

What actually is social innovation?

Initiatives that involve both **new services or products**
and
new relationships among people in the producing of them
i.e.
a new output + a new social process

[BEPA 2010]

They generally involve **empowering citizens**

Examples of social innovation

- Open University
- open source software
- Wikipedia
- microcredit
- crowdfunding
- fair trade
- flexitime
- Specialisterne – employment for autistic people

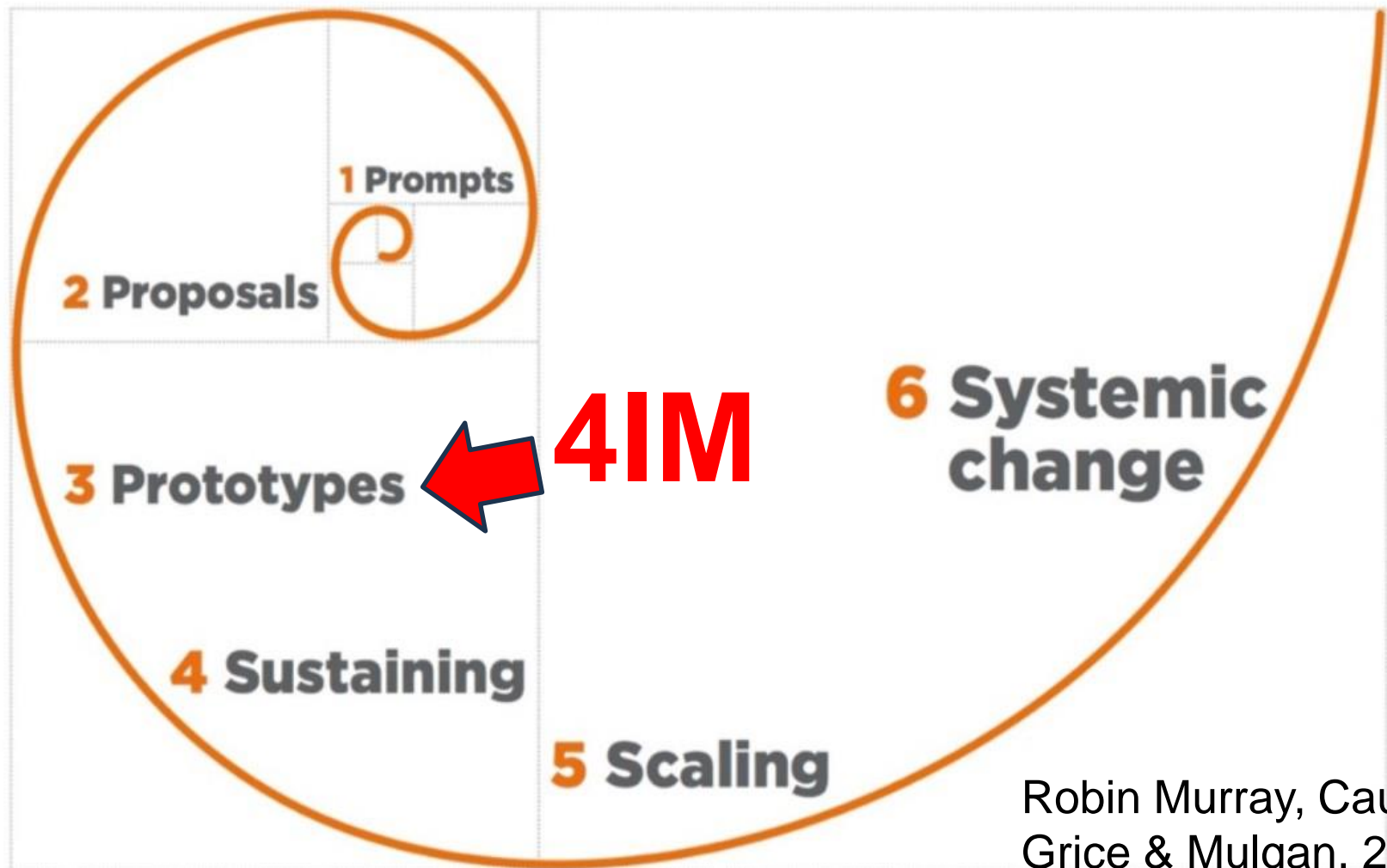


Characteristics of social innovation

- Done by government, business and/or civil society
- Multidimensional & cross-disciplinary
- Need partnerships
- Often implemented through social enterprises
- Benefit from transnationality
- Digital tools can be useful
- Can be politically contentious
- Stimulate impact investing

ESF+ Support for social innovation





ESFA support €197m 2021-27

- Grants: open calls to transfer/scale up SIs on:
 - effect of war in Ukraine €22m (deadline 30 May)
 - long-term unemployment €23m (deadline 30 September)
 - 2+ countries, 8% funding, lump sum
- Knowledge sharing: 4 communities of practice: SI / employment & skills / inclusión / results-based mgt
- Social Innovation Match database – 150 organisations & projects (self-uploaded then verified)
- ALMA – 29 youth internship projects
- EURoma
- 6 National Competence Centres + more on the way

Mainstream ESF+ funding

An R&D laboratory for new policies

Every MS must have:

- >1 priority for SI
- in >1 operational programme

Incentive: 95% funding



EaSI call for integrated interventions to support the most vulnerable (2020)

Common features of the 9 projects:

- Transnational public-NGO partnership
- Outreach – difficulty recruiting participants
- Codesign – working with clients and not for them
- Individual tailored coaching and case management
- Monitoring & evaluation → continuous learning

Going further

- Assemble evidence of effectiveness – evaluation
- Impact on practice: scale up/replicate – with possible ESF+ support
- Impact on policy through Joint Report of Social Protection Committee & Commission in 2025