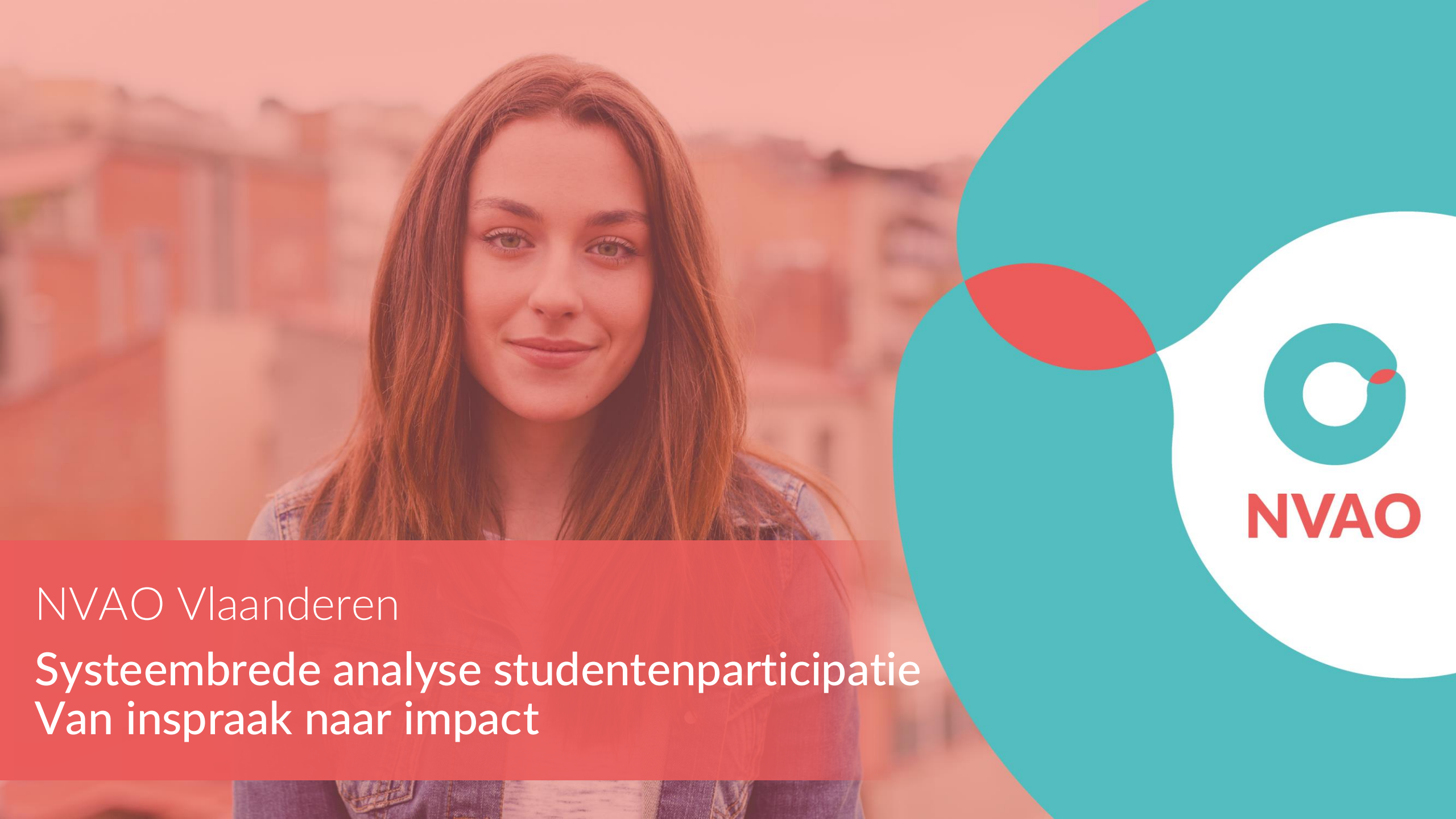




NVAO Vlaanderen

Systeembrede analyse studentenparticipatie
Van inspraak naar impact

A portrait of a young woman with long brown hair, smiling slightly, wearing a denim jacket. The background is a blurred city street. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent red banner at the bottom left and a large teal and white graphic on the right side.

Axel Aerden
Directeur NVAO Vlaanderen

Verwelkoming



A portrait of a young woman with long brown hair, smiling slightly, wearing a denim jacket. The background is a blurred city street. The image has a red overlay on the left side where the text is located.

