Entrepreneurs and Innovators have NEEDs met at SHINE

Workshops, presentations and art installations were used to explore the ideas and practice of being an entrepreneur who is working to meets the NEEDs of their communities, colleagues and selves, in a more sustainable way.

The installations and presentations at SHINE Unconference were met with enthusiasm over the course of the three day event. The concept of Human Needs proved to be inspirational for consultants, entrepreneurs, and artists, as well as those involved in policy and civil society organisations. It proved useful for thinking of new sustainable ways to meet our needs, and inspiring fresh ways to market and communicate what social entrepreneurs are already doing.

Below are some details of what happened….

Art Installation

Independent artists, academics and an Haringey Art CIC co-created an immersive experience on the top floor of 'The Bargehouse'. Visitors were greeted by projected icons of objects that apparently satisfy our needs. Narratives and other images invited them into a story of what experiences we associate with the objects. Guidebooks were available for visitors to add their thoughts on whether the objects really meet needs, or whether they were actually associated with deprivation and poverty.

In a second room, visitors were first treated to a virtual feast of modern agriculture, and a piece representing the interconnected global ethical trade networks. The real opportunity to reflect was in the 'Library of Needs' where people posted their needs into the library for others to find. As they left visitors were asked to consider the question of which needs their project or business met, and which poverties they were going to make history!

Biz Fizz for aspiring entrepreneurs

Natalia from NEF and Celia from Biz Fizz presented the Biz Fizz model of support for entrepreneurs. This truly unique model draws on the connections and knowledge within the community to lend support to the entrepreneurs. The Biz Fizz facilitator is available to offer unlimited free support to the entrepreneurs, and the results for individuals and communities of this approach are truly impressive.

Belonging and Identity

Rick from IPPR presented his research into the trends in our indivudal and collective sense of belonging and identity. His fascinating presentation drew on information from IPPR's report, showing how our sense of who we are has been radically changing over the last few decades. Traditionally, the need for belonging and identity was met by the government or civil society, or more recently, through consumer allegiance to brands. Perhaps there is a role here for social entrepreneurs to play, in building our sense of shared identity and belonging? A thought to end on…

Designing with a purpose: How to 'hardwire' social sustainability

Amber and Luke from the Blekinge Institute of Technology, hosted a discussion on the buzzwords around social sustainability, and how it relates to individual businesses or projects. During the session, they also introduced a framework to help structure actions, decision-making and interactions between people within a community or organisation.
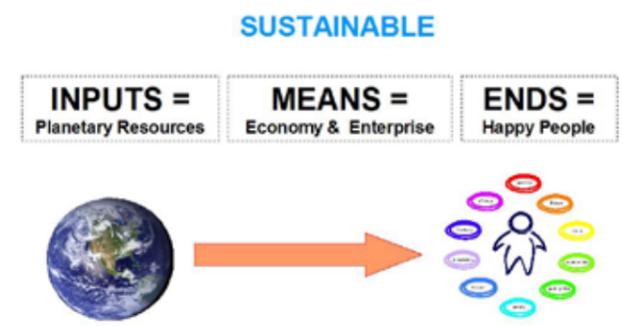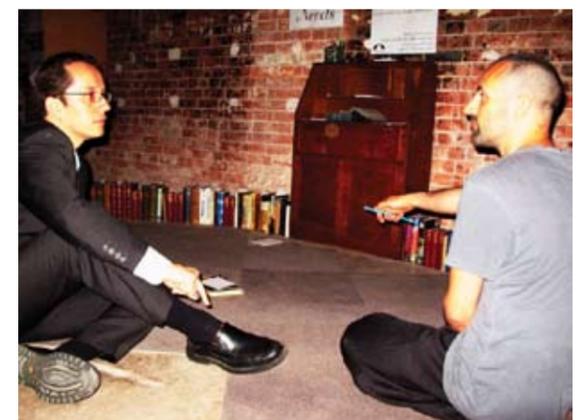
Transforming business for sustainable consumption

Anthony from WWF and Andrew from Arising shared their thinking on creative ways to design, market and sell products and services that are: equitable in production, distribution and use, respect ecological limits, and maximise well-being. Anthony demonstrated the range and depth of his knowledge of ecological, social and market trends, then suggested ways this information could be used to create more sustainable business models.

Hot and Bothered? How climate change and social unrest impact entrepreneurs

Luke Raftis and Amber Collins from the Blekinge Institute of Technology, Sweden facilitated a session highlighting the synergies between actions addressing social conflicts and environmental dilemmas. They explored how the roots of many social issues can be traced to environmental disputes (scarcities, etc) and how much of the environmental unrest has been caused through social practices.

To learn more about the concept of Fundamental Human Needs, the organisations and individuals that created this experience, and how it can increase innovation and impact in your organisation, visit www.wearearising.org

And, learn about what else happend at the event www.shineunconference.com

Thanks to all the organisations who helped make this happen: