

Inclusive Social City Development

Exploring the role of Social Innovation Clusters

March 2025



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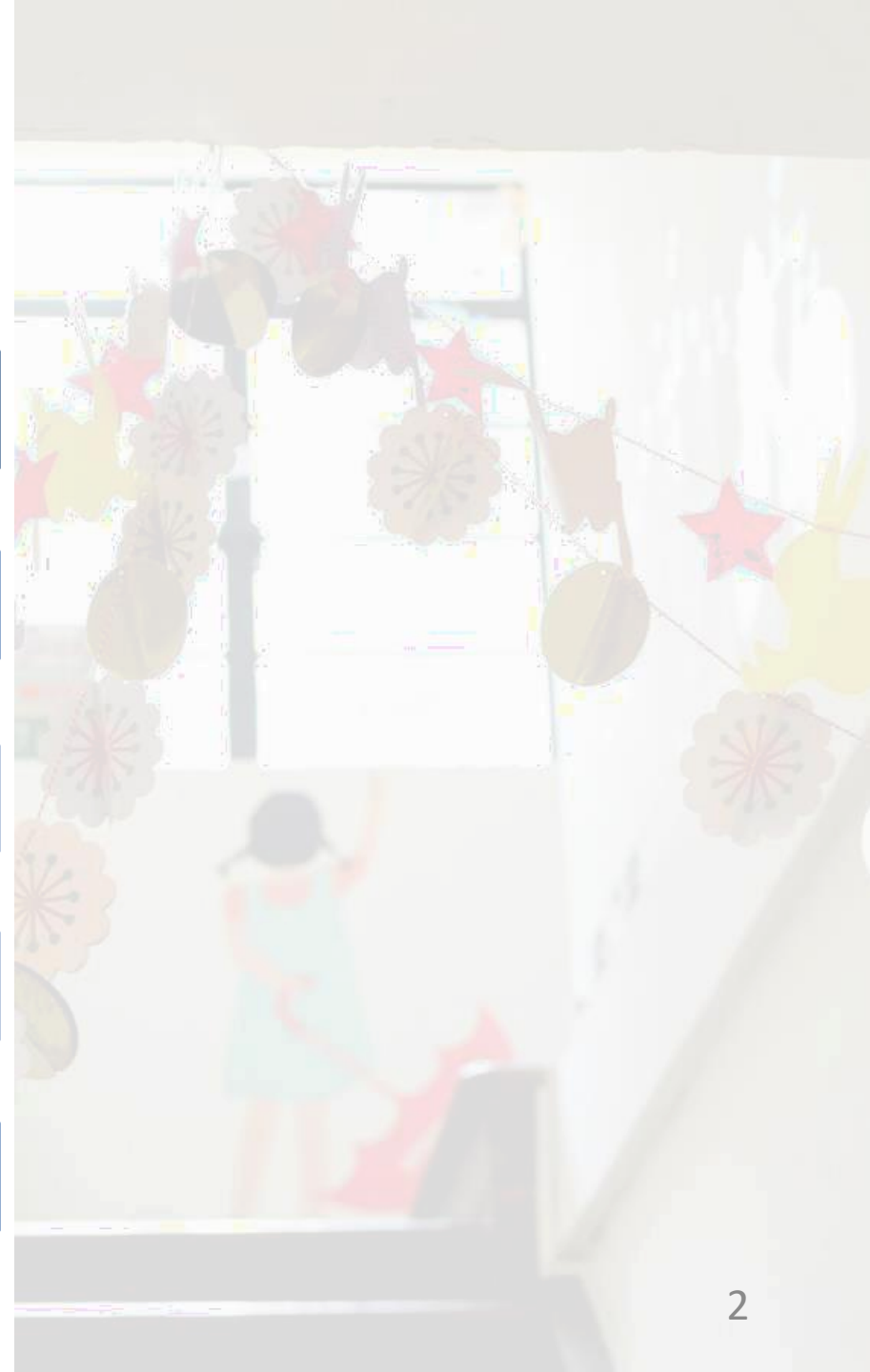
1. Brief on social innovation

2. Context on Cascais City Hall

3. Cascais Social Hub Station

4. A benchmark... Challenges at Aproximar

5. Potential impact



Very brief overview of social innovation

One definition on social innovation in Europe:

*"Social innovations are new ideas that meet social needs, create social relationships and form new collaborations. These innovations can be **products, services or models** addressing **unmet needs more effectively**. The European Commission's objective is to encourage market uptake of **innovative solutions and stimulate employment**."*

<https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/>



European Social Fund Plus

Very brief overview of social innovation

Diferent types of innovation, which I've selected three that can be disruptive or incrementals....

