



1 Introduction

This document focuses on the Bottom-up Business Opportunity (BUBO) method developed by the Knowledge Center Biobased Economy (KCBBE) of the Hanze University of Applied Sciences Groningen as part of the Interreg North Sea PERISCOPE program¹. In short, the PERISCOPE program includes the start of a permanent transnational intersectoral innovation platform for sustainable development within the North Sea regions. The program will answer the question what opportunities for new business in the North Sea region can be developed and deployed. The final result is a platform that provides innovations and instruments in the areas of finance, policy and Living Labs.

The Entrepreneurial Discovery Process (EDP) is an inclusive bottom-up process in which participants from different professional and social backgrounds are involved. It involves discovering new activities and opportunities based on interaction between participants, whereby policy makers evaluate and facilitate the outcomes of the process. The EDP strives to promote and integrate knowledge about entrepreneurship that is available at organizations, companies, universities, clients and users through partnerships. The EDP is also focused on identifying, exploring and starting up promising innovation domains².

The development of the BUBO method gives face to the EDP of the Periscope program and has been developed by Dr. Egbert Dommerholt³ and Drs. Derwin Schorren⁴ of the KCBBE of Hanze University of Applied Sciences Groningen, in close collaboration with spatial designer Wim Boetze⁵.

Although the BUBO method gives a face to the EDP work package of the PERISCOPE program, the method can also be used outside of this program in many different contexts and levels. And that is also the intention. The core of the method is "citizens at the helm" when it comes to devising and developing new economic activities. Who have a better understanding of and insight into the potential of the province, regions, cities or villages than the residents themselves. And who else but the residents have all kinds of images and ideas about these potentials. Would it not be great and rewarding for the authorities, the business community and the knowledge institutions to connect with the ideas and the passion of the residents for their own area, and to take this as the starting point for a new (economic) vision for that area. Who other than the citizens understand the value of their region and how they want to leave the region to their children. Shaping a desired future for generations to come is about values, passion and emotion which need to be heard and be taken into account.

¹ PERISCOPE is an abbreviation of Platform for Expanding Regional Innovation SCOPE for blue growth

² Source: <http://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/entrepreneurial-discovery-edp>. Freely translated by E. Dommerholt

³ Egbert Dommerholt is an expert in the field of New Business Models at the International Business School of the Hanze University of Applied Sciences Groningen.

⁴ In addition to project leader Periscope, Derwin Schorren is vice-chairman of the 'grassroot' NGO Groninger Bodem Beweging; an association that stands up for the interests of the residents in the earthquake areas of Groningen.

⁵ Wim Boetze (landscape designer and publicist) has been working as a spatial designer for more than thirty years with the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture and Nature. Nowadays he is active as a publicist and consultant in the field of landscape, design and culture. He writes books, such as 'Middag Humsterland' and 'Hoogte op Kleur', and articles for the magazine Noorderbreedte. He was also a lecturer at the Academies of Architecture in Amsterdam and Groningen. Wim is 'spiritual father' of the 'sketch workshop'. During sketch workshops he fulfills the function of atelier master, which means, among other things, that he monitors the results and adds his expertise to the sketch teams.



The BUBO method is seen as a journey in which new horizons are explored. The intention is to start a movement in which the quadruple helix partners (citizens, companies, governments and knowledge institutions) develop value propositions and explore new markets through all kinds of cross-pollination activities, creating networks, building new business models, exchanging ideas and furthermore link these networks transnationally to the other PERISCOPE partner regions.

With regard to the province of Groningen, the BUBO method is closely linked to the research and innovation strategy for smart specialization North Netherlands (RIS3), and its translation to the Northern Innovation Agenda (NIA). RIS3 and NIA focus on major social transitions with regard to the (circular) economy, renewable energy, healthcare, etc.

In order to coordinate and facilitate the outcomes of the EDP process, a Living Lab will be established. This is a physical and/or virtual place where research, education and professional practice work together on complex issues from professional practice or society. Living Labs will be of a transdisciplinary nature. In the collaboration with other disciplines participants learn to look beyond the boundaries of their own field and environment. Living Labs will bring about development and are a breeding ground for innovation products, services and start-ups⁶.

