the objectives. These concepts emerged from the literature as frequently mentioned and significant in shaping the level of connection experienced between the city and the university, which will be elaborated upon in this chapter.

The connection between universities and their host cities is a crucial and dynamic concept that profoundly shapes both entities. Universities, as centres of learning, research, and innovation, do not exist in isolation; they are deeply embedded within the urban environments that surround them. In this context, connection refers to the multifaceted relationship and interaction between the university and the host city, encompassing all levels from residents to governance, aimed at mutual benefit and enrichment.

A university affects city dynamics in several aspects. This impact on city dynamics is complex to encompass, as it differs per city and university and affects a wide range of aspects. However, some shared characteristics typify a university city. Generally, a university contributes to the city's economic landscape by attracting students, staff, and research institutes (Audretsch & Feldman, 1996). Universities also tend to encourage entrepreneurship through knowledge spill overs and collaborations between academics and local businesses, thereby changing the city's demographics. Growth is often seen in the younger population and cultural diversity due to the influx of international students and academics (Bilbokaite & Bilbokaitė-Skiauterienė, 2018). Furthermore, a university influences the cultural enrichment of a city, manifested in cultural events and the presence of students from various cultural backgrounds (Florida, 2003). They often play a significant role in urban expansion and redevelopment of surrounding areas, leading to infrastructure improvements (Wiewel & Perry, 2015). Additionally, universities contribute to the exchange of knowledge between the academic realm and the local community, which can foster innovation and subsequently influence policy making (Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff, 2000).

The connection between the university and a city has a significant impact on urban dynamics. The aforementioned aspects show positive effects; however, negative aspects can also occur. The growing (young) population can affect the increasing cost of living. The arrival of this creative class can lead to gentrification, where the cost of living rises, eventually displacing the original residents. This can negatively impact social cohesion and diversity in a city (Komarek-Meyer, 2019). Additionally, the university may contribute to a brain drain effect, with talented graduates potentially seeking employment elsewhere after completing their degrees (Florida, 2010). Furthermore, a university or campus can trigger conflicts with the local community, such as issues related to space utilisation, traffic congestion, noise levels, and changes in the character of the neighbourhood due to the growing number of students settling in the city (Ferman & Hill, 2004). Finally, a university can influence growing inequality and the level of accessibility (Pinheiro et al., 2012). This is partly caused by a lack of engagement by universities with the local community, leading to inequality in access, as university activities and communication may not adequately align with the needs of the broader population (den Heijer & Curvelo Magdaniel, 2018).

### Spatial location in fostering connection

The connection between the city and the university may be related to the history of establishing a university at a specific location within the city. Research shows that the spatial location of university buildings is a crucial element influencing the relationship between the university and the city (Hebbert, 2018). A university can take on various forms within an established urban structure. Broadly, there are three spatial configurations in which a university campus can be situated: greenfield campus outside the city, gated campus within the city, and buildings integrated within the city (Figure 2.1) (den Heijer & Curvelo Magdaniel, 2018).

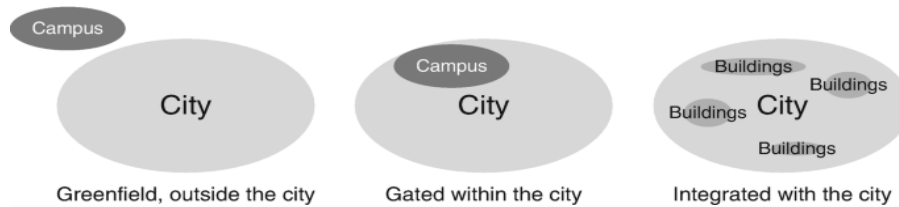


Figure 2.1 : Campus spatial configuration (den Heijer & Curvelo Magdaniel, 2018)

Throughout history, there existed a prevalent belief that urban universities situated in central locations were at a disadvantage. One reason was because it limited their ability to expand. Consequently, the modernist concept emerged, suggesting the relocation of campuses to the outskirts of the city. The initial aim was to encourage collegiality, interdisciplinarity, and a more comprehensive pursuit of knowledge through physical segregation. However, contrary to expectations, this shift resulted in students feeling disconnected from the city, and local residents experiencing reduced accessibility (Hebbert, 2018). This highlights the significant influence on the perceived connection between the university and the city.

Thereby, the perspective on knowledge has evolved, moving away from being an exclusive activity for elites. In his study on the relationship between the campus and the city, Hebbert underscores the significance of broadly disseminating knowledge among the working population. This not only contributes to the knowledge economy but also enhances the well-being of both students and city residents (Hebbert, 2018). The accessibility of a campus plays a crucial role, particularly for city residents, in fostering transparency regarding activities and access to science. Hebbert (2018) therefore advocates for reducing the boundary between the university and the city stating that; "in a healthy knowledge society, the university becomes the city, and the city becomes the university (p. 18)".

## 2.2 Objectives of fostering connection

The above discussion indicates that a strong connection between a city and its university is crucial. Increasingly, governments and universities are striving to strengthen this connection (Williams, 2017). This is evident in the numerous collaborative initiatives, policy frameworks, and joint projects aimed at integrating academic and urban development university (Rathenau Instituut, 2020). These efforts reflect a growing recognition of the mutual benefits that can be derived from a robust connection between university and society.

There are various objectives for a university or city in strengthening this connection. In this study, the term objective refers to a specific, measurable goal or aim that an individual, organisation, or entity sets out to achieve within a defined timeframe (Youker, 2001). Objectives are clear and concise statements that guide actions and decision-making processes, helping to align efforts and resources towards desired outcomes. They are used to track progress, evaluate performance, and ensure that strategic plans are effectively implemented (Youker, 2001). In this paragraph, I explore several objectives that universities identify as reasons for fostering connections between the city and the university environment.

## **Social impact**

One of the significant objectives that universities pursue in strengthening their connection with the city is to enhance their social impact. In recent decades, the focus in academia has heavily leaned towards publications and citation counts, often undervaluing societal relevance (Gamoran, 2018). The emphasis on social impact grew due to criticism and calls for increased accountability from universities regarding their societal contributions and the use of public funds (Gamoran, 2018). Thereby, governments are increasingly demanding that universities demonstrate how they are utilizing resources to benefit society, thereby intensifying the emphasis on social impact (Gamoran, 2018).

Although the term impact is frequently mentioned in recent strategic documents of educational institutions, a clear definition is often missing. Essentially, social impact revolves around the value that scientific research and academic activities contribute to society and intends to change in behaviour or practices. This encompasses a wide range of benefits, such as progress in public policy, increased community engagement, economic development, and efforts to tackle social challenges (Smit, 2021a). Overall, this evolving role of universities reflects a broader recognition of their capacity to drive social change, foster innovation, and contribute significantly to societal well-being. By focusing on societal contributions, universities can better align their goals with the needs of the communities they serve, ensuring that their work continues to be relevant and impactful (Smit, 2021a).

However, evaluating social impact is a complex task that varies depending on the academic field and discipline. According to Smit, the measurement of impact is particularly important for policy and governance, as they require quantitative data to clearly communicate the extent of the impact to the public (Smit, 2021b). Smit also mentions an effective method for evaluating impact through narratives, where researchers describe their activities and their societal relevance. These narratives offer a nuanced perspective on how academic work translates into real-world benefits, providing a qualitative measure that complements traditional quantitative metrics (Smit, 2021b).

## **Growing social function**

Similarly, another objective driving universities to foster connections with their urban surroundings is the expanding social function they aim to fulfil. In today's society, a university is not just a place for educational purposes, but also has important social functions (Walker, 2013). An example of this is the growing interest in how a university can serve as a third place in the urban context (Campos, 2017). This means besides being a "second place", serving as a space for work or learning, a university also functions as a "third place", a location outside the home where people gather primarily to enjoy each other's company. Third places serve as distinctive public spaces fostering social interaction, creating an environment for sociability, community development, and emotional expression (Oldenburg & Brissett, 1982). The university plays a crucial role in fostering encounters among students, faculty, staff, and residents. These encounters are vital in the city-university relationship. They can serve as a powerful tool for positive social value and bridging differences. Wilson highlights in her article on the geographies of encounter the significance of interactions between diverse entities that hold the promise of creating meaningful impact, referring to encounters that not only take place but also have the potential to bring about change (Wilson, 2017). This suggests that not all encounters are equal; some have the ability to generate positive effects, such as reducing prejudices, building communities, or promoting understanding among diverse groups (Wilson, 2017). A range of studies have highlighted the potential for universities to foster encounters that make a difference in society. Walker (2013) underscores the role of universities as a space for fostering capabilities and social citizenship, particularly in the face of growing inequality. Nichols (2015) emphasises the role of community-campus collaboration in fostering positive relations and encounters with society. Finally, Kim et al. (2006) highlights the importance of community relations in shaping public perception and support for universities. These studies collectively underscore the potential for universities to be key drivers of positive social change.

### **Knowledge sharing**

Moreover, knowledge sharing has become increasingly important for universities. Knowledge sharing refers to the process through which individuals or groups exchange knowledge, information, ideas, experiences, and skills to achieve common goals, thereby enhancing institutional capacities and performance (Al Kurdi et al., 2018). Sharing knowledge is seen as essential for promoting a culture of collaboration and maximizing the impact of research and education. Furthermore, knowledge sharing has gained importance due to increasing competitiveness for public funding and the need for universities to gain a competitive advantage in a knowledge-based economy (Al Kurdi et al., 2018). Therefore, universities engage in knowledge sharing through collaborations with other universities, businesses, and by disseminating knowledge to the community. Knowledge sharing with the community include activities which can enhance connections between the city and the university, such as public lectures, open access publications, outreach programs and media appearances (Karim & Majid, 2019). Research also identifies various barriers to effective knowledge sharing, including time constraints, a tendency among academics to remain knowledge for themselves, and lack of support from the institutions management (Buckley, 2012). Overcoming these barriers is crucial to fostering a culture of knowledge sharing and therefore maximized impact for both the university and society.

## **2.3 Collaboration to foster connection**

Another crucial element influencing the connection between the university and the city is collaboration between the university, the municipality, and other key partners. Effective collaboration is crucial to understand, address and solve complex urban challenges and promoting mutual benefits for all stakeholders involved (Pauer et al., 2020). Collaboration in this study refers to the process by which multiple stakeholders work together towards common objectives or goals. Stakeholders are individuals, groups, or entities with a vested interest in a specific activity, decision, or organization and may be directly or indirectly affected by the outcomes or decisions made (Savage et al., 1991). The stakeholders in this research include social partners who strategically collaborate within a regional and urban framework to work towards a common goal (Ansell & Gash, 2008). The main stakeholders are the university, the municipality and other social partners involved in initiatives that connect the university and the city, including research centres, community partners such as the public library, and other educational institutions.

### **Forms of collaboration**

Collaboration between municipalities and local universities or colleges is not a new phenomenon. In the past, collaboration has mainly focused on campus development, student housing, cultural enrichment, fostering regional business innovation, and stimulating local economic activity (Rathenau Institute, 2020). These last forms of collaboration have contributed over the years to enhance economic opportunities and skill development within both the university and the broader city. The collaborative efforts of the university municipalities, social partners, entrepreneurs, profit, and non-profit organizations lead to knowledge spill overs, where insights and expertise generated within the university "spill over" for the benefit of external partners and the broader community (Audretsch & Feldman, 1996). Therefore, this collaboration benefits not only the university but also fosters broader socio-economic advancement through the diffusion of knowledge and expertise. Social partners can further benefit from enhanced knowledge acquisition, employee development, and the fostering of innovation within their respective sectors (Klein, 2019).

In addition to these forms of collaboration, there has been a recent trend towards developing new partnership models that focus not primarily on enhancing the regional economy or cultural climate in cities, but on generating knowledge for decentralized policymaking (Rathenau Institute, 2020). Universities can play a crucial role in strengthening the knowledge base of municipalities, a necessity stemming from municipalities assuming more policy tasks due to decentralization of national policies (Duyvendak, 2017). Furthermore, municipalities have increasingly sought more structured collaborations with local universities, driven by the growing trend of

integrated policymaking, which has generated new knowledge demands (Van Der Steen et al., 2020). For instance, municipalities are adopting neighbourhood-focused approaches to address complex societal issues holistically and with tailored solutions, necessitating partnerships with institutions willing to assist in these efforts. Thereby, in educational institutes there has been a growing focus on the societal impact, as discussed in section 2.2 objectives. The emphasis on social impact grew due to criticism and calls for increased accountability from universities regarding and the use of public funds (Gamoran, 2018). Therefore, Universities are expanding their societal contributions by focusing on utilizing knowledge in the public sector and contributing to solutions for societal challenges (Goddard & Vallance, 2013).

These developments have led to a growing number of collaborations between universities and cities, which subsequently resulted in the conduct of new research on these collaborations. For example, the Rathenau Institute has identified six key features that characterizes the partnerships between municipalities and universities, in a report on universities and universities of applied sciences as structural knowledge partners for municipalities (Rathenau Institute, 2020). The first key feature describes that these collaborations evolve from ad-hoc projects to more structured partnerships. This offer efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability by fostering continuous knowledge sharing. Secondly, the report describes that a small base funding provides continuity, although additional project-specific funding is often necessary. Thirdly, involvement from top organizational leadership legitimizes these efforts and ensures commitment. Fourthly, a joint program driven by policy and practical knowledge needs enables systematic knowledge development. Fifthly, the collaborations are built on equal partnership and mutual benefits, unlike traditional contractor-client relationships. Lastly, Rathenau Institute identifies that in these collaborations partners generally are engaged throughout the entire programming cycle, ensuring co-creation and shared decision-making (Rathenau Institute, 2020).

### **Collaboration is complex**

However, challenges exist. Collaboration between the university, the municipality, and other key partners is an intricate process, faced with challenges and opportunities. Establishing this collaboration depends on effective interplay at the political level. Such collaboration proves complex, as evidenced by a case study examining historical incidents and the development of the relationship between two different host city municipalities of the Simon Fraser University (Curry, 2016). This study shows that the collaboration between the university and city administrations holds significant potential but is often overshadowed by daily conflicts over planning, land use, transportation, and noise (Curry, 2016). These conflicts can create a lasting hostile atmosphere which hinders effective collaboration.

In addition to these conflicts, the dynamics of institutional power and organizational hierarchy often pose challenges to genuine collaboration. A critical issue in promoting social partnerships is the influence exerted by municipalities, which often provide funding to universities, social partners, and other involved initiatives. A common dilemma is that municipalities expect quantitative evidence of impact in response to their financial support. However, research shows that this insistence on numerical evidence does not fully reflect the qualitative value delivered by these initiatives (Raiden & King, 2023). This discrepancy can lead to tensions, as the emphasis on quantitative numbers can overlook the broader social impacts and nuanced outcomes being achieved. The pressure to meet these evidence-based requirements can divert resources and attention from the initiatives' original objectives, hindering overall progress and effectiveness (Raiden & King, 2023).

To effectively mitigate these conflicts and mismatches, there are several factors crucial for fostering successful collaboration (Rathenau Instituut, 2020). To enhance collaboration between municipalities, universities, and colleges, four strategies can be implemented, according to Rathenau Institute. Firstly, strategic decision-making and clear goal setting are crucial. Municipalities should approach collaborations with universities and colleges strategically, defining why, with whom, and in what capacity they intend to collaborate. This approach can be facilitated by adopting a knowledge ecosystem framework, mobilizing various knowledge organizations

and stakeholders around shared policy challenges (Rathenau Instituut, 2020). Secondly, establishing a robust funding model is essential to reduce dependency on project-based funding and ensure sustainability. Securing base funding and forming alliances with other municipalities, regions, and international partners can diversify funding sources and enhance financial resilience. Thirdly, maintaining a balance between proximity and distance is key. It is important to strike a balance where there is sufficient distance for independent research yet enough proximity for collaborative and relevant engagement. Clear agreements, behavioral codes, and evaluation mechanisms can help maintain professionalism and regulate data-sharing practices (Rathenau Instituut, 2020). Lastly, fostering equality and a culture of openness is critical for sustainable partnerships. Partners should strive for mutual understanding for each other's goals and interests throughout the collaboration lifecycle, from program design to project execution. Governance structures such as program boards or advisory committees can facilitate effective coordination and decision-making among stakeholders. These strategies collectively aim to strengthen the collaborative initiatives between municipalities, universities, and social partners to overcome challenges and achieve successful partnerships (Rathenau Instituut, 2020).

## 2.4 Co-creative approaches

The approach that a university or city employs in the process of decision-making, planning, and design to facilitate the connection between the university and the city can vary. The type of approach can significantly influence the ultimate degree of connection it facilitates (van Karnenbeek et al., 2022). Across various fields, there is a growing belief in the importance of experiential, practical and co-creative approaches over traditional methods when initiating a project. Co-creation defines itself as a collective and creative process that engages various stakeholders in the design, planning and decision-making processes, with the aim of contributing to shared understandings of more socially just cities (Carpenter & Horvath, 2022). Particularly in urban planning experts have adopted co-creative or participatory approaches to depart from rational planning methodologies (Carpenter & Horvath, 2022). Moreover, since the introduction of the new Environmental Law (Omgevingswet) in the Netherlands in 2024, co-creation with communities has become a requirement. This is for example required in the development of an environmental vision or plan.

### Placemaking

Co-creation encompasses various layers and manifests in a variety of approaches. A specific co-creative approach in urban planning is placemaking. Placemaking refers to an active process of creating or enhancing a physical space with the goal of promoting community, engagement, strengthening social bonds, and improving the quality of life (Project for Public Spaces, n.d.). This approach places the community centre as the expert and decision-maker on how a specific place should look and function. One of the founding organizations of the placemaking approach is the non-profit organization Project for Public Spaces. According to Project for Public Spaces, placemaking is both a philosophy and a practical process. The idea revolves around co-creation with the end user. Various approaches exist to implement this co-creative method, with variations depending on the specific project and its objectives. Consequently, Project for Public Spaces has devised a fundamental approach for addressing placemaking projects (Figure 2.2). First, it is necessary to identify the place and stakeholders for a good co-creation starting point (Project for Public Spaces, 2017). Next, the place is evaluated, and the main issues are identified together with the stakeholder group. This results in a place vision, describing the ambition of the place and an action plan (Project for Public Spaces, 2017). Subsequently, short-term experiments emerge from this, in which the vision is put into action. These experiments apply, manage, and validate small improvements (Project for Public Spaces, 2017). Finally, there is

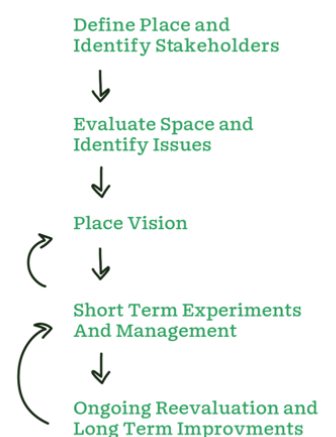


Figure 2.2 (Project for Public Spaces, 2017)

ample room for re-evaluation and adjustments throughout the entire process, ultimately leading to long-term improvements (Project for Public Spaces, 2017).