01

I. Focus in the product: inclusive services, new packages, change of focus...

02

II. Focus on process: redesign service delivery, new practices, how to deliver...

03

III. Transformative: awareness, collective mobilisation, political influencing...

Impossible to do without evaluation...

Know process... But walking the Walk... Is fierce job!

01

Identification

Desired change to problem, need and challenge.

03

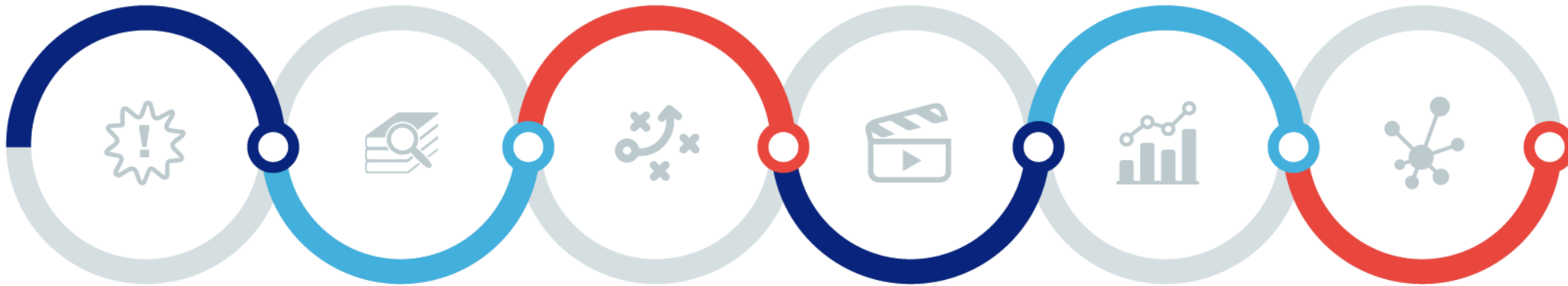
Solution design

Configured to obtain funding for the development of prototypes and their testing.

05

Monitoring and evaluation

Expert panels, validation workshops and experimental methods: end users and beneficiaries.



Diffuse the solution

02

Research

Effectiveness and efficiency of existing solutions, programmes and services

04

Prototyping and pilots

Co-creation of the prototype of the proposed solution and subsequent testing followed by fine-tuning.

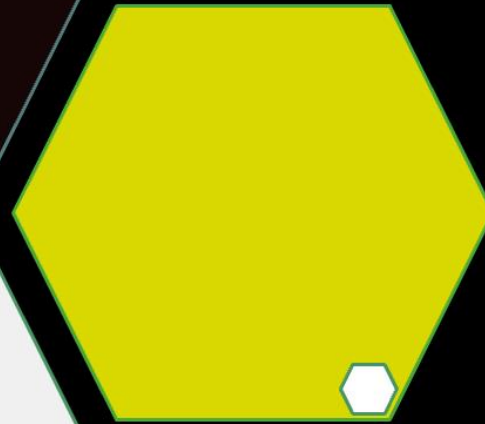
06

Internalisation and Scalability

Learning embedded in existing programmes and transition to intervention processes. Dissemination to stakeholders.

The context that sustained the strategy:

COMMUNITIES IN ACTION



Demographic Data and Facts



Inhabitants

206 479

2011 Census

214 124

2021 Census

3,7 %

growth

Foreign Population

34 097

143 Nationalities

Territory

97,4 Km²

50 Municipal **Neighbourhoods**

6 057 Inhabitants

1 372 Young People

1 160 Elderly

Social Challenges

1**POVERTY**

People covered by benefits and support from the public social assistance subsystem.

2**HOUSING**

Homes in poor condition due to inadequate construction or lack of maintenance.

3**AGING**

Elderly individuals facing isolation and loneliness.

4**YOUTH
HOPELESSNESS**

Lack of motivation and search for purpose in life.

5**CIVIC
PARTICIPATION**

Prevalence of issues related to citizenship and access to rights.