In the next section we will discuss the relationship between RIS3, the NIA and the EDP as part of the PERISCOPE program. Part 3 is dedicated to the BUBO method, while in part 4 attention is paid to the Innovation Workplace (IEL) Entrepreneurship in an Inclusive Economy. Finally, the project planning is included in section 6.

2. The connection between RIS3, NIA and EDP

The research and innovation strategy for smart specialization in the Northern Netherlands (RIS3) is a strategy aimed at (1) using research for (2) realizing innovation, while (3) stimulating entrepreneurship. The aim is to contribute to economic growth in the North Netherlands and at the same time contribute to (addressing) societal challenges. RIS3 focuses on four major societal challenges:

- Health, demography and well-being
- Food security, sustainable agriculture and bio-economy
- Clean and efficient forms of energy
- Clean and safe water

In addition to and tailored to RIS3, the Northern Innovation Agenda (NIA) has been developed. The NIA's starting point are societal challenges in the areas of nutrition, health, sustainable energy and water. The aim is to support and facilitate the social and economic development of the North Netherlands in a sustainable way and to recognize the crucial role of SMEs in the creation of prosperity, well-being and jobs. The more innovative, powerful and internationally oriented SMEs are, the better they are able to acquire new knowledge and transform business that use new (i.e. sustainable) business models.

⁶ Source: <https://www.hanze.nl/nld/onderzoek/kenniscentra/centrum-ondernemerschap/innovatiewerkplaatsen/innovatiewerkplaatsen/innovatiewerkplaats>. The original description speaks of multidisciplinary Living Labs. In the context of the EDP process, preference is given to a transdisciplinary Living Lab.



To realize these ambitions, a business environment is needed that connects businesses with the region and with other businesses in the region (and beyond). This requires building new networks of businesses and knowledge institutions and connecting and revitalizing existing networks to develop new products and explore new markets. This also requires a transnational attitude: connecting with partners in the North Netherlands and in the North Sea regions in so-called Living Labs.

Within the framework of the PERISCOPE program, the RIS3 and NIA are guiding, but not leading. It is throughout possible that, in addition to the RIS3 and NIA-related subjects, other societal challenges and visions can serve as a starting point for new economic activities based on the 'citizens on the helm' principle.

3. The Bottom-up Business Opportunity's (BUBO) method

As mentioned in the introduction, the purpose of the BUBO method is to give citizens a central role in the identification and development of economic opportunities. As such, the BUBO method is the realization of what is known in European jargon as the Entrepreneurial Discovery Process (EDP). The BUBO method consists of four parts

1. Letters from the future
2. Sketch atelier
3. New and updated Business models
4. Inclusive Economy Lab

Each of the components will now be explained. Because the BUBO method is rooted in Transition theory, attention will first be paid to this topic.

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The term transition is widely used in many scientific disciplines and refers to a non-linear shift from one dynamic equilibrium to another. It has been used regularly in disciplines such as demography (demographic transition), ecology (ecosystem transitions), psychology (development transitions), physics (phase transitions of substances) and spatial planning (changes in spatial use). The term sustainability transitions is increasingly being used to refer to large-scale social changes that are deemed necessary to solve 'major societal challenges'. (Loorbach, 2017)

When referring to transitions within the framework of the PERISCOPE EDP project, we will refer at least to some of the RIS3 and NIA-related challenges, but possibly also other region related transitions brought to bear by participants. This may involve the transition to a circular economy as well as the interplay between transitions.

Some of the RIS3 and NIA challenges can be called trends rather than transitions., but in the EDP process we want to focus specifically on transitions. As can be read in the above quote, transitions refer to a non-linear shift from one (system) equilibrium to another, which means that transitions require new solutions, approaches and business models instead of (marginally) adjusting existing ones.

In the transition arena, among other things, regimes that represent the status quo and niches that challenge the existing regime are discussed. The BUBO method challenges people to think differently



and to adopt a different mind-set that creates room for experimentation. In other words, experimenting and initiating experiments is crucial in transition thinking.