The placemaking approach is not a new approach. It has evolved from the ideas of Jane Jacobs and Jan Gehl around the social and cultural significance of vibrant neighbourhoods and welcoming public spaces, by designing cities for people instead of prioritising cars and shopping centres. Jacobs advocated for ordinary citizens to take ownership of their streets through the widely recognized concept of "eyes on the street" (Jacobs, 1962). Jan Gehl is known for his work "Life Between Buildings," where he explores the relationship between urban design and people's well-being (Gehl & Koch, 1971). Over the years, more approaches have emerged to help residents and city-makers pursue co-creative and placemaking approaches. With this rise, the number of critical perspectives unfolded. Some critical articles point to the risk that placemaking initiatives often do not originate from the grassroots but are to some extent directed top down (Mens et al., 2023). Figure 2.3 visualises the stage of development of a project (Project for Public Spaces, 2013). A placemaking project ideally aims for a place-led development from its foundation. In reality, there is often a project-driven or discipline-led approach, where the idea originates from administrators, and residents are subsequently sought to be involved in the development of the idea (Mens et al., 2023).

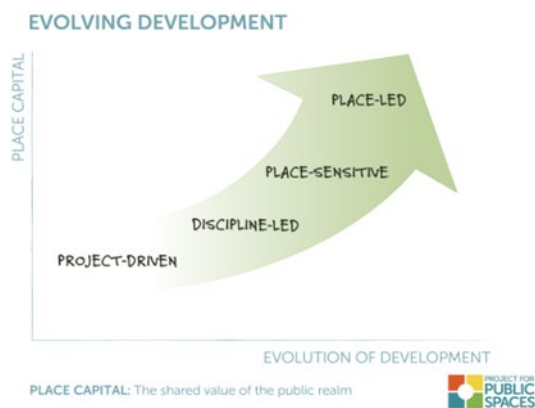


Figure 2.3: Evolving Development (Project for Public Spaces, 2013)

Another critique focuses on the risk of selectivity in participatory processes (Allen & Queen, 2018). By directing the initiative from governmental levels and actively involving the local community in a later stage, there is a danger that participatory design practices are selective in engaging stakeholders. The article argues that certain participatory methods may reinforce assumptions and selectively use responses to support a predetermined agenda rather than promoting an authentic open dialogue (Allen & Queen, 2018). Therefore, it is highly important to critically evaluate the objectives, collaboration and approaches adopted during several stages within a co-creative approach.

## 2.5 Connection conceptualised

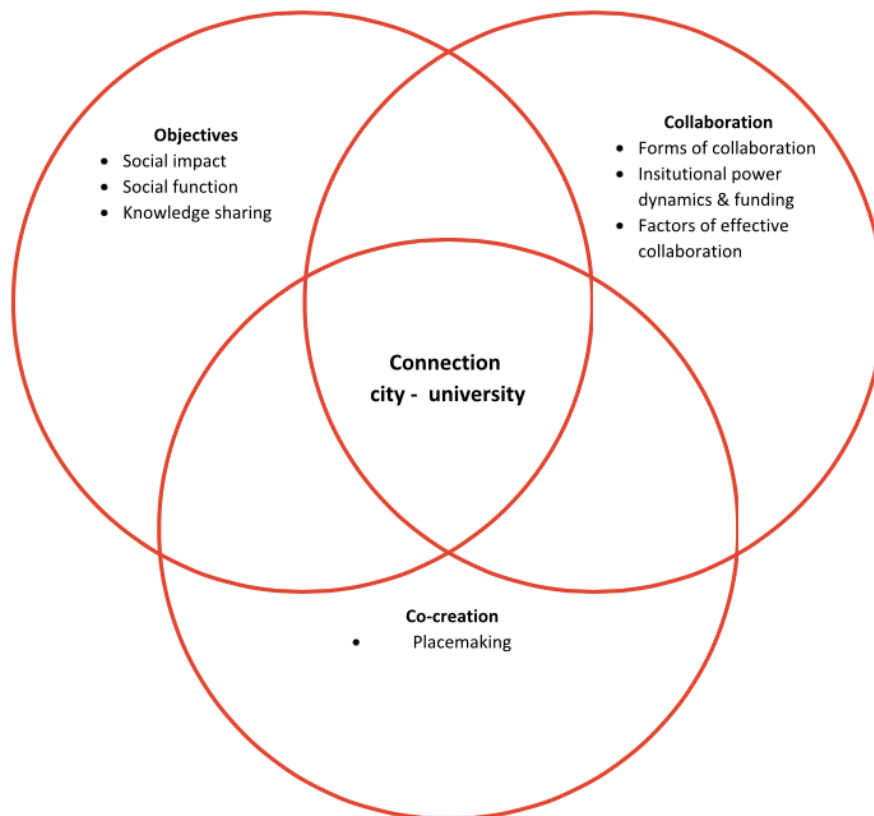


Figure 2.4: conceptual model

The conceptual model outlined above provides a framework for understanding the dynamics between various variables involved in connecting the city and the university (figure 2.4). Consisting of three overlapping circles, each representing a dependent variable – objectives, collaboration, and co-creation – the model places the independent variable, the connection between the city and the university, at its core. The independent variable, the connection between city and university, serves as the central focus of the model. In this context the term connection refers to the multifaceted relationship and interaction between the university and the host city, encompassing all levels from residents, social partners to governance, aimed at mutual benefit and enrichment. The independent variable is influenced by and influencing the dependent variables: objectives, collaboration, and co-creation. In the context of this research the variable objective is defined as specific, measurable goal or aim related to connecting the city and the university, that an individual, organisation, or entity sets out to achieve. The variable collaboration refers to the process by which the university, the municipality, and other key social partners work together towards the common objectives or goals in establishing connection. Lastly, the variable co-creation describes the co-creative approach and strategy employed to achieve these goals. In conclusion, this conceptual framework outlines the purpose of the study: to examine how the independent variables influence the degree of connection and how their interrelationships promote this connectedness.

The conceptual model guides the construction of the study, which will be further elaborated in the following chapters. The next chapter discusses the methodology used to examine the variables. It provides insight into the approach and rationale behind the research design, including data collection, the selection of respondents, and data analysis using discourse analysis.

# 3 Methodology

---

## 3.1 Research design

Since the Latin school is currently in the programming phase and will open its doors in September 2024, it is not yet possible to analyse the location's impact on fostering connections. Therefore, I conducted a benchmark study comparing similar contemporary initiatives in the Netherlands with the Latin school. This study included seven semi-structured interviews primarily with program managers of these initiatives and six analysed policy documents, both analysed using critical discourse analysis. Subsequently, a comparison was made between the results of the benchmarks and those of the Latin school to gain valuable insights for further developing the Latin school's programming. In this chapter, I will provide a detailed explanation of the methodology used to design and conduct the research. I will discuss the choice of a benchmark study, the selection process of respondents, offer insights into the initiatives examined, and provide insights of the data collection and analysis.

### **Benchmark study**

Benchmarking involves evaluating performance through standardized indicators that allow for comparison across diverse entities (Meares & Owen, 2012). Benchmarking originated in the management field (Papaioannou et al., 2006) and is now also used in geography and planning (Meares & Owen, 2012). However, the tendency to compare is not a new construct. Festinger's 1954 theory explains how individuals judge their own circumstances by comparing themselves to others. Benchmarking can be a valuable approach to gaining insights through comparison. Huggins (2010) discusses the arguments both for and against benchmarking in planning, in particular city benchmarking. According to Huggins, benchmarking offers advantages such as facilitating information exchange on best practices and policies, fostering mutual learning, and enhancing their strategies. It also stimulates healthy competition, encouraging benchmarks to become more efficient and competitive, while aiding in identifying strengths and weaknesses compared to others, assisting in prioritizing investments and formulating effective policies (Huggins, 2010). On the other hand, potential drawbacks of benchmarking in urban planning, as discussed by Huggins, include the challenge of applying benchmarking results directly to other situations due to differences in context, culture, and policy environments (Huggins, 2010). This may result in a one-size-fits-all approach that may not be effective for all. Additionally, not all aspects of urban planning are easily measurable or comparable, limiting the utility of benchmarking results and complicating the drawing of meaningful conclusions. Furthermore, benchmarking often focuses on quantitative data, such as economic indicators, potentially neglecting aspects such as social inclusion, cultural heritage, and sustainability, thereby leading to a one-sided approach to urban planning (Huggins, 2010). Considering these advantages and disadvantages, I chose to utilize the benchmarking method in combination with critical discourse analysis (see section 3.3).

## 3.2 Respondents and discourse

To select the benchmarks and respondents, specific search terms and characteristics of benchmarks were used. The five criteria for selecting benchmarks included 1) being an initiative from or in collaboration with a Dutch university or university of applied science, 2) the presence of a physical location situated in a Dutch city, 3) in collaboration between the municipality and/or residents and the university, 4) open to the public as much as possible, and 5) aimed at connecting the city and university. The selection I made was to provide the most comparable context possible to the Latin school and researched benchmarks. For example, by choosing the criteria of a physical location and the aim of connecting the city and university, because these are central

factor in the objectives of the Latin school. I considered investigating foreign initiatives, but ultimately chose to focus solely on Dutch initiatives to maintain consistency in context, including aspects such as the education system, the character of Dutch campuses and the degree of collaboration between government and universities. In the Netherlands, a distinction is made between universities and universities of applied sciences. However, I have not differentiated between these two types of institutions in my search for initiatives connected to higher education. This decision was based on the fact that international literature often does not make this distinction either, and it helped to enlarge the pool of respondents for benchmarking purposes. To identify relevant benchmarks, I employed systematic Google searches. The search terms I used were carefully selected from the criteria and include:

- Public engagement
- Open science
- City
- University
- City campus
- City lab
- Neighbourhood campus
- Neighbourhood lab
- Living lab
- Annex
- Connection
- Meeting place
- Encounter
- Collaboration
- Interdisciplinary

These search terms were translated into Dutch and used alongside the English terms. By using these combinations of words and search terms, relevant benchmarks related to the collaboration between the university and the city were identified. The table below (3.1) illustrate possible combinations of words and search terms used:

English search term	Dutch translation	Combination
Public engagement	Publieksbetrokkenheid	University + Public engagement, City + Public engagement
Open science	Open wetenschap	University + Open science, City + Open science
City	Stad	University + City, City + Urban university
University	Universiteit + Hogeschool	University + City, University + Community, University + Engagement
City lab	Stadslaboratorium	University + City lab
Neighbourhood campus	Buurtcampus	University + Neighbourhood campus, City + Neighbourhood campus
Neighbourhood lab	Buurtlaboratorium	University + Neighbourhood lab, City + Neighbourhood lab
Living lab	Levend laboratorium	University + Living lab, City + Living lab
Annex	Dependance	University + Annex, City + Annex
Connection	Verbinding	University + Connection, City + Connection
Meeting place	Ontmoetingsplek	University + Meeting place, City + Meeting place
Encounter	Ontmoeting	University + Encounter, City + Encounter
Collaboration	Samenwerking	University + Collaboration, City + Collaboration
Interdisciplinary	Interdisciplinair	University + Interdisciplinary, City + Interdisciplinary

Table 3.1: search terms benchmarks

In addition to the systematic Google search, benchmarks were identified using the snowballing method. During interviews with benchmark initiatives, I requested recommendations for additional benchmark initiatives.

## Selection process

The initial systematic Google search generated a list of 10 potential initiatives (Appendix 9.1). Each of these initiatives were carefully reviewed against the predefined criteria to ensure relevance and comparability to the Latin school. This detailed examination led to the identification of six initiatives that fully met all the specified criteria. Four out of six initiatives were open to an interview and responded to my request. Additionally, to this google search, the snowballing method was employed during the interviews conducted with the four benchmark initiatives. Through this approach, one additional benchmark was identified that met the criteria. In total, the selection process resulted in five initiatives that provided a robust basis for comparison with the Latin school, ensuring that the insights gained were both relevant and actionable for further developing the Latin school's programming.

## Overview of the researched benchmarks

The selected benchmarks meet the selection criteria, but they also differ from each other by creating connections in different ways. The following table provides the basic characteristics of each initiative and insight into the activities that aims to strengthen the connection between the city and the university.

Title	<b>Centrum voor Wetenschap en Cultuur (CWC)</b>
Educational institute and city	Utrecht University, Utrecht
Activities to foster connection	The CWC is Utrecht University's central meeting place for science, culture, and society. The program office organizes several initiatives and events aimed at public engagement, including the Wetenschapsknooppunt, Studium Generale and the Betweter Festival. These efforts aim to engage a broad and diverse audience in scientific endeavours (Universiteit Utrecht, n.d.).
Opening year	2021
Initiator	Executive board Utrecht University
Recruitment	Google search
Function title respondent	Head of Program Office Centrum voor Wetenschap en Cultuur
Key stakeholders	Utrecht University
Title analysed document	Open in Verbinding. Universiteit Utrecht Public Engagement Plan 2021-2025 (Universiteit Utrecht, 2021)

Title	<b>Buurtcampus Amsterdam (BA)</b>
Educational institute and city	Hogeschool van Amsterdam (HvA), Amsterdam
Activities to foster connection	In BA students together with residents, professionals, entrepreneurs, teachers, and researchers jointly seek solutions to current challenges in the neighbourhood. Various student projects offer consultation hours and innovative solutions to neighbourhood residents and local organizations (Hogeschool van Amsterdam & Openbare Bibliotheek Amsterdam, 2021).
Opening year	2008
Initiator	Executive board Hogeschool van Amsterdam
Recruitment	Google search
Function title respondent	Buurtcampus projectmanager
Key stakeholders	Public library Amsterdam, municipality of Amsterdam
Title analysed document	Buurtcampus – samen kennis maken in Amsterdam (Hogeschool van Amsterdam, 2022)

<b>Title</b>	<b>House of Connections (HoC)</b>
Educational institute and city	Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, Groningen
Activities to foster connection	HoC is the central meeting place in the field of social themes, where students, researchers, networks, and citizens can come together to learn from and inspire each other in activities such as events, lectures, dialogue sessions and workshops (University of Groningen, n.d.).
Opening year	July 2023
Initiator	Executive board Rijksuniversiteit Groningen and director Cisca Wijmenga
Recruitment	Google search
Function title respondent	Program manager House of Connections
Key stakeholders	Rijksuniversiteit Groningen
Title analysed document	Gedeeld verhaal Schools - uvhn – ghh (Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, n.d.)

<b>Title</b>	<b>Urban Living Lab Breda (ULL)</b>
Educational institute and city	Avans Hogeschool, Breda
Activities to foster connection	ULL builds on the city's broad well-being (brede welvaart) in collaboration with students, residents, organizations, businesses, educational institutions, and the municipality. Various projects facilitate co-creation sessions, workshops, dialogue sessions, and innovative solutions to sustainably shape the future together (Urban Living Lab Breda, n.d.).
Opening year	2019 (Strategic partnership in city and region 2022)
Initiator	Respondent. Emerged from his vision as a resident of Breda, now initiator and program manager of Urban Living Lab Breda
Recruitment	Google search
Function title respondent	Initiator and program manager Urban Living Lab Breda
Key stakeholders	Municipality of Breda, Avans Hogeschool, BUas, De Rooi Pannen, ROC and Nederlandse Defensie Academie
Title analysed document	Visie Urban Living Lab Breda (Urban Living Lab Breda, n.d.).

<b>Title</b>	<b>Wageningen Dialogues (WD)</b>
Educational institute and city	Wageningen University, Wageningen
Activities to foster connection	Organises dialogues on various social issues within Wageningen University's research areas to explore different perspectives and establish connections. The dialogues are organised within lectures, sessions, and events to encourage and facilitate dialogue between stakeholders, scientists and society (Wageningen University & Research, n.d.).
Opening year	2019
Initiator	Chairman of executive board Wageningen University
Recruitment	Snowballing (via House of Connections)
Function title respondent	Program manager Wageningen Dialogues
Key stakeholders	Wageningen University
Title analysed document	Year Evaluation of the Wageningen Dialogues programme 2022 – CPI 10 – Expanded connection with society and partners (Ritzer, 2022)

Table 3.2: overview researched benchmarks.

### **Selection of project leaders**

The interviews were conducted with program managers of the initiatives because they are considered the most relevant group for exploring the three key factors: objectives, collaboration, and approach. These individuals possess the most comprehensive knowledge about the intricacies of the initiatives. Consequently, this approach was expected to gain the most relevant results for ultimately comparing with the Latin school, which is currently in the programming phase. The program managers' insights were valuable due to their direct involvement in the planning and execution of the initiatives, providing a deeper understanding of the processes and challenges involved. However, as representatives of the initiative, they may portray a more positive and idealized image of the initiative, possibly omitting critical challenges or dissenting viewpoints. This can therefore limit the research's objectivity.

## **3.2 Data collection**

### **Benchmarks**

After approaching respondents, an interview guide was prepared with a structure of semi-structured open-ended questions. This interview guide was developed from the thesis proposal and tested theory from the literature review and theoretical framework (interview guide appendix 9.2.). Subsequently, the interviews were conducted in a comfortable and familiar setting for the respondent. The interviews were conducted face-to-face and on location of the initiative as much as possible in order to obtain the most comprehensive impression possible of the respondent's verbal and nonverbal communication. Thereby, visiting the location provided insights into the atmosphere, structure, and use of space, which was invaluable for understanding and interpreting the discourse. These priorities ensured objectivity in my interactions with participants. I was conscious that I might be viewed by my respondents as an ambassador of Radboud University rather than a student. This awareness guided my communication of my role during interviews, striving to create a non-judgmental environment that encouraged open and honest communication.

### **Latin school**

The Latin school is investigated using a methodology similar to the benchmarks described above. I conducted two interviews, one with the project manager from Radboud University and one with the program manager of the municipality of Nijmegen. Additionally, I conducted a document analysis on the jointly developed document titled "Tijdelijk gebruik Latijnse school, Verkenning tweede fase" to delve into the written discourse of the Latin school. Both the interviews and the document analysis were analysed using critical discourse analysis.

During this research I actively engaged as a research intern from Radboud University in the Latin school project. However, my involvement extended beyond the university's sphere. Throughout this research, I engaged with various key stakeholders who played integral roles in the Latin school project. Martijn Stevens, my supervisor from the Radboud University project group, provided guidance and mentorship as I navigated the intricacies of the project and interactions with Anouk Kerkhofs from CityDeal Kennismaken provided me valuable insights into the Honours Labs, several benchmarks, and the interconnectedness of various stakeholders in Nijmegen. Accordingly, I attended the Honours Labs programme, where students from HAN University of Applied Sciences and Radboud University collaborated with the municipality of Nijmegen. In addition, I participated in programming meetings, where I observed and made fieldnotes of the collaborative dynamics between Radboud University and the municipality. These meetings served the joint project group as crucial forums for exchanging ideas, sharing progress updates, and making strategic decisions to advance the objectives of the Latin school project.