Source: Cascais City Council

ESTAÇÃO
HUB SOCIAL
CASCAIS

03. One solution in many... Hub Social!

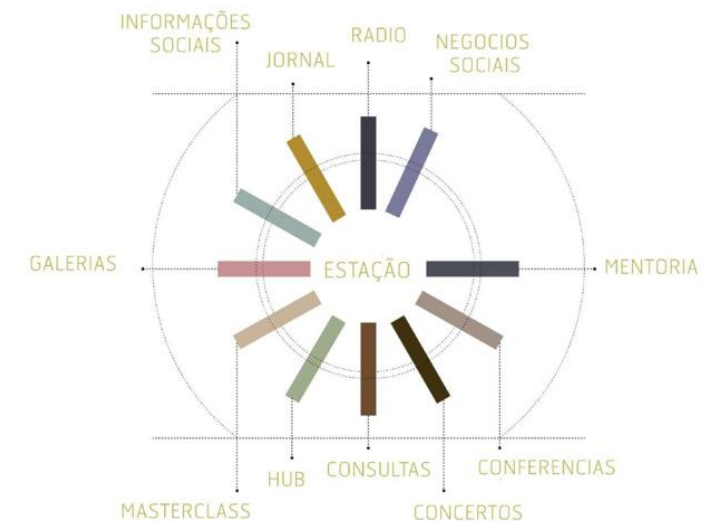
Introduction

Context

Cascais City Council has developed the concept of the Cascais Social Hub Station

- ✓ A central space, next to train station of Pared, with around 200m², for the co-creation, incubation and networking of organisations and services aimed at generating value and social impact.
- ▼ Generation of entrepreneurial and social business dynamics, with continuous open competitions: ideation, incubation and acceleration
- ▼ Inspirational space with conferences, conversation circles, round tables, masterclasses, workshops and other learning and knowledge transfer dynamics
- ▼ Experimental radio and newspaper workshop in a partnership between children and mentors
- ▼ Exhibition gallery for local artists
- ▼ Mental health consultations / family support

Source: Cascais City Council



Social Hub Cascais

After analysing the CMCascais proposal document, we opted to group the services into five main areas of activity. Aproximar would act as an **activator and curator**, and the services are provided by various organisations.

After consolidating business ideas, it is important to support the incubation of the idea or its scalability, accompany the venture and ensure that all dimensions and resources are aligned and available.

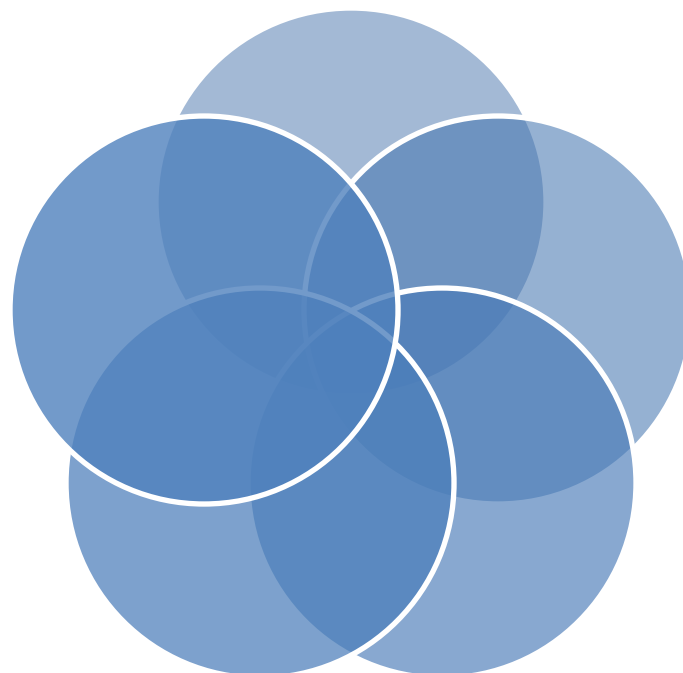
05 Social Business Workshop

A process that includes identifying needs, designing a concept/solution, raising finance, prototyping, testing and launching innovative solutions.

04 Social innovation laboratory

01 Talent & Learning Forum

It includes all initiatives linked to vocational stimulation and awareness: formal and non-formal training, debate, sharing and transfer of knowledge, mobilities, demonstrations of knowledge and techniques.