Phase 1: Letters from the future

Working with transitions requires participants to leave their comfort zone. We all suffer from a form of path dependency; thinking about and in terms of transitions implies that we are not only prepared, but also able to leave our comfort zone. In this phase, participants are challenged to tap into creative talents by learning to think out-of-the-box. It is crucial for the participants to get in the 'right' mood and state of mind in order to be able contribute optimally to the next phase.

The BUBO method takes a trans-disciplinary approach as the starting point. This means that social actors with all kinds of professional backgrounds and social positions (e.g. entrepreneurs, civil servants, students, housewives, teachers, scientists, vicars, etc.) are invited to participate in the project. We are convinced that interaction between people with (very) different backgrounds will benefit the quality of the EDP process, and thus the outcomes. When the term 'participants' is mentioned in this document, we refer to this broad spectrum of social actors.

Furthermore, we assume that residents of the province of Groningen are proud of their province, concerned about the future of their children and consequentially the future of the region where they live. We want to use the care that residents of the province of Groningen (in Dutch 'Groningers') feel and the pride they share for their province by asking them to dream the future of their children and the future of the province. What do these dreams look like? What visions do the 'Groningers' have of yet unexplored opportunities?

We want to challenge Groningers to portray their dreams, visions and ideas about the future and the chances of the province in the form of a letter, a video message, or in any other way, as long as the dream, vision or idea is clear for the future. light is brought

We want to ask 'Groningers' to position themselves in the year 2050 and ask them to write a letter on behalf of their (imaginary) children, grandchildren or neighbouring children. What do they see? What does the environment look like? How do people live and work in that era? What will they tell you? What are they proud of, how do they experience life in 2050? What are the most prominent (shared) values, and so on?

People will be challenged to do this by writing an article. For an example of such a letter [click here](#)

From the flow of letters /e-mails, 25 copies will be selected and the authors will be approached and asked if they are willing to participate in a few roundtable sessions.

It is our intention to offer the 'dream letters' to regional politicians. In that case we will also invite the authors of the letters for that event.

The BUBO method is value driven, that is to say that we assume that people participate in the EDP because they want to positively contribute to the (economic) development of the province of Groningen. This is crucial because participants work best with partners who share the same values. Breuer and Luedeke-Freund (2016) state that values are integrative, directive and generative. This means that values unite people, give direction to processes and generate viable ideas.

Phase 2: Round table meetings



The Design Studio Approach (DSA) is used for the round table meetings. This method was developed by Wim Boetze and was successfully used in several area development workshops. In order for this method to be successful, the group 'dream letters' authors will be divided into three groups, while the key input for these sessions are the participants' 'dream letters'

The purpose of this first phase of the BUBO method is to generate a Design Book with all the ideas that have been conceived by the three formed groups. These ideas can be cast in any (artistic) form. When the Design Book is ready, it will be presented to a broad audience of (potentially) interested stakeholders.

Phase 3: Business Models

The output of the previous phase (Design Book) will be the input for the second phase of the BUBO method: the phase of developing Business Models. The idea is that groups are formed around the different ideas presented in the Design Book. Here too, 'the citizen is at the helm'. This means that the development of a value proposition (= what are we going to offer and to whom) and the ultimate business model are the result of a transdisciplinary collaboration. Other key concepts that we want to introduce in this respect are 'shared responsibility' and 'shared ownership'. This means that the group that is going to develop a business model will work according to these principles. The ultimate goal is to start a venture that creates multiple values, i.e. social, ecological and economic value. Participants will be 'trained' in the 'what', 'why' and 'how' of new business models. In addition, the various projects will be guided by experienced supervisors.

The process is not pre-cooked, meaning that nothing is fixed beforehand and all options are still open. This applies to the working method, to who should be included in the course of the process of developing the business model, who will take on which responsibilities, the legal form of the venture, et cetera.

For the development of business models we will use the cloverleaf method as shown in the book 'New Business Models; Working together on the value creation' by Jonker et al. (2016). An snapshot of this model is included in Appendix 1.

In terms of the PERISCOPE program, phases 2 and 3 can be referred to as a 'Trend Jam'.

4 The Inclusive Economy Lab (IEL)

Social actors involved in developing and executing New Business models that will be formed during the EDP process must stay in touch to learn from each other, to share ideas, to solve shared problems and challenges together, to jointly take action and to gain new insights and to develop new ideas. To this end, the 'Inclusive Economy Lab' will be set up. This Lab which can be to function like a beehive (see appendix 2).

