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Reflections on Collaboration between Nonprofit organizations and Universities

The Junior Chamber International Seinäjoki and Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences

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Thesis abstract

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Collaboration between organizations is no strange option in strategic planning, even between an NPO and a university. In fact, there has been successful partnerships between a nonprofit organization and a university in many countries. This study aims to find a benchmark for setting up a partnership between a local NPO chapter and its local university of applied sciences. Through researching, a collaboration strategy and an initial plan is proposed for the local NPO and the university to implement, along side with the evaluation aspects to be considered. While it will not cover the whole progress of the collaboration, a theoretical strategy framework and a sample plan is created for both parties to implement. The study will include an empirical research in expectations and demands from the local young workforce and the NPO members as well as the university students towards the collaboration. This is to have an insight into the needs from perspectives of both sides, making sure the collaboration can reach the same mutual objectives.

¹ Keywords: collaboration, nonprofit organization, collaboration strategy, university

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Terms and Abbreviations

JCI	Junior Chamber International is a non-profit international non-governmental organization for young people between 18 and 40 years old. It has members in about 124 countries, and regional or national organizations in most of them.
SeAMK	Seinäjoen Ammattikorkeakoulu - Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences.
NPO	Nonprofit organization is a legal entity organized and operated for a collective, public, or social benefit, in contrary with an entity that operates as a business aiming to generate a profit for its owners.
NBC	Nonprofit-Business Collaboration. Partnership or collaboration between nonprofit organizations and for-profit business sectors.
AVOP	Feedback questionnaire for University of Applied Sciences graduates in Finland. AVOP feedback questionnaire asks graduating students to evaluate and provide feedback on their education. The findings are used locally by institutions to improve their institutional processes and practices and nationally to inform performance-based monitoring and funding.
Chapter	A local branch of a society.
Workshop	A usually brief intensive educational program for a relatively small group of people that focuses especially on techniques and skills in a particular field.
Kickstart	Make something start to happen or start to develop more quickly.
Quantitative method	Quantitative methods emphasize objective measurements and the statistical, mathematical, or numerical analysis of data collected through polls, questionnaires, and surveys, or by manipulating pre-existing statistical data using computational techniques.
Assertiveness	Confident and forceful behavior.

Autonomy	Freedom from external control or influence; independence.
Innovation	A new method, idea, product, etc.
Consortium	An association, typically of several business companies.

1 INTRODUCTION

Through collaborations or partnerships, two or more entities, organizations can achieve and exchange valuable intangible assets such as knowledge, connections. However, in order to reach those values, the accumulation of recurring interactions, engagement, deliver results, and how each party perceive trust between them are required (Marinez-Moyano, 2006).

Universities partnering with a nonprofit organization (“NPO”) can help the success of students, with constant support in coaching, supervising, and advising from both parties. In a recent study, various obstacles for college students have been addressed between a major university and four nonprofit organizations through interviews and thematic analysis, including financial management and networking, making new friends (Farruggia et al., 2020, pp. 1899-1900). The partnership showed opportunities for both parties to take steps in supporting transitioning college students to earn a degree.

The Junior Chamber International (“JCI”) Seinäjoki and Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences (“SeAMK”) are exploring opportunities for a collaboration. JCI is a non-profit international non-governmental organization of young people, JCI Seinäjoki is part of the international network (address themselves as “chapter”) and aims to promote self-development, creating and joining in training programs to acquire new working and life skills (JCI Seinäjoki, n.d.).

This thesis will help explore feasible options of collaboration based on the characteristics of a collaboration, basic modes of a collaboration between organizations. Thus, proposing a plan for the actions can be taken to benefit both parties when implementing the suitable mode of collaboration.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 The Junior Chamber International in Seinäjoki

The Junior Chamber International is a nonprofit worldwide organization, consisting of young members from 18 to 40, who are actively learning and sharing with an aim to bring positive impacts to societies (Junior Chamber International, n.d.-a). Founded in 1915 as Young Men's Progressive Association ("YMPCA") in St. Louis, The United States of America, JCI consisted of 32 men at the local Mission Inn (Junior Chamber International, n.d.-b). Across over 100 years of operations and developments, JCI has made numerous social impacts locally and globally, including partnership with the United Nations from 1954. Some considerable movements are Project Concern in 1965, helping disadvantaged people in Mexico, Hong Kong, Vietnam with dental and primary care; in 1971, a first female JCI national president were elected in Nepal, supporting the gender equality movement; in the 1990s, JCI globally committed to support children protection program by establishing partnership with UNICEF. In 2010, JCI officially adopted the JCI Active Citizen Framework in order to deliver and create sustainable solutions towards communities all over the world. By 2015, JCI international members have constantly brought positive impacts to their communities and about 467,540 individuals were empowered and influenced.



Picture 1. The Junior Chamber International logo (Junior Chamber International, n.d.-a).



JCI Active Citizen Framework

A Better World Begins Here

ANALYZE

Examine
Community
Needs

REVIEW | Monitor and Evaluate Results



DEVELOP | Formulate Sustainable Solutions

EXECUTE

Take Action

Figure 1. The JCI Active Citizen Framework (Junior Chamber International, n.d.-b).

As part of the JCI worldwide organization, the chapter in Seinäjoki promotes the development of working and life skills through training, seminars and programs (JCI Seinäjoki, n.d.-a). These programs' aim is to improve the performance of their members as well as the community's occupations and businesses. Founded in 1963, the local chapter in Seinäjoki is currently operating with around 30 members including the board members (J. Mattila, personal communication, April 2, 2021). JCI Seinäjoki is actively involved in various networking activities, including with the members' family, bringing the local society closely together.



Figure 2. The JCI Seinäjoki Strategy in 2023 – 2026 period (JCI Seinäjoki, n.d.-b).

2.2 Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences

Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences (SeAMK) is an institution of higher education in West Finland. In 1992, various institutes in the South Ostrobothnia region, Finland, one of which even had a history of more than 100 years, decided to merge and establish as one single entity, SeAMK was founded (SeAMK, n.d.-a). Currently, the university offers a wide range of education fields, and has about 5,000 students, including 10% are studying an international degree. SeAMK is not only offering international study programme, but also expanding the network globally, with 200 partner universities in over 50 countries, across five continents, as well as double degree programs in 8 countries. With Vision 2030, SeAMK strives to become the best university for students. As in 2022, SeAMK has consecutively been ranked as the best university of applied sciences in Finland three times in a row, from 2020 (SeAMK, 2023-b). The national feedback survey of the universities of applied sciences (AVOP) provided the result based on answers from students in the graduation phase, in bachelor's and master's degrees.

SeAMK

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Picture 2. Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences logo (SeAMK, n.d.-a)



Picture 3. SeAMK Frami Campus in the summer (Internal data source, 4 June 2021).

2.3 Theoretical framework

Before reaching the final steps of proposing a collaboration plan for JCI Seinäjoki and SeAMK, it is important to understand the key concepts surrounding collaboration between organizations, specifically between an NPO and a university, and putting them in a logical framework. The internal aspects consist of characteristics of collaboration between organizations, the basic modes of collaboration, and a framework strategy for it. In addition, the external influencing factors towards the efficiency of the collaboration are also taken into account. Combining these aspects, activities to establish the collaboration will be delivered, in this case, an additional source is reviewed to understand the efficiency of training workshop as a

teaching method, as JCI Seinäjoki is an NPO promoting this form of education and training for their community. The theoretical framework can be visualized as the figure below.

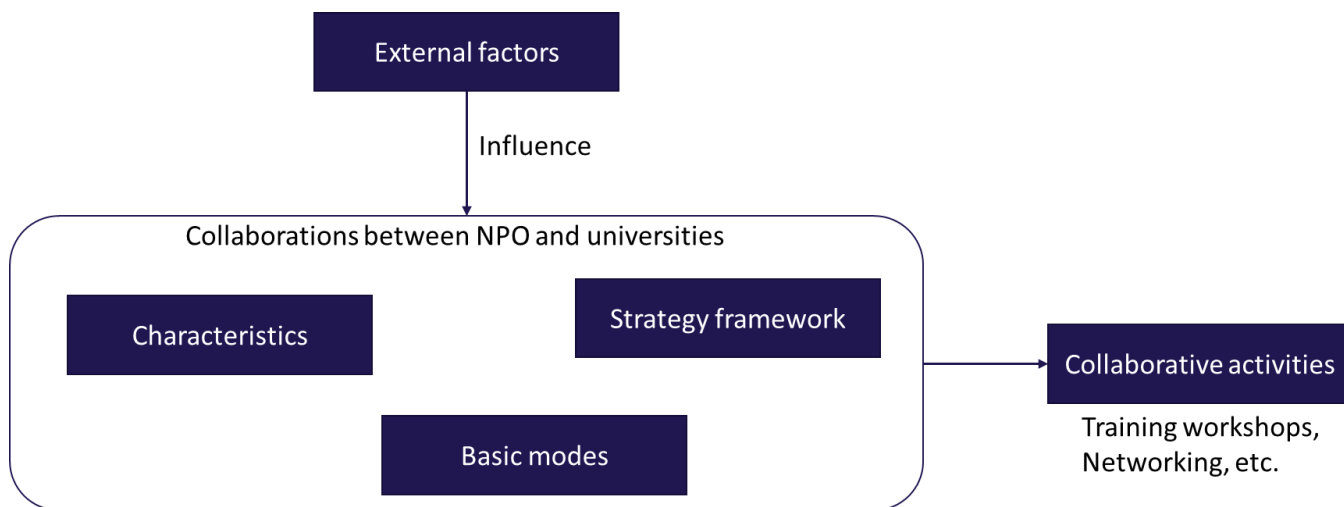


Figure 3. The theoretical framework for reflections on NPOs and universities collaborations.

A collaboration strategy plan will be developed based on the findings above. The study then proposes an initial event plan for the kickstart training workshop hosted by JCI Seinäjoki and SeAMK, marking the start of collaboration process between them.

2.4 Empirical research

To understand the expectations from local young professionals and JCI Seinäjoki members as well as SeAMK students, two survey are delivered to the designated research targets, with the key research questions are:

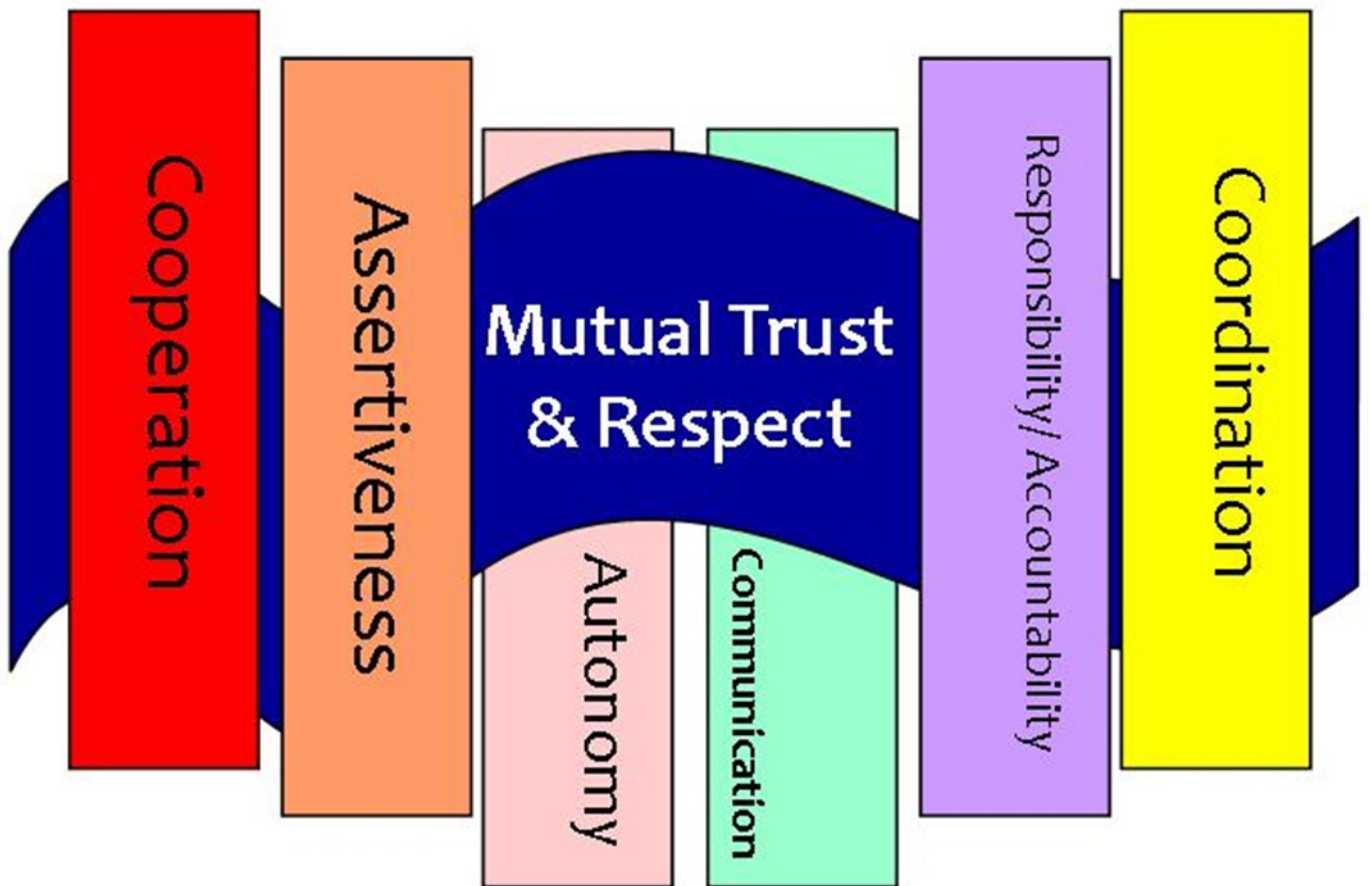
- What are the important skills in working?
- What skills would you want to be trained more while still in university?
- What kind of topic you want to learn in a training workshop?

By collecting answers for these questions, the quantitative method is implemented, and the analysis uses descriptive method based on the statistics. The results will deliver the demands and expectations for JCI Seinäjoki and SeAMK to choose a suitable topic for the workshops and taking suggestions to create more collaborative activities.

3 COLLABORATION BETWEEN UNIVERSITY AND NPO – LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 The characteristics of collaboration between organizations

According to Marinez-Moyano (2006, p.83), collaboration requires two or more people or entities, organizations to work together in order to achieve a common goal. He concluded in his study that it consists of constant recurring interaction between parties with shared knowledge, engagement, result-oriented view and how each of them perceives trusts. The essential characteristics of collaboration are not too different regarding interorganizational settings or between individuals. Way et al. (2000) suggests the notable elements are: cooperation, assertiveness, autonomy, responsibility, communication, coordination and mutual trust and respect. In general, collaboration or partnership revolves around human connections. Cooperation and assertiveness refer to one's ability to listen, actively seek support, as well as willing to offer support and engagement. Autonomy and responsibility are the decision-making aspects, determine how each party is able to solely make decisions and take action with care, and take account for them. Coordination and communication are to ensure the performance between parties is effective and efficient. They have to make sure all means of communication, i.e., written and/or verbal, are transparent and positive, while addressing their role precisely. All the above elements are connected by mutual trust and respect. Norsen (1995) emphasizes that cooperation cannot exist, intimidation rises within assertiveness, responsibility is avoided, communication is hindered, autonomy is suppressed and co-operation is haphazard when there is no trust and respect. It means that all elements have to be taken into consideration when starting a partnership or collaboration between organizations.



Picture 4. The mutual trust and respect element flows through and connect all other elements together to form the essential elements for collaboration (Queens University, n.d.).

3.2 Basic modes of collaboration

Given the dynamics of collaboration, how to choose the way of collaboration is another issue, especially between organizations. A simple framework can be displayed to categorize the modes of collaboration based on two questions: “how open or closed should the network of collaborators be?” and who take the leadership role, “who decide which problems to tackle, and which solutions to adopt?” (Pisano & Verganti, 2008). Addressing the answers, there are four basic modes of collaboration (op. cit., 2008). In a closed network with hierarchical governance, which full control of recognizing the issues, and choosing the solutions belongs to one side, the “elite circle” is formed. In this case, the example is an Italian company invited outside experts to solve their allocated problems. While an open network, but still with hierarchical governance spans the “innovation mall”, in which problems are recognized and solutions are proposed by anyone, but the decision-maker role still belongs to one party. When

the network is open, and the control is decentralized, the mode is called “innovation community”, anyone can address problems, giving solutions, and decide which one to apply. Finally, a “consortium” is formed when the network is closed, and everyone has equal control in the work of selecting and resolving problems.

<p>Innovation Mall</p> <p>A place where a company can post a problem, anyone can propose solutions, and the company chooses the solutions it likes best</p> <p><i>Example: InnoCentive.com website, where companies can post scientific problems</i></p>	<p>Innovation Community</p> <p>A network where anybody can propose problems, offer solutions, and decide which solutions to use</p> <p><i>Example: Linux open-source software community</i></p>	PARTICIPATION Open Closed
<p>Elite Circle</p> <p>A select group of participants chosen by a company that also defines the problem and picks the solutions</p> <p><i>Example: Alessi's handpicked group of 200-plus design experts, who develop new concepts for home products</i></p>	<p>Consortium</p> <p>A private group of participants that jointly select problems, decide how to conduct work, and choose solutions</p> <p><i>Example: IBM's partnerships with select companies to jointly develop semiconductor technologies</i></p>	
GOVERNANCE		
Hierarchical	Flat	

Picture 5. The four ways to collaborate create by Pisano and Verganti (2008).

Pisano and Verganti (2008) conclude that while there is no mode that outweighs the other, each organization has to take into account its own capability, strategy, assets and structure to the decision-making process. As stated in their findings, IBM successfully built an innovation community with Linux open-source community to constantly keep ahead of their operating systems, and at the same time leveraging their technology development by creating several consortia with semiconductor companies (op. cit., 2008). It is a display of combining the different modes of collaboration based on understanding one’s capability. This means that even when collaborator takes form of an educational institution, it is necessary to consider all of its capability, vision, strategy, and assets.

3.3 Framework strategy for NPOs to collaborate with other business sectors

Before starting to build a conceptual framework for a cross-sector collaboration between a nonprofit organization and business sectors, it is crucial to define the attributes (Al-tabbaa et

al., 2014). First, the nature of the collaboration should be an organizational combination of both nonprofit and other business sectors. Then, values have to be delivered from both parties in the partnership. Last but not least, the collaboration has to have a common goal or objective, which generally considered to be a positive social change (Bies et al., 2007). Al-tabbaa et al. (2014) concluded that this form of collaboration is defined as a discretionary agreement between an NPO and another form of business or institution, with an aim to deal with certain social or environmental problems and bring specific benefits for both partners.

The strategy framework is typically built around three elements: context, content, and process (Pettigrew, 1987). According to Al-tabbaa et al. (2014), Pettigrew (1987) emphasized that strategic change can be reached if these elements are engaged and work around at the same time, while Ketchen et al. (1996) pointed out that content, and process element can help predict an organization’s performance. The strategy framework then can be displayed as the figure below, with outer factors influencing the three core strategy elements.

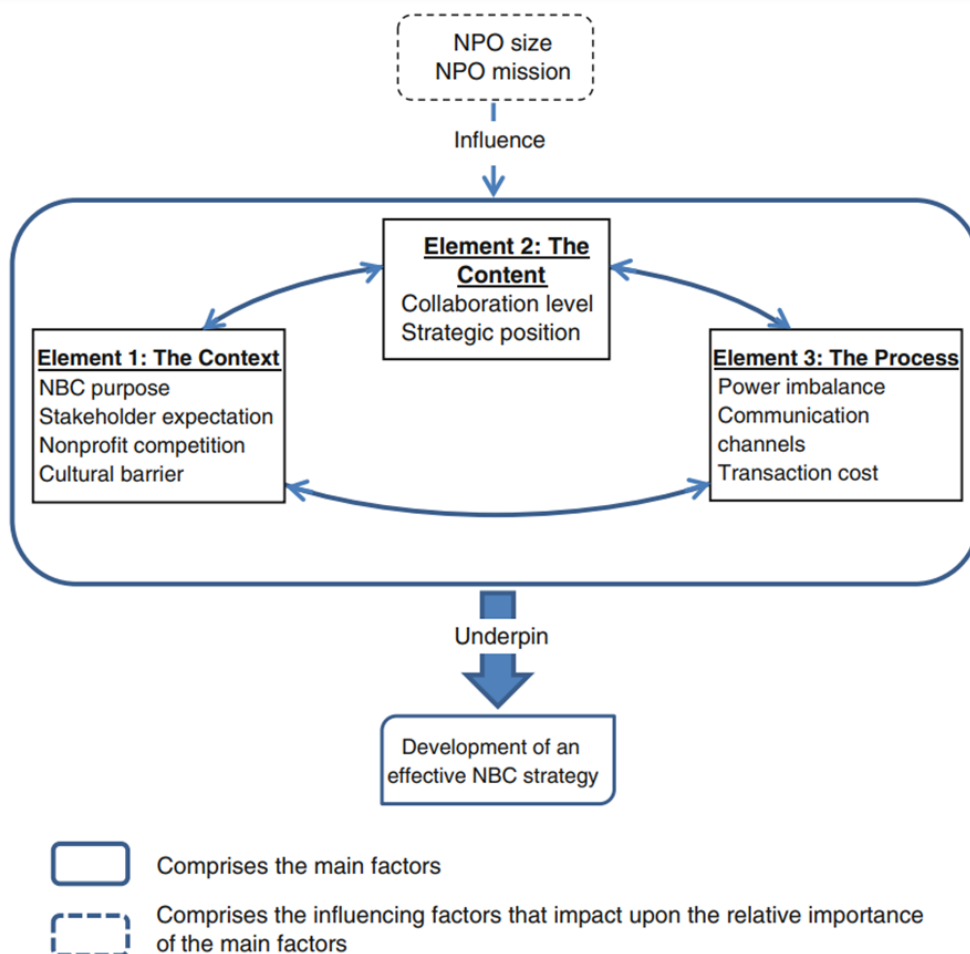


Figure 4. Framework for development of Nonprofit-Business Collaboration (“NBC”) strategy from the NPO perspective (Al-tabbaa et al., 2014).

It is possible for JCI Seinäjoki to adopt this framework when working on the collaboration plan with SeAMK. Starting from evaluating its size and mission, then going through three core elements of the strategy by addressing the main factors allocated for each element as shown in the figure.

3.4 Factors influence collaborations between universities and NPOs

To address factors that influence university and NPOs partnership, Jozefowicz (2015) sets up a qualitative assessment by interviewing seven NPO leaders currently in collaboration with universities. The leaders shared similarities in experience, educational level, geographical location, while also differentiated in their organizational purpose, vision, mission. This is to create a more comprehensive perspective from the NPOs' point of view. Alongside barriers that have been established including conflicts of interest, conflicting values, mistrust, the study shows that all seven of the participants shared a same recognition with the dominant role of university partners (op. cit.). While partnership brings mutual benefits and values, universities tend to join in a collaboration with NPOs if it brings educational values to their students. This could in turn bring negative effects if NPOs realize their university partners only take advantage of them for research purposes. In addition, NPOs are also engaged if their programs can bring direct benefit to the communities surrounding the universities, especially support student recruitment and retention. Despite the valuable gains from partnerships, interpersonal factors such as trust, communication, shared vision, equal power can affect the efforts. Differences in vision, and perception of trust can break the collaboration. This shows that to maintain a partnership, interpersonal factors are to be considered with care and nurtured where it counts.

3.5 Workshop as a training and teaching method

By definition, workshop is a form of intensive educational program focusing on certain techniques and skills in a particular field for a relatively small group of people (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). It provides a way to a deep and comprehensive learning experience in a short amount of time (Community Tool Box, n.d.). Thus, it is suitable for participants who cannot afford to commit a larger amount of time. Due to the relatively small scale of a workshop, while it introduces new concept and knowledge to participants, they have the opportunities to going through the trials and errors process in learning certain skills, receiving peer reviews and also

speaker reviews. For people working together, this is a great way to introduce a form of community or common objective among the participants (op. cit.). Thus, a NPO focus on sharing knowledge and organizing training workshop like JCI Seinäjoki (JCI Seinäjoki, n.d.), this can be a suitable way to start a collaboration with another organization or institution, which is SeAMK in this particular project.

4 COLLABORATION STRATEGY FOR JCI SEINÄJOKI AND SEAMK

Before building a proposal collaboration plan for JCI Seinäjoki and SeAMK, it is necessary to start from building the collaboration strategy. By utilizing the framework constructed by Al-tabbaa et al. (2014), Figure 4 above, we can start laying the base for the plan.

4.1 JCI Seinäjoki size and mission

While being part of a massive global organization with more than 11 million legacy members (JCI, n.d.), JCI Seinäjoki is a local chapter with fairly moderate size with around 30 members, the information of the members is not disclosed on the website, but it was retrieved from initial meeting with the representative from the organization (J. Mattila, personal communication, April 2, 2021).

Al-tabbaa et al. (2014, p. 669) believed the size of an NPO would be crucial as it directly related to such issues as organizational structure, how well the organization is known to local public and wider, as well as the accessibility to its own resources. They also concluded that larger organizations tend to have more public attention; Thus, they have to be more careful with their operations, while representing the society they are in. In addition to this, the size of an NPO might greatly contribute to its objectives (op. cit., p. 670). Bigger NPOs might focus on developing organizational capacity, while smaller NPOs want to captivate financial resources.

Although the chapter in Seinäjoki might not seem big with around 30 members, it is still part of a global organization with high publicity. In fact, it can be seen that the social visibility of JCI Seinäjoki is at a fairly high level, with its Facebook Page having about 503 likes and 565 followers (Seinäjoen Seudun Nuorkauppakamari ry, n.d.), comparing to another local NPO called Seinäjoki Entrepreneurship Society ("SeiES"), an association helps developing local entrepreneurs (Seinäjoki Entrepreneurship Society - SeiES, n.d.), which has about 516 likes and 550 followers, and another JCI chapter in Helsinki, the capital of Finland, which has about nearly 800 likes and 911 followers (Helsingin Nuorkauppakamari, n.d.). This mean that the organization can aim to have strategic benefit in marketing as well as growing in capacity through partnership with a university like SeAMK.

Considering the mission of an NPO, it is important in defining what the organization can bring to stakeholders and society (Al-tabbaa et al., 2014, p. 670). Regarding its contribution to the collaboration strategy, NPO's mission can affect how stakeholders perceive the organization and putting trust (The Context), how the collaboration level would be (The Content), and influence the collaboration process (The Process), especially when partners separately putting collaboration mission distinctively with their own organization's mission, disrupting the process (Al-tabbaa et al., 2014, pp. 670–671). With JCI global mission is “to provide development opportunities that empower young people to create positive change” (JCI, n.d.-b), the chapter in Seinäjoki is not far from that, promoting development, networking and connection within their organization and their community of young professionals (JCI Seinäjoki, n.d.-b). The mission is social-centric, thus being easier to engaged than ecology-centric (Al-tabbaa et al., 2014, p. 670).

4.2 The Context

4.2.1 Purpose

Defining a clear goal and purpose for the collaboration can lead to a successful strategy (Al-tabbaa et al., 2014, p. 662). For this particular project, while the purpose can also be found through what the members of JCI Seinäjoki expect, which might be unveiled in a survey for them in the later part, it is possible to pin a proposal goal as: establishing a higher awareness for SeAMK students and community of the organization, its activities and capabilities.

4.2.2 Stakeholder expectations

It is crucial to handle the complex nature of expectations from stakeholders (Al-tabbaa et al., 2014, pp. 662–663). In this case, expectations from SeAMK may be derived from the students and the staff, which might be able to be retrieved through a structured questionnaire similar to the one for JCI local members. The results will be the orientation of how the organization should manage the demand from SeAMK.

4.2.3 Nonprofit competition

As there are other active NPOs in Seinäjoki, i.e. SeiES, JCI Seinäjoki has to manage the value they deliver for SeAMK to make sure it stands out. Such features can be resources that only their members held, like intellectual resources, knowledge, experience in a particular field.

4.2.4 Cultural barrier

Al-tabbaa et al. (2014, p. 664) suggested that NPOs consider the potential risk of cultural differences would develop a more acceptable strategy. SeAMK has about 5,000 students, consisting of 10% who are studying international degrees, which is about 500 (SeAMK, n.d.-a), so the cultural barrier might be an issue. Both parties need to address the differences to make sure the content and approach and appropriate.

4.3 The Content

4.3.1 Collaboration level

To choose a suitable collaboration level, it is necessary to comprehend the resources, commitment and risks potential involved (Al-tabbaa et al., 2014, p. 665). Considering this is the first collaboration opportunity, it can be safe to follow the “Transactional” level, where SeAMK will provide JCI Seinäjoki with certain necessary resources, in exchange for knowledge sharing sessions from JCI members and their connections. If the partnership goes well, both parties can consider working on “integrative” level, with common goals and activities. Starting from the lowest level “Philanthropic” should not be an option as there is little to no considerable value spawned from this, as it only requires minimal resource exchange (Al-tabbaa et al. 2014, p. 664).

4.3.2 Strategic position

Strategic position related directly to how an organization is recognized and stood out in the competition (Kotler & Andreasen, 1996). In this case, it is necessary for JCI Seinäjoki to showcase their competitive edge while building the strategy, publicizing their capabilities and

knowledge. NPOs that comprehend and able to commercialize their capabilities will be more attractive to partners (Al-tabbaa et al., 2014, p. 666).

4.4 The Process

4.4.1 Power imbalance

Emerson (1976, p. 354) defined the term “power” in particular situations as ability to influence decision-making of others. JCI Seinäjoki and SeAMK need to consider their position to avoid creating imbalance, where one party perceived another to be at a lower level. The potential of power imbalance can also span from low collaboration level (Al-tabbaa et al., 2014, p. 667), this might be avoided as the recommended level is “transactional” or “integrative”, in which both sides required to be involved actively and exchanging resources to achieve mutual benefits.

4.4.2 Communication channels

Al-tabbaa et al. (2014, pp. 667–668) suggested that NPOs should deploy real-time and two-way (inbound and outbound) communication channels to improve the performance of the collaboration. JCI Seinäjoki can adapt the suggestion with clear direct communication virtually and directly. The content of the communication is no limit to any risk or potential, i.e. cultural barriers aspect, expectations.

4.4.3 Transaction cost

Macher and Richman (2018) divided transaction cost into three main sources regarding collaboration between organizations:

- Cost of finding partners
- Cost of negotiating agreements
- Cost of monitoring and implement compliance with the agreement

While JCI Seinäjoki having connection with SeAMK as some of the members are alumnus, so the cost of finding partners has been diminished, the other two costs should be regarded

as an investment in order to create a more successful strategy (Al-tabbaa et al., 2014, p. 669). It is not an easy task as an NPO like JCI might have sources of funding and need to manage their financial situation carefully. Both parties might consider minimizing the cost as controlling administrative costs, but in turn it may bring down the quality of the collaboration.

4.5 Collaboration mode

According to the framework laid by Pisano and Verganti (2018), JCI Seinäjoki and SeAMK can consider the two main questions to choose a suitable mode of collaboration: “how open or closed should the network of collaborators be?” and “who decide which problems to tackle, and which solutions to adopt?”.

Considering the two parties engage in knowledge and resources exchange, the participation aspect can actually be either closed or open, depending on the goal of the collaboration. If the goal is to develop the publicity of both parties, it is recommended to choose an open participation approach. If the goal is to solve particular internal issues, the approach should be kept closed.

With a high collaboration level, and managing a proper and balanced power position, JCI Seinäjoki and SeAMK are likely to engage in a flat hierarchy. This means that both “innovation community” and “consortium” modes may be applied in the collaboration.

Regarding innovation community mode, in which anyone one in the collaborators can address problems, propose solutions and implement them (Pisano & Verganti, 2018), JCI Seinäjoki and SeAMK can consider set up workshop to help training the students, provide job fair booth to offer internship opportunities, the participants can be outside of either party, as this is an open mode. These particular activities will greatly help the students graduate and improve their readiness to work.

To utilize consortium mode, both parties need to work closely together with certain privacy, as this is a closed mode (Pisano & Verganti, 2018). The issues might be addressed by either side in the collaboration, for example, SeAMK can propose an innovation idea and work with JCI Seinäjoki, or regarding training workshops, JCI Seinäjoki can bring exclusive contents for SeAMK students.

4.6 Factors to consider when in collaboration

When engaging in the collaboration, it is crucial to maintain trust, communication and equal power and other interpersonal factors between JCI Seinäjoki and SeAMK. Those factors can greatly influence the outcome of the partnership (Jozefowicz, 2015), and they also contribute to the success of the strategy, where power imbalance, communication channels and shared mission and vision will improve the outcome.

4.7 Example cases

One highly successful case of collaboration between a university and an NPO is the partnership between Harvard University and Partners In Health (“PIH”).

Partners In Health is an international health organization dedicated to providing quality healthcare to those in needs in a resource-limited settings, fighting against injustice that leads to the lack of primary medical care of the patients in those backgrounds (Partners In Health, n.d.-a). The organization was co-founded by Dr. Paul Farmer, who is also a professor at Harvard Medical School, alongside Dr. Jim Yong Kim and Ophelia Dahl in the 1980s (Partners In Health, n.d.-b), the movement then forever changed global healthcare toward treating impoverished people.

Harvard Medical School, the graduate medical school of Harvard University, one of the world's leading academic institutions, partnered with Partners In Health to create the Program in Global Health and Social Medicine (Harvard Medical School - Program in Global Health and Social Medicine, n.d.). This collaboration brought together the experts from Harvard Medical School and the field experience of PIH practitioners to tackle complex global health challenges, especially treating impoverished people. The Program serves as a hub for research, education, and advocacy in global health and social medicine not only for students but also clinicians and policymakers. It aims to train future leaders in global health, advance research and knowledge in the field, and promote policies that improve health equity worldwide.

This partnership between Harvard and Partners In Health has yielded significant achievements. Together, they have conducted groundbreaking research, developed innovative healthcare delivery models, and influenced global health policy (Farmer et al., 2013). They

have also trained numerous healthcare professionals who have gone on to make substantial contributions in the field of global health. One notable example of their collaborative work is the implementation of comprehensive healthcare programs in resource-limited settings, such as Haiti and Rwanda. By combining academic expertise with on-the-ground experience, Harvard Medical School and Partners In Health have demonstrated how effective healthcare interventions can be developed and scaled up in challenging environments.