02 Social Services Pavilion

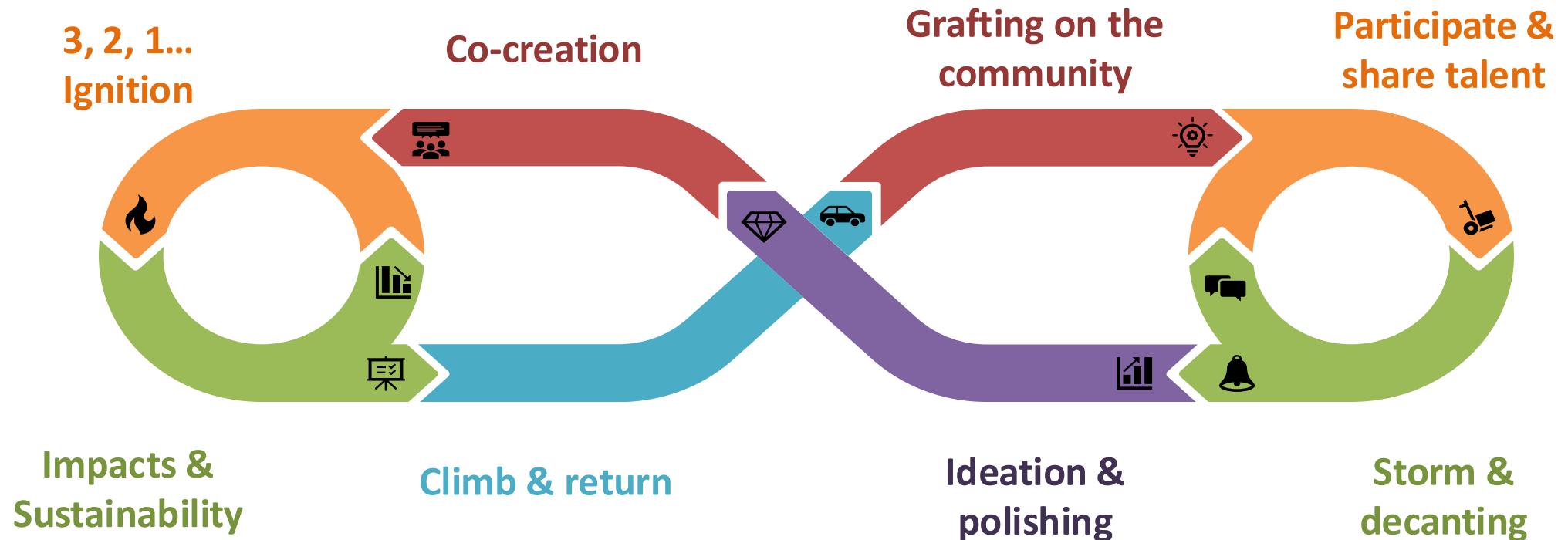
A space with shops and offices where social organisations provide their services to the community.

03 Arts and (Multi)Media Arena

Venue for artistic expression, audiovisual, media and community activation initiatives.

The participatory methodology

The action of the Cascais Social Hub Station is based on a **looped and bi-cyclical dynamic** of **activating civic participation in the Cascais community**, on the **one** hand, and on the other hand, **providing integrated services (one stop shop)** to **enable** and qualify the participation. The methodology involves **opening up to the community** and the *design thinking* process to extract the greatest potential and thus be able to sustain the continuity of the Cascais Social Hub Station.

