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de Greef, Maurice; De Donder, Liesbeth; Lambotte, Deborah; Huysmans, Minne; Duppen, Daan; Hoens, Sylvia; Croux, Flore; Switsers, Lise; Pan, Tina; Colpin, Nathalie; Petti, Sara; Kish, Ilona

*Published in:*  
World Studies in Education

*DOI:*  
[10.7459/wse/21.1.03](https://doi.org/10.7459/wse/21.1.03)

*Publication date:*  
2020

*License:*  
Unspecified

*Document Version:*  
Accepted author manuscript

[Link to publication](#)

### *Citation for published version (APA):*

de Greef, M., De Donder, L., Lambotte, D., Huysmans, M., Duppen, D., Hoens, S., Croux, F., Switsers, L., Pan, T., Colpin, N., Petti, S., & Kish, I. (2020). Increasing the impact of innovation and advocacy in public libraries across Europe. *World Studies in Education*, 21(1), 25-44. <https://doi.org/10.7459/wse/21.1.03>

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# Increasing the impact of innovation and advocacy in public libraries across Europe

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**Summary**

Libraries need to innovate to ensure services they offer match citizens' needs and expectations in addition to among others the increasing digitalisation of society. Besides, professionals in the library sector need to improve their advocacy skills so that stakeholders are aware of the realised innovation. Based on a mixed-method methodology existing of a systematic desk research, followed by short interviews among 49 professionals from 22 different countries working in the public-library sector and finally completed by 25 case studies this study answers the question what kind of innovation and advocacy activities are possible for public libraries influence successful implementation?

**Key words:** lifelong learning – education – public libraries – innovation – advocacy.

## **Introduction**

Public libraries continue to have a crucial role in modern society: they provide services that citizens cannot find so easily elsewhere, they contribute to building strong communities and they help people develop their personal skills. Libraries need to innovate to ensure that the services they offer match citizens' needs and expectations. This is especially true because of the increasing digitalisation of society, changing labour market needs and social trends. At the same time, professionals in the library sector need to improve their advocacy skills so that the public, decision-makers in national and local government and other stakeholders are aware of the innovation that libraries are achieving. Central question is what the definition of innovation and advocacy is focusing on services of the public libraries in order to innovate and strengthen their public services concerning among others education.

## **Increasing the impact of innovation**

Companies rely on innovation to improve their performance in terms of market share, exports and total sales, according to a study by Gunday et al. (2011). Innovation can also stimulate productivity, according to Hashi and Stoji (2013). This is also underlined by Cainelli et al. (2004), which showed that productivity levels and economic growth among innovating firms are better than among non-innovating firms. On top of this, the speed of innovation matters as faster development influences higher returns, which then have an influence on increasing market share (Carbonell and Rodriguez, 2006). While innovation clearly has a positive influence on the sustainability and economic growth of a company, the question remains in what kind of circumstances innovation can be successful. According to recent studies, creating an internal innovation culture as well as long-term cooperation including networking and a customer focus can help innovation.

### *An internal innovation culture*

Getting the necessary organisational structure, strategy and administrative procedures in place is important in order to achieve innovations, according to Azar and Ciabuschi (2016). Talukder and Quazi (2011) find this is possible when a favourable atmosphere is created in which employees are encouraged to innovate. In other words an organisation needs to become a learning entity with strong leadership, team learning at its core and strong systemic connections, i.e. between people and their work, the organisation and the community (Ugurluoglu et al, 2013).

In addition, organisational norms and practices should support innovation and be reinforced by management (Hogan and Coote, 2014). O'Banion et al. (2012) underline that this type of management, as well as the availability of resources, is important in creating a culture and climate for innovation. This form of management should balance flexibility for discovering new procedures, on the one hand, and the ability to carry out evaluation and decision-making, on the other hand (Khazanchi et al., 2007). More specifically, advanced management capabilities, such as generating income, analysing assets and stocks as well as managing the use of resources, have an even greater influence on superior performance (Basterretxea and Matinez, 2012).