Another example taken directly from a member organization of JCI in Tobago in February 2019, with a similar concept of bringing knowledge sharing workshops to business partners (JCI, n.d.-c). The project's aim was to raise awareness for Small and Medium Enterprises ("SME") in Tobago of their supply chain management process, creating competitive edges for them in their Business-to-Business markets. By hosting a training workshop for over 60 attendees, all of which are entrepreneurs, JCI in Tobago brought valuable knowledge to them and their business development. The attendees had an opportunity to learn deeper around the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Property Act of 2015 from the Government, prepare themselves for competitions in the markets. In addition to this, they also acquired knowledge delivered from JCI in different business operation aspects such as managing finances, branding, marketing with limited resources, implementation of technology, and how to effectively respond to a Request For Proposal. The project was recommended to continue to further support small businesses in different aspects as well as accelerating development for SME in Tobago.

5 PROPOSAL COLLABORATION PLAN

After constructing a collaboration strategy framework, there needs to be a kickstart event to initiate the partnership. With similar educational nature of organizations, it is recommended to bring a series of training workshops to SeAMK students, with each one has about 20–30 participants at most. To set up a successful event, planning ahead is crucial. Slater (2012) developed a guide to help manage it efficiently. Before setting up a detailed plan, two surveys were conducted to understand the expectations and the demands from young professionals, JCI Seinäjoki members, and from the SeAMK students. These surveys are analyzed under a descriptive research method, in which a summary regarding statistics of the data collected will be delivered (Greasley, 2007, p. 7).

5.1 Survey for young professionals and JCI Seinäjoki members

The survey for local young professionals in Seinäjoki and JCI Seinäjoki members is conducted to research the main questions:

1. What kind of knowledge/skill(s) do you think are important for young professionals?
2. When in college, what kind of knowledge/skill(s) would you want to learn more but have limited opportunities?
3. If your organization is to host a workshop for training skills, what topic/skill will it focus on?

The total number of respondents is 19, with all of them are young working class from 19 – 40 currently in Seinäjoki, a couple of which are also SeAMK Alumni and JCI Seinäjoki members. All these main questions are structured with multiple choices (see appendix 1), and with these categorical data, the frequencies for the preferable topic will be determined (Greasley, 2007, p. 8). Before analyzing data for the main questions, it is also important to have a view into backgrounds of the demographic of the respondents. There are two questions in the survey to research how many of the respondents are JCI Seinäjoki members, how many years they have been and whether they are also members of other nonprofit organizations. This is to understand the perspective of the respondents as they are JCI Seinäjoki members, other NPOs members, or just local young professionals. From the figure below, the results are 12 non-JCI Seinäjoki members, the rest are members. In the rest seven JCI Seinäjoki members, three of them have been in the organizations for more than two years, with one being there

more than five years, one within 3 – 5 years and one between 2 – 3 years, and the remaining four members have been there for one year or less.

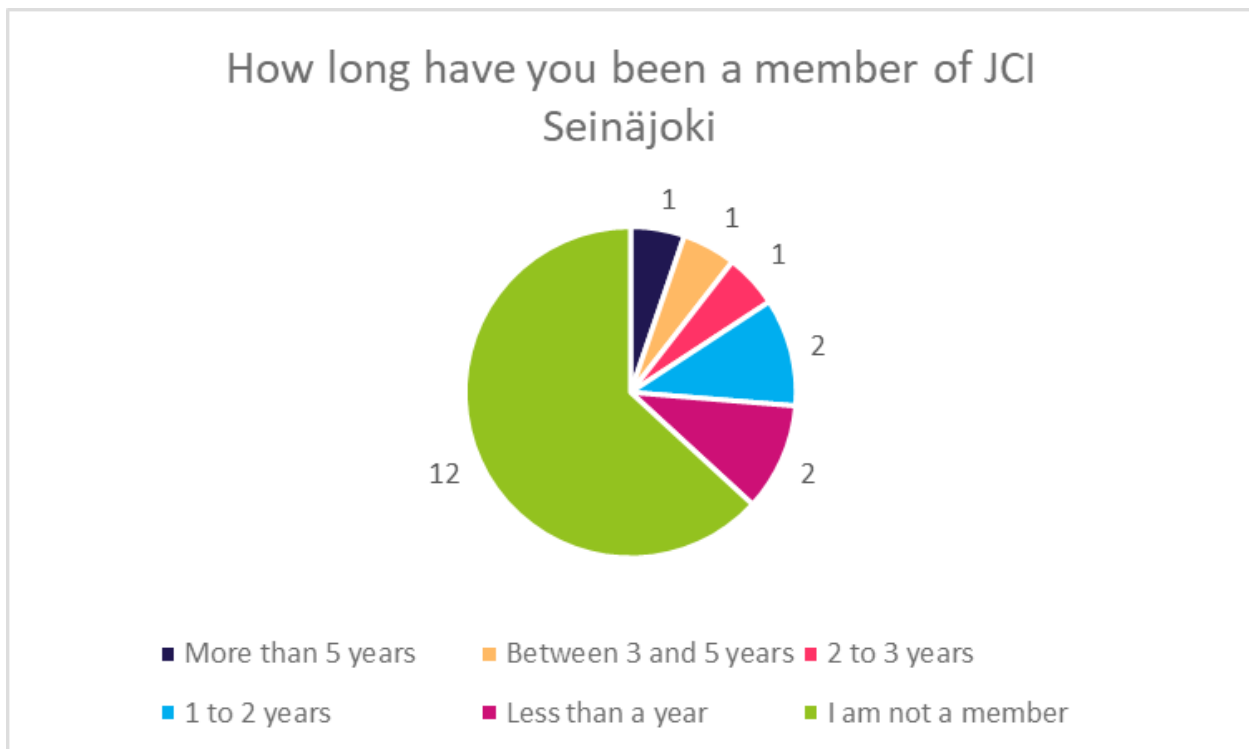


Figure 5. Chart showing how many young professionals are JCI Seinäjoki members and how many years they have been there.

Even though more than half of the respondents are not a JCI Seinäjoki member, there is still a question to indicate if they belong to another similar organization or organization for young professionals. The figure below shows there are four members of SeiES, Seinäjoki Entrepreneurship Society, a local association focusing on developing entrepreneurs as mentioned before. There are also three respondents from AIESEC, another global NPO famous for nurturing future leaders. As seven respondents answer that they are from another university alumni, it can be suggested that they are working locally in Seinäjoki but having completed their study elsewhere. There are also four out of five respondents choosing the “Other” option stated that they are not currently in organizations other than their workplace. When using cross-tabulation method, in the 12 non-JCI Seinäjoki members, there are one from AIESEC, one from SeiES and one belongs to SeAMK Alumni.



Figure 6. Chart showing how many respondents are a member of another organization for young professionals.

From the initial two questions, only four respondents are not currently belonging to any organization for young professionals, the rest 79% of the respondents can possess a view from this kind of organization.

Based on the analysis of the demographics, it is reliable and has high validity for the follow-up opinions, which are put into three main questions: what kind of skills/knowledge are viewed as important, which kind of skills/knowledge are wanted to be train more in college, and which kind of skills/knowledge would be suitable to be a workshop topic.

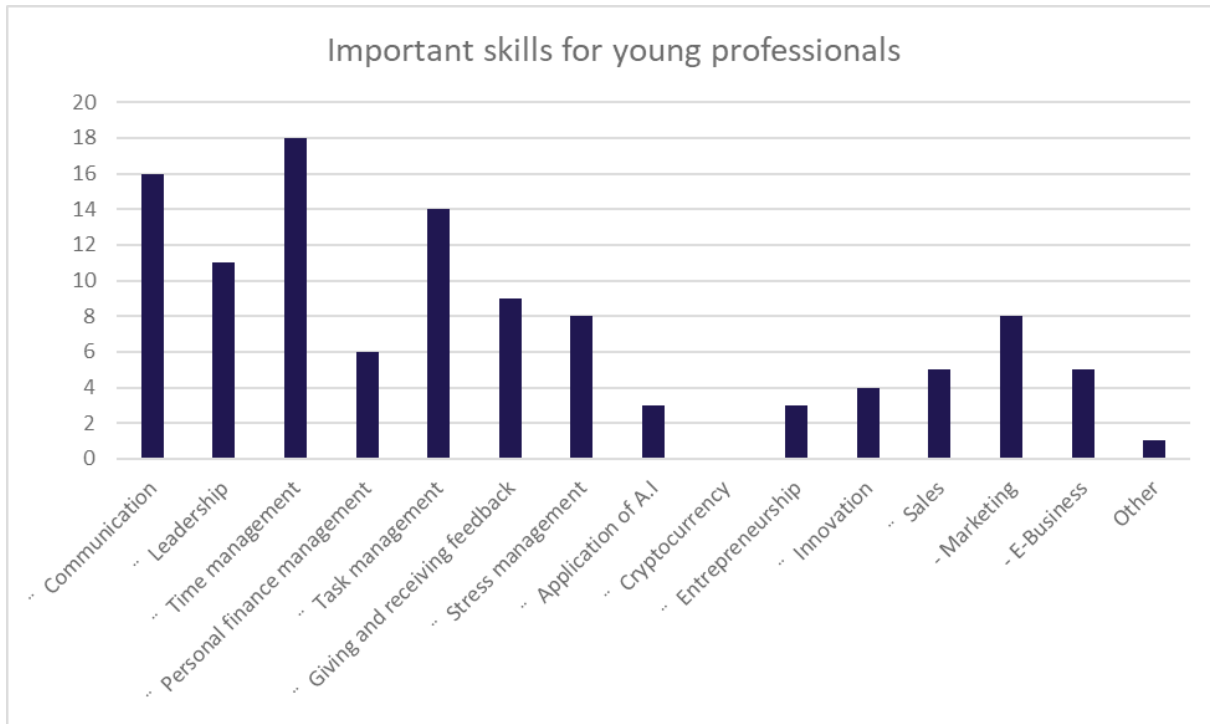


Figure 7. Chart showing important skills/knowledge for young workers.

The top three most voted skills are Time management, 18 votes, Communication, 16 votes, Task management, 14 votes, and Leadership with 11 votes. As time is a precious asset, there is no possible way to capture time nor rewind it, one can only learn how to utilize the time he has in order to accomplish more (Tracy, 2014, p.1). Therefore, young professionals as respondents tend to emphasize the importance of time management skills in their work.

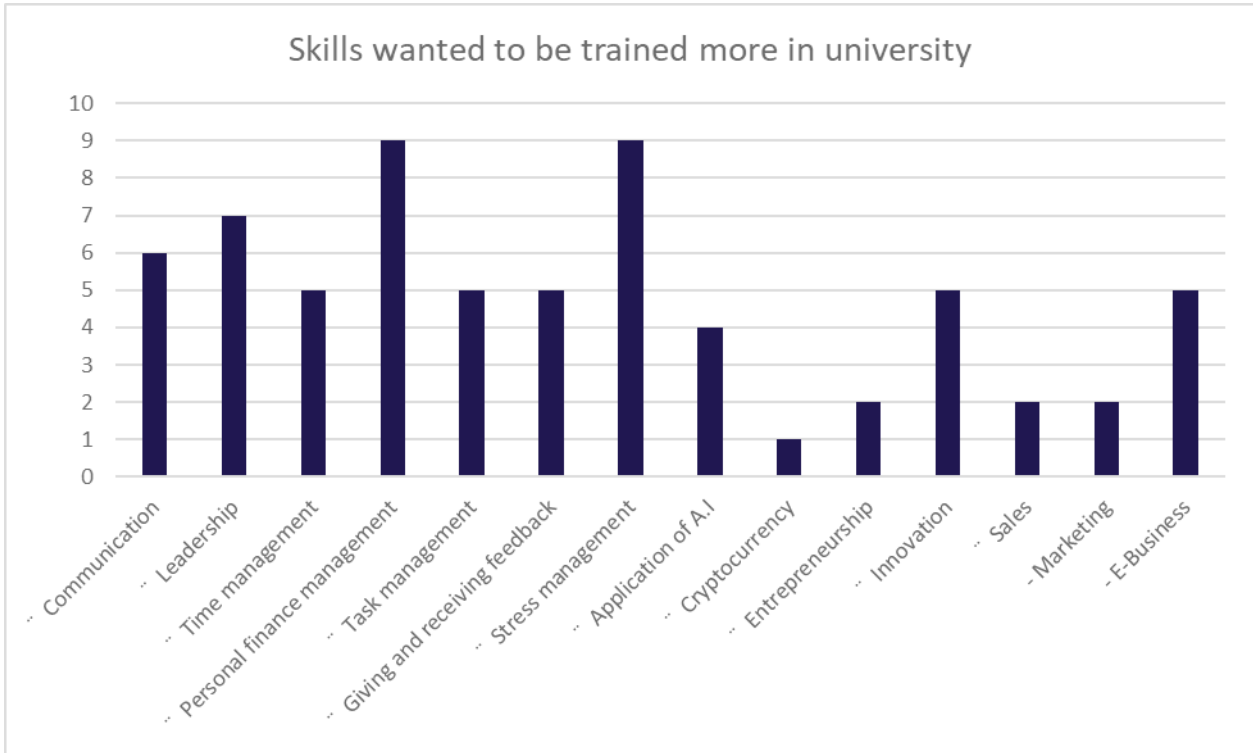


Figure 8. Chart showing desirable skills to be trained while in college/university.

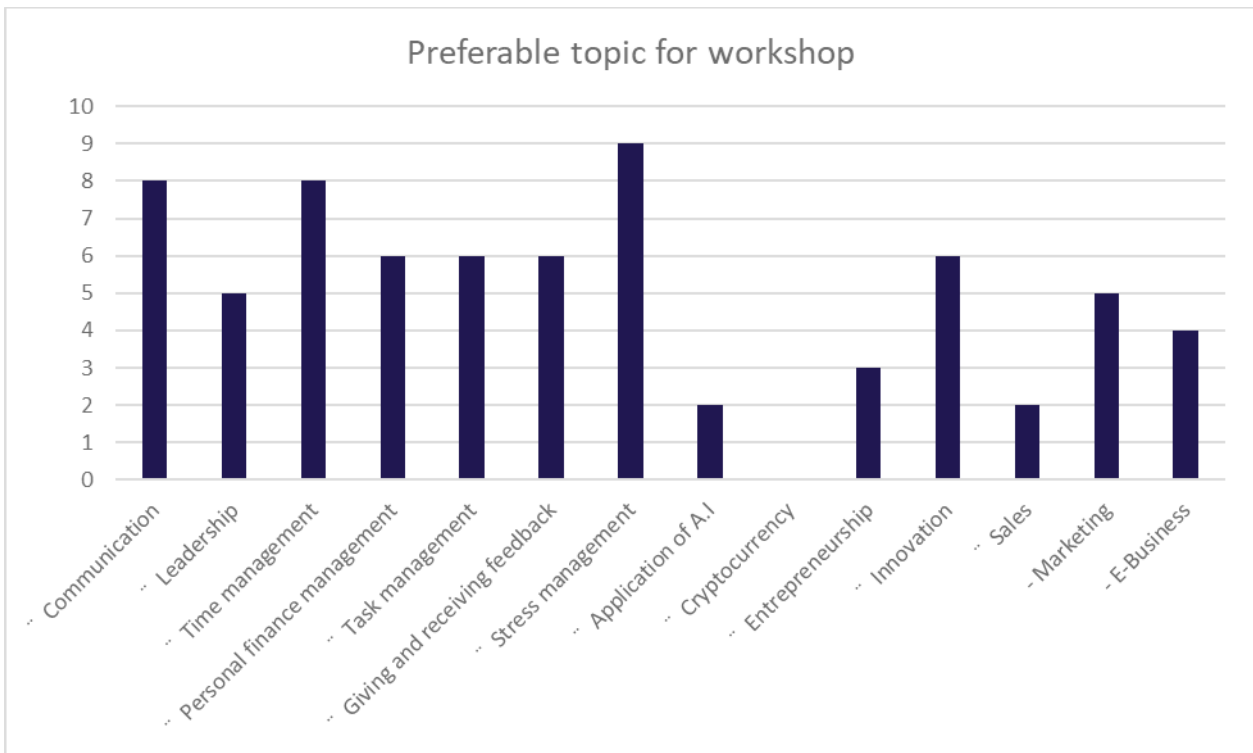


Figure 9. Chart showing preferable topics for training workshops.

From the two charts showing desired topics for training, it can be seen that Stress management has the highest vote among respondents, at 9 votes for both questions. Stress in work can be energy derivative, making workers exhausted and having no joy in their jobs, so the ability to keep control of the stress is believed to not only maintain the resources of the

professionals, but also bring a balance working life with accomplishment and satisfaction (Kane, 2007, p. 4). From figure 5, Personal finance management is also a desired topic respondents want to be able to learn more if they were still in college/university, with 9 votes. The result is understandable as per recent report in 2022 from the National Financial Educators Council in The United States of America, about 38% confirmed that it could waste them at least \$500 due to lack of financial literacy, in which 15% of them said the number was \$10,000 in deficit (O'Brien, 2023). In addition to this, Time management and Communication skills are also at a high interest level with 8 votes for both in the preferable topic options for workshops. While time management is voted the most important skills in work in the previous analysis, Communication skill has leveled the vote with it in the preferable topic for a workshop. As it is a difficult skill to comprehend, while talking may be easier, communication required exchange information with others, so both listening and speaking with great care is demanded (Kelly, 2007, p. 41).

For the last question in the survey, the respondents are asked whether they would be interested in joining any networking activities or training workshops with the university as a young professional or an NPO member. 15 of them stated their interest in joining, including 10 of them will join if the topic is of their interest, and the rest 5 are willing to join on a regular basis. The high interest in networking activities or training workshops in SeAMK can be concluded with about 79% of respondents confirming their future participation. The results are showcased in the below figure:

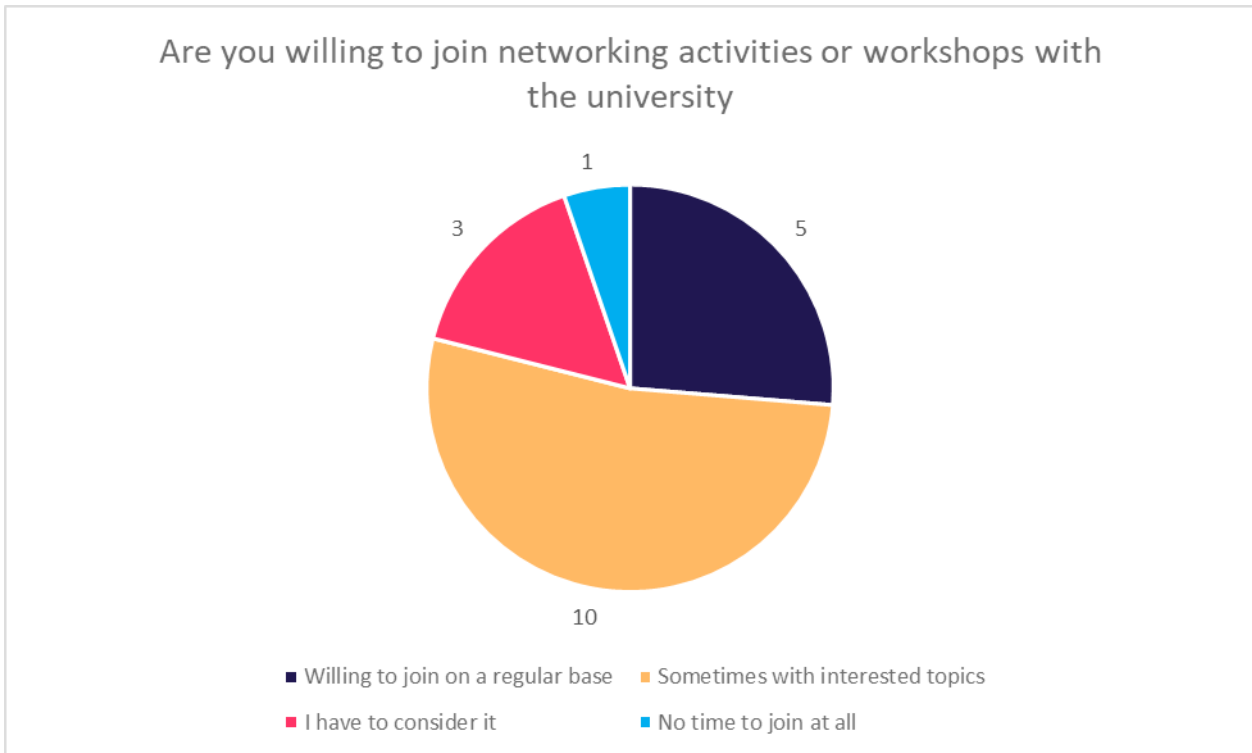


Figure 10. Chart showing the willingness of respondents to join in networking activities or training workshops with a university.

5.2 Survey for SeAMK students

Another survey is conducted for SeAMK students to understand their awareness of such organizations as JCI Seinäjoki, what topic would attract their attention the most for a training workshop, as well as their incentives to join in an NPO, especially JCI Seinäjoki (see appendix 2). There are total of 30 respondents in the survey, all of them are SeAMK students, both local and international. The method used is also quantitative method to summarize the data collected from the respondents. In the end of the survey, an open question was put forward to gather suggestions from the respondents, which can contribute to build the collaboration plan for JCI Seinäjoki and SeAMK.

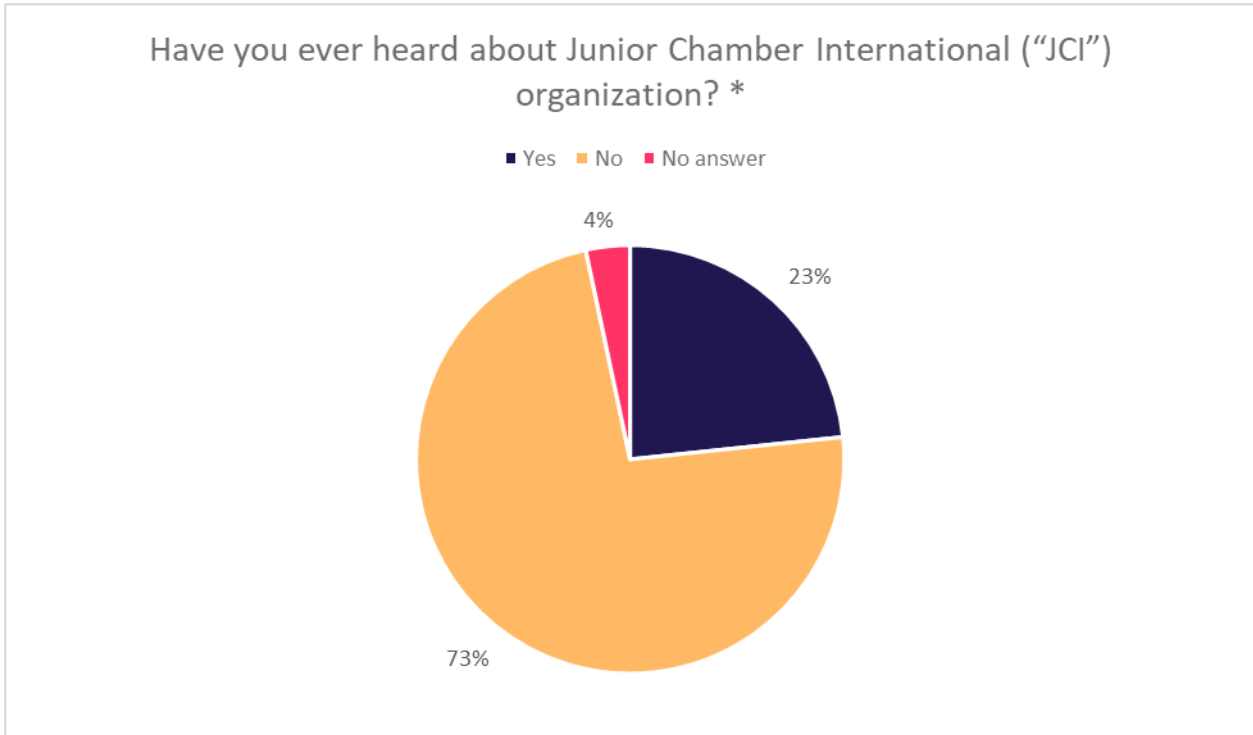


Figure 11. Chart showing the awareness of SeAMK students towards JCI.