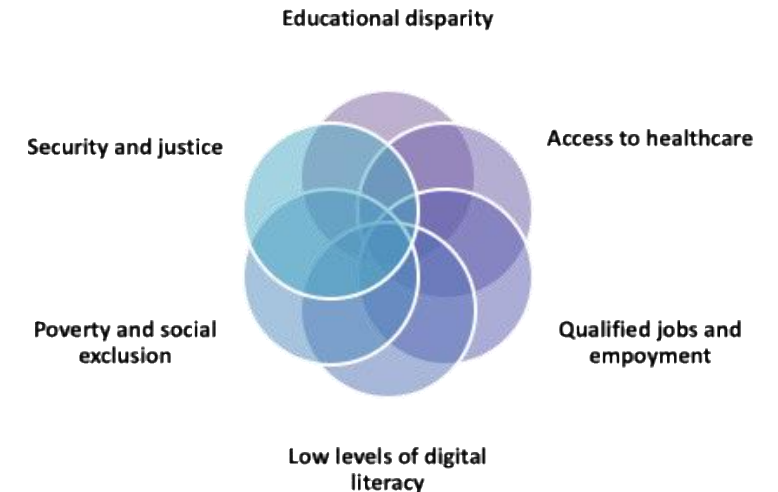


Source: Aproximar, Social Solidarity Cooperative

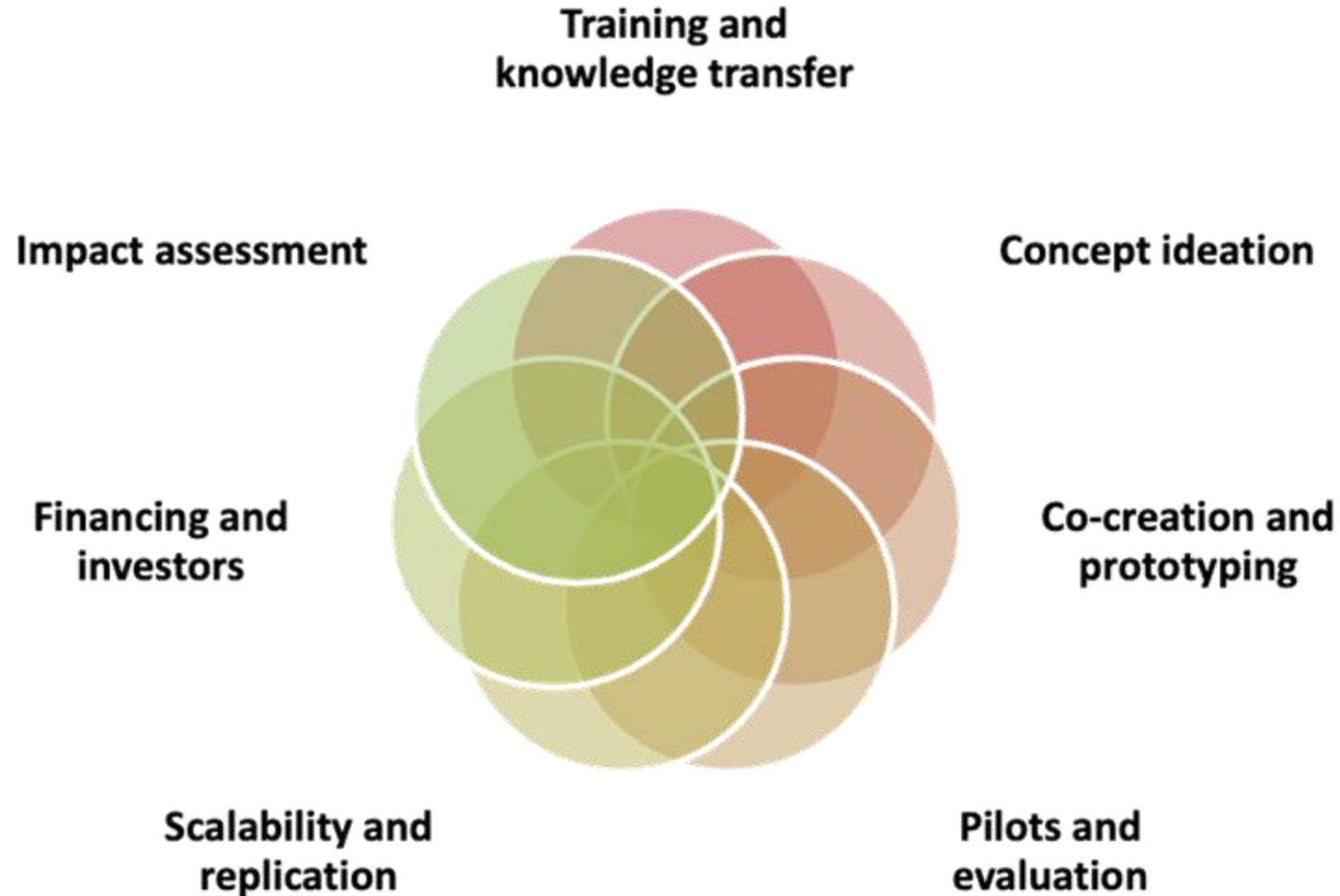
Creating an ecosystem for delivering impact