### *Sustainable cooperation including networking*

The external environment, as well as internal organisational culture, is important for the degree of success in innovation. Innovation also seems to differ per country and depends on national systems (Castellacci and Natera, 2013). According to Efrat (2014), national culture, in particular aspects such as avoidance of uncertainty, the role of individualism, distance from power and masculinity, still influence the ability to innovate and sustain innovation. Additionally, Frenz and Ietto-Gillies (2009) show that wide access to different environments and national systems of innovation as well as the range of intra-company networks are more important than an international dimension to collaboration. In addition, if managers target specific elements of the value chain depending on the competitive goals of an organisation this can be valuable (Prajogo et al., 2008). But if the goal is to cooperate in order to enhance innovation then managers should maintain connections to the environment, be trusting and only use moderate contracts between partners in order to improve innovation performance (Wang et al., 2011). Networking therefore seems to provide leverage for successful innovation. According to Choi et al. (2010) having a strategy for networking is necessary in order to implement innovation. Cooperative interpersonal relationships seem to enhance innovative behaviour, especially in heterogeneous groups, according to Van der Vegt and Janssen (2003). This network should be build up at an early stage as this improves dissemination (Choi et al., 2010).

### *Customer focus*

A third factor that drives successful innovation is customer focus (Silva et al., 2017). Different communication services (including among others a variety of personal and written communication) can help boost customer focus to contribute to innovation (Kawakami and Parry, 2013). But one necessary condition is to have a strategy in place to use these different kinds of communication services during

the life cycle for spreading innovation. In addition of using word-of-mouth channels, Wang et al. (2016) underline the importance of using social media. According to their findings brand awareness can be improved by using online communities during innovation (Wang et al., 2016).

### **Increasing the impact of advocacy**

Advocacy is the act of supporting an idea, need, person, or group, according to London (2008, p. 313). In other words advocacy can contribute to raising awareness of a specific sector and to interest others to do something for this sector (Nzeadibe and Ajaero, 2010). More specifically, social advocates take public action to engender fair treatment or further the cause of people in need who can't speak for themselves (or do so effectively), according to London, 2008, p. 313. An external multidimensional focus as well as professionalisation of the team, customer focus and impact assessments can help to increase the success of advocacy activities as part of a successful advocacy strategy.

#### *External multidimensional focus*

A clear call to action, clear goals (including recognition of the extent of goals) and involvement of stakeholders is important for successful advocacy, according to London (2008). Carrol (2004) underlines that setting successful collaboration among key stakeholders an explicit goal is crucial for a multidimensional advocacy concept (Carroll, 2004). For example, political networking can influence the effectiveness of advocacy (Johansen and LeRoux, 2012). There should therefore be engagement in different policy fields in order to carry out successful lobbying. This applies in particular for fields that influence the spending of money (Michaelowa, 1998).

#### *Team professionalisation*

The role of professionals themselves is important for successful implementation of advocacy activities. For instance, healthcare professionals need to increase their knowledge of the health system in order to help patients and their families get the most out of the system (Putman, 2014). Likewise Doherty et al. (2016) argue that improving communications skills among professionals enhances their ability to advocate and the effectiveness of advocacy activities. In addition, training in charity branding is important. This involves consistent branding over time and entails strong brand communication as a two-way process with the charity and stakeholders, on one hand, and bringing the brand alive among employees, for example, on the other (Hankinson, 2002). This brand-oriented approach seems to be successful in boosting funding as an advocacy goal (Hankinson, 2002).

#### *Customer focus*

Customers are very important as Lacey and Morgan (2009) underline. According to their study, the more customers are engaged with an organisation the more they are willing to advocate on behalf of that organisation. Therefore it seems necessary to create higher levels of trust and engagement in order to be a strong customer advocate (Lacey and Morgan, 2009). Sunguya et al. (2016) underline the importance of involving different customers or target groups in order to achieve successful advocacy. These important groups include among others at-risk populations, local community members, peer advocates and activists, specific age groups and celebrities (Sunguya et al., 2016).

#### *Impact assessment*

Finally, Coates and David (2002) underline the importance of monitoring, evaluation and impact assessments. This is necessary in order to reshape the campaign to create a more successful advocacy strategy. The essential elements during the advocacy process should be identified and the most important areas need to be evaluated (Coates and David, 2002).