From the chart above, it can be seen that 73 percent of the respondents, 22 out of 30, stated they do not know about JCI. This means that the awareness among SeAMK students with JCI is still quite low.

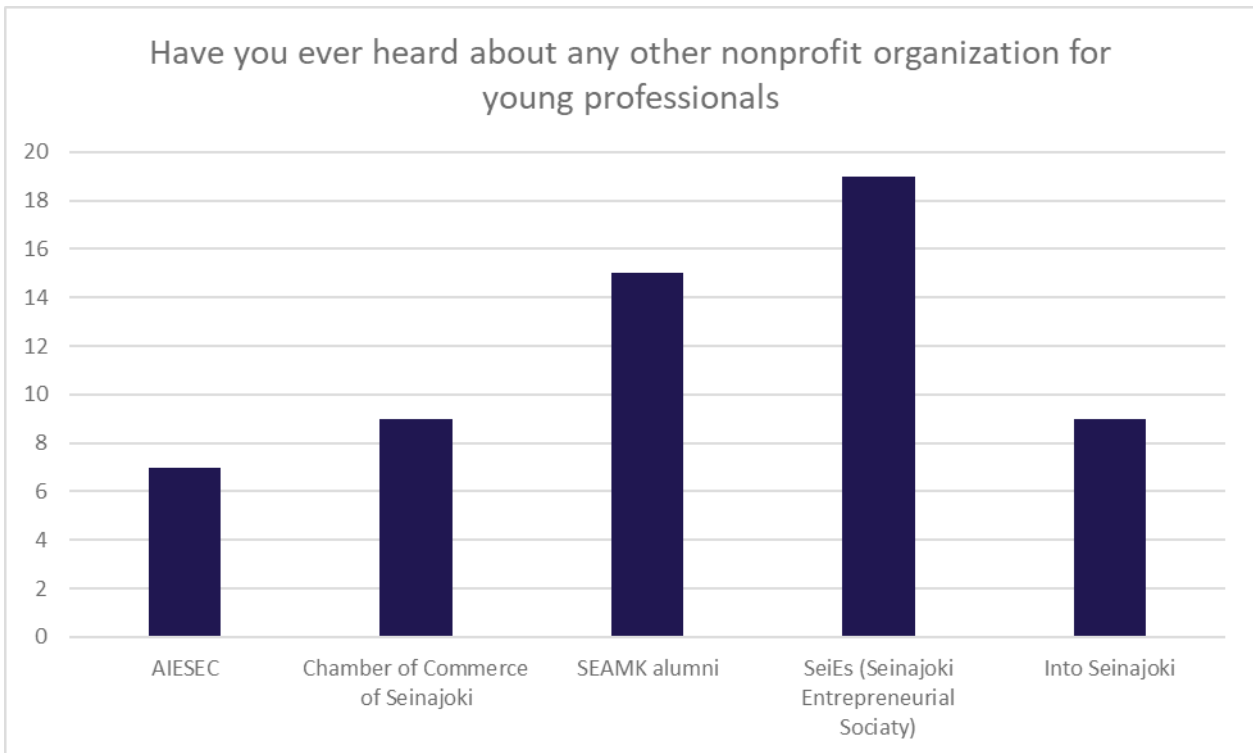


Figure 12. Chart showing awareness among students towards other NPOs.

While asking about their awareness of other NPOs, SeiES was chosen the most, with 19 times. It is reasonable as SeiES has a close relationship with SeAMK, so the students' awareness for this organization is higher.

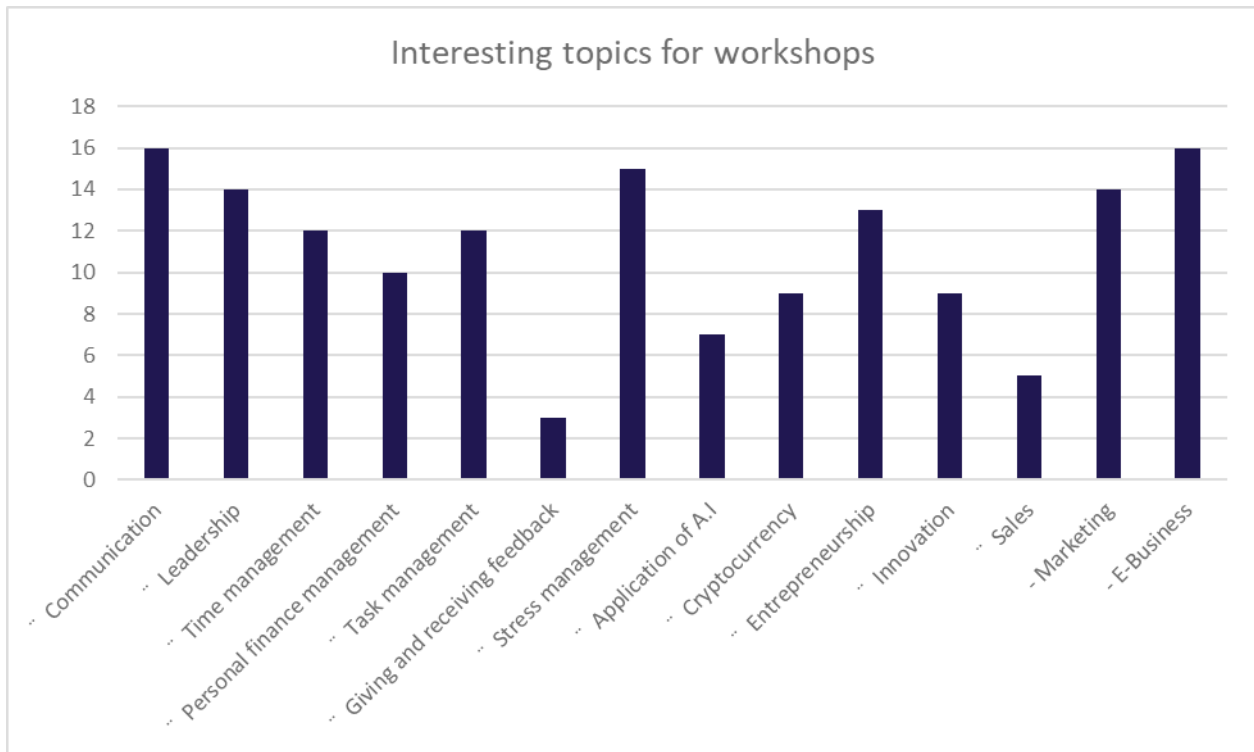


Figure 13. Chart showing students votes for their interested topics when joining training workshops.

Communication skill and E-business are the top voted topic, with 16 votes for both, while Stress management follows with 15 votes. SeAMK student respondents seem to have similar preferences as respondents from young professionals and JCI Seinäjoki member, with their focus on Communication skill and Stress management skill. E-business, on the other hand, is a shared-top choice among the student respondents. This might be due to its growth and big position in the global economy with the development of technology and the Internet (Grefen, 2010, p. 25), as well as SeAMK offers the Digital Business/E-business in their second- and third-year study of bachelor's degree in business administration (SeAMK, n.d.-c).

Regarding incentives among the respondents in joining JCI Seinäjoki or an NPO, two questions were raised: what activities would be of interest, and what the reasons for joining such organizations would be.

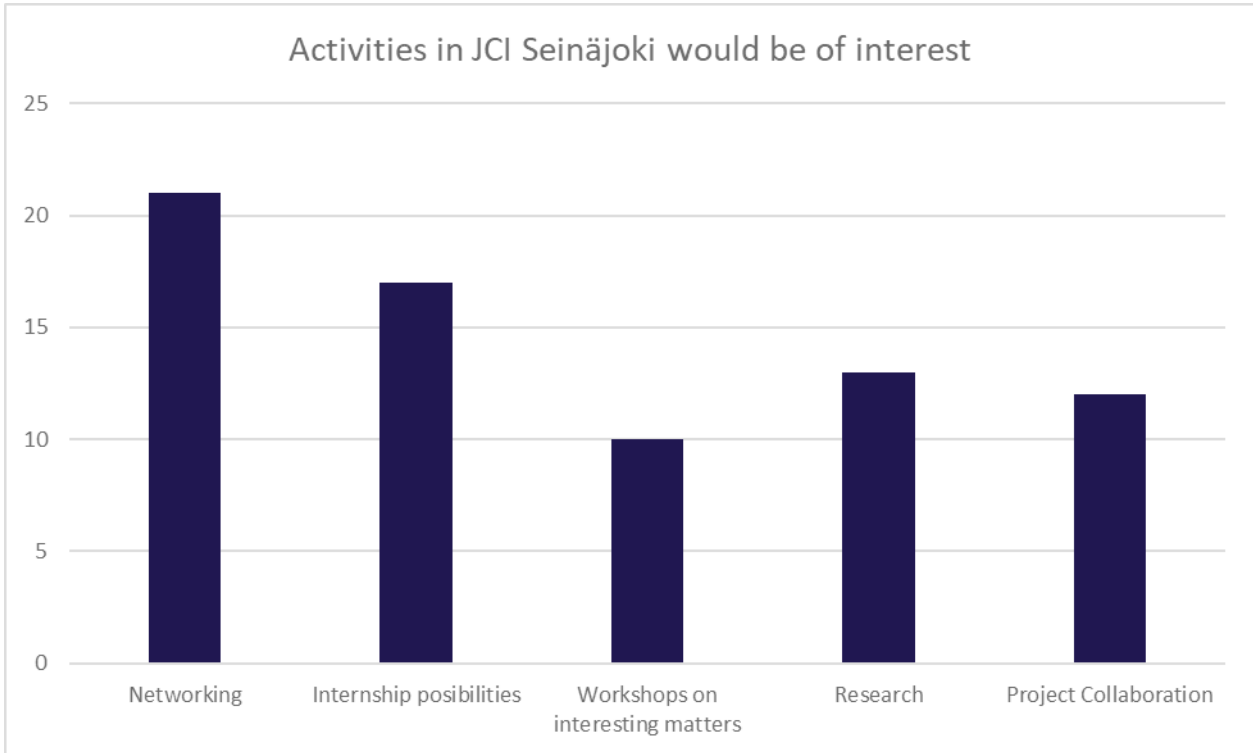


Figure 14. Chart showing activities of interest among SeAMK students if they were to join JCI Seinäjoki.