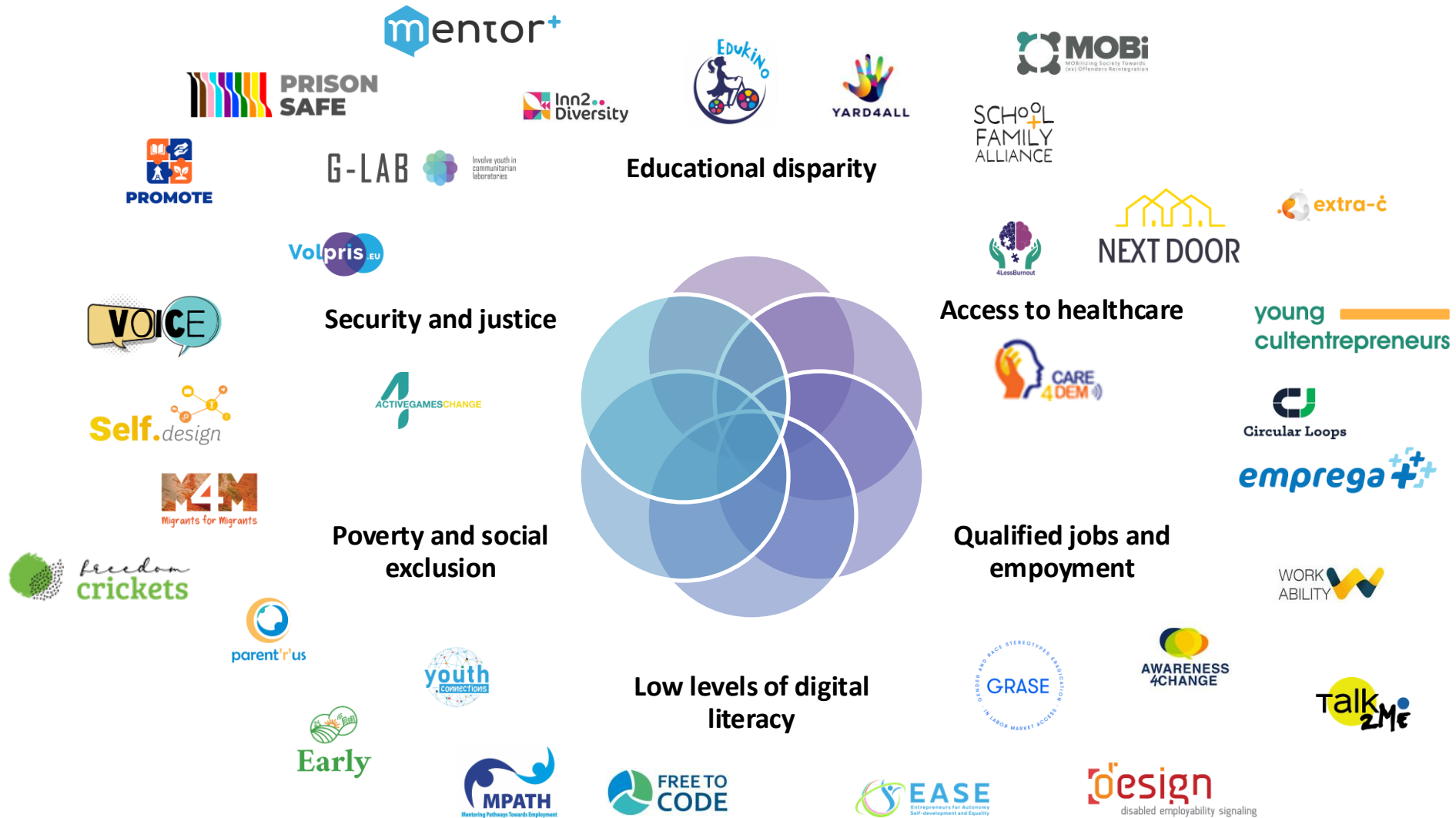
Cooperation focus on clustering as a must be and the intersection will drive innovation...



Strategic partnership focus on adding value



Clustering: seeding solutions, scaling impacts



04. Benchmark challenges... at Aproximar

A social innovation hub

Since 2006, Aproximar has developed a Social Innovation Hub which focuses on the creation of **clusters or sectors** that are orientated towards social needs and problems.

Each **cluster** has a person in charge who **facilitates** the process from A to Z: from identifying the need, creating the solution proposal, raising funds to disseminating and internalising the tested solution.

By functioning autonomously, the **clusters** intersect needs and co-develop proposed solutions, guaranteeing the **continuous generation of innovation at three levels**: process, product and transformation.



From innovation labs to training programmes

- Needs and challenges
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Applying tried and tested solutions: capacity building and training
- Raising finance

Training programmes



Innovation Labs

- Problem
- Proposal Solution
- R&D Prototype
- Testing and evaluation
- Creating programmes
- Replication / Dissemination

KNOWLEDGE
TRANSFER

CONSULTANCY AND
INNOVATION

CAPACITY BUILDING
AND TRAINING

MARKETING AND
COMMUNICATION

Social Intervention
Services

It takes time, it takes resolve, it is not miraculous...

But it can be done!...



Good practices recognitions are just promising solutions

Aproximar was the enabler or member of 21 partnerships focused on social innovation development awarded as good practices by the correspondent funding programme.