It would be awesome if other PERISCOPE partners are interested in taking the BUBO method on board. In that case a transnational dimension will be added to beehive community.

The Inclusive Economy Lab comprises a community of groups that will cooperate in developing new business models, but is also a community of professionals from different disciplines, who together



with lecturers / researchers and students, will exchange ideas on inclusive economy based business models

In effect, the Inclusive Economy Lab will be a new business model in itself. What exactly is offered and to whom, what is needed and who to involve? These are all questions that need to be answered along the route. It needs to be stressed that in case of the Inclusive Economy Lab the transdisciplinary perspective will be leading, as well as the principles of shared responsibility and ownership.

- The IEL can serve as a platform where entrepreneurs can share insights, new (business) opportunities and can get (academic) support for the further development of their sustainable/circular/inclusive business.
- The IEL offers the opportunity to exchange inclusive and circular economy related knowledge in the form of workshops, seminars or events. In the same vein, the IEL provides an environment for business(es) and researchers and other partners for doing research into circular and inclusive economy issues.
- The IEL will serve as a platform for circular and inclusive economy experimenting and prototyping.
- The IEL is a place for students to gain experience and to apply share knowledge and skills, especially in the field of new business models.
- The IEL is a Hanze UAS showcase concerning applied scientific research.

5 Planning

BUBO method:

Phase 1: end of April 2018

Phase 2: end of June 2018

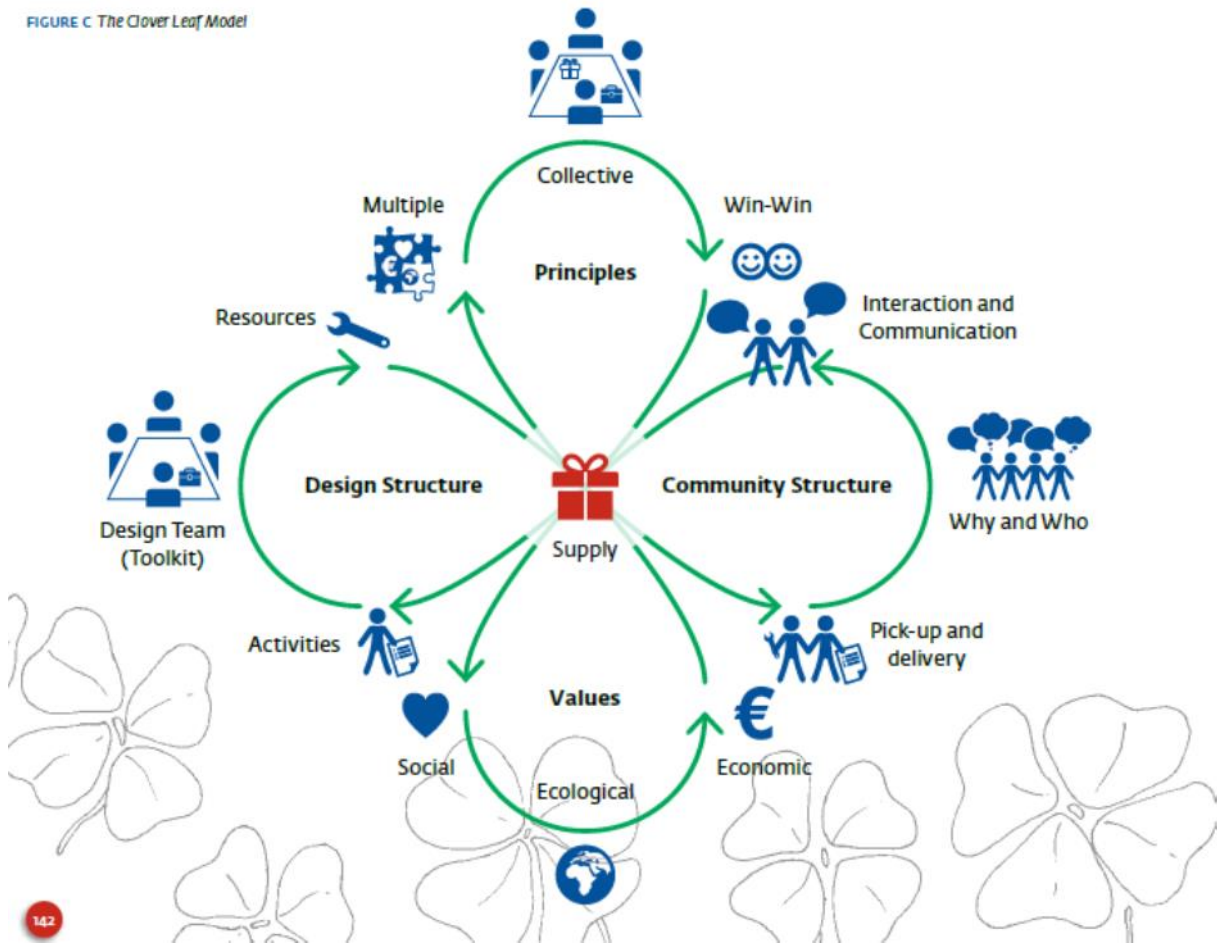
Phase 3: September/October 2018.