As a research intern conducting research within the Latin school project, I recognized the potential bias inherent in my position. My close involvement in the project and my commitment to it may have

unintentionally influenced my perspective and analysis. Despite my belief in my ability to make a positive contribution, I was aware of the need to critically examine my biases and preconceived ideas. To meet this challenge, I was committed to maintaining self-awareness throughout the research process. I actively reflected on my position and its potential impact on my interpretations and conclusions. This included acknowledging my ties to the project and the university, as well as any personal biases as a student at Radboud University.

### Transcribing the data

The interviews were conducted in Dutch, as this is both the respondents and my native language. In processing the results, I relied on quotations extracted from transcripts as evidence. I extracted these quotations from the transcripts and translated them into English. Transcribing the interviews involved capturing every spoken word with precision. I aimed to maintain the authenticity of the conversations and ensured that details were not overlooked. These details often carry significant meaning and contribute to the depth of the conversation (Silverman, 2006). To achieve this, I utilised an audio recorder with playback tools that allowed for slow and repetitive listening, ensuring accurate and detailed transcription. With these precise transcripts, I facilitated a rich and comprehensive comprehension during subsequent analysis. This thorough transcription process laid a solid foundation for the coding and analysis phases, enabling a deeper understanding of the participants' perspectives and discourse. This is crucial for gaining insights into power relations, underlying currents, and the emotions involved, moving beyond the institutional role of the program manager to capture genuine experiences.

### Secondary data

Alongside the collection and analysis of primary data from interviews, I incorporated the analysis of secondary sources. Therefore, I analysed relevant documents related to the benchmarks including reports, visions, or explorations through discourse analysis. I identified these sources by considering recommendations provided during interviews with benchmarks. Secondary discourse analysis will be employed to examine the language, narratives, and discourse practices surrounding the objectives, collaborations and used approaches. The combination of secondary and primary data allows for increased saturation and a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomena being studied. Moreover, it facilitates a more objective approach by incorporating findings from different data sources (Hay & Cope, 2021).

## 3.3 Critical discourse analysis

### Coding the data

The coding process was structured to uncover patterns and themes within the transcribed data. The coding process was guided by Norman Fairclough's model, which involves three dimensions: text, discourse practice, and socio-political practice (figure 3.1) (Fairclough, 2012).

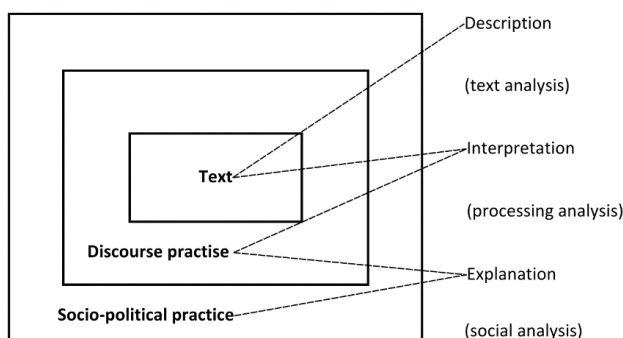


Figure 3.1: dimensions of discourse (Fairclough, 2012)

### Dimension 1: text

At the text level, I conducted open coding to assign descriptive labels to segments of text. This initial coding focused on capturing the specific words and phrases used by participants. It aimed to identify linguistic patterns and rhetorical strategies employed in discussing university-city initiatives (Fairclough, 2012).

### Dimension 2: discourse practice

Moving to the discourse practice level, axial coding was implemented to analyse how the texts were produced and composed. This step involved identifying how language was used not just as a neutral medium but as a vehicle containing values, attitudes, and rhetorical devices (Fairclough, 2012). By categorising and interconnecting the initial codes, I aimed to uncover deeper discourse practices embedded within the interviews.

### Dimension 3: socio-political practice

Finally, the analysis extended to the socio-political practice level, examining the broader societal standards, structures and power relations influencing the discourse (Fairclough, 2012). This involved contextualising the discourse within the norms and expectations of academic and urban communities. By exploring how stakeholders framed objectives, collaboration, and co-creative approaches, I gained insights into the socio-political dimensions and power relations in university-city initiatives (Fairclough, 2012). Through systematic transcription and coding using Fairclough's model, the critical discourse analysis provides a comprehensive understanding of stakeholders' perspectives and discourse strategies. It illuminated not only the linguistic choices and rhetorical strategies employed but also the underlying social and normative contexts influencing collaborative efforts between universities and cities. This methodological framework enriched the analysis of community engagement and partnership strategies within academic and urban contexts.

### Coding software

For the data analysis process, I utilised Atlas.ti, a qualitative data analysis software that proved to be highly effective for my needs. Atlas.ti offers a range of functionalities that facilitate the systematic coding and analysis of my data. I used Atlas.ti to organise the transcribed interviews and policy documents by importing the interview transcripts and policy document files into the software, allowing me to efficiently manage and navigate through the data. The software's coding tools enabled me to assign codes to specific segments of the text systematically (Figure 3.2). Through its interface, I could easily perform the three levels of coding, aligning with Fairclough's three-dimensional model. I used this approach for both the interview transcripts and the policy documents. Atlas.ti also provided visualisation tools that helped in identifying connections between codes and developing a deeper understanding of the discourse practices and social contexts. The ability to create networks and graphs enhanced my analytical process by allowing me to document insights and track the evolution of themes throughout the analysis. After transcription and throughout the coding process, a number of codes emerged that encapsulate the principal themes and concepts found within the data. Presented in table 9.3 in the appendix are these codes along with their definitions and detailed explanations of their intended meanings.

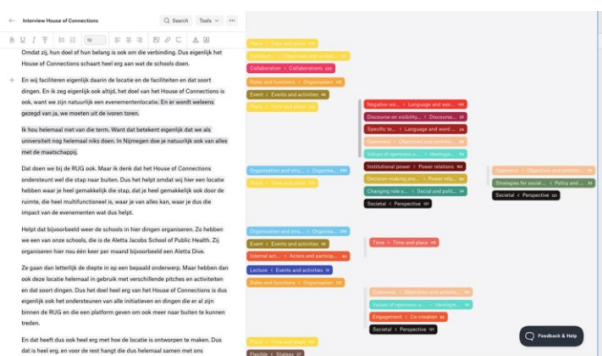


Figure 3.2 screenshot of coded document

**Comparison of factors**

To compare the factors from the benchmarks with those of the Latin school and derive learning points from them, I followed a systematic approach. First, I identified the key factors being assessed in the benchmarks, such as shared objectives, collaboration models and co-creative approaches. Next, I compared these factors with the specific factors, context, and objectives of the Latin school. This involved examining how these factors manifest within the Latin school, identifying any similarities and differences. Through this comparative analysis, I aimed to gain valuable insights that can be used to further develop the Latin school programming. Before making this comparison, the following chapter will discuss the results of the empirical data gained from the contemporary initiatives in the benchmark study. The insights from the critical discourse analysis will be compared to the literature study, exploring the quotations, identified themes, and their insights in greater depth. Following this, the results of the empirical data gained from the Latin school will be discussed. Finally, a comparison between the results of the benchmarks and the Latin school will be made, highlighting key similarities and differences.

## 4. Insights from contemporary initiatives

---

The purpose of this discourse analysis is to outline the key themes and findings that emerged from the data and to illustrate their relevance to the research questions. Connecting the insights from the quotations and codes to the research questions provides a clear understanding of the dynamics, complexities and crucial factors involved within the context of the initiatives. The insights will further provide understanding of how the initiatives strengthen the connection between the city and the university, starting from the core activities shown in Table 3.2. This table also shows the names of the initiatives along with their abbreviations, which will be used to refer to the initiatives. Based on the sub questions, I will interpret and analyse the data in this chapter in the three main concepts: objectives, collaboration, and co-creation.

### 4.1 Objectives

In this paragraph, I will interpret data based on sub question 1: what are the objectives of the benchmarks regarding fostering connections between the university and the city? The term objectives is defined in this study as the established goals, motivations and ambitions related to connecting the city and the university.

From the interviews and documents, it is clear that all the initiatives aim to enhance societal engagement and foster connections between higher education institutions and the broader community, including society and citizens. This goal aligns with the criteria used to select the benchmarks (see section 3.2). All these initiatives share similar underlying values focused on social engagement. However, there are nuanced differences in their objectives, stemming from how each initiative was conceived, developed, and what its aims are. This emphasis on societal engagement is highlighted in the discourse practice level of coding under the theme of objectives and ambitions. The most frequently mentioned objectives include: 1. Connection, 2. Interaction, 3. Openness, 4. Visibility, 5. Accessibility, and 6. Knowledge sharing. I will interpret and substantiate the three most significant objectives with relevant quotations.

#### **Connection**

The objective mentioned most frequently is fostering or creating connection. This objective is evident in the discourse of all benchmarks, indicating its significance across all initiatives. Based on the frequency of the codes, connection appears to be the primary objective of the initiatives. This is evident from various quotations where respondents or the discourse indicate that strategic plans were developed or the idea for an initiative originated from this objective. For instance, the program manager of the House of Connections in Groningen highlights this aim: “The goal is of course really that connection. We're called House of Connections after all. [...] In Making Connections, our strategic plan, that's also emphasized; how do we as a university create connections?” (Interview HoC). Similarly, Utrecht University's Public Engagement Plan, which underpins the establishment of the Centrum voor Wetenschap en Cultuur, explicitly focuses on this objective. The plan is titled "Open in Connection" and stresses the importance of dialogue and interaction between science and society: “Utrecht University addresses the major challenges of our time. The University of Utrecht believes that knowledge should be shared, and that ambition includes investing in engaging a broad audience with science” (Universiteit Utrecht, 2021). The initiator and program manager of the Urban Living Lab Breda also describes the importance of connection, reflecting on the initiative's origin: “Whether it's a university or a university of applied science, it's a kind of stronghold, bastion in a city, which has very little connection to the city. While such a university, especially universities of applied science, are of course very focused on directly adding value to society, to the work field, can mean a lot to a city. So, I thought, yes, it's strange that we don't do that naturally. So yes, I'm going to organize something for that” (Interview ULL).

These quotations and the discourse analysis of Wageningen University and Buurtcampus Amsterdam, collectively illustrate that all initiatives share the common objective of fostering connections between the academic world and society. These quotes also provide insight into the diverse origins of the initiatives. Notably, strategic plans and policy documents frequently explicitly mention this objective, and most respondents indicate that the initiatives stem from planned strategies within their institutions. However, the initiator of the Urban Living Lab Breda stands out by revealing that he initiated this initiative as a civilian, driven by societal concerns.

In the analysis of objectives, it is evident that the primary goal shared by all benchmarks is to foster connections between universities and society. Literature shows that increasingly, governments and universities are striving to strengthen this connection (Williams, 2017). This emphasis on connection aligns well with the literature review suggesting that universities should strive for broader social functions (Campos, 2017). These functions include actively contributing to societal changes and enhancing social inclusion within urban areas. The fact that these objectives are prominently featured in the analysed initiatives demonstrates that they aim not only for connection but also for substantial and impactful engagement with society. This alignment between practice and theory underscores the relevance and effectiveness of these initiatives in addressing significant social challenges within urban contexts.

### **Underlying value social engagement**

During the socio-political coding phase, I delved into the underlying values inherent in the objectives of these initiatives, particularly focusing on social engagement which was most linked to the quotations. This value emerged prominently in the discourse, linked closely to the notions of connection and interaction. In the literature social impact revolves around the value that scientific research and academic activities contribute to society and intends to change in behaviour or practices to eventually drive social change, foster innovation, and contribute to societal wellbeing (Smith, 2021a). Similarly, in the discourse social engagement, underscores the ideologies that emphasize the university's role in addressing community and societal issues. The discourse converges on this idea that effective engagement between academia and society involves more than just disseminating knowledge; it requires active dialogue and collaboration with citizens. For instance, Centrum voor Wetenschap en Cultuur in Utrecht underscores the importance of openness and transparency in science to enhance societal value. They view public engagement as a transformative movement aimed at closer integration between science and society:

*In that movement, it was also said, ultimately, it's about public engagement. Eventually, science must be more open and transparent, so that you can have more societal value, and so that we can also collaborate better with society (Interview CWC).*

Similarly, the program manager of Wageningen Dialogues emphasizes the reciprocal nature of engagement, stressing the value of researchers listening to and learning from citizens. They believe this dialogue enriches both parties and enhances the relevance of academic research in addressing societal needs:

*Where it seems, and that is said quite exaggeratedly, but where it initially seems to be mainly about scientists sharing their knowledge and engaging in conversation with citizens. But where the real value lies, for me and why we do it, is so that you create a moment where those researchers can also listen to what is happening among those citizens (Interview WD).*

In contrast, the program manager of Urban Living Lab sets a more ambitious goal of redefining urban democracy. Their initiative aims for substantial community involvement in decision-making processes, advocating for a more inclusive and participatory approach to urban governance:

*So, my real big ambition is that we achieve a new urban society with this, where democracy is also real democracy. So, residents, end users have a proportionately large say in what happens in their city. And which solutions, applications are implemented in their city (Interview ULL).*

While all five initiatives share a commitment to social engagement, they diverge in their approaches and aspirations. The initiatives in Utrecht (CWC), Wageningen (WD) and Groningen (HoC) prioritize enhancing societal relevance through dialogue and transparency. In contrast, the initiatives in Breda (ULL) and Amsterdam (BA) aims to empower residents directly in shaping urban development.

### **Inclusion and accessibility**

During the coding at the socio-political level, the ideologies, or values of "value of connection" and "inclusion and accessibility" emerged also as important underlying values to the objectives and ambitions of the discourse coding level. The code "value of connection" touches upon a deeper meaning of the objective connection, emphasising the value of fostering encounters between groups of people as an ideology and core value. The code "inclusion and accessibility" is noteworthy as it highlights a different ideology than connection or social engagement, appearing as a secondary value in the discourse alongside the initial values of connection and social engagement. However, it is evident that this is a highly significant value for the respondents, as reflected in the emotional arguments. The program manager of the Centrum voor Wetenschap en Cultuur passionately and critically addresses the role of the university in society:

*I think, look, you are the public institution, and we all think that, I say 'I' now, but I have always been very adamant about this, you are the public institution that in a certain way needs to be accountable for what you do, but above all, you need to realize that for many people, it is not at all obvious that it is important for a university to exist, and that's not so strange either, because if you see how many people are busy with, especially a lot of publications, and indexes, and I don't know what else, but you do have the obligation, and once you start doing it, you also notice that it is actually necessary not to lose that connection with the world that you are just a part of (Interview CWC).*

Furthermore, the discourse reveals that the initial drive and urgency to be more inclusive and accessible as an institution to society stem from the sense or response to reducing the gap between the university and society. Interviews with the project managers highlighted specific terms like "lowering barriers" (CWC), "stepping outside" (ULL) and "getting out of the ivory tower" (HoC). This figurative language signifies a shift towards a more open and inclusive approach, where the university becomes a more integral part of community life rather than an isolated entity, to overcome divisions between academia and society.

### **Cultural change**

Although this alignment of objectives and social development in theory is evident in the discourse practice of data analysis, the discourse analysis at the socio-political level reveals a critical note. Literature emphasises the need for a cultural shift within the university, where public engagement and societal value are not seen merely as optional activities, but as integral parts of academic practices (Walker, 2013). However, socio-political discourse analysis shows a clear contradiction emerges in these developments. On one hand, the university aims to change, sets numerous objectives, and strives to integrate with society. However, discourse shows that power relations still play a significant role, and genuine cultural change has not yet fully materialised. This dilemma is reflected in a quotation from the program manager of Centrum voor Wetenschap en Cultuur. In the public engagement plan "Open in Connection," the university addresses public engagement as cultural change within the institution:

*This movement calls for a significant system and cultural shift within universities. This includes a broad academic dialogue about the public value(s) of scientific research and education, and university management. Teamwork and other ways of recognizing and valuing the work of academics are prerequisites for realizing these ambitions. This also involves recognizing activities that contribute to*

*and create conditions for societal interaction. There should also be coherence with other impact pathways of Utrecht University. Thus, this public engagement plan is a link in a larger whole and part of a complex cultural change program (Universiteit Utrecht, 2021).*

Subsequently, the program manager of Centrum voor Wetenschap en Cultuur discusses collaborations with internal partners of the university and the importance of having a PhD to be taken seriously: "It does help that I have a PhD, by the way. Otherwise, they always find it a bit... Well. They never ask in what, but they find it important that you have a PhD. That you can be a credible voice, that you can say, hey, this idea is nice, but what do you actually have in mind? What do you want to achieve? And that people then take that seriously. That is definitely an important success factor." (Interview CWC). This example highlights a dual reality: on one hand, the university advocates for public engagement and aims to be an inclusive and accessible institution. On the other hand, status and educational background still significantly influence decisions. This raises the question of whether such norms hinder the full embedding of the objectives and ideologies. The discourse suggests that for genuine cultural change to occur, this transformation needs to permeate the entire organisation.

Furthermore, notably from the discourse, program managers are aware of each other's initiatives and express critical views towards other initiatives in the Netherlands. During the interview, the program manager of Wageningen Dialogues expressed criticism regarding the impact of Centrum voor Wetenschap en Cultuur at Utrecht University on society. In this context, she notes that Wageningen Dialogues, unlike Utrecht University's initiative, places a strong emphasis on reciprocity, highlighting that the core of the activities is not solely about "sending". This criticism also aligns with the questions about whether the initiatives are truly embraced by the overall culture of the institution:

*And that's why it's a shame that not every university has a Wetenschapswinkel or not every university sees outreach in that dual way. And I think Utrecht, for example, does fantastically in showing the society what they are working on and they have a fantastic Studium Generale program and have a very nice program to showcase what the university is all about. But do those researchers really engage in conversation with those visitors? I have my doubts about that. And that can be a choice. But for us, that choice is very much about reciprocity and not just about sending" (Interview WD).*

## 4.2 Collaboration

In this paragraph, I will interpret data based on sub question 2: How is the collaboration between key stakeholders of benchmarks regarding fostering connection between the university and the city experienced by the project managers of the initiatives? In this study the term collaboration underscores the importance of collaboration between the key stakeholders, including the university, the municipality, and other key social partners, in establishing a university initiative opened to the public.

The first notable observation from the discourse coding is that the majority of the quotations predominantly focus on organisation and structure. This is followed by the code collaborations with partners and stakeholders, and the code collaboration. This underscores the significance of partnerships, both internal and external, within the initiatives. This focus on the importance of collaboration also aligns with the literature, several studies emphasize that collaboration is crucial to understand, address and solve complex urban challenges and promote mutual benefits for stakeholders (Pauer et al., 2020).