Certificações

Prémios

Boas Práticas

Redes

Protocolos

Financiamentos



Accredited projects for mobility of learners and staff in adult education



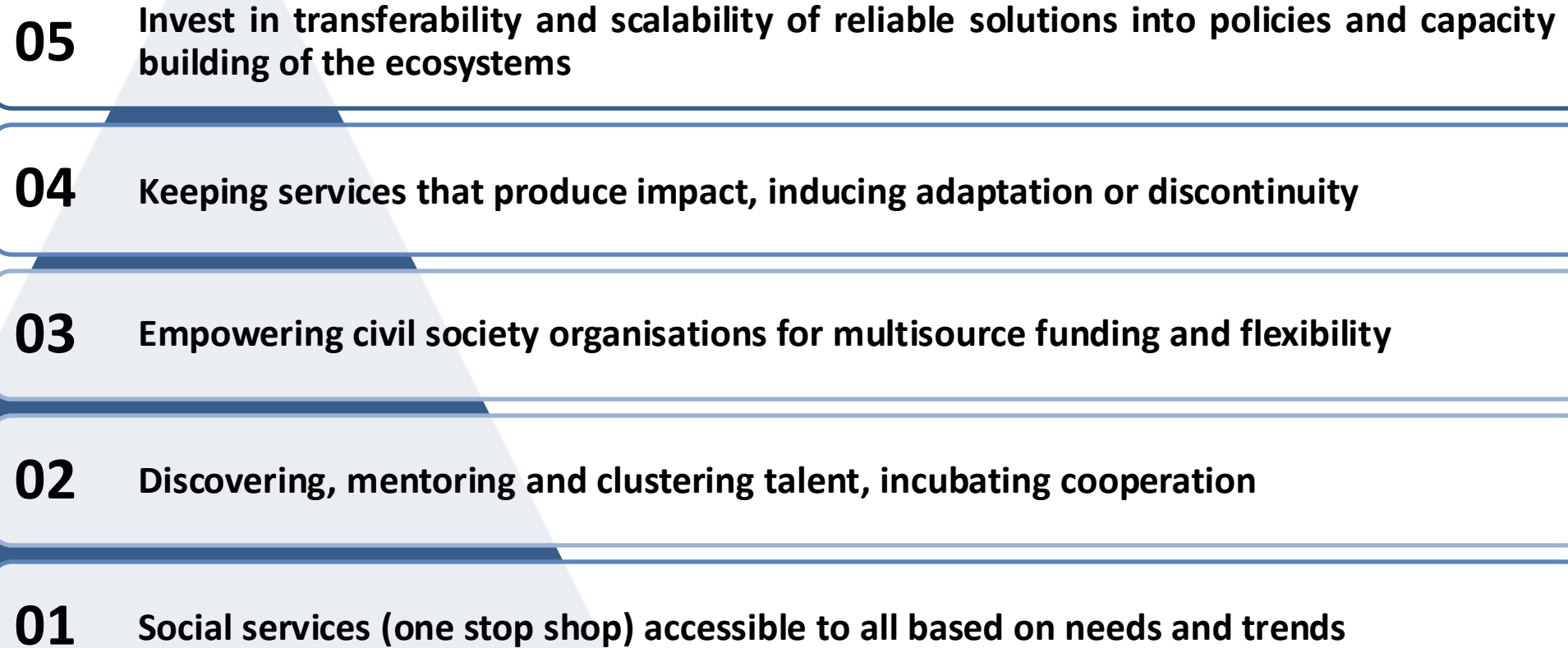
MOMIE



06. Potential Impact

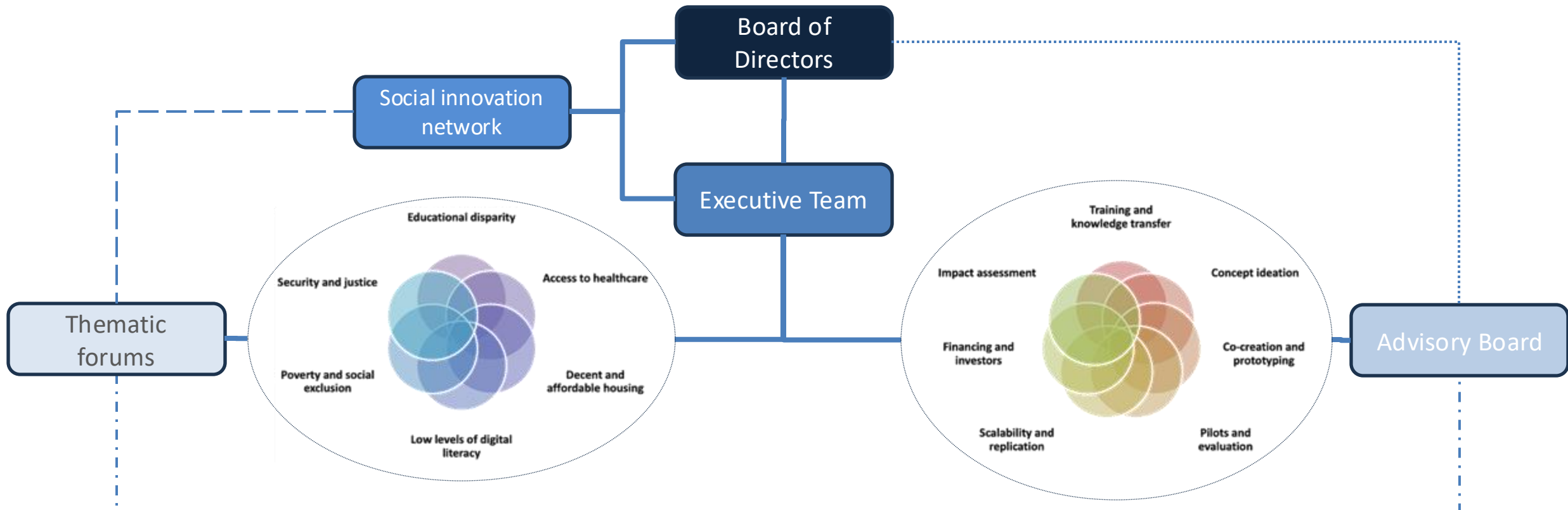
To reach more people we need to bring them in anyway possible.