## **Research questions**

The central goal of this study focuses on gaining knowledge concerning the support of public libraries in order to strengthen their role and services and to show their added value. Innovation and advocacy can contribute to this goal. Therefore, the following research questions have to be answered:

1. What kind of innovation activities are possible for public libraries?
2. Which success factors influence successful implementation of innovation in public libraries?
3. What kind of advocacy activities are possible for public libraries?
4. Which factors influence successful implementation of advocacy activities in public libraries?

## **Methodology**

## **Procedure and sample**

This report has used a mixed method research approach. First, systematic desk research was carried out to identify and describe possible success factors for innovation and advocacy. This systematic desk research resulted in the selection of 69 unique resources. The following search terms have been used: impact of innovation, impact of advocacy and impact of lobbying in order to find articles and book chapters in the following databases: ERIC (EBSCO), PiCarta, PsycARTICLES (EBSCO), PsycINFO (EBSCO), Sage Journals Online, ScienceDirect (Elsevier), SpringerLink, SSCI, Taylor & Francis Online, UM Publications, Web of Science and Wiley Online Library. Additionally, there have been Internet searches for examples of guidelines and handbooks in innovation and advocacy and these resulted in a selection of 15 unique resources.

Second, public-library professionals attending a special European event for the sector took part in short individual interviews. This was done to identify good innovation and advocacy practices in the sector. The event "Generation Code Exhibition: Born at the Library" was held at the European Parliament in September 2017. Participants were asked to answer the questions in the first questionnaire to identify good innovation and advocacy practices. After a short introduction during the plenary session a team of eight researchers interviewed 49 professionals from 22 different countries working in the public-library sector.

Third, after selecting the most promising practices 25 case studies were carried out. Seventeen of these concerned innovation, seven concerned advocacy and one concerned both innovation and advocacy. Twenty-five experts from 16 countries who were involved in these case studies were contacted for in-depth interviews. The interviews were carried out in January and February 2018. The analysis of the results of the case studies aimed to explore the categories of innovation and advocacy as well as the success factors for effective innovation and advocacy. In order to achieve more in-depth understanding of these phenomena a multiple case-study design was used (Baarda et al., 2009). After instruction at the start of each interview, the interviewee answered the questions from the second questionnaire. All participants work in public libraries or a public library association. Annex 1 gives an overview of the 25 selected case studies.

## **Instrument development**

Researchers at the Department of Educational Sciences of the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel developed a questionnaire in order to identify good practices.

The first questionnaire consisted of four main parts:

- 1) socio-demographic factors (like gender, age, country where one works and professional role);
- 2) respondents were asked to name a maximum of five good innovation practices and a maximum of five good advocacy practices, and they were asked to categorise these good practices;
- 3) all interviewees were asked if they cooperated with other stakeholders and if they were interested in partnerships;
- 4) respondents were asked if it was their first visit to this event and the European Parliament.

The second questionnaire (also developed by researchers of the Department of Educational Sciences at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel) focused on more in-depth issues concerning innovation and advocacy. As well as questions concerning the general information about the organisation involved and the innovative project or advocacy activities, the following categories of questions were been included:

- accessibility of messages;
- impact on knowledge, skills and attitude;
- impact on interest and participation;
- sustainability of change;
- challenges;
- success factors;
- the library community.

## **Method of analysis**

In order to analyse the results of the case studies the interviews were recorded, transcribed and analysed. In order to prevent interpretation bias by the researchers, the results of the analysis have been discussed using an investigator triangulation and a peer review (Eisner, 1998). This means that each one of the researchers analysed a set of interviews and made a "pool of meaning". This pool of meaning by each researcher consists of different categories of results based on the different interviews, which were discussed among the researchers. The final "pool of meaning" is a result of an investigator triangulation based on the discussion of the interpretations of the conceptions of the respondents (Bowden, 2000). Finally, results from the earlier desk research were considered in light of

the case findings. This also created opportunities to identify new indicators that could be used to track the success of innovation and advocacy of the case studies analysed.