Veerle Martens

Coördinator SBA 2024-2025

Voorstelling publicatie



Themabepaling studentenparticipatie

NVAO's klankbordoverleg

(NVAO, Vliir, VH, VVS, kabinet, departement)

-

“Vormgeving van het onderwijs in samenwerking met de studenten, betrokkenheid bij beleidsontwikkeling, besluitvorming en interne kwaliteitszorg op verschillende niveaus in de instelling; aandacht voor ondersteuning en faciliteiten voor studenten(vertegenwoordigers)”.

Systeembrede Analyse Studentenparticipatie: Van inspraak naar impact

Werkgroep



Studentenparticipatie in Vlaanderen: sterke traditie



Codex Hoger Onderwijs

DEEL 2 STRUCTUUR EN ORGANISATIE VAN HET HOGER ONDERWIJS

TITEL 5 Rechtspositie en medezeggenschap van de student



Hoofdstuk 4 Studentenraad



Vlaamse Vereniging
van *Studenten*

Studentenparticipatie in Vlaanderen: uitdagingen

Zoals...

- Complexiteit en tijdsdruk
- Gebrek aan bekendheid en impact
- Meer nood aan opleiding en ondersteuning
- Meer nood aan erkenning en valorisatie
- Gebrek aan diversiteit en inclusie

Thematische uitwisselingen

Cultuur, structuur en organisatie van studentenparticipatie

Diversiteit en inclusie

Faciliteren en ondersteunen

Erkennen en valoriseren

Systeembrede Analyse Studentenparticipatie: Van inspraak naar impact

Werkgroep in actie



Systeembrede Analyse Studentenparticipatie: Van inspraak naar impact

Internationale peers



Publicatie



2.	Inzichten en praktijkvoorbeelden over studentenparticipatie
2.1.	Cultuur, structuur en organisatie van studentenparticipatie.....
2.1.1.	Kernelementen en leervragen
2.1.2.	Key takeaways
2.1.3.	Praktijkvoorbeelden
2.2.	Diversiteit en inclusie in studentenparticipatie
2.2.1.	Kernelementen en leervragen
2.2.2.	Key takeaways
2.2.3.	Praktijkvoorbeelden
2.3.	Faciliteren en ondersteunen van studentenparticipatie.....
2.3.1.	Kernelementen en leervragen
2.3.2.	Key takeaways
2.3.3.	Praktijkvoorbeelden
2.4.	Erkenning en valorisatie van studentenparticipatie
2.4.1.	Kernelementen en leervragen
2.4.2.	Key takeaways
2.4.3.	Praktijkvoorbeelden

SBA Studentenparticipatie
**Deel 3: Beleidsaanbevelingen door
de werkgroep**



Studentenparticipatie = collectieve verantwoordelijkheid

- Sterke participatiecultuur is essentieel
- “*Students are experts in their own right*”
- Leidinggevenden/management in cruciale rol



Inclusieve studentenparticipatie stimuleren

- Barrières wegwerken
- Financiële drempels overwinnen



Participatiecoaches ondersteunen

- Investeren in de participatiecoach
- Een netwerk voor participatiecoaches
- Praktijkgericht onderzoek over studentenparticipatie



Studentenraadsverkiezingen faciliteren

- Verkiezingen vereenvoudigen
- Verkiezingen als inclusieve en collectieve onderneming
- De 10 %-regel heroverwegen
- Duidelijke doelstellingen voor studentenparticipatie op associatieniveau





Simon Varwell

Mountains and pathways: meaningful partnership in Scotland at a time of institutional and national turbulence



The background of the slide is a photograph of a rugged mountain landscape. A narrow, light-colored path winds up a grassy and rocky hillside. In the distance, more mountain peaks are visible under a cloudy, overcast sky. The overall tone is somewhat somber and atmospheric, reflecting the 'turbulence' mentioned in the text.

Mountains and pathways: meaningful partnership in Scotland at a time of institutional and national turbulence

Simon Varwell

**Director of Student Engagement and Representation
Highlands and Island Students' Association (UHI)**

NVAO SWA on student participation – Friday 10th October 2025



A quick bit about me

- November 2023: **HISA**, the students' association at UHI.
- August 2007: **sparqs**, Scotland's agency for student engagement.
- Early career roles on both institutional and students' association sides, and a one-year sabbatical as students' association President.



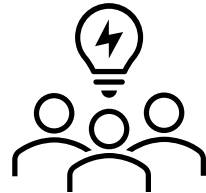
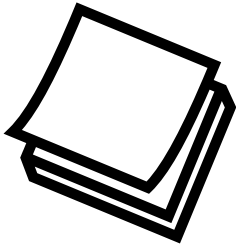
- Masters in Student Engagement in Higher Education (University of Winchester).
- Principal Fellow of the Higher Education Academy.
- Interested in models and concepts of partnership....

When do we first involve students?