Impacts on people and communities

- 
- 05** Invest in transferability and scalability of reliable solutions into policies and capacity building of the ecosystems
 - 04** Keeping services that produce impact, inducing adaptation or discontinuity
 - 03** Empowering civil society organisations for multisource funding and flexibility
 - 02** Discovering, mentoring and clustering talent, incubating cooperation
 - 01** Social services (one stop shop) accessible to all based on needs and trends


Triggering Social innovation


The creation of a Social Innovation City Council to reach the desired impact is of outmost importance to have public policies focused on **triggering** and **sustaining efforts**, ensuring **accessibility** to all while **driven the innovation on real needs** and **investing on promising/proven solutions**.





Innovation network and innovation forums

A series of activities designed to activate talent and promote learning with a view to generating innovative solutions. Innovative solutions can integrate one or more elements of innovation:

 **Disruptive** - game changers and transformation of existing solutions with a new paradigm.

 **Context** - successful innovations with the potential to be adapted to a new context with the same impact.

 **Process** - changes to the configuration of existing solutions that allow for greater satisfaction of new or emerging needs.

 **Participative** - changing the model and configuration of promoters and partners to models with organisation and ownership by the communities.

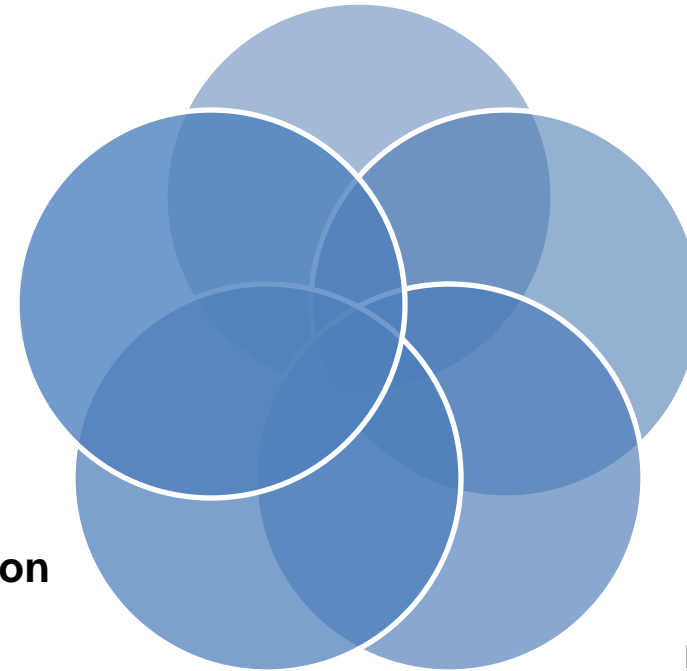
05 Identifying and attracting funding opportunities

04 Social innovation challenges and competitions, prototyping processes and project generation

01 Regular meetings of innovation networks and forums

02 Capacity building: workshops, training, pitch

03 Community involvement, networking events and collaborative initiatives





Embracing Social Cohesion!



Protocolo entre a autarquia e a Direção Geral de Política de Justiça



Mediação Familiar e Laboral no concelho de Cascais



Cascais acolhe colóquio sobre Drogas Sintéticas



Encontro Nacional dos Vespistas



Maior eficiência no consumo de água nas escolas

Thank You!

March 2025



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/approach