## Results

### Main categories of innovation

Five main categories of innovation were identified according to the case studies:

1. New services and functions
2. Involvement with and variety of target groups
3. Diversity in activities on different levels
4. Adjustment of space and vision
5. Outreach strategy

#### *New services and functions*

Almost all case studies (17 out of 18) show that a library needs to be more than just a place for borrowing books. Most experts in the field are aware that the services and functions provided by libraries need to be updated to serve people's current needs. These new functions mainly involve the use of technology and the connection to the digitalisation of modern day society as well as providing educational services and information at a local level. For example, R1 (the R is an abbreviation for "respondent" and refers to the different respondents of this study) says: *"We have two strategies; that is mixing this classical approach with a lot of educative programs, and giving a lot of our services a digital perspective which they didn't have before...and third ...a tailor-made approach where people who have specific problems can come here and find advice which is really based on their specific problem"* (R1).

#### *Diversity in activities on different levels*

Besides upgrading the function of libraries themselves 16 out of 18 experts said they tried to introduce new activities. These activities can give a new 'boost' to the daily work of public libraries, as R9 explains: *"We have two cinema halls inside our library, one for kids and one for adults, and every afternoon we have programmes, (...) both for children and for adults, and inside the library we have a very large cafeteria ...and ...the computer lab [where} we schedule all the technological courses and the courses on how to create or how to find jobs"* (R9). These activities are not only focused on the local level, but also on other levels in order to professionalize the activities and the library team themselves.

#### *Adjustment of space and vision*

Most of the experts interviewed (12 out of 18) also gave the example of innovation involving the library space itself. More and more public libraries are [becoming] attractive buildings, which can be used for different goals and purposes, but if the building needs to serve a new purpose the space has to be adjusted to the new requirements, as this example by R18 shows: *"Among the usual library services, such as lending books and magazines and newspapers and DVDs and Blu-ray, people can come here and they can write a song: they can use the media lab, which is a recording studio in the library, and many musicians come and use it free of charge"* (R18).

#### *Involvement and variety of target group*

As well as upgrading the services and functions of libraries, 17 out of 18 experts argue that it is necessary to involve the target group as well as focusing on more than one target group. Some of the case studies broadened their target group and reached out new locally situated target groups like refugees, as R8 explains: *"We want to create this platform to have a space where refugees can have their voices heard and ...to give them an opportunity to have their cultures discovered by EU citizens ...thereby fostering intercultural and interreligious understanding between refugee communities and host country populations"* (R8). Identifying the needs of citizens and customers (visiting the public library) can be helpful in developing the services of the library itself.

#### *Outreach strategy*

More than half of the experts interviewed (10 out of 18) underlined the importance of an outreach strategy. It is not always easy to attract people to public libraries so one has to go to places where possible customers are for example in schools where parents meet each other, as R3 explains: *"And then getting the same education and then it goes to kids to different activities from when they are quite small until they are ready to begin in school. So, we are actually going to train them in different parts, we are going to train the parents and so on. (...) So, it is a very focused project on working together"* (R3).

## **Success factors for innovation**

The five main success factors for innovation identified in the case studies are as follows:

1. Adaptation to user needs
2. Mixed-method communication (fitting with users' daily lives)
3. Interdisciplinary partnerships
4. Professional ownership during an iterative process
5. Proximity

### *Adapting to users' needs*

All experts underline the importance of providing added value for the users. For innovation to be successful, users need to know how it benefits them. Tailor-made proposals for innovation and personal connection with users seems to be of great importance, as R18 explains by this specific example of fitting into with citizens' daily lives: *"There are many people who don't have a computer at home...salaries [in Greece] have become very low and not everybody has access [to the] Internet ...[and] there isn't a public service which can help them free of charge, so people come ...to the library and we help them how to apply for the heating allowance"* (R18).

### *Mixed-method communication fitting into users' daily lives*

Using a variety of communication channels can improve added value as it makes it possible to find and reach different target groups. It also seems to generate more attention for the innovative services the public library provides: *"We have different ways: we had a great campaign when we launched the platform, we had ads on one of the most visited media websites and we [had] more than ten TV and radio guests when we go on the radio. The media here in Serbia was really impressed when we launched that portal and we took three famous writers to write articles just to promote and write recommendations for promotional purposes. They also make our portal more visible. Now, all of the libraries involved in the project have the special banner on its website and also on its social media, Facebook, for example and that way we find our target groups"* (R17).