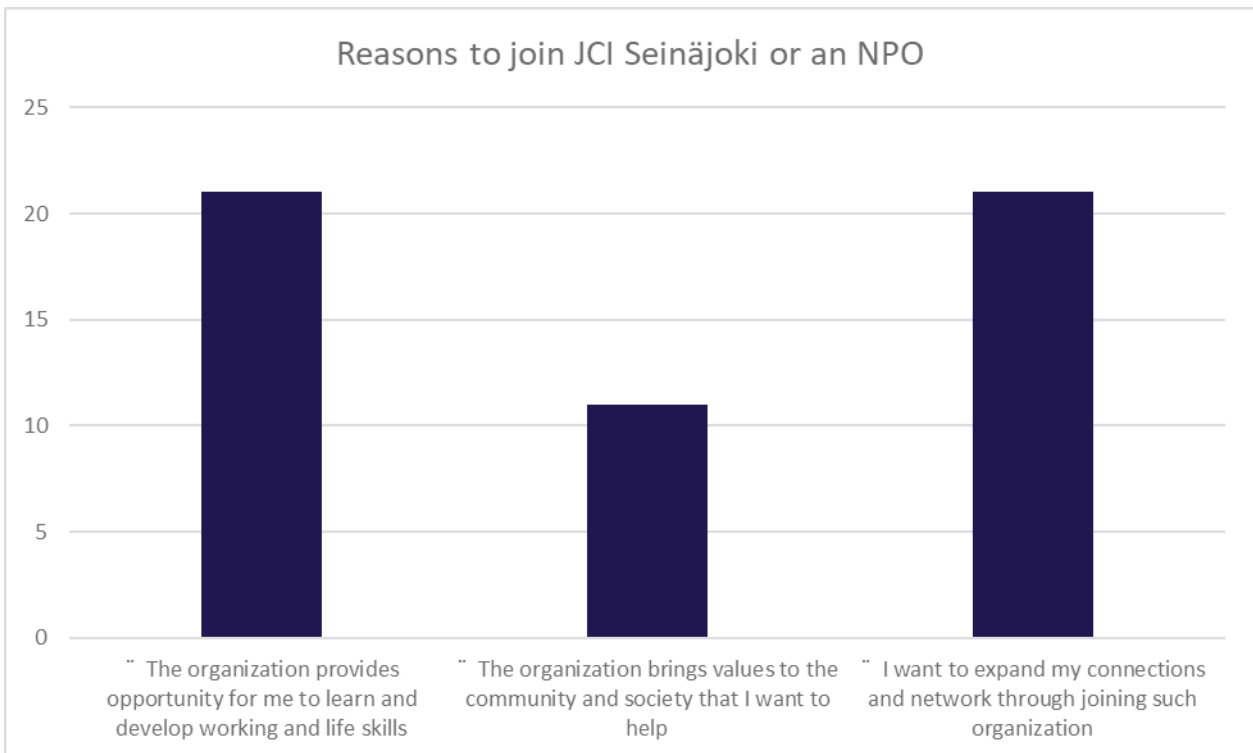


Figure 15. Chart showing reasons for students when decide to join JCI Seinäjoki or an NPO.

From the two charts above, the reasons and incentives student respondents voted for the most are Networking, opportunities to learn and develop skills and also expand connections, all of which have 21 votes. It is suggested that the students are keen on develop their

working and life skills through joining an NPO or JCI Seinäjoki. This aspect is also an aim of JCI Seinäjoki, to promote personal development. Beside this, networking and widening connections are also of the students' interest. Networking is a crucial skill for building connections and accelerating career, it requires good personal communication, appropriate relationship management and also professionalism (The University of Manchester, n.d.).

While JCI Seinäjoki might not need any membership fee (J. Mattila, personal communication, April 2, 2021), it is still relevant to understand the respondents' behaviors towards the fees if they have to pay. Most of the student respondents, 22 people, are willing to pay about from none to €10, which accounts for about 73% of the total respondents. The higher the amount, the less willing they are to pay.

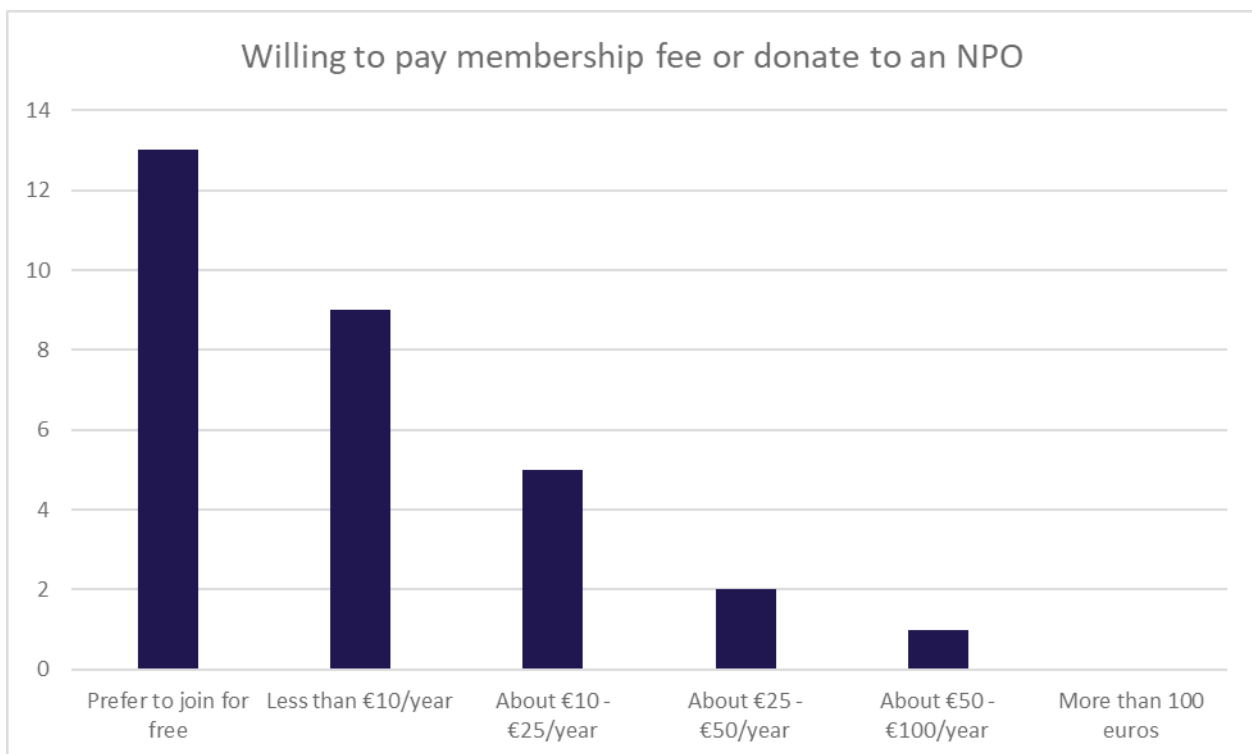


Figure 16. Chart showing the amount of membership fee or donation that student respondents are willing to pay.

In the last open question, there are three constructive suggestions that JCI Seinäjoki and SeAMK can consider, which are offering internship and job opportunities for students or vice versa, setting up events or activities between the two parties, and arranging seminar in the university for students. This plan is also following the last suggestion, to plan a series of free seminar for SeAMK students, with trainers from JCI Seinäjoki, or external guests.

After researching and comprehend the demands and expectations from both perspectives of the young professionals/JCI Seinäjoki members, and the SeAMK students, the triggering collaboration event plan can be built based on the data summarized above. The plan is created following the guidance from Slater's guide to event management (2012) suggestions.

5.3 Financial and legal considerations

With the event being free for students as targeted audience, the financial issue needs to be addressed with care. Costs can occur in a workshop can be printing and advertising, catering, equipment. To balance the responsibilities, it is recommended that both parties share the costs where appropriate. For example, as SeAMK provides the university facilities for JCI Seinäjoki members to utilize for the workshop, i.e., rooms, internet, printing materials without charging any fee, JCI Seinäjoki can cover most part or all of the catering cost. This kind of administrative cost, as discussed in the transaction cost section of the strategy, can be considered as an investment for the collaboration to keep the quality high.

To comply with the legal requirements, it is recommended that JCI members respect any legal compliance within SeAMK facilities and vice versa, as well as follow the contract agreements if any from the collaboration. Certain issues may spawn including the non-disclosure agreements, publication or commercialization of any materials provided in the workshops without permissions.

5.4 Objective

To distinguish from the overall goal of the collaboration, the objective for the training workshop should deliver its own value, while contributing to the wider scale (Slater, 2012, p. 28).

We can apply the SMART rule to navigate the objective for training workshops:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Relevant
- Timebound

The training workshops should be free for all SeAMK students to share and teach useful skills for working and studying, with an aim of having as many students attend as possible within the time span of a whole academic year. The number of workshops in an academic year can be once every month depending on the availability of trainers and students' willingness to attend. As analyzing in the previous sections, a majority of JCI Seinäjoki members and young professionals are willing to join in workshops with a topic of their interest, and also the student respondents voted for their most demanding topics. The two most anticipated topics are Stress management and Communication skills. These two topics can be chosen as the first two topics for training workshops. Depending on the results, more workshops can be held for other topics with relatively high expectation, such as Leadership skill, Time management.

5.5 People involved

To maintain the balance of power between JCI Seinäjoki and SeAMK, it is important to involve human resources from both sides. The allocation of staff in planning a workshop is vital, from planning phase through setting up, managing the event and clearing up post-event. It may affect the cost whether the people are volunteers, staff from the university or JCI members (Slater, 2012, p. 34). The team needs to have shared responsibilities between both sides. It is recommended that there should be representative coordinators from JCI Seinäjoki and SeAMK to maintain communications as well as expectations for the workshops. As suggested in the factors influencing the collaboration and in the process of collaboration, having real-time and two-ways communications are required.

As the size of each workshop should be around 20 participants, the people involved in managing it can be 3–4 people with multiple roles, with a leader/manager who is able to join in every part of the event phases. The team should consist of members from both JCI Seinäjoki and SeAMK, one of them can even be the trainer, speaker.

5.6 Event initiation document

An event initiation document consists of the above information that has been confirmed, including the names and contacts of all people involved, the objective of the workshop, the overall goal of the collaboration (Slater, 2012, p. 39). This document will deliver a transparent

message and orientation for both parties in the partnership workshop. An example of required information in the document can be presented as below:

- **Event boards:** This can be JCI Seinäjoki board member chosen to work with SeAMK representatives, and SeAMK board representatives.
- **Event manager:** both parties can choose one event manager for each particular workshop, or a manager in charge of the series.
- **Names of the event team members:** the team members as mentioned in the previous sections should consist of staff from both JCI Seinäjoki and SeAMK.
- **Justification/Purpose of the whole project:** kickstart the collaboration of JCI Seinäjoki and SeAMK and potential future partnerships. Bringing a series of free training workshops to promote working skill development for students, and raise awareness of the organization to SeAMK students.
- **Objective of the event:** Provide a free training workshop on a specific topic for SeAMK students.

5.7 Risk assessment and management

The checklist to define and control possible risks may occur all through the workshop phases (Slater, 2012, p. 41):

- The students might not show up as registered before the event. It is recommended to ensure a suitable time frame to start the workshop and with a interesting topic.
- The facilities may not work as intended, i.e., printer, projector malfunction. Relating to technology issues, it can only be resolved by having backup devices and solutions while also requesting on-site support from technical experts.
- The trainer is not able to attend as scheduled. For unexpected situations like personal issues, it is difficult to resolve if it was not communicated before at least 2 working days. Having a backup presenter might only be feasible when the issue is noticed beforehand.
- The registrations surpass the limit. In case there is a highly demanded topic, a recommended solution is to deliver the workshop into identical sessions in different time schedules and arrange the registration list into those.

- The registration cannot reach a minimum number. While the circumstance might be rare when the topics are of interest of the student, the risk of low registration rate can still happen. The time schedule might not fit students as they are in examination period for example. Rescheduling might be a recommended solution.
- Other uncertainties such as pandemic occur, resulting in a obstacle in hosting face-to-face workshops. A virtual platform such as Teams might be a solution to move the training to online workshops. Nonetheless, the interactions between students and trainers might not be as effective.