### **Collaboration is complex**

The effectiveness of collaborations is extensively discussed in the interviews. Several factors underlie this, as revealed during the discourse level of coding. Firstly, a notable insight is that collaboration is perceived as complex and intensive by most initiatives. Respondents attribute this complexity to the scale of the organisation involved, both internally and externally, the interdisciplinary nature of the domains, and the diversity of partners engaged. According to the respondents, the outcome of these complex collaborations results in lengthy processes and the maintenance of relationships, which consume significant time and energy. The Urban Living Lab Breda highlights the necessity for continuous boundary work to navigate and integrate across different departments and initiatives within large organizations: “And the organizations are also very large. So, collaborating with one doesn't mean you're integrated into another department. So, you have to do a lot of what we call boundary work. Making sure you keep making connections within the organizations. Those organizations, their parts, are also busy with their own initiatives. Sometimes they think, well, this conflicts with what we're doing.” (Interview ULL). Moreover, external collaborations pose additional challenges, as observed by the project manager of Buurtcampus Amsterdam when working with organizations like the Amsterdam Public Library. Structural differences and bureaucratic processes often slow down decision-making and progress: “When you collaborate with another organization, you notice they have a very different structure. For example, they have to consult everything with their superiors. They themselves are actually allowed to make very few decisions. So that's actually quite difficult to collaborate. So, you notice that it slows down” (Interview BA).

The literature reflects these challenges as several studies show that collaboration between the different key stakeholders proves to be a complex and intricate process (Curry, 2016). Collaboration between the university, municipality and other key social partners is often overshadowed by daily conflicts, hindering effective collaboration (Curry, 2016). Furthermore, another study shows that the dynamics between varying institutional power and organizational hierarchy often pose challenges to genuine collaboration between the different parties (Raiden & King, 2023). However, the program managers of House of Connections and Centrum voor Wetenschap en Cultuur seem to perceive collaboration as a less complex issue. This may be because the respondents indicate that internal collaborations within the organisation, such as with other departments, faculties, or programs, are more crucial than collaborations with external partners like municipalities or other educational institutions. Therefore, differences in organisational culture and hierarchy are less significant compared to initiatives in Amsterdam, Breda, and Wageningen. This reduces the complexity of collaboration, as there is greater experience in working together, enabling parties to understand each other better and reach common ground more quickly.

### Team and qualities

The positive outcome of these initiatives hinges significantly on the composition and qualities of their core teams, as highlighted by all respondents. While the size of the team is noted to be less critical, the qualities of team members emerge as pivotal factors. These qualities encompass strong program management skills, enthusiasm, adept networking abilities, and the capacity to foster effective connections among stakeholders. The program manager of the House of Connections highlights the role of hospitality in facilitating connections and praises her team for their dedication. Similarly, the program managers of the Urban Living Lab Breda and Centrum voor Wetenschap en Cultuur emphasize the importance of their team's qualities in building strong relationships and fostering internal collaboration as critical factors for their initiatives:

*The other success has been that we have managed from every partner [...] that we have a group of people together who have a lot of energy and enthusiasm. And so, they really do good ambassador work within their own organizations. That is really a success factor. So, your key is really the group of people you initially bring together. And yes, also the chemistry you manage to build with each other. Because that's what it all depends on (Interview CWC).*

*But yes, it's really about building relationships. And in that sense, I just have a fantastic team. Anyway, they also make fantastic programs, but also on this, they can just do that very well. Just calmly building those relationships with people. And not wanting to score immediately and do just one project and then never show up again. That's very important (Interview HoC).*

### Power relations

The analysis delved deeper into the complexity of these collaborations at the socio-political coding level. It became evident that institutional power dynamics, organizational hierarchies, and decision-making processes significantly influence the collaborative efforts among diverse stakeholders. Respondents perceive these factors both negatively, as potential obstacles, and positively, as critical factors. Institutional power and organisational hierarchy can hinder the processes and ambitions of program managers. A significant issue is the influence exerted by municipalities, which often provide funding. In exchange for this financial support, municipalities demand quantitative evidence of success initiatives (Raiden & King, 2023). However, program managers find that this demand for numerical proof does not align with the qualitative value their initiatives deliver. Both the discourse analysis and the literature show that this misalignment can create friction, as the quantitative metrics required by the funders fail to capture the broader social impact and nuanced outcomes of the programs. The need to produce such evidence can divert resources and focus away from the objectives and ambitions of the initiatives, thereby hindering their progress and effectiveness (Raiden & King, 2023). The program manager of the Urban Living Lab Breda illustrates this challenge, highlighting his negative experience with governance structures and a the so called “command-and-control approach”:

*Ideally, we also hold ourselves accountable to the city. But at the same time, you are all part of an institution. And then things like governance, structure, come into play, and result and effect. Your effect may only be measurable in 10 or 15 years. So, the societal transformation you aim for is actually preceded by an organizational and institutional transformation. Our lessons learned towards organizations, administrators who want to embrace such an initiative; this initiative won't succeed if you operate from command and control (Interview ULL).*

Similarly, the project leader of Buurtcampus Amsterdam reflects on their collaboration with the municipality, which did not meet initial expectations due to the influence of investments, role distribution, and hierarchy. She even indicates that they have abandoned their expectations for collaboration with the municipality: “Yes, well. I think it has always been a wish that we had some kind of collaboration. But you actually notice that the municipality, because you get subsidies, is just a client. So that is... Yes, we always hoped to work together more on that. But I have somewhat abandoned that hope by now” (Interview BA).

The societal contributions made by these initiatives often cannot be quantitatively captured. Program managers express frustration with this limitation in the interviews, emphasising the importance of receiving flexibility and trust as key factors. The program manager of the Urban Living Lab Breda underscores the significance of flexibility and providing space: “This initiative will be successful if you operate by giving space and trust. Yes, of course, we also find it important to show how many students are still involved, what is the learning effect for those students, how do the students themselves experience it, are they also better socially involved, and so on. Obviously, that is also very important. But it is mainly about how you really help society move forward together. And that thinking, that still needs to grow. So, that would be my advice to all those administrators.” (Interview ULL). Wageningen's program manager also mentions this importance of flexibility and space: “Another important aspect is also having the freedom to develop the program as needs arise throughout the year. What we often see now, especially in projects, is that at the beginning of the funding stream, a whole program must be laid out. About what exactly are you going to do with the money. But that actually kills everything right away. Because you don't know what will be needed” (Interview WD).

Contrary, it is noteworthy that these same project leaders highlight effective collaboration driven by institutional power as a significant positive factor. This is particularly the case when the ambitions of the program manager are supported and shared by higher-level authorities, such as the institution's board of directors or other governmental administrative roles. This is also reflected in a report of Rathenau institute on collaboration between municipalities and universities, which identified the involvement from top organisational leaderships as key feature in collaboration as it legitimizes the efforts and ensures commitment (Rathenau institute, 2020). The discourse analyse reveals that all five researched initiatives underscore the support from the board of directors as crucial. The program managers highlight this by saying: “It is a success factor, that the board of directors has said, we find this very important, we are going to allocate money for this, we ensure that this will happen. So, at the start of the initiative this has really been a success factor and naturally seeps through that the board of directors still finds it important. We have rented this building for 10 years, for example.” (Interview HoC) and “Well, that has helped enormously if you simply have someone from the top-down who says this as a kind of ambassador and we're just going to do this. Because there are so many nice initiatives, but if there isn't really a backbone from the top saying we are going to do this.” (Interview WD). Similarly, the program manager and initiator of the Urban Living Lab Breda also considers supported policies by administrators as a crucial factor. Moreover, he mentioned that this has facilitated collaborations with other stakeholders as well: “A success factor has certainly been the moment when the administrators in Breda said we will embrace this initiative. This is where we will shape strategic cooperation in the city, for the city, and with the city. And from coordinating. This has at least ensured that it gained a certain status. Which made people think yes, it's a serious party to engage with. And to collaborate with” (Interview ULL).

These quotations highlight the inherent tension between the challenges of power dynamics and the necessity of securing funding to sustain collaborative initiatives. According to theoretical insights from the Rathenau Instituut (2020), fostering openness, proactive communication, and mutual understanding is crucial for navigating these complexities. Institutional power dynamics and bureaucratic hurdles can impede collaboration, prioritizing short-term metrics over long-term societal impacts potentially stifling innovation and flexibility (Rathenau Instituut, 2020). However, securing institutional support, often through funding, is essential for launching and maintaining initiatives. This support provides legitimacy, stability, and necessary resources. Therefore, balancing the need for institutional resources with the challenges posed by complex dynamics is critical for maximizing the societal impact of collaborative efforts.

### 4.3 Co-Creation

In this paragraph, I will connect codes and quotations from the discourse to respond to the sub question: in what ways are the benchmarks adopting a co-creative approach to contribute to fostering the connection between the city and the university? The term co-creation in this research defines itself as a collective and creative process that engages the community in the design, planning and decision-making processes, with the aim of contributing to shared understandings of more socially just cities (Carpenter & Horvath, 2022).

#### **Engagement in the establishment phase**

Respondents emphasise the importance of co-creation with the community or target audience in the initiatives. The code engagement is linked notably more often to a quotation compared to the code participation. These two codes differ in reflecting how collaboration with the target audience is approached. In the discourse, the code engagement refers to the emotional and psychological involvement of the community, whereas participation relates to their actual actions and physical presence in the process. The significant difference in the frequency of these codes can be partly explained by the limited use of co-creation in the initial phase. The discourse and respondents indicate that co-creation mainly occurs during the execution phase. Here, co-creation plays a less significant role in decision-making or the design process and more in achieving the objective of fostering connection emotionally and socially. Several reasons underlie the limited use of co-creation in the establishment of the initiative. Firstly, it appears that the initial idea of the initiative often originates from managerial roles rather than emerging from the target audience (see quotations in 4.2 collaboration). Additionally, involving the target audience proves complex when few frameworks are established. Respondents suggest that co-creation therefore tends to be applied in later stages. Centrum voor Wetenschap en Cultuur program manager mentions that audience involvement happens mostly during the program, but “We are trying more and more” (Interview WD). Similarly, the project leader of Buurtcampus Amsterdam mentioned that there have been graduation students who surveyed the needs of residents, but “Not in the creation phase” (Interview BA).

Co-creation, particularly through engagement, emerges as a critical factor for the examined initiatives. However, comparing the use of co-creation in the initiatives studied with the ideals outlined in the placemaking literature, several critical differences and considerations emerge. According to placemaking literature, co-creation ideally begins with a bottom-up approach, where initiatives originate from community needs and aspirations rather than top-down directives from managerial roles (Project for Public Spaces, 2017). However, in the initiatives studied, there is a notable pattern towards top-down initiation of the initiatives. For example, the House of Connections and Centrum voor Wetenschap en Cultuur initiatives primarily started with ideas from university leadership and engagement with the target audience occurring later in the process. Thereby, placemaking literature underscores the importance of inclusive stakeholder engagement throughout all project phases, emphasising ongoing dialogue and collaboration with diverse community members. Effective co-creation involves not only inviting stakeholders to participate but also empowering them as decision-makers in shaping the initiative's vision and implementation (Project for Public Spaces, 2017). In contrast, the initiatives studied show varying levels of stakeholder engagement, often focusing more on involvement during the execution phase rather than the entire project lifecycle. This reactive engagement approach, where stakeholders are approached after initial decisions are made, may hinder the establishment of trust and meaningful collaboration essential for sustainable community initiatives (Project for Public Spaces, 2017).

#### **Personal engagement**

The discourse analysis reveals that engagement of the target audience is crucial in achieving the initiatives' objectives. Analysis at the discourse level of the discourse highlights several key factors shared among the initiatives in engaging the target audience. The first key factor identified from the discourse analysis involves effective engagement of the target audience. Respondents emphasise that actively and personally

approaching the target audience, instead of waiting for them to initiate contact, constitutes a key element of a positive outcome. This approach aims to foster personal relationships and facilitate collaboration in a familiar environment. Although there are subtle differences in the extent to which personal contact is sought, the discourse analysis of all initiatives highlights the importance of personal engagement. This also emphasizes the role of the program manager in fostering these connections. The following quotations from the program manager of the Centrum voor Wetenschap en Cultuur and the program manager of Wageningen Dialogues underscore that the ability of personal engagement to foster connections is a key factor for the initiative. The program manager of Buurtcampus Amsterdam underscores this and adds the value of engagement through networking and interaction through key figures to foster genuine connections:

*It's very much about personal contacts. Actually, more than at the organizational level when setting up those collaborations. If you can find a good connection with each other from person to person, then suddenly the interests of your organization matter less, and then you can create something together. That's one of the catalysts in such an initiative. The project leader who sets up such initiatives, they really need to have a very connecting character. It shouldn't be someone who is just very much into figures and a super organized project leader. No, they need to be a people person (Interview WD).*

*Approach a partner with a questioning attitude. Well yes, of course not completely blank [...], but I'm just very curious. I ask people; what do you do? Who are you? Why do you think that's important? And if I tell what we do here, what would you think? Is that interesting or not? So not approaching with a ready-made offer. And what sometimes happens and what sometimes might work well is mutual interaction. That's the program manager's job (Interview CWC).*

*In the early years, we invested a lot in the neighborhood network. So going to meetings. Also in the evenings. Always being present in the neighborhood. And I think it really helps us a lot. That we collaborate with key figures and resident initiatives. For example, to get in touch with those residents. I have to be very aware that I don't look like the average resident living in Amsterdam-Zuidoost. So I really need the help of other residents who have a large network in their neighborhood. And I definitely have a lot of contact with residents. But ultimately, if I really want to make a difference for residents. I really need key figures in the neighborhood (Interview BA).*

### **Challenges with accessibility and outreach**

In addition to personal interaction, the interview with the program manager of the Urban Living Lab Breda reveals that connection is best facilitated by engaging the audience in a familiar place. The project manager of Urban Living Lab Breda mentions: "We thought, you need to have a central location because that's the place where you can receive everyone, especially when it comes to collaboration partners from the field, from education, from research, students. But residents very sporadically, they find such a barrier too high. [...] We have noticed that they feel more comfortable and safer when you receive them in their own environment. So for example, in a neighbourhood centre. [...]. Because they know them, that's their place." This is also evident in the discourse analysis of Buurtcampus Amsterdam, where a recent collaboration with the public library of Amsterdam aims to bring the initiative closer to the community. Similarly, the discourse analysis of Wageningen Dialogues shows experiments with dialogue sessions in various public spaces, such as the weekly market and the local cinema.

Creating an accessible atmosphere is a recurring theme in all initiatives and is cited as a crucial factor in the discourse. The importance of accessibility is underscored by informal participation and the availability of spaces that attract a broad audience. The program manager of House of Connections describes the multifunctionality of the space as a crucial element in creating accessibility: "The multifunctionality really has an effect. The space is free, accessible, open, no frills, you notice that people are more informal here. We almost never see people in suits and ties. There's a kind of informality, it's not stately or anything, it isn't the

classical image of the university, highly educated, we don't have that here." However, the discourse analysis reveals there are challenges in maintaining these spaces truly open and consistently accessible to the public. Overall, discourse analysis of all initiatives reveals a sense of dissatisfaction regarding the level of engagement with the target audience. For instance, Utrecht University's public engagement describes; "It is difficult to reach an audience that is more distant from science, and the university has little knowledge and expertise in that area. It is a societal task of Utrecht University to establish relationships with them, to start a dialogue" (Universiteit Utrecht, 2021). In addition, contrary to the above quotation, the House of Connections program manager addresses the challenge in making the building and activities truly open and accessible for everyone: "However, I do think the majority of the events are for invitees or by invitation. We have very few open-door moments. Also, because we're still struggling with that. What do you want then and what do you want to show? Is there a demand?" (Interview HoC).

Particularly interesting about these quotations and the corresponding discourse analyse is that initiatives with more flexible locations, such as Urban Living Lab Breda, Buurtcampus Amsterdam, and Wageningen Dialogues, report that personal engagement is more effective when it takes place in a setting familiar to local residents. In contrast, the initiatives Centrum voor Wetenschap en Cultuur and House of Connections, which operate from more fixed locations, face challenges in reaching their desired audiences, currently often attracting those who are already familiar with the university. This suggests that the effectiveness of these initiatives is not necessarily tied to the physical location of the building, but rather to the quality of interaction and engagement with the community that the initiative fosters.

Moreover, criticisms from placemaking literature regarding selective participatory practices resonate with challenges observed in the studied initiatives on reaching the desired audience. While actively approaching the target group is deemed a crucial factor, this can lead to risks in selective participation that may marginalize certain groups or prioritize stakeholder input to fit predefined goals (Mens et al., 2023). According to the literature this selective engagement can undermine the co-creative process' democratic ideals and limit the initiative's ability to address diverse community needs effectively (Mens et al., 2023).

The insights from this chapter provide valuable understanding of the examined benchmarks and help guide the answers to the sub-questions. To fully address these sub-questions and eventually compare the benchmarks with the Latin school, the next chapter will analyse the discourse surrounding the Latin school. The next chapter is structured similarly to this chapter, offering an explanation and interpretation of the data analysis based on the sub-questions, within the framework of the three main concepts: objectives, collaboration, and co-creative approach.

## 5. Insights from Latin school

---

The Latin school located in the middle of Nijmegen's city centre will soon serve as a part of the university in the city. After decades of use as an architectural office, the Latin school recently became temporarily available for a new purpose. A vibrant interpretation was sought in cooperation with partners who bring their own audience to this unique place. From there, the idea arose from the Municipality of Nijmegen to temporarily loan the Latin school to Radboud University (RU). This can also be considered a gift from the municipality to Radboud University in honour of its 100th anniversary (Ensing et al., 2023).14/10/2024 13:09:00

The Latin school is currently in the programming phase and will open its doors in September 2024. The project team, comprising policy officers from the municipality and Radboud University, seeks guidance on utilizing the temporal use both impactful and effectively. Therefore, my research will contribute to the development of the Latin school by evaluating its current phase, offering insights into its progress and areas for improvement. This chapter will provide insights through discourse analysis. Subsequently, chapter six will compare the results of the contemporary initiatives discussed in chapter four with the findings from the Latin school covered in this chapter. Similar as in chapter four, I will interpret and analyse the data in this chapter based on the sub questions in the three main concepts: objectives, collaboration, and co-creative approach.

### 5.1 Objectives

In this paragraph, I will interpret data based on sub question 1: what are the objectives of the Latin school regarding fostering connections between the university and the city? The term objective is defined in this study as the established goals, motivations and ambitions related to connecting the city and the university.

#### Formation

What clearly emerged from the discourse analysis of the Latin school is that the initiative originated from an idea of the municipality of Nijmegen. The primary purpose behind this initiative is to temporarily loan the Latin school to Radboud University in honor of their centenary, while the municipality searches for a permanent purpose for the building:

*The initiative emerged because we were looking as a municipality for a gift for Radboud University. That was quite difficult. Then at one point the tenant of the Latin school had terminated the lease. And yes, then we were thinking about a new use. And we thought, it would actually be very nice to temporarily give it to Radboud University. But with the condition that it does not have to be rebuilt too radically for the temporary use. Because we are still looking for a permanent use for the Latin school (Interview Nijmegen municipality).*

*I think it started as a sort of vacancy management; they were looking for a user who could do something interesting with it for a year, a year and a half. Also, with the idea that the user should bring some excitement to that part of Nijmegen by bringing a new target group. And the target group the municipality had in mind were, in our case, young people, especially students. They asked if we could do something with and for students in that part of the city to create more excitement and liveliness in that place (Interview RU).*

These quotes highlight different emphases from the Municipality of Nijmegen and Radboud University regarding the initiative. The municipality's project manager focuses on finding a temporary use for the building after the previous tenant left, stressing that any usage should not require extensive renovations. In contrast, the project manager from Radboud University underscores the goal of creating activity and vibrancy in that part of Nijmegen by involving students. Both perspectives underscore the mutual benefits of the collaboration but emphasize different aspects of the initiative's motivations and expected outcomes. The temporariness of the initiative turns out to be an important aspect that brings both advantages and disadvantages. On the one

hand, this poses limitations; the document analysis clearly shows that the temporariness impacts the time and available resources: 'There is temporary use of the building. Both the university and the municipality therefore adopt the principle that costs are kept as low as possible and that only the necessary adjustments for temporary use are made to the building' (Radboud Universiteit & Gemeente Nijmegen, 2023). At the same time, program managers indicate that this 'creates space for experimentation' (interview RU) and the document analysis states that 'The opportunity to learn on the job would fit well with the intended use of the Latin school' (Radboud Universiteit & Gemeente Nijmegen, 2023) and 'This aligns well with the co-creative and pop-up nature of the proposed programming' (Radboud Universiteit & Gemeente Nijmegen, 2023). The program managers do not comment on whether the temporary nature affects the feasibility of the ambitious intended objectives.

### **Multiple objectives**

The discourse analysis of the objectives uncovers a diverse range of goals, as demonstrated by the coding of the quotations. At the discourse level, 'objective accessibility' emerges as the most frequently cited. The second most used code is 'vacancy property management', followed by 'openness'. On socio-political level, underlying values and ideologies were analysed, with 'values of openness and transparency' being most frequently linked to a quotation, followed by 'social engagement' and 'value of connection'. Discourse analysis reveals that temporarily making the Latin school available to Radboud University serves multiple objectives for both the university and the municipality. Both parties agree on the objective that the building should have a vibrant purpose that aligns with the city of Nijmegen, integrating science and practice. The location should prioritise education, research, and societal interaction. The intention is to enhance the connection between the university and the city, including its residents and visitors, stated in the policy document analysis on the jointly developed document "Temporary use Latin school" by Radboud University and the municipality of Nijmegen:

*The university in the city: a place where science and practice come together, where education and research (with a link to the city) become visible and tangible. [...] A meeting place for scientists, students, researchers, civil servants, residents, visitors, and businesses (Radboud Universiteit & Gemeente Nijmegen, 2023).*

The objectives mentioned in the document align with the discourse from the interviews with the program managers:

*Well, the primary goal, which the municipality also supports, is to create some vibrancy in that part of the city. That's the most important thing. To establish a connection between the university and the city, its residents, and visitors. And also to link education and research on the one hand (Interview RU).*

*It is certainly a great opportunity for Radboud University and for us as a municipality. It's also a chance to explore what could be developed there. How can the Latin school be better utilized? We're doing this now with the university occupying it. But we've also included in our assignment that it shouldn't be used solely for internal purposes. Radboud University also wanted this, as they thought, 'we want more of a university in residence.' This way, the university becomes more visible in the city. It's not just for students; it's also for visitors and the people of the city. This brings them closer to the university, instead of everything being centered in Heijendaal, where many people do not go (Interview Nijmegen municipality).*

This objective of the university to be visible in the city aligns with the study by Hebbert, which shows that the spatial location of a university is a crucial element influencing the relationship between the university and the city (2018). In the interview, the program manager of the Nijmegen municipality mentioned, 'bringing people closer to the university, instead of campus Heijendaal, [...] where people do not go' (Interview Nijmegen municipality). Similar to Hebbert's study, this illustrates that Radboud University initially established in the city centre, later expanded as a campus outside the city, and now seeks to re-establish a presence in the city centre (see figure 2.1). According to Hebbert, there existed a prevalent belief that urban universities were at a disadvantage, which led to the modernist concept of relocating campuses to the outskirts of the city (Hebbert, 2018). Hebbert now advocates for reducing the boundary between the university and the city to foster transparency, as it contributes to the knowledge economy and enhances the well-being of students and city residents (Hebbert, 2018).

Moreover, the objective of knowledge sharing emerges in the discourse analysis. For example, the quotation 'where education and research become visible and tangible' (Radboud University & Municipality of Nijmegen, 2023) aligns with the literature review, which indicates that sharing knowledge is increasingly seen as essential for promoting a culture of collaboration and enhancing the impact of research and education (Al Kurdi et al., 2018). These two objectives clearly emerge in the discourse analysis. However, interestingly, despite being prominently featured in earlier discussions and listed as the primary objective in the joint exploration, the codes 'connection' at the discourse level and 'value of connection' at the socio-political level were not utilised more frequently. Interviews with the municipality of Nijmegen and Radboud University highlighted these goals less prominently, potentially due to the program's still-open framework. Additionally, the broad range of objectives mentioned may have obscured the emphasis on creating connections in the discourse analysis.

## 5.2 Collaboration

In this paragraph, I will interpret data based on sub question 2: How is the collaboration between key stakeholders of the Latin school, regarding fostering connection between the university and the city experienced by the project managers of the initiative? In this study the term collaboration underscores the importance of collaboration between the key stakeholders, including the university, the municipality, and other key social partners, in establishing a university initiative opened to the public.

### **Division of roles and collaboration**

The discourse reveals how the division of roles within the Latin school has been structured. The municipality owns the building and initiates the idea of lending the Latin school to Radboud University. During this loan period, the university assumes ultimate responsibility for programming, while the municipality facilitates and collaborates on decision-making. Following the loan period, the municipality determines the permanent use of the building, potentially in collaboration with Radboud University. The program manager from the municipality of Nijmegen describes the division of roles in the programming and execution of the Latin school: "Radboud University has also indicated that they would like to have our help in developing the program. That is my role from the municipality, as Radboud University is essentially leading this initiative. However, I am responsible for our contribution to it on behalf of the municipality" (Interview Nijmegen municipality).

The discourse analysis indicates that both parties consider the collaboration between the municipality and Radboud University as crucial. This partnership will continue throughout the initiative and will impact the collaboration and relationship between both parties in the future. The program managers from the municipality of Nijmegen and the Radboud University on the importance of effective collaboration between both parties:

*The municipality has always invested a lot in maintaining a good relationship with Radboud University. It is a very important institution in Nijmegen. It is a major employer and also significantly influences the composition of the population, as Nijmegen is truly a student city. Therefore, this collaboration is essential and is always a top priority (Interview Nijmegen municipality).*

*I think what also plays a role is that the university is an important stakeholder for the municipality, and the municipality is for us as well. So, we have a mutual interest in maintaining that relationship and in the success of the Latin school. This makes the collaboration smoother (Interview RU).*

Literature emphasises the arguments of the program managers by stating that effective collaboration is crucial to understand, address, and solve complex urban challenges and to promote mutual benefits (Pauer et al., 2020). Research thereby shows that collaboration between universities and city municipalities enhances economic opportunities, skill development, and socio-economic advancement through the dissemination of knowledge and expertise (Klein, 2019). However, within the Latin school initiative viewing long-term

relationship management as a secondary objective has the potential to overshadow the primary goal of promoting social engagement and fostering connections between the city and the university. Balancing these priorities will be crucial for maintaining alignment and achieving the initial objectives.

### **Collaborative factors**

Several factors contributing to the collaboration between the municipality of Nijmegen and Radboud University have been identified. Discourse analysis highlights openness, positivity, and enthusiasm as crucial elements in their partnership. The municipality of Nijmegen immediately mentions the word "enthusiasm" when asked about key factors in the collaboration: "Well, primarily, it's the word enthusiasm. Everyone who sees that building and thinks about all the possibilities it holds becomes very enthusiastic. Of course, the challenge is to turn that enthusiasm into something tangible, which is not always easy. But enthusiasm is what binds us all." (Interview Nijmegen municipality). Similarly, the program manager from Radboud University emphasizes positivity and clear communication as essential factors: "It is very nice that everything can be discussed openly. There is no undercurrent, so to speak. Things can be communicated clearly. I also notice, and this might be related to the individuals involved rather than just the organizations, that people tend to think in terms of opportunities and possibilities rather than limitations or risks. They don't focus on what can't be done but rather on what can be achieved and how to approach it positively. I find that very pleasant. (Interview RU)" These insights highlight that the collaboration benefits significantly from shared enthusiasm and a positive outlook.

The elements of collaboration described as "enthusiasm" and "open discussion" align well with the Rathenau Institute's report on effective university-city partnerships. This report emphasizes that fostering equality, maintaining a culture of openness, strategic decision-making, and setting clear goals are essential for sustainable partnerships (Rathenau Instituut, 2020). These aspects are partially reflected in the discourse analysis of the Latin school, as seen in the quotations provided. However, the factor described in the report as balance between proximity and distance is mentioned less explicitly in the discourse analysis of the Latin school. Furthermore, the report underscores the need for a robust funding model, a factor not addressed in the discourse analysis, given that the objectives for the Latin school specified a cost-neutral implementation (Rathenau Instituut, 2020).

### **Challenges in administrative structures**

In addition to the positive factors, both parties also face challenges within the collaboration. Challenges have been identified concerning the bureaucratic structures of both the municipality and the university, which affect the speed and effectiveness of the collaboration. The Municipality of Nijmegen reflects on the administrative hurdles encountered within Radboud University, similarly the program manager from Radboud University acknowledges the complexity introduced by the municipality's bureaucratic setup:

*I always thought the municipality could be bureaucratic, but I must say the university surpasses that by far. I never expected that. I see that even within our team, especially [...] the project manager from the Radboud University, faces challenges due to hierarchical or bureaucratic structures within the university. This sometimes hinders his ability to act as quickly or smoothly as he would like (Interview Nijmegen municipality).*

*I can relate to that from the university's perspective. The municipality is also a large organization, with many different departments and diverse interests. I notice that various departments within the municipality are involved, but they don't always seem well-coordinated internally. Nevertheless, it's interesting to experience this and see how things unfold (Interview RU).*

Interestingly, despite navigating through bureaucratic structures, both Radboud University and the municipality of Nijmegen hold distinct perceptions of their collaboration. Radboud University views the partnership as positive and constructive, attributing its positive outcome to a shared vision that facilitates

smooth operations from the outset: “And because of that, the collaboration has been running smoothly. This was evident right from the initial phase, during the drafting of the document. [...] So yes, so far, I am quite satisfied with the collaboration. It has been constructive as well” (Interview RU). Conversely, the municipality of Nijmegen expresses concerns over the perceived lack of progress, *slagkracht* in Dutch: “We need more progress, [...] the ability to quickly bring ideas to fruition. We've been preparing for the program for a year now, which is quite a long time. It's about time it starts taking shape” (Interview Nijmegen municipality). These differing viewpoints shed light on how bureaucratic challenges can influence the interpretation and effectiveness of collaborative efforts. While Radboud University underscores the importance of a unified vision to maintain momentum, the municipality of Nijmegen stresses the need for more decisiveness to accelerate progress. Despite a joint exploration drafted, the true alignment of this shared vision between both parties remains unclear.

The literature supports the findings from the discourse analysis, emphasizing the complexities involved in collaboration between universities and municipalities. Curry (2016) points out that this type of collaboration is intricate and often challenging, as it requires effective engagement at the political level, where aligning diverse interests can be particularly difficult. Moreover, the literature review highlights that the dynamics of institutional power and organizational hierarchy frequently introduce further obstacles. These power dynamics can hinder genuine collaboration, making it difficult to achieve shared goals (Raiden & King, 2023).

#### **Involved partners and stakeholders**

In addition to the collaboration between Radboud University and the municipality, a diverse range of other partners are involved. Within the municipality, various departments such as property management, city marketing, and economic policy are engaged. Within the university organisation, facilities services, marketing and communications, and policy officers are involved. Additionally, stakeholders like the Stevenskerk, local entrepreneurs, educational programs, and student organisations, are involved to ensure broad support. However, Radboud University faces challenges in engaging these parties. The interview reveals that providing clear guidelines for involved partners and finding partners willing to join in the early stages and take on the role of a pioneer proves to be difficult:

*What is a bit tricky there is that these two things go hand in hand. So, parties are enthusiastic to participate, but at the same time, there's the question of what can be done there? What is allowed there? The boundaries of the building, what can and cannot be done, are heavily influenced by its physical limitations. Thus, the capacity of the building is limited, partly due to laws and regulations, and that's where I'm running into issues now (Interview RU).*

The factor of setting clear goals, highlighted in the Rathenau Institute's report on effective university-city partnerships, may be particularly relevant for strengthening collaboration with the involved partners and stakeholders (Rathenau Institute, 2020). According to the literature, establishing well-defined objectives can significantly enhance the effectiveness of partnerships by providing direction, fostering accountability, and ensuring that all parties are aligned in their efforts. By integrating clear guidelines into the collaborative framework, the partners can improve communication, streamline their processes, and achieve more coherent and impactful outcomes (Rathenau Instituut, 2020).

## 5.3 Co-creation

In this section, I will connect codes and quotations from the discourse to respond to the sub question: in what ways is the Latin school adopting a co-creative approach to contribute to fostering the connection between the city and the university? The term co-creation in this research defines itself as a collective and creative process that engages the community in the design, planning and decision-making processes, with the aim of contributing to shared understandings of more socially just cities (Carpenter & Horvath, 2022).

### Collaborative activities

From the interview analysis, it appears that the programming of the building is still relatively open. However, the policy document analysis of the jointly developed document “Temporary use Latin school” by Radboud University and the municipality of Nijmegen, provides insight into the direction of the program and activities. The document emphasises that the activities in the Latin school are aimed at involving diverse users and initiatives that align with the broader vision for the property, such as educational innovations, cultural events, and scientific projects connected to Nijmegen: “The leitmotif is that the combined thinking and imagination of scientists and artists (in the broadest sense of the word) are employed to collaborate with residents, entrepreneurs, and visitors of Nijmegen in search of innovative and meaningful solutions for societal challenges related to climate, housing and spatial planning, social cohesion, health, and quality of life, etc” (Radboud University & Municipality of Nijmegen, 2023).

The implementation of activities has gained a more concrete form during the period when the interviews were conducted. One of the intended core activities described by the program manager of the municipality of Nijmegen is the establishment of collaborative labs where students, scientists, and entrepreneurs work together on societal issues, enhancing the co-creation process. These collaborative labs have not yet been developed, but the project manager describes the intended purpose as follows: “What we will do there is lectures, but also collaborative labs, so to speak. It would be great if entrepreneurs, students, or scientists could work together on specific societal issues” (Interview Nijmegen municipality).

### Co-creative approach

To further shape the program, a co-creative approach is envisioned. The objective is to actively involve the target audience in the design, implementation, and decision-making processes. The policy document analysis of the jointly developed document “Temporary use Latin school” by Radboud University and the municipality of Nijmegen outlines a cohesive set of activities at the intersection of science, art, and society. These activities prioritize co-creation with the relevant target audience or users: “aiming to empower them from the start to shape their own space to bring personal meaning to this unique location, fostering a sense of belonging, connection, and ownership” (Radboud Universiteit & Gemeente Nijmegen, 2023). From the interviews, it becomes evident that the current involvement of the target group primarily revolves around engaged students: “I find it very exciting to already involve students at this phase. That includes you, and also the student of the Honourlab group [...]. Because we're doing this especially for you all. So, it needs to resonate with the target group you're working with, of course.” (Interview Nijmegen municipality). While this mode of co-creation is positively acknowledged, the project manager of the Municipality of Nijmegen and Radboud University both indicate its current minimal extent:

*Yes, so far only the university itself and the municipality, naturally. And you're also a student yourself. So, students are involved, but it's really minimal at this point (Interview Nijmegen municipality).*

*So, we need to engage much more in co-creation than we currently do. It's something we're still actively working on, that aspect is not progressing as well as I'd hoped. I'm glad you asked that question. No, it still really needs to take shape (Interview RU).*

Despite the ambitious goals described in the jointly developed document “Temporary use Latin school”, the project managers indicate that the co-creative progress has been more challenging than anticipated. The document describes a co-creative approach which aligns to placemaking; defined as an active process of creating or enhancing a physical space to promote community engagement, strengthen social bonds, and improve quality of life by placing the community centre as the expert and the decision maker (Project for Public Spaces, n.d.). This challenge is a common issue in theory. In placemaking initiatives, there is a risk that they may not originate from grassroots efforts but are instead somewhat directed top-down (Mens et al., 2023). The discourse analysis on the interviews reveal that this is indeed the case with the Latin school, as the idea originated from administrators, and students were subsequently sought to be involved in its development. This approach can thereby lead to the risk of selectivity in participatory processes (Allen & Queen, 2018).

### **Flexible and ad-hoc approach**

Instead of adhering to a predetermined plan, the discourse analysis reveals that the project evolves more flexible through input from various stakeholders. During the interviews, both project managers mentioned that this flexible approach allows for adjustments and new ideas, but also entails ad hoc solutions and challenges: “We haven’t made a plan of action or a project plan. We didn’t have any of that and then we encountered several practical problems like accessibility issues, structural defects, air handling, and gas prices soaring while we need to heat the building. So, we’ve been quite ad hoc in dealing with each obstacle as it comes our way” (Interview Nijmegen municipality). At the same time, the Radboud University program manager underscored the benefits of this approach in providing flexibility and accommodating the co-creative process: “For example, with setting up the building. [...] Yes, you could furnish and equip it completely from top to bottom. But if it turns out the user’s needs are different, you’re back to square one. That’s why we decided to set up a few spaces initially. We’ll see if they meet the requirements. And if adjustments are needed, we can quickly pivot to make those changes. I find this way of working quite pleasant” (Interview RU).

Notably, the ad-hoc approach mentioned by the program managers is explicitly identified as one of the key features of collaboration in the Rathenau Institute’s report on partnerships between universities and municipalities. The report describes how university-municipality collaborations often evolve from ad-hoc projects to more structured partnerships. These structured partnerships are seen as desirable for fostering continuous knowledge sharing (Rathenau Instituut, 2020). Additionally, the report highlights that partners in these collaborations are engaged throughout the entire programming cycle, ensuring co-creation and shared decision-making (Rathenau Instituut, 2020). This approach aligns with the project setup of the Latin school, by the joint project team and jointly developed document with shared objectives.

## 6. Latin school vs other contemporary city-university initiatives

---

This chapter compares the results from the benchmark study with those related to the Latin school initiative at Radboud University in Nijmegen. This comparison is made by analysing the discourse results from chapter four alongside those from chapter five. The goal is to extract lessons from the benchmark initiatives to gain insights into key takeaways and recommendations for the Latin school in Nijmegen.