### *Interdisciplinary partnerships*

Interdisciplinary partnerships are a success factor for almost all case studies, namely for 17 out of 18. These partnerships are important for launching innovation and to maintain the organisation of public libraries as explained by R11: *"The main focus from the beginning is the forming of new partnerships because we believe that there are lots of possibilities for libraries to work with new partners, maybe also removing ourselves a bit from the culture field"* (R11). This collaboration with different partners takes place at different levels according to the different experts interviewed.

### *Professional ownership during an iterative process*

Innovation is not always successful from the beginning. A process of 'trial and error' is a crucial part of innovation. Most of the experts (14 out of 18) explained that innovation should be an ongoing process in which professionals involved can learn from mistakes and make improvements, as R6 explains: *"Most of the time it is an iterative process of finding interesting things for our users, especially in the field of media competencies, ...trying them out with our colleagues and co-workers and then bringing them to the public and the clients"* (R6). But this is in most cases only possible if the staff and management allow themselves and others to make mistakes and are open-minded towards innovation.

### *Proximity*

According to most of the experts (14 out of 18) libraries should provide new services close to potential users and sometimes they need to seek them out if innovation is to succeed. This also lowers the threshold for users to come to the library as explained by R8: *"When you talk with a refugee and decide to meet them ...to make an interview, they didn't show up because they have a lot of [issues] (...) So, we changed tactics and we started to call them one hour before the meeting. It went much better"* (R8). This seems to be the case for different target groups and in some cases volunteers, rather than professionals themselves, can play a role in reaching the potential end-users.

## **Advocacy activities for public libraries**

The five main categories of advocacy identified by the case studies are:

1. Awareness-raising campaigns
2. Attraction and retention of the target group
3. Stakeholder cooperation
4. Policy adjustment



## 5. Increasing funding

### **Main categories of advocacy**

#### *Awareness-raising campaigns*

All experts explained that increasing awareness about the potential role and function of public libraries is one of the most important advocacy activities. Such awareness-raising campaigns should target policy-makers as well as end-users. It is important that the results of the services offered by public libraries are known by the general public but especially among policy makers: *“Apart from the personal mission [of library staff] it is taking over the goals of the decision makers, taking over the goals of the policy makers in the town or in the city and [finding] out how the library can respond to these goals. ... that is the most important thing”* (R20).

#### *Attraction and retention of the target group*

Most of the experts (7 out of 8) argue that libraries need to be active in developing activities that suit the target group. This means that one often has to change activities to respond to the changing needs of the group: *“Of course you grow from what the library can offer you. You grow as a person and society grows, and that is the pay-off of a campaign that we are doing ... We will have a new one coming in May when there is the exam period for children in schools and we use that to say the library is a place where you can study and you are not disturbed. So, the pay-off ... is the library makes you richer and we use that for all kinds of activities to position ourselves as a place for everybody, where everybody can get better”* (R22). Timing is important as well as the content of the activities themselves. Sometimes libraries offer activities at specific times of the year in order to attract a particular target group.

#### *Stakeholder cooperation*

Ongoing cooperation with stakeholders is needed in order to have enough possibilities to offer services and to stay connected to different target groups and different possible funders, according to most of the experts (6 out of 8). Sometimes this means that libraries launch new co-operations to embrace a new field of services: *“So, we always try to have a look at new people with new ideas, who come up with new ideas, like a design... we are now talking to the State Media Institution: we work with them very closely in regard to the safety of social media and how to get people aware what they do when they use social media for instance. We cannot do this as a stand-alone but we do this together with other institutions”* (R20).

#### *Policy adjustment*

More than half of the experts (5 out of 8) see advocacy as way to change policy or legislation in favour of public libraries. The aim of this kind of advocacy activity is to ensure the visibility and added value of libraries in the near future as R19 explains: *“Last year the new strategic plan of the city was adapted and the municipal library of Prague is one of the city agencies mentioned in that strategic plan...that is because we were part of structures preparing that strategic plan. So we as a municipal library we are part of the broader city initiatives. (...) That means that it is easier to send a message that we are relevant for the city”* (R19).