5.8 Managing tasks

In simple and small events, a to-do list might be utilized to serve as a checklist for the event team. However, this kind of training workshop involves people to work closely together and at a considerable level of complexity, applying a simple to-do list may not work well. It is crucial to plan for tasks to be done simultaneously, considering the dependencies of tasks to each other, setting a precise deadline, and be mindful with the tasks required resources from outside of the event team (Slater, 2012, p. 46). A Gantt chart can be applied to schedule and manage event tasks. An example of the event tasks input in a Gant chart can be shown as below table:

Table 1. Sample tasks list of preparing a workshop scheduled in a Gantt chart.

Tasks	W1	W2	W3	W4
Book workshop room				
Send invitation to students				
Prepare devices				
Prepare training materials				
Check-in person				
Rehearse before workshop day				
Prepare and send post-event survey				
Clear up post-event				

The sample tasks list and schedule above can be changed to fit for each training workshop, and the color blocks represent members' responsibilities from each party. In this case, the color indigo represents SeAMK staff, and light orange represents JCI Seinäjoki members. Some tasks require both parties' involvement so both colors are used to mark the schedule.

5.9 Key factors when running event

As the workshops are part of the collaboration between JCI Seinäjoki and SeAMK, it is important to maintain the key factors influence the success of it within each event delivered, such as communication, mutual trust and respect. In addition to this, Slater (2012, p. 52–57) suggests other principles to consider, which includes Motivation, Validation, Appreciation, Evaluation, and also Communication. Motivating the event team are crucial to get the tasks done in time without feeling exhausted, keeping the plan in check for the validation, appreciating everyone involved is a good way to maintain relationships, and evaluation after the event is also a vital phase after completing any event to check whether the objectives are meet, and in the long run if the whole collaboration can result in a positive impact in the community.

5.10 Evaluation after event

To effectively evaluate the event, it is important to make a transparent goal and objective for it (Slater, 2012, p. 56). The assessment after a workshop can be based on what JCI Seinäjoki and SeAMK want to achieve in the first place. As stated in the Objective section, the aim is to have as many students participate as possible, so one of the key performance indicators (“KPI”) should be the number of attendees in the workshop. Another aspect that should be considered is the quality of the workshop, which can be retrieved from a feedback form delivered to the attendees after the workshop has ended. This is to make sure the students’ expectations are met. In addition, an internal evaluation in the event team is also required to make sure the work can have improvement in the following workshops and maintain a good collaboration process between JCI Seinäjoki and SeAMK.

5.11 Actions to be taken

To summarize the plan, a flowchart is created to visualize the steps required to initiate this first activity in the collaboration between JCI Seinäjoki and SeAMK.

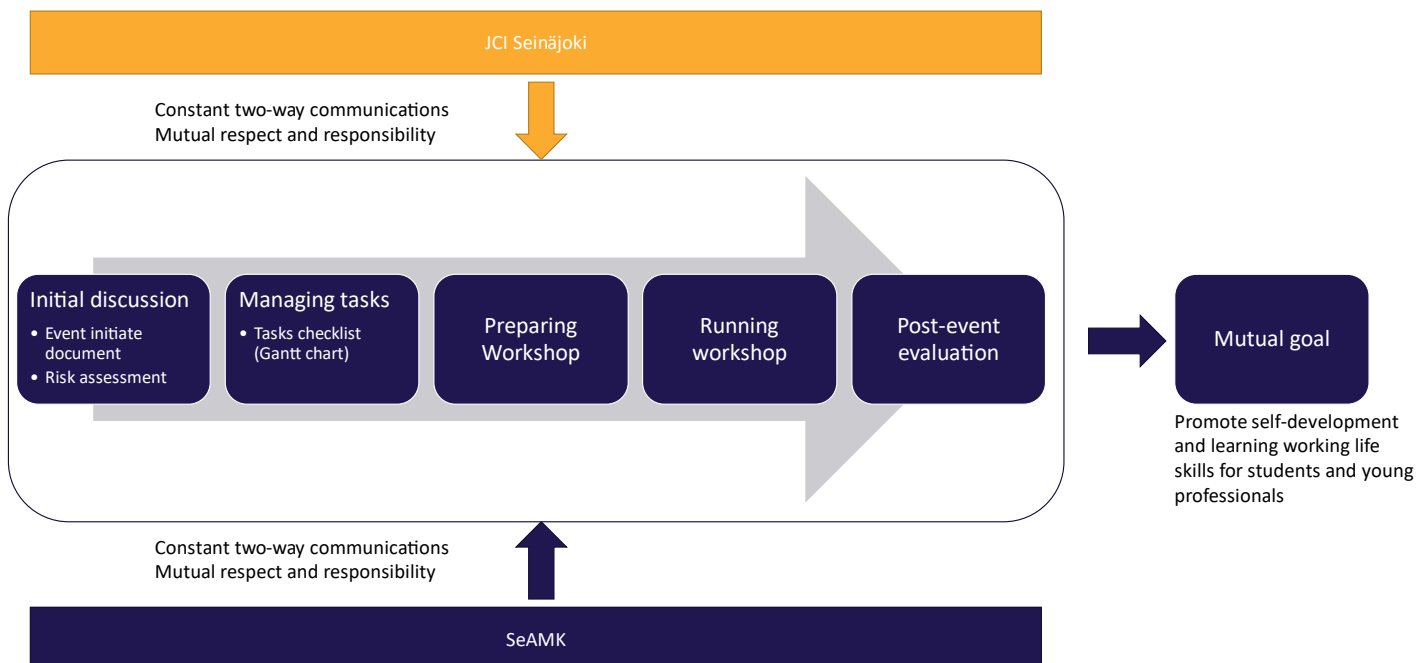


Figure 17. The flowchart showing steps to be taken for JCI Seinäjoki and SeAMK to run a workshop.

6 CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

The establishment of a collaboration between an NPO and a university is not a rare occasion, but it requires constant work and motivation from both sides. JCI Seinäjoki and SeAMK both have a mission and goals in educating and promoting knowledge for students, as well as young workforce, so their partnership has an appropriate background and can be enhanced with proper communications and activities. It is not an easy task to maintain a good relationship with another organization, but with similarities in missions, vision, mutual trust and respect, both parties can reach a high level of collaboration and in many different forms.

Through reflections on collaborations between NPOs and universities in internal and external aspects, it can be concluded that even the external factors come from internal parties among the collaborations. There are particular characteristics such as mutual trust and respect, effective constant communications, balance in responsibility, exist as both internal factors and external factors influencing the efficiency of the partnership. In addition, there is no simple and one solution for the form of collaboration considered as better than the other, any forms or modes of collaboration between organizations need to be carefully selected based on the capacity, vision, strategy and assets of each party.

Through the empirical research with local young professionals and SeAMK students, it can be recognized that they are open to joining workshop providing working and life skills and actively contributed to the topics they want to learn. This shows a positive sign for the collaboration to bring benefits for the local society as there is a high chance the collaboration activities are greatly anticipated.

As there are only theoretical strategy and proposal plan delivered in this study, the result can only be observed when they are applied and run in a right amount of time, which might be research through another study to see how the collaboration between JCI Seinäjoki and SeAMK bring positive impact to the surrounding society and communities. In this time of uncertainty, outer aspects can affect the collaboration in unexpected manners, such as global economy downturn, pandemic, unstable political situations. Addressing all these circumstances might be difficult, organizations can only prepare for the worst and hope for the best-case scenarios, even in their strategic partnership plan. Nonetheless, starting the partnership as soon as possible and nurturing it from the early stage is of importance as long-term collaborations can result in positive impacts to both parties.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Survey for young professionals and JCI Seinäjoki members

Appendix 2. Survey for SeAMK students

Appendix 1. Survey for young professionals and JCI Seinäjoki members

1. Name and Last name

2. Company where do you work ?

3. How long have you been a Junior Chamber International (JCI) member in South Ostrobośnia

- More than 5 years
- Between 3 and 5 years
- 2 to 3 years
- 1 to 2 years
- Less than a year
- I am not a member

4. Are you currently a member of an organization for young professionals (nonprofit, nongovernmental, etc.)? (can choose all that are applicable) *

- AIESEC
- Chamber of Commerce of Seinajoki
- SEAMK alumni
- SeiEs (Seinäjoki Entrepreneurship Society)
- Other University Alumni
- Other (please specify)

5. What are the skills/knowledge you think are important for young professionals? (can choose all that are applicable) *

- " Communication
- " Leadership
- " Time management
- " Personal finance management
- " Task management

Giving and receiving feedback

Stress management

Application of A.I

Cryptocurrency

Entrepreneurship

Innovation

Sales

- Marketing

- E-Business

Other (please specify)

6. When you were in university/college, what skills/knowledge you would want to train more but have limited to no training occasion from the university/college's curriculum? (can choose all that are applicable) *

Communication

- Leadership
- Time management
- Personal finance management
- Task management
- Giving and receiving feedback
- Stress management
- Application of A.I
- Cryptocurrency
- Entrepreneurship
- Innovation
- Sales
- Marketing
- - - .

- E-Business

Other (please specify)

7. If your organization are to host workshop training skills for university/college students, what topic you think the workshop can be? (can choose all that are applicable) *

" Communication

" Leadership

" Time management

" Personal finance management

" Task management

" Giving and receiving feedback

" Stress management

" Application of A.I

" Cryptocurrency

" Entrepreneurship

" Innovation

" Sales

- Marketing

- E-Business

Other (please specify)

8. How do you believe that JCI can Collaborate with SEAMK university (ideas)

Idea 1	<input type="text"/>
Idea 2	<input type="text"/>
Idea 3	<input type="text"/>
Idea 4	<input type="text"/>

9. Are you willing to join in networking activities/training workshops with university/college students? *

- Willing to join on a regular base
- Sometimes with interested topics
- I have to consider it
- No time to join at all

Done

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Appendix 2. Survey for SeAMK students

Seamk Students and JCI NPO Collaboration - 2023

1. Name and Last name

2. Carrier that you are studying at SEMK ?

3. Have you ever heard about Junior Chamber International (“JCI”) organization? *

Yes

No

4. Have you ever heard about any other nonprofit organization (“NPO”) for young professionals ?

AIESEC

Student Cooperation Center

Chamber of Commerce of Seinajoki

SEAMK alumni

SeiEs (Seinajoki Entrepreneurial Society)

Into Seinajoki

Other (please specify)

5. If there are training workshops for young professionals and students, what kind of topics/skills you are interested? (can choose all that are applicable) *

" Communication

" Leadership

" Time management

" Personal finance management

" Task management

" Giving and receiving feedback

" Stress management

" ...

" Application of A.I

" Cryptocurrency

" Entrepreneurship

" Innovation

" Sales

- Marketing

- E-Business

Other (please specify)

6. If you could participate in JCI activities what would be of your interest

Networking

Internship possibilities

Workshops on interesting matters

Research

Project Collaboration

Other (please specify)

7. Are you currently a member of JCI or any NPO? (NPO - None Profit Organization)

Yes, I am a member of JCI

Yes, I am a member of another NPO

NO

8. What would be the reason(s) for you to decide joining an NPO, or JCI? (can choose all that are applicable) *

" The organization provides oppportunity for me to learn and develop working and life skills

" The organization brings values to the community and society that I want to help

" I want to expand my connections and network through joining such organization

Other (please specify)

9. Are you willing to pay membership fee or donation to organization dedicated for young professionals like JCI? *

- Prefer to join for free
- Less than €10/year
- About €10 - €25/year
- About €25 - €50/year
- About €50 - €100/year
- More than 100 euros

10. Do you have any Idea or know a good collaboration between Universities and organizations that you can suggest

Suggestion 1

Suggestion 2

Suggestion 3

Done