### **Establishment and objectives**

The Latin school's starting point differs notably from the benchmarks. It originated from a unique context: the building was gifted to Radboud University for its 100th anniversary. The discourse analysis reveals that the initial objective was to manage the property during its vacancy. In contrast, most benchmark initiatives were launched by university boards with the aim of enhancing societal engagement and strengthening connections with the city. An exception is the Urban Living Lab in Breda, which was initiated by a local resident but shares similar ambitions. Furthermore, the Latin school differentiates itself from the benchmarks with the temporality of the project, whereas the benchmark initiatives are generally designed for long-term or indefinite durations.

While each initiative in the benchmark analysis varies in its specific activities, there are overarching similarities in their goals. The primary objective of fostering connections between universities and society, as evidenced by the benchmarks analysed, aligns with literature emphasising the importance of such engagements for enhancing community interaction and knowledge sharing (Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff, 2000). Similarly, to the benchmarks, the interviews and document analysis of the Latin school reveal there is a shared ambition to have societal impact and foster community engagement. Both the university and municipality of Nijmegen articulate a common goal of creating vibrancy and linking the university with the city. The analysis of linked quotations underscores that accessibility, openness, and inclusivity are crucial values for the Latin school initiative. Interestingly, the municipality places more emphasis on the initiative's temporary and experimental nature, whereas the university sees possibilities for future expansion. Therefore, the objectives of the Latin school closely align with those of the benchmarks. Although fostering or creating connections is not explicitly mentioned as often within the discourse from the Latin school, the underlying values of social engagement and inclusivity are consistent across both benchmarks and the Latin school.

Furthermore, both the Latin school and the benchmarks place a strong emphasis on openness and inclusivity. Notably, vibrancy is a more frequently highlighted goal in the discussions about the Latin school, likely because of the significant role of its physical location, which was a gift. This emphasis differs from the benchmarks, where the physical location is less central to the initiatives. The benchmarks analysis highlights challenges with physical openness and accessibility, often attracting only those already familiar with the university. To broaden engagement and foster societal connections, the benchmarks stress the importance of actively engaging with diverse groups in familiar community settings, such as neighbourhood centres. This stands in contrast to the Latin school's central location, gifted by the municipality. While this central location provides visibility, the Latin school should carefully assess whether it effectively serves its objectives of community engagement and inclusivity. Evaluating the location's impact on reaching diverse audiences and fostering meaningful interactions will be crucial for the Latin school moving forward.

Another emerging objective among the benchmarks is the recognition of a cultural shift in the university's role within the city. Although this was not an initial objective for most benchmarks, it gradually developed as the initiatives progressed. The discourse reveals persistent challenges in achieving a cultural shift where public engagement and societal value are fully integrated into academic practices. Addressing these challenges

requires deeper institutional dialogue and structural adjustments to ensure genuine cultural transformation and impactful societal contributions moving forward. The Latin school has not yet prioritised the objective of making a cultural shift explicitly. Due to the temporary nature of the initiative, achieving this objective may not be feasible within the 1.5-year loan period. However, the establishment of the initiative indicates a potential shift in how the university engages with the city, reflecting an evolving role in community engagement.

### **Collaboration**

Effective collaboration with key stakeholders is experienced as crucial for both the benchmarks and the Latin school. Literature underscores the importance of this, suggesting that effective collaboration is crucial for addressing complex urban challenges and promoting mutual benefits for all stakeholders involved (Pauer et al., 2020). The discourse analysis of the benchmark initiatives highlights the importance of effective collaboration as positive influence. While most perspectives within the benchmark analysis recognize the significance of team dynamics and supportive institutional frameworks, a key difference lies in the impact of power dynamics on collaboration outcomes (Pauer et al., 2020). Program managers emphasise how institutional power structures can either facilitate or obstruct collaborative efforts, depending on the level of administrative support and alignment with overarching goals set by higher authorities. This is also evident in the discourse analysis of the Latin school. The collaboration between the municipality of Nijmegen and Radboud University is generally perceived positively. Both parties acknowledge the importance of collaboration and share common factors such as enthusiasm and positivity. However, they also identify challenges stemming from bureaucratic structures within their organisations, resulting in differing experiences. The municipality emphasises a lack of progress, whereas Radboud University underscores the benefits of operating from a shared vision.

Moreover, in both the discourse analyses of the benchmarks and the Latin school collaboration is perceived as complex due to the diverse roles and interests of the various partners. Benchmarks often highlight the difficulty of collaborating with municipalities, primarily due to funding issues where municipalities tend to act more as funders rather than partners. This funding aspect is less emphasized at the Latin school, possibly because the building was a gift from the municipality. However, this starting point could result in divergent interests between Radboud University and the Latin school. The discourse analysis reveals nuanced differences in their goals and ambitions regarding the Latin school initiative. Thereby, long-term relationship management appears to be an important secondary goal for both parties. Theoretical insights reflect the complexities of collaboration and advocate for fostering a culture of openness, proactive communication, and mutual understanding to mitigate conflicts and enhance the effectiveness of collaborations (Rathenau Instituut, 2020).

### **Approach**

Several key factors highlighted in the benchmarks align with the approach taken by the Latin school. Firstly, the hands-on approach advocated in the benchmarks proves effective at the Latin school, as noted by project managers. Both the benchmarks and the Latin school emphasize the importance of taking proactive steps to initiate action. Additionally, positivity and enthusiasm are highlighted as critical factors by the benchmarks, underscoring the pivotal role played by project managers and the overall team morale. Similarly, the Latin school values enthusiasm as essential in effectively cultivating external relationships with external stakeholders such as the Donders Institute. Furthermore, flexibility at multiple levels is recognized as a crucial factor. This includes flexibility at the individual level, in programmatic approaches, and in the physical space, such as the adaptable choice of furniture. The benchmarks underscore the benefits of this flexibility, which is also evident in the discourse on the approach of Latin school. Moreover, both the Latin school and the benchmarks underscore personal engagement with stakeholders as important factor in its approach. This involves actively approaching the intended audience, building personal relationships, and creating an environment conducive to collaboration. At the Latin school, this approach is evident in its partnerships with the Municipality of Nijmegen, various entities within Radboud University and the local community, such as the nearby Stevenskerk.

## **Co-Creation**

Both the Latin school and the benchmarks place significant emphasis on co-creation, underscoring the importance of engaging directly with the target group to foster meaningful connections. The benchmarks acknowledge challenges in the early stages, often resulting in co-creation occurring later in the process. They also note the use of a top-down approach initially, where program ideas and activities originate from higher management. In contrast, the program of the Latin school initiative, remains not fixed yet and is currently being shaped in collaboration with a group of students.

According to placemaking literature, the co-creative approach employed at the Latin school can be described as discipline-led (see Figure 2.3), where initiatives start with ideas originating from an organization or institution, then seek collaboration with the target audience (Project for Public Spaces, 2013). This method is effective because it ensures early involvement of stakeholders. In contrast, most benchmarks demonstrate a project-driven approach, where the idea originates from an institution, the project is rolled out, and the target audience is only reached during the implementation. However, the Latin school needs to be cautious about selective participation and the potential risk of overlooking grassroots perspectives when seeking collaboration with the target audience, as this could affect the sustainability and authenticity of community initiatives (Allen & Queen, 2018). Additionally, placemaking literature advocates for short-term projects that allow for evaluation and adjustments. The Latin school, operating as a 1.5-year temporary initiative, aligns well with this approach, potentially enhancing its effectiveness (Project for Public Spaces, 2017). While both the benchmarks and the Latin school demonstrate efforts towards co-creation and community engagement, critical gaps remain in aligning practices with placemaking ideals. Addressing these gaps requires prioritizing bottom-up approaches, enhancing stakeholder inclusivity across all project phases, and adopting adaptive management strategies. However, it is important to acknowledge that the theory of placemaking, while providing valuable guidance, may not always manifest in practice exactly as envisioned. Local contexts, institutional frameworks, and varying stakeholder dynamics can influence how co-creation unfolds, challenging the notion of a universal truth in placemaking theory.

## **Recommendations for praxis**

The comparison of analyses above provides valuable insights into the factors contributing to effective city-university connections, as well as key lessons from the development and implementation of the benchmark initiatives. While the Latin school already demonstrates strengths such as a proactive and hands-on approach, a strong focus on co-creation, and a commitment to stakeholder engagement, integrating these lessons can further enhance its effectiveness. These insights highlight important recommendations that the Latin school can apply as it prepares for its opening and plans for its future.

The first recommendation I derived from the research is that the Latin school should carefully evaluate whether its fixed location is truly effective in reaching a broad and diverse audience. When aiming to strengthen the connection between the city and the university, it is important to determine if the location not only attracts individuals who are already familiar with Radboud University but also successfully engages new and varied segments of the community. This is based on the insights from the benchmarks who strive for flexible and non-fixed locations, focused on actively approaching the audience in a familiar place. An assessment of the Latin school should focus on whether the central location fosters genuine, meaningful interactions and facilitates broader community engagement. Assessing the impact of this location on community engagement and inclusivity will be essential as the initiative progresses. Furthermore, despite its nature as a temporary initiative, the Latin school should aspire to achieve a lasting impact on the community. By learning from the benchmarks that often have extended goals, the Latin school can explore ways to ensure that its efforts in societal engagement and fostering connection yield lasting effects. The Latin school could accomplish this by taking a broader view of its future societal contributions as a university. The benchmark analysis highlighted that a secondary objective for most initiatives is to promote a cultural shift in their role as institution engaging with the city. While the Latin school has not explicitly prioritized a cultural shift, its

establishment signifies an evolving role in Radboud University's engagement with the city. The initiative should consider how it can contribute to a broader cultural shift toward integrating public engagement and societal value into academic practices, even within its limited timeframe.

Furthermore, effective collaboration with stakeholders, especially between the university and the municipality, is crucial for the Latin school. Although both parties are enthusiastic about the initiative, managing bureaucratic challenges and aligning differing objectives is essential. To continue well-functioning collaboration and achieve mutual benefits, the project group should continue focussing on fostering a shared vision, open communication, and proactively addressing any challenges that arise. Additionally, the Latin school can gain insights from the collaborative experiences of the benchmarks regarding challenges encountered at later stages of their projects. For instance, maintaining autonomy within project groups and avoiding a command-and-control approach are recommended to enhance effectiveness. The benchmarks also suggest focusing on perceived societal impacts rather than quantitative measures to assess goals or objectives.

Finally, based on the research findings, it is recommended that while the Latin school has made progress in co-creation by involving students in shaping its program, it should be careful to avoid selective participation. Ensuring that grassroots perspectives are included from the outset will help sustain the initiative's authenticity and relevance. The initiative should aim to enhance inclusive participation throughout all stages of project development, adhering to best practices in placemaking to avoid selective participation and ensure broad engagement. By incorporating these insights, the Latin school can strengthen its role in fostering meaningful connections between Radboud University and the city of Nijmegen, ensuring that it not only meets its immediate objectives but also leaves a lasting, positive impact on the community.

# 7. Conclusion and discussion

---

## 7.1 Conclusion

This thesis explores the connection between the university and the city through a benchmark study of the Latin school in Nijmegen. The Latin school, temporarily lent to Radboud University by the municipality of Nijmegen, represents a novel initiative to bridge the university and society. The project team, comprising policy officers from the municipality and Radboud University, seeks guidance on utilizing the temporal use both impactful and effectively. Since the Latin school is currently in the programming phase and will open its doors in September 2024, it is not yet possible to analyse the location's impact on fostering connections. Therefore, I conducted a benchmark study comparing similar contemporary initiatives in the Netherlands with the Latin school. This study included seven semi-structured interviews primarily with program managers of these initiatives and six analysed policy documents, both analysed using critical discourse analysis. Subsequently, a comparison was made between the results of the benchmarks and those of the Latin school to gain valuable insights for improvement and the development of Latin school's program.

In this conclusion, I will provide insights into the overarching main question: What factors contribute to fostering connection between the university and the city comparing contemporary initiatives in Dutch university cities to the Latin school in Nijmegen? Central in studying the connection between the university and the city are three influencing factors emerged by me from the literature study. These encompass the factors of objectives, collaboration, and co-creative approach. The factor of objectives is defined in this study as the established goals, motivations and ambitions related to connecting the city and the university. Additionally, collaboration underscores the importance of collaboration between the key stakeholders, including the university, the municipality, and other key partners, in establishing a university initiative opened to the public. Lastly, the factor approach describes the co-creative methods and strategies employed to achieve the objectives.

To start, the Latin school initiative stands out from contemporary projects due to its distinctive origins. The initiative began when Radboud University received a historic building from the municipality of Nijmegen as a centennial gift. The discourse analysis reveals that the initiative serves multiple purposes: managing a vacant space, fostering connections, and enhancing social engagement between the university and Nijmegen's residents and visitors. While the Latin school emphasizes the advantages of its centrally located building, the researched benchmarks focus more on long-term shifts in university-city relationships. Both the Latin school and benchmark initiatives aim goals driven by the university's ambitions to foster a deeper connection with the city and enhance societal engagement. They shared fundamental values of promoting social interaction, inclusivity, and accessibility of the university. However, critical examination raises the question on the audience being genuinely receptive to these efforts.

Most benchmarks started as a top-down initiatives, after which they collaborated with the intended audience during the program. The Latin school's intended approach starts with institutional ideas evolving through co-creation. This aligns with placemaking principles advocating for short-term projects to assess and adjust based on community feedback (Project for Public Spaces, 2017). The support from higher management was seen as a crucial factor in the benchmarks, which often secures organizational support and resources but can also lead to bureaucratic hurdles. The debate between bottom-up versus top-down approaches reveals nuances; while a bottom-up approach may appear more promising but unrealistic, top-down strategies are recognized as complex yet better supported.

The Latin school's proactive partnership with Nijmegen municipality entails mutual understanding and open communication in stakeholder collaborations, according to the project manager of the Radboud University and reflecting theoretical insights on effective collaboration. Additionally, flexibility was identified as another shared crucial factor, where the Latin school aims and benchmarks emphasize the adaptability to community needs and fostering external relationships. Moreover, personal engagement with stakeholders proved essential by the benchmarks, underscoring the significance of a personal approach, and building relationships. While the Latin school leverages its central, municipally gifted location for visibility, the benchmarks emphasized the importance of close, personal community engagement.

These results provide valuable insights into the factors that contribute to fostering a connection between the university and the city. They indicate that objectives, as outlined in the conceptual model, play a significant role in establishing this connection. Specifically, the formation of the initiative and its resulting objectives guide its direction. The findings suggest that the objective of social impact is crucial; when this objective is effectively supported, it enhances the overall connection between the university and the city. Additionally, the factor of collaboration has a profound impact on these initiatives. The degree of institutional power, including top-down initiation and the distribution of roles through funding, significantly influences the initiatives. Furthermore, the forms of collaboration and the partners involved play an important role. The extent and nature of these collaborations affect the objectives, thereby influencing the connection that the initiatives foster. The factor of co-creation, as mentioned in the conceptual model, appears to have a less significant impact on the connection established by the initiative. The principles of placemaking in particular seem less critical. Co-creation or engagement is often seen more as an objective to be achieved later in the process rather than a primary approach from the outset. Moreover, the results reveal two key concepts that could be incorporated into the conceptual model: the concepts of time and space. The temporality or structural nature of the initiative has a substantial effect on the connection it can foster, as demonstrated in the comparison between the benchmarks and the Latin school. Additionally, the location plays a crucial role in fostering connection; a flexible, non-fixed location tends to create more meaningful connections compared to a fixed location as evident from the results of the benchmark study. The revised conceptual model, as illustrated in figure 7.1, highlights the importance of both temporal and spatial considerations in enhancing the impact of initiatives aimed at strengthening the connection between the university and the city.

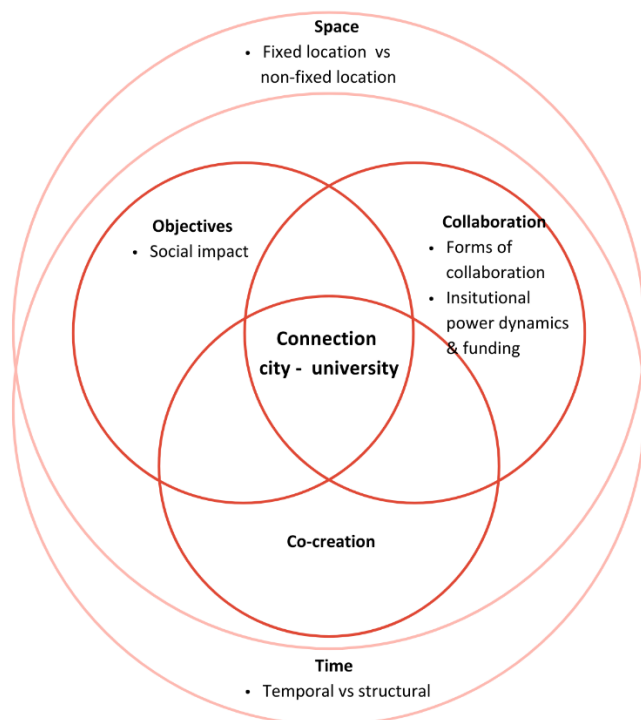


Figure 7.1: revised conceptual model

Beyond offering insights into the factors that foster connections between the university and the city, the research also highlights a broader societal shift, where initiatives like the benchmarks and the Latin school signal a changing role for universities within society. These initiatives underscore a growing recognition that universities must adopt a different role in modern times, emphasizing community engagement, visibility, connection, and openness. The benchmarks and the Latin school should be seen as early signals or manifestations of this shift. However, the analysis indicates that these initiatives have yet to obtain full institutional support, where a deeper cultural shift is needed to achieve meaningful impact and establish genuine connections with society.

In conclusion, while both the Latin school and benchmark initiatives aim to connect the university and the city, their approaches, challenges, and outcomes vary. The Latin school's unique origin and focus contrast somewhat with benchmarks' broader emphasis on long-term community integration. Both approaches, however, underscore the evolving role of universities in fostering social engagement and connection. To succeed, these initiatives must navigate complex dynamics, adapt to community needs, and foster inclusive relationships, thereby contributing to a redefined role of the university in contemporary society.

## 7.2 Weaknesses and limitations

### **Limitations of my role**

As a research intern from Radboud University, I was deeply involved in the Latin school project, working closely with key stakeholders such as my supervisor, Martijn Stevens, who provided crucial guidance. I attended programming meetings, which were vital for advancing the project's objectives, and where I observed and analysed the collaborative dynamics between the university and the municipality of Nijmegen. Furthermore, Anouk Kerkhofs from CityDeal Kennismaken offered me insights into the broader network of stakeholders related to the Latin school and the Honours Lab program which I attended, where students from HAN University and Radboud collaborated with the municipality of Nijmegen on the creation of the program of the Latin school. However, as a research intern I recognized the potential bias in my position, given my close involvement and commitment to the project. I am aware that this could influence my perspective and bias my analysis. Therefore, I actively reflected on my position, including acknowledging my ties to the project and the university, as well as any personal biases as a student at Radboud University. Aiming to remain objective and critically assess my interpretations and conclusions throughout the research.

Furthermore, I implemented steps to reduce biases by seeking different perspectives and reviewing a wide range of literature. By engaging with multiple viewpoints and theoretical frameworks, I sought to broaden my understanding of the issues at hand and challenge any assumptions or biases. During the data collection phase, I prioritized objectivity in my interactions with participants. I was conscious that I might be viewed by my respondents as an ambassador of Radboud University rather than a student. This awareness guided my communication of my role during interviews, striving to create a non-judgmental environment that encouraged open and honest communication. Additionally, I employed multiple methodological approaches, such as triangulation of data sources and reflexivity in data analysis, to enhance the credibility and reliability of my research. Specifically, I utilized a combination of primary and secondary data sources to enrich my analysis. By triangulating information from different sources, I aimed to minimize the influence of individual biases and ensure a comprehensive understanding of the topic. Overall, my contribution with this research is aimed at examining the Latin school project and similar initiatives with the goal of providing valuable insights for improvements that could inform the Latin school and contribute to the debate on city-university and participatory approaches.

### **Selection of respondents**

The research methodology also has inherent limitations that must be acknowledged. One significant limitation is the potential for social desirability bias in the responses provided by project managers. Project managers were chosen for their central role in the initiative, as they offer insights into its objectives, collaboration and obtained approach. However, as representatives of the initiative, they may portray a more positive and idealized image of the initiative, possibly omitting critical challenges or dissenting viewpoints. Moreover, the decision for project managers restricted the exploration of perspectives from other crucial stakeholders, such as students, visitors, and residents. These groups are integral to the initiative's objectives and may offer

diverse insights and priorities not captured in this study. The decision to exclude these perspectives can therefore limit the research's scope and its applicability in understanding broader community engagement.

### **Differences among respondents**

The decision was made to conduct a benchmark study of initiatives similar to the Latin school in Nijmegen. This comparison established criteria against which benchmarks were assessed. Despite the established criteria, discourse analysis revealed nuanced differences among respondents' initiatives. These differences emerged in various aspects, including the way the initiatives were established, the types of activities they undertook, and the specific target audiences they aimed to engage. Additionally, the extent and nature of collaboration with municipalities varied significantly. In some initiatives it even appeared that collaboration with the municipality played little or no role. There were also differences in how co-creation with the target audience was implemented, and differences in the importance placed on the physical location of the initiatives. These variations provided a more complex and detailed understanding of each initiative, highlighting the diverse approaches and priorities among the respondents. These differences necessitated adjustments in the research and challenged the initial framing of collaboration. Despite complicating the comparison and drawing conclusions, these variations provided valuable insights for the Latin school. For example, they emphasized the contradictory importance of having a physical location while working on social engagement.

Another contributing factor was the limited availability of suitable respondents. In the Netherlands, few universities have initiatives comparable to the Latin school, and those that do often differ considerably, complicating meaningful comparison. Additionally, the decision to focus solely on program managers further narrowed the pool of potential respondents. Despite these challenges, securing the participation of 5 out of 7 respondents is a commendable achievement.

## **7.3 Recommendations for further research**

Reflecting on the rich insights gathered in this study, it is evident that the initiatives explored, the researched benchmarks and the Latin school in Nijmegen, are characterized by inherent complexity and diverse perspectives. While my research has provided valuable contributions, it is clear that a deeper understanding and enhancement of these initiatives require moving beyond the often limited viewpoints of project managers.

A key recommendation is to conduct an in-depth, multi-perspective case study focused on one of these benchmarks, engaging all stakeholders comprehensively. This approach will allow for a detailed exploration of the multiple perspectives identified in the research. One of the findings from my study highlights the difficulty in engaging the desired target audience within the initiative, especially in fixed locations. This insight calls for additional research to determine the underlying reasons. A multi-perspective study on the experiences of the target audience and various stakeholders, particularly concerning the connection between the city and the university and the influence of the chosen initiative, could provide valuable insights. By capturing the diverse viewpoints of local residents, university students, academic staff, and municipal officials, such a study can reveal the unique insights, challenges, aspirations, and successes that each stakeholder group contributes. This comprehensive engagement will help uncover nuanced issues, foster deeper empathy, and provide a holistic understanding of the initiative's impact on the community.

Furthermore, the evolving cultural role of the university within the city, as observed through these initiatives and revealed by my research, requires further research. It is essential to conduct broader research to determine whether there is an underlying societal shift that is giving rise to initiatives like these. This research should encompass a thorough investigation into whether there is a broader cultural change within universities prompting universities to take on a different role in society. Such an investigation would be invaluable in

clarifying whether these initiatives are addressing a genuine need and whether the changing role of universities is in line with broader societal expectations. Understanding this alignment, or the lack thereof, would offer crucial insights into the relevance and impact of these initiatives. Moreover, within the context of the Latin school, it would be worthwhile to examine both the past and current efforts of Radboud University to strengthen the connection between the city and the university. Exploring initiatives such as Radboud Reflex, neighbourhood hubs, and other university-city engagement programs within the Radboud University yield valuable insights into which initiatives have been truly effective and which have had less impact. Such insights would be crucial in shaping the future programming of the Latin school and similar efforts in the future.

While this research provides a thorough analysis, it is important to acknowledge that it may not have captured every aspect of these complex relationships. Therefore, these recommendations should be seen as pathways for further exploration and refinement. They encourage ongoing dialogue and active efforts to strengthen the valuable connection between universities and cities.

## 8. References

---

- Agenda stad.* (n.d.). Retrieved 24 May 2024, from <https://agendastad.nl/citydeal/kennismaken/>
- Al Kurdi, O., El-Haddadeh, R., & Eldabi, T. (2018). Knowledge Sharing in Higher Education Institutions: A Systematic Review. *Journal of Enterprise Information Management*, 31, 00–00. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JEIM-09-2017-0129>
- Allen, T., & Queen, S. G. (2018a). *Critical Placemaking: Towards a more critical engagement for participatory design in the urban environment.* Design Research Society Conference 2018. <https://doi.org/10.21606/drs.2018.675>
- Allen, T., & Queen, S. G. (2018b). Critical Placemaking: Towards a more critical engagement for participatory design in the urban environment. *DRS Biennial Conference Series.* <https://dl.designresearchsociety.org/drs-conference-papers/drs2018/researchpapers/2>
- Alogan, G. B., & Yet[.], N. (2006). Defining strategic objectives: A methodology suited for public organizations. *Total Quality Management & Business Excellence*, 17(6), 669–684. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14783360600594172>
- Ansell, C., & Gash, A. (2008). Collaborative Governance in Theory. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 18. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/mum032>
- Audretsch, D., & Feldman, M. (1996). Spillovers and the Geography of Innovation and Production. *American Economic Review*, 86, 630–640.
- Bhagwan, R. (2020). Towards the institutionalisation of community engagement in higher education in South Africa. *Perspectives in Education*, 38(2), Article 2. <https://doi.org/10.18820/2519593X/pie.v38.i2.03>
- Bilbokaite, R., & Bilbokaitė-Skiauterienė, I. (2018). *THE IMPACT OF HIGHER EDUCATION ON THE REGION.* 8676–8681. <https://doi.org/10.21125/inted.2018.2113>
- Brown-Luthango, M. (2013). Community-university engagement: The Philippi CityLab in Cape Town and the challenge of collaboration across boundaries. *Higher Education*, 65. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-012-9546-z>
- Buckley, S. (2012). Higher education and knowledge sharing: From ivory tower to twenty-first century. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International - INNOV EDUC TEACH INT*, 49, 333–344.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/14703297.2012.703015>

Campos, J. N. (n.d.). *The academic third place: Examining physical space and first-year student sense of belonging at a commuter campus: Implications for educational leaders.*

Campos, J. N. (2017). *The academic third place: Examining physical space and first-year student sense of belonging at a commuter campus: Implications for educational leaders.*

<https://dspace.calstate.edu/bitstream/handle/10211.3/198549/J.%20Campos%20Thesis%20Final%2012.4.pdf?sequence=3>

Carpenter, J., & Horvath, C. (2022a). Co-Creation and the City: Arts-Based Methods and Participatory Approaches in Urban Planning. *URBAN PLANNING*, 7(3), 311–314.

<https://doi.org/10.17645/up.v7i3.6106>

Carpenter, J., & Horvath, C. (2022b). Co-Creation and the City: Arts-Based Methods and Participatory Approaches in Urban Planning. *Urban Planning*, 7(3), 311–314. <https://doi.org/10.17645/up.v7i3.6106>

Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2008). *Basics of Qualitative Research (3rd ed.): Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory*. SAGE Publications, Inc. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781452230153>

Creswell, J. W. & Poth. (2017). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (third edition). SAGE. <https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/qualitative-inquiry-and-research-design/book246896>

Curry, J. E. (2016). *The Dynamics of University/City Government Relationships: It's Personal.*

den Heijer, A., & Curvelo Magdaniel, F. (2018). Campus-city relations: Past, present and future. In P. Meusburger, M. Heffernan, & L. Suarsana (Eds.), *Geographies of the University* (pp. 439–459). Springer. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-75593-9\\_13](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-75593-9_13)

Duyvendak, J. W. (2017). *Decentralisaties lijden onder een democratisch tekort*. Sociale Vraagstukken. <https://www.socialevraagstukken.nl/decentralisaties-lijden-onder-een-democratisch-tekort/>

Ensing, Voskes, A., & Theeuwes, M. (2023). *EMBARGO Collegevoorstel Geschenken aan Radboud Universiteit ter gelegenheid van 100-jarig bestaan.* <https://nijmegen.bestuurlijkeinformatie.nl/Document/View/e16b963f-4c9c-4c4b-b51a-85f6ea820171#:~:text=Op%2017%20oktober%202023%20kunnen,op%20grond%20van%20artikel%205.1.>

Etzkowitz, H., & Leydesdorff, L. (2000). The dynamics of innovation: From National Systems and “Mode 2” to a

- Triple Helix of university–industry–government relations. *Research Policy*, 29(2), 109–123.  
[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0048-7333\(99\)00055-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0048-7333(99)00055-4)
- Ferman, B., & Hill, T. L. (2004). The Challenges of Agenda Conflict in Higher-Education-Community Research Partnerships: Views from the Community Side. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 26(2), 241–257.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0735-2166.2004.00199.x>
- Florida, R. (2003). THE Rise of the Creative Class: And How It’s Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life. *Canadian Public Policy / Analyse de Politiques*, 29. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3552294>
- Florida, R. (2010). *The Flight of the Creative Class: The New Global Competition for Talent*. Harper Collins.
- Freestone, R., Pullan, N., & Saniga, A. (2021). The making of a city campus. *GEOGRAPHICAL RESEARCH*, 59(1), 29–45. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1745-5871.12439>
- Gamoran, A. (2018). *The Future of Higher Education Is Social Impact (SSIR)*.  
[https://ssir.org/articles/entry/the\\_future\\_of\\_higher\\_education\\_is\\_social\\_impact](https://ssir.org/articles/entry/the_future_of_higher_education_is_social_impact)
- Gehl, J., & Koch, J. (1971). *Life between buildings: Using public space*. Island Press.
- Geschiedenis van de Radboud Universiteit*. (n.d.). Retrieved 8 April 2024, from <https://www.ru.nl/over-ons/geschiedenis-en-identiteit/geschiedenis-van-de-radboud-universiteit>, <https://www.ru.nl/over-ons/geschiedenis-en-identiteit/geschiedenis-van-de-radboud-universiteit>
- Goddard, J., & Vallance, P. (2013). The university and the city. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203068366>
- Hay, I., & Cope, M. (2021). *Qualitative Research Methods in Human Geography* (5th ed.). Oxford.  
[https://learninglink.oup.com/access/hay-cope5e-instructor-resources#tag\\_all-chapters](https://learninglink.oup.com/access/hay-cope5e-instructor-resources#tag_all-chapters)
- Hogeschool van Amsterdam. (2022). Samen kennis maken in Amsterdam. [hva.nl](https://www.hva.nl/hvaindestad/gedeelde-content/projecten/living-labs/buurtcampus.html).  
<https://www.hva.nl/hvaindestad/gedeelde-content/projecten/living-labs/buurtcampus.html>
- Hogeschool van Amsterdam & Openbare Bibliotheek Amsterdam. (2021). Samen kennis maken in Amsterdam. In *Buurtcampus*. [https://www.hva.nl/binaries/content/assets/subsites/hvaindestad/buurtcampus-a5-zigzagfolder\\_loos.pdf?1639593532391](https://www.hva.nl/binaries/content/assets/subsites/hvaindestad/buurtcampus-a5-zigzagfolder_loos.pdf?1639593532391)
- Huggins, R. (2010). Regional Competitive Intelligence: Benchmarking and Policy-making. *Regional Studies*, 44(5), 639–658. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00343400802331312>
- Jacobs, J. (1962). *The death and life of great American cities*. Bodley Head.
- Jones, P. (2018). Contexts of Co-creation: Designing with System Stakeholders. In P. Jones & K. Kijima (Eds.), *Systemic Design: Theory, Methods, and Practice* (pp. 3–52). Springer Japan.

[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-4-431-55639-8\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-4-431-55639-8_1)

- Karim, D., & Majid, A. (2019, March 13). *Barriers to Knowledge Sharing Among Academics in Tertiary Institutions*. <https://doi.org/10.2991/icmemm-18.2019.1>
- Kim, S.-H., Brunner, B. R., & Fitch-Hauser, M. (2006). Exploring community relations in a university setting. *Public Relations Review*, 32(2), 191–193. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2006.02.018>
- Klein, J.-L. (2019). *SOCIAL INNOVATION AND UNIVERSITIES: THE CHALLENGE OF SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION* (pp. 122–127). <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781788974288.00042>
- Komarek-Meyer, G. (2019). *Gentrification, Displacement & Creative Placemaking*:
- Linda, L. (2007). *The flight of the creative class: The new global competition for talent*. [https://www.academia.edu/2252137/The\\_flight\\_of\\_the\\_creative\\_class\\_The\\_new\\_global\\_competition\\_for\\_talent](https://www.academia.edu/2252137/The_flight_of_the_creative_class_The_new_global_competition_for_talent)
- Martínez-Acosta, M., Vázquez-Villegas, P., Mejía-Manzano, L. A., Soto-Inzunza, G. V., Ruiz-Aguilar, K. M., Kuhn Cuellar, L., Caratozzolo, P., & Membrillo-Hernández, J. (2023). The implementation of SDG12 in and from higher education institutions: Universities as laboratories for generating sustainable cities. *Frontiers in Sustainable Cities*, 5. <https://doi.org/10.3389/frsc.2023.1158464>
- Meares & Owen. (2012). *CITY BENCHMARKING*: <https://knowledgeauckland.org.nz/media/1675/city-benchmarking-technical-report-february-2012.pdf>
- Mens. (2022). *Identifying the merits of bottom-up urban development: Theory-based evaluation using a value map model*. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/02697459.2023.2181296#2b85d6ca-6520-4a3d-8e4a-aa9f2ee3f33d-b6de7b7c-de82-45a5-9538-313dd15c6659>
- Mens, J., van Bueren, E., Vrijhoef, R., & Heurkens, E. (2023). Identifying the merits of bottom-up urban development: Theory-based evaluation using a value map model. *Planning Practice & Research*, 38(2), 196–217. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02697459.2023.2181296>
- Nichols. (2015). *Generating Social Change Through Community–Campus Collaboration*. <https://core.ac.uk/reader/77104730>
- Oldenburg, R., & Brissett, D. (1982). The third place. *Qualitative Sociology*, 5(4), 265–284. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00986754>
- Papaioannou, T., Rush, H., & Bessant, J. (2006). Benchmarking as a policy-making tool: From the private to the public sector. *Science and Public Policy*, 33(2), 91–102. <https://doi.org/10.3152/147154306781779091>

- Pauer, S. U., Pilon, A., & Badelt, B. (2020). Strengthening city–university partnerships to advance sustainability solutions: A study of research collaborations between the University of British Columbia and City of Vancouver. *International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education*, 21(6), 1189–1208.  
<https://doi.org/10.1108/IJSHE-10-2019-0316>
- Pinheiro, R., Benneworth, P., & Jones, G. (2012). *Universities and Regional Development: A critical assessment of tensions and contradictions*.
- Powell, R. (2012, February 10). “Place: A short introduction”, Tim Cresswell (2004). *Venice and the Carnival*.  
<https://veniceandthecarnival.wordpress.com/2012/02/10/place-a-short-introduction-tim-cresswell-2004/>
- Project for Public Spaces. (n.d.). *What is Placemaking?* Retrieved 30 April 2024, from  
<https://www.pps.org/article/what-is-placemaking>
- Project for Public Spaces. (2013). *Toward Place Governance: What If We Reinvented Civic Infrastructure Around Placemaking?* <https://www.pps.org/article/toward-place-governance-civic-infrastructure-placemaking>
- Project for Public Spaces. (2017). *The Placemaking Process*. <https://www.pps.org/article/5-steps-to-making-places>
- Qualitative Research Methods in Human Geography, 5E Instructor Resources - Oxford Learning Link. (n.d.).  
[https://learninglink.oup.com/access/hay-cope5e-instructor-resources#tag\\_all-chapters](https://learninglink.oup.com/access/hay-cope5e-instructor-resources#tag_all-chapters)
- Radboud Universiteit, & Gemeente Nijmegen. (2023). *Tijdelijk gebruik Latijnse school*.
- Raiden, A., & King, A. (2023). Added value and numerical measurement of social value: A critical enquiry. *Buildings and Cities*, 4(1), 767–782. <https://doi.org/10.5334/bc.330>
- Rathenau Instituut. (2020). *Stad zoekt toga*. [https://www.rathenau.nl/sites/default/files/2020-11/Rapport\\_Stad\\_zoekt\\_toga\\_Rathenau\\_Instituut.pdf](https://www.rathenau.nl/sites/default/files/2020-11/Rapport_Stad_zoekt_toga_Rathenau_Instituut.pdf)
- Rijksuniversiteit Groningen. (n.d.). Gedeeld verhaal Schools - uvhn - ghh.
- Rio, P. del. (2019). *Un Abordaje Intersectorial en Salud y Seguridad en el Trabajo*.  
[https://www.academia.edu/85353097/Un\\_Abordaje\\_Intersectorial\\_en\\_Salud\\_y\\_Seguridad\\_en\\_el\\_Trabajo](https://www.academia.edu/85353097/Un_Abordaje_Intersectorial_en_Salud_y_Seguridad_en_el_Trabajo)
- Ritzer, S. (2022). Year Evaluation of the Wageningen Dialogues Programme 2022 – CPI 10 –. In Expanded Connection With Society and Partners.