#### *Increase of funding*

Half of the experts (4 out of 8) point out that they have developed their advocacy activities in order to increase funding. R19 explains advocacy should focus on the partner that ensures the funding: *“First is communication towards the city and decision makers of the city since 90% of our budget is covered by the subsidy from the city. So the city is the most important partner for all our activities, either running the normal everyday business or any new initiatives. My colleagues and I do the usual lobbying in the city council, that means when a new council is elected we approach them, give them information about what the library is, how is our budget, how do we spend it ...we quite frequently give them information about all our special activities”* (R19).

### **Success factors for advocacy**

The case studies identified seven different types of success factor:

1. Target group policy
2. Personal contacts
3. Public recognition
4. Multiplier collaboration
5. Marketing expert
6. Umbrella organisation
7. Impact assessment

### *Target group policy*

According to all experts one of the most important elements for successful advocacy activities is a tailor-made approach for the different target groups. New activities that fit into the possible perceptions and connect to the actual needs of the potential users have to be developed, as the example of R22 illustrates: *"We had the financial crisis with unemployment which gave a boost to helping people on the labour market, but we also had a refugee crisis where lots of people from Syria came into our country and everybody says ...if they have to stay here for a while it starts with having a language skill so they can manage their life in Dutch society. So, libraries started to do language workshops and classes"* (R22).

### *Personal contacts*

Personal contacts are important for advocacy activities according to most of the experts (7 out of 8). One needs to create a way of connecting to and bonding with other people who could be interested in the library's goals. Unofficial and networking meetings are seen by respondents as ways to create better personal contacts. *"I think unofficial communication is sometimes more important than the official communication. So what I do is to have ...all the official meetings, be very well prepared, give the impression that the library is a sustainable and reliable institution. The unofficial is more important ... I not only invite people to have coffee with me in the library to show them the library, but also ...going out to receptions, to openings, to New Year's receptions, whatever it is. It is so important to be present"* (R20).

### *Public recognition*

Most of the experts (6 out of 8) underline the importance of librarians themselves acting as ambassadors for public libraries. They can communicate the added value of public libraries and what these services can mean for end-users. R22 says: *"What we see is that our community of librarians moved from showing ...value on paper ...to be much more of a community of ambassadors. They are talking, they are seen, they show themselves in the local community, they are really an ambassador of the library, they are everywhere where people come together (...) and they tell what they are doing"* (R22).

### *Multiplier collaboration*

More than half of the experts (5 out of 8) say that collaboration is a factor for a successful advocacy strategy. To achieve one's own goals, it is sometimes necessary to adopt the goals of another person or organisation. The added value of supporting other organizations and their 'social goals' can expand your own target group or the sustainability of your activities, as illustrated by R25: *"The combination of a fab lab and a business and intellectual property centre is very much around building skills, building businesses, even very small scale businesses. In Exeter Library we have a skateboarder who is an artist and a crafts person ...he put [s] really beautiful designs onto his skateboards and ...sells them in a very, very upmarket shop in London for some huge sums of money, but they are made in the fab lab and we help him to do that"* (R25). Collaboration is important to find as much as support as possible to achieve a library's goals.

### *Marketing expert*

More than half of the experts (5 out of 8) state that having a marketing expert is important for effective advocacy activities although it is not always possible to have one. A marketing department can deliver more advocacy activities and reach more people, as R19 explains: *"We have the biggest PR and marketing department, so they do a lot of things ...every day"* (R19).

### *Umbrella organisations*

Half of the experts (4 out of 8) underline the necessity and added value of being a member of an umbrella organisation. These organisations can support libraries in delivering their services and roles in a professional way. *"Because we work very, very closely with this network and our partners they know that we have very good relationship with all libraries in Latvia (...) [All] librarians ...not only in big towns but also in very rural, small villages and partners ...[This] public library network is our goal"* (R21). Sharing knowledge among libraries and being a community can strengthen the sector itself and can show the added value of the libraries.