References:

- Breuer, H. en F. Luedeke-Freund (2016). Values-Based Innovation Management. Innovating by what we care about. Palgrave. London.
- Jonker, J. (2016). New Business Models. Working Together on Value Creation. Stichting OCF2.0 (Doetinchem, the Netherlands).
- Loorbach, D, N. Frantzeskaki, and F. Avelino (2017). Sustainability Transitions Research: Transforming Science and Practice for Societal Change. The Annual Review of Environment and Resources, 42, 4.1-4.28.

Appendix 1: The Clover leaf model

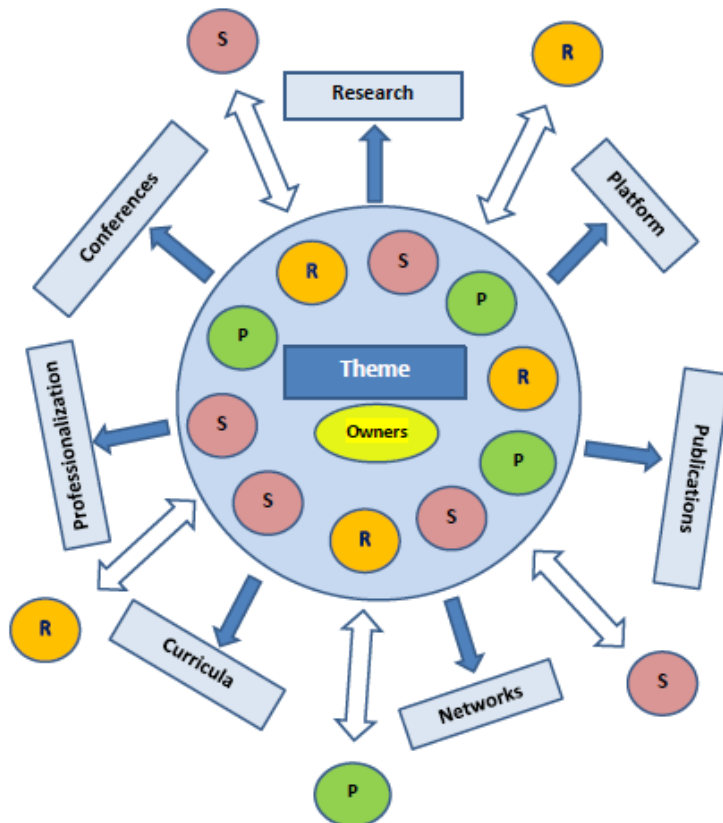
FIGURE C The Clover Leaf Model



Source: Jonker et al. (2016)

Appendix 2: The concept of the beehive as a metaphor for the Inclusive Economy Lab

The Inclusive Economy Lab is based on the beehive metaphor. The beehive symbolizes a transdisciplinary network community where skills, know-how, best practices are exchanged and new business models are developed taking the 'Inclusive Economy' as the starting point.



S= students
 R= researchers
 P= other partnes