- Rymarzak, M., den Heijer, A., Curvelo Magdaniel, F., & Arkesteijn, M. (2020). Identifying the influence of university governance on campus management: Lessons from the Netherlands and Poland. *Studies in Higher Education*, 45(7), 1298–1311. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2019.1616167>
- Savage, G. T., Nix, T. W., Whitehead, C. J., & Blair, J. D. (1991). Strategies for assessing and managing organizational stakeholders. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, 5(2), 61–75. <https://doi.org/10.5465/ame.1991.4274682>
- Silverman, D. (2006). *Interpreting Qualitative Data: Methods for Analyzing Talk, Text and Interaction / D. Silverman.*
- Smit, J. (2021a). *The production of scientific and societal value in research evaluation: A review of societal impact assessment methods.* [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/350833301\\_The\\_production\\_of\\_scientific\\_and\\_societal\\_value\\_in\\_research\\_evaluation\\_a\\_review\\_of\\_societal\\_impact\\_assessment\\_methods](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/350833301_The_production_of_scientific_and_societal_value_in_research_evaluation_a_review_of_societal_impact_assessment_methods)
- Smit, J. (2021b, October 21). *The university wants to 'create impact'. But what does that actually mean?* [Interview]. <https://www.erasmusmagazine.nl/en/2021/10/21/the-university-wants-to-make-an-impact-but-what-does-that-actually-mean/>
- The Dynamics of University/City Government Relationships: It's Personal | Metropolitan Universities.* (2016). <https://journals.iupui.edu/index.php/muj/article/view/21117>
- Universiteit Utrecht. (n.d.). Centrum voor Wetenschap en Cultuur. <https://www.uu.nl/organisatie/bestuur-en-organisatie/universitaire-diensten/universitaire-bestuursdienst/centrum-voor-wetenschap-en-cultuur>
- Universiteit Utrecht. (2021). Open in verbinding. Universiteit Utrecht Public Engagement Plan 2021-2025. [https://www.uu.nl/sites/default/files/SamenvattingPEplan\\_0.pdf](https://www.uu.nl/sites/default/files/SamenvattingPEplan_0.pdf)
- University of Groningen. (n.d.). House of Connections. rug.nl. <https://www.rug.nl/society-business/house-of-connections/?lang=en>
- Urban Living Lab Breda. (n.d.). Visie Urban Living Lab Breda. [urbanlivinglabbreda.nl](https://urbanlivinglabbreda.nl). <https://urbanlivinglabbreda.nl/webpagina/976/visie#:~:text=Samen%20oversnellen%20we%20naar%20Oeen,bijdraagt%20en%20iedereen%20gezien%20wordt>
- Van Der Steen, M., Van Delden, M., MSc, & Van Schaik, E., MSc. (2020). De opgave aan tafel: De praktijk van werken vanuit maatschappelijke opgaven. In Nederlandse School voor Openbaar Bestuur, De opgave aan tafel. <https://www.nsob.nl/sites/www.nsob.nl/files/2020->

02/NSOB%202020%20De%20opgave%20aan%20tafel.pdf

van Dijk. (1993). *Principles of Critical Discourse Analysis*.

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0957926593004002006>

van Karnenbeek, L., Janssen-Jansen, L., & Peel, D. (2022). Conceptualising Co-creative Planning Pedagogies:

The Community Knowledge Triangle. *Planning Practice & Research*, 37(4), 446–463.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/02697459.2020.1856501>

Wageningen University & Research. (n.d.). Wageningen Dialogues. WUR.

<https://www.wur.nl/nl/waardecreeatie-samenwerking/kom-naar-de-campus/wageningen-dialogues-2.htm>

Walker. (2013). *Universities are crucial spaces to foster capabilities for the formation of social citizens in times*

*of growing inequality*. [https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2013/07/04/human-](https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2013/07/04/human-development-capabilities-and-universities-of-the-twenty-first-century/)

[development-capabilities-and-universities-of-the-twenty-first-century/](https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2013/07/04/human-development-capabilities-and-universities-of-the-twenty-first-century/)

Wiewel, W., & Perry, D. C. (2015). *Global Universities and Urban Development: Case Studies and Analysis: Case*

*Studies and Analysis*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315704043>

Williams. (2017). *Collaboration, alliance, and merger among higher education institutions* (OECD Education

Working Papers 160; OECD Education Working Papers, Vol. 160). [https://doi.org/10.1787/cf14d4b5-](https://doi.org/10.1787/cf14d4b5-en)

[en](https://doi.org/10.1787/cf14d4b5-en)

Wilson, H. F. (2017). On geography and encounter: Bodies, borders, and difference. *Progress in Human*

*Geography*, 41(4), 451–471. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132516645958>

Yaylali-Yildiz, B., Spierings, B., & Çil, E. (2022). The spatial configuration and publicness of the university

campus: Interaction, discovery, and display on De Uithof in Utrecht. *URBAN DESIGN International*,

27(1), 80–94. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41289-020-00130-w>

Youker, R. (2001). *Defining The Hierarchy Of Project Objectives*.

## 9. Appendices

---

### 9.1 Overview of potential benchmarks in the Netherlands from google search

City	Title	Objectives	Status	Links	Criteria & contact: yes no
Utrecht	Centrum voor Wetenschap en Cultuur	Open science, meeting place, public engagement	Ongoing	<a href="#">Open Science</a> <a href="#">UMU Public Engagement</a>	Interview conducted
Utrecht	Even over morgen	Public and science, public engagement	Ongoing	<a href="#">Public Science</a>	No physical location, Centrum voor Wetenschap en Cultuur is a better fit, one initiative per city.
Amsterdam	Buurtcampus Amsterdam	Learning from each other, collaboration	Ongoing 2008-2030	<a href="#">Buurt Campus</a>	Interview conducted
Amsterdam	VU Art Science Gallery	Multidisciplinary knowledge for societal solutions	Ongoing	<a href="#">VU Art Science Gallery</a>	Contacted, no response
Den Haag	Buurtlab070	Connecting residents of The Hague with scientists and students, focus on sustainability	Ongoing	<a href="#">Buurtlab 070</a>	Solely focus on sustainability less on fostering connection
Leiden	Leren met de stad	Making an impact and learning with the city	Ongoing 2019-now	<a href="#">Learning with the City</a>	Focusing on students and solving social issues than fostering connection

Twente	Challenge Lab Twente	Bringing cities and students together	Ongoing 2018-now	<a href="#">Challenge Lab Twente</a>	Contacted, no response
Groningen	House of Connections	Education and research, public activities, connecting city and university	Ongoing Opened July 2023	<a href="#">House of Connections</a>	Interview conducted
Breda	Urban Living Lab Breda	Facilitating collaboration between education, research, government, and residents	Ongoing	<a href="#">Urban Living Lab Breda</a>	Interview conducted
Eindhoven	Stadslab	Municipality and MAD Foundation: Creating better living environments with innovative solutions	Ongoing	<a href="#">Stadslab Eindhoven</a>	No collaboration with university

## 9.2 Interview guide benchmarks

### Introductie

Welkom [naam respondent]. Mijn naam is Irene Kuzee en ik ben master student Urban and Cultural Geography aan de Radboud universiteit. Ik ben momenteel bezig met mijn masterscriptie naar initiatieven die de stad en de universiteit met elkaar verbinden. Daarvoor doe ik een benchmarkstudie naar initiatieven vergelijkbaar met [naam van het initiatief]. Het doel van dit interview is om meer inzicht te krijgen in de totstandkoming, doelstellingen, samenwerkingen en aanpak [naam van het initiatief].

Ik wil graag benadrukken dat alle informatie die we tijdens dit interview bespreken vertrouwelijk blijft en alleen voor onderzoekdoeleinden wordt gebruikt. Uw naam en andere persoonlijke informatie zal ik anonimiseren, uw functie zal wel zichtbaar zijn. Mocht u op een bepaald punt in het interview een antwoord geven die u liever anoniem stelt, geef dit dan aan. Als u op enig moment wilt stoppen of een pauze wilt nemen, voel u dan vrij om dat aan te geven. U bent niet verplicht om op elke vraag te antwoorden. U heeft eerder verklaard dat u akkoord gaat met de opname van dit interview? Zo ja, geldt dit nog steeds?

#### WAT: Doelstellingen

1. Wat is uw rol binnen [naam van het initiatief]?
2. Hoe is het initiatief tot stand gekomen?
3. Wat is het doel?
  - a. Waar is dit uit voortgekomen?
4. Wat wordt er op dit moment gedaan om het doel te bereiken?
  - a. Welke activiteiten vinden er plaats?
  - b. In hoeverre zijn deze open voor het publiek?
5. Wat is de huidige status van het initiatief?
  - a. Zit er een bepaald tijdslimiet aan het initiatief?
  - b. Wat is de ambitie voor het initiatief?

#### WIE: Samenwerking:

6. Wie zijn betrokken bij het initiatief (partners, gemeente, projectgroep, bezoekers, studenten, wetenschappers)?
  - a. Welke rol spelen deze betrokkenen?
7. Hoe ervaart u de samenwerking met de betrokkenen?
8. Welke factoren hebben bijgedragen aan een succesvolle samenwerking?
  - a. Wat is de geschiedenis van de samenwerking met betrokkenen voorafgaande aan het initiatief?
  - b. Hoe betrokken zijn de deelnemers?
9. Wat kan worden verbeterd aan de samenwerking?

#### HOE: Aanpak:

10. Wie is de doelgroep?
11. Op welke manier is de doelgroep betrokken bij het initiatief?
  - a. Welke rol heeft de doelgroep in de totstandkoming van het initiatief?
  - b. Welke rol heeft de doelgroep binnen de samenwerking tussen de betrokkenen?
12. Hoe ervaart u deze mate van betrokkenheid?
13. Hoe is deze groep betrokkenen uit de doelgroep geselecteerd?
14. Wat is de invloed van deze selectie op de samenwerking?
15. Welke aanpak is er gebruikt om het project op te zetten en uit te voeren?
16. Hoe is de locatie geselecteerd?
17. Is er een visie opgesteld?
  - a. Hoe is deze opgesteld?
  - b. Zijn er hieruit kortdurende experimenten uit voortgekomen?
18. Vinden er tussentijdse evaluaties plaats?

#### Resultaat

19. In hoeverre zijn de doelstellingen van [naam van het initiatief] bereikt?
20. Op welke manier heeft [naam van het initiatief] impact op de verbinding tussen de universiteit en de stad?
  - a. Waar blijkt dit uit?
21. Wat betekent verbinding binnen de context van het initiatief?
22. Wat zijn volgens u de langetermijneffecten van het initiatief op zowel de universiteit als de stad?
23. Wat zijn belangrijke succesfactoren van [naam van het initiatief]?
24. Welke uitdagingen bent u tegengekomen tijdens de uitvoering?

Afronding:

We zijn aan het einde gekomen van dit interview. Heeft u nog vragen voor mij?

Ik wil u hartelijk bedanken voor uw tijd en de waardevolle inzichten die u heeft gedeeld. Uw bijdrage zal enorm helpen bij mijn onderzoek.

Als u later nog vragen heeft of als er iets is waarover u graag meer zou willen weten, aarzel dan niet om contact met mij op te nemen. Ik sta altijd open voor verdere discussie. Nogmaals bedankt voor uw deelname en ik wens u een prettige dag toe.

### 9.3 Overview of codes and meanings

After transcription and throughout the coding process, a number of codes emerged that encapsulate the principal themes and concepts found within the data. Presented in the table below are these codes along with their definitions and detailed explanations of their intended meanings.

#### Level 1: Text

##### Actors and participants

Code	Definition	Explanation
<b>External Actors</b>	Individuals or groups involved from outside the organisation	Identifies external stakeholders involved, such as companies or government officials.
<b>Internal Actors</b>	Individuals or groups involved from inside the organisation	Identifies internal stakeholders, such as faculty, staff, and administration.

##### Audiences

Code	Definition	Explanation
<b>Residents</b>	Local community members	Identifies local community members involved or affected.
<b>Scientists</b>	Researchers and scientists	Identifies researchers and scientists involved.
<b>Students</b>	Students from universities and universities of applied science	Identifies students involved or affected.

<b>Visitors</b>	Visitors to the initiative or activity	Identifies visitors to the initiatives, events or activities.
-----------------	--	---

#### Events and activities

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
<b>Program</b>	Organised set of events	Describes a series of related events or activities captured in a central concept or program involving the initiative.
<b>Workshop</b>	Interactive sessions	Identifies workshops or hands-on sessions organised within or involving the initiative.
<b>Lecture</b>	Educational talks	Identifies lectures or educational talks organised within or involving the initiative.
<b>Event</b>	General events	Identifies general events organised within or involving the initiative.
<b>Activity</b>	Specific activities	Identifies specific activities organised within or involving the initiative.
<b>Dialogue</b>	Conversations or discussions	Refers to structured conversations or interactive communication where participants exchange ideas, perspectives, or information.

#### Finance

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
<b>Finance</b>	Financial aspects	Discusses financial aspects of the initiative.

### Language and word choice

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
<b>Negative wording</b>	Use of negative language	Identifies negative language used.
<b>Positive wording</b>	Use of positive language	Identifies positive language used.
<b>Specific terms</b>	Use of specific or striking terminology	Identifies specific or striking terms used as specific names, terms or metaphor.

### Organisation and structure

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
<b>Organisation and structure</b>	The internal framework and setup of an organisation	Describes the internal arrangement and operational setup of the organisation or initiative. It encompasses how roles, responsibilities, and departments are structured.

### Roles and functions

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
<b>Roles and functions</b>	Specific roles or functions of participants	Identifies the roles and functions of participants within an organisation

## Time and place

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
<b>Time</b>	Temporal aspects	Discusses the time-related aspects.
<b>Place</b>	Spatial aspects	Discusses the place-related aspects.

## Level 2: Discourse practice

### Objectives and ambitions

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
<b>Connection</b>	Importance of connection	Refers to the relationship and interaction between the city and different groups in society with science, the university city or education in general for mutual benefit and enrichment.
<b>Interaction</b>	Interaction	Discussing various forms of interaction between different groups in society with each other, science, the university or education in general.
<b>Openness</b>	Openness	Discussing openness of science, the university or education in general
<b>Visibility</b>	Visibility	Focusing on visibility of science, the university or education in general
<b>Accessibility</b>	Accessibility	Discussing accessibility of science, the university or education in general.

<b>Knowledge sharing</b>	Sharing of information and expertise	Involves the exchange of information, expertise, knowledge and insights among participants, stakeholders, or the broader community.
--------------------------	--------------------------------------	---

### Collaboration

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
<b>Collaboration</b>	Working together towards a common goal	Collaboration involves discussing the efforts and processes where individuals or entities work together towards a shared objective within the initiative or organisation.
<b>Relationship management</b>	Managing interactions with internal or external stakeholders	Relationship management focuses on discussing the strategies and practices employed to cultivate, maintain, and enhance interactions with stakeholders within or outside the initiative or organisation.
<b>Partners and stakeholders</b>	Involved organisations or individuals with an interest	Identifies various partners and stakeholders who are actively engaged or have an interest in the initiative or organisation

### Co-creation

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
<b>Participation</b>	Involvement in decision making or processes	Involves discussing the degree and manner in which individuals or groups are actively involved in design and decision-making.
<b>Engagement</b>	Involvement and commitment	The extent to which individuals or groups are emotionally and psychologically actively involved with the initiative.

<b>Activation</b>	Focusing on initiation or mobilisation	Strategies aimed at initiating or mobilising individuals or groups into action.
-------------------	--	---

#### Result

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
<b>Impact</b>	Impact	Effects or consequences
<b>Change</b>	Change	Discussing transformation or alteration
<b>Awareness</b>	Awareness	Knowledge or understanding

#### Perspective

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
<b>Societal</b>	Perspectives on societal impacts or implications	Involves discussing the broader impacts, consequences, or implications of the initiative or activity on society as a whole.
<b>Economic</b>	Perspectives on economic impacts or implications	Involves the financial implications, contributions, or impacts.

#### Strategy

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
<b>Doing</b>	Action	Discussing actions and executing hands-on strategies.

<b>Temporary</b>	Temporary strategies	Discussing temporary solutions or strategies.
<b>Structural</b>	Structural strategies	Discussing long-term, structural solutions or strategies.
<b>Flexible</b>	Flexibility	Discussing the adaptability and responsiveness of strategies, organisations or individuals.
<b>Investing</b>	Investments	Discussing investments made in resources, initiatives, or strategies. It includes examining financial, human, or intellectual investments.
<b>Building on previous programs</b>	Continuation or expansion of existing initiatives	Discusses the continuation, expansion, or adaptation of existing programs or initiatives which build upon or enhance ongoing efforts.
<b>Strategic alignment</b>	Alignment with organisational goals	Discusses the alignment of strategies, initiatives, and actions with the existing overarching goals and objectives.

### Level 3: Sociopolitical practice

#### Power relations

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
<b>Institutional power</b>	Role of the institution on individuals, groups, or society	Describes how the institution influences individuals, groups, or society at large. It examines the institutional authority, impact, and implications.

<b>Influential power</b>	Influence of key roles	Discusses the impact and influence of key individuals such as program managers and other key roles within the initiative or organisation. It explores how these individuals shape decisions, policies, and outcomes through their leadership or influential positions.
<b>Decision-making processes</b>	Who makes decisions and on what basis	Explores the processes involved in decision-making. It includes analysing who holds decision-making authority, how decisions are made, and the criteria or factors considered in the decision-making process.

### Structure

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
<b>Organisational hierarchy</b>	Structure of authority	Describes the hierarchical structure of authority. It involves analysing the levels of leadership, decision-making processes, and reporting relationships.
<b>Policy formation</b>	How policy decisions are made and implemented	Explores the processes and mechanisms through which policy decisions are formulated, adopted, and implemented.

### Ideologies and values

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
<b>Social engagement</b>	Importance of community involvement	Discusses ideologies surrounding the importance of the university's involvement in community and societal issues.
<b>Values of openness and transparency</b>	Emphasis on transparency and accountability	Discusses the principles and practices that prioritise, openness, transparency, accountability, and ethical conduct within the university towards society.

<b>Inclusion and accessibility</b>	Promotion of educational inclusivity and public access	Discusses educational inclusivity and public access to knowledge within the university.
<b>Value of connection</b>	Importance of connection	Refers to the relationship and interaction between the city, various societal groups, and educational institutions aimed at mutual benefit and enrichment.

### Social and political implications

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
<b>Urban impact</b>	Effects on urban communities	Explores the effects of university initiatives on urban communities.
<b>Changing role of universities</b>	Changing role in urban development	Discusses how the role of universities is changing in the context of urban development.

### Policy and strategies

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
<b>Strategies for social integration</b>	Enhancing community collaboration	Involves initiatives and partnerships that promote mutual benefit, cultural exchange, and socioeconomic development.
<b>Evidence-based reasoning</b>	Use of empirical evidence	Discusses the use of empirical evidence and data-driven approaches within decision-making processes.

<b>Investments</b>	Financial allocations	Discusses financial allocations and resource investments including funding, financial planning, and budget allocations.
--------------------	-----------------------	---

**Discourse and narrative**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
<b>Narrative of connection and collaboration</b>	Stories about university-city connection and collaboration	Discusses the stories, narratives, and rhetoric that highlight the connection, collaborations, and partnerships between the university and the city.
<b>Discourse on visibility and accessibility</b>	Tekst, words or documents on visibility and accessibility	Explores how visibility and accessibility are discussed, perceived, and promoted.