### *Impact assessments*

Finally, half of the experts (4 out of 8) state that they carried out an impact assessment. Showing the impact of the services and activities and the added value they generate can be a success factor for advocacy. According to R21 the impact assessment can support sustainability: *"There were 5 different*

*studies and after that when the project finished we think about sustainability and now it is incorporated in our national statistics and all public libraries now (...) information nationally" (R21). Besides by conducting an impact assessment one can show the social and economic added value of the public library. This can be supportive in advocacy activities towards policy makers.*

## **Conclusions and discussion**

According to the findings of this study it became clear that both the success factors of innovation and advocacy include three different dimensions (see table 1). Besides an external focus it seems to be necessary to create a culture, which makes it possible to learn from mistakes. More specified professionals should join an iterative process, in which they can realise new steps and new procedures next to new activities based on 'trial and error'. Of course, one would like to be as successful as possible, but one needs to have the possibility to make mistakes and to be creative in developing new concepts. If managers support this and if professionals themselves believe in it and act as ambassadors, innovation and advocacy can be successful. Especially during the process of realising advocacy activities, one should measure its impact in order to improve the advocacy activity itself. Trial and error seems to be a good starting point, but one definitively has to learn from mistakes and have to improve them. Therefore, insights in impact are necessary. During the process of advocacy special attention goes to the technique of branding. It seems to be important that one could embrace a strategy to brand the unique organisation in order to gain more attendance, start possible cooperation or increase funding.

Second the external dimension focuses more on multilevel dimensions. According to the case studies, but also to the findings of the desk research one should try to collaborate with different partners. These different partners can have different meanings for the organisation itself. Cooperation with social partners can attract new end-users after shared development of new services, but on the other hand collaboration with decision makers concerning funding seems to be important. So public libraries should translate the surplus value of collaboration on different levels. In order to start these multilevel collaborations networking and personal contacts seem inevitable and necessary to create some bonding with the potential stakeholders.

Third customer-focus for innovation and advocacy seems one of the most important factors gaining success. In a co-creative way one should develop new activities or involve partners in making meaning to the daily work and services of the organisation. If one would like to successfully innovate services one should necessarily adapt these to the daily life needs of the end-users. These needs can be a starting point of the new activities and services, which should be developed. Besides communication towards the end-users, but also to other stakeholders for example decision makers should be adapted to their possibilities. The used channels should be known among and used during their life and work for example Pinterest or video messages, which can be used by the end-users or decision makers themselves. Therefore, diversity in using communication channels is necessary including word-to-mouth, which seems to be successful next to social media and other media like TV. One of the keywords to strive for is proximity to the target group, which one would like to reach during the process of innovation or advocacy.

### **[Include table 1 here]**

These success factors can be used in order to accomplish different innovations, to mention:

1. New services and functions
2. Involvement with and variety of target groups
3. Diversity in activities on different levels
4. Adjustment of space and vision
5. Outreach strategy

Besides the following kinds of advocacy activities seems to be realised in most of the case studies:

1. Awareness-raising campaigns
2. Attraction and retention of the target group
3. Stakeholder cooperation
4. Policy adjustment
5. Increasing funding

For both innovation and advocacy most of the time the internal drive and motivation is contents and awareness and not funding. This seems to be clear in most of the case studies. Of course one needs to have resources, but only if the product or service can be better and can be used in a sustainable way. Again the co-creation of new services and advocacy activities seems to be important. In other words contacts with end-users and stakeholders are very important and should be strived for in order to fulfil a successful innovation or advocacy activity.

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## Tables

**Table 1: Three dimensions of success factors**

| <b>Success factors in innovation and advocacy for strengthening position of public libraries</b> |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
|  | <b>Internal dimension</b>                          | <b>External dimension</b>                    | <b>Co-creation</b>   |
| <b>Innovation</b>  | Internal innovation culture                        | Sustainable cooperation including networking | Customer-focus   |
|  | Professional ownership during an iterative process | Interdisciplinary partnerships               | Adaptation to user needs                                     |
|  |  |  | Mixed-method communication (fitting with users' daily lives) |
|  |  |  | Proximity  |
| <b>Advocacy</b>  |  |  |  |
| <b>Advocacy</b>  | Team professionalization                           | External multidimensional focus              | Customer-focus   |
|  | Public recognition                                 | Personal contacts                            | Target-group policy  |
|  | Marketing expert                                   | Multiplier collaboration                     |  |
|  | Impact assessment                                  | Umbrella organisation                        |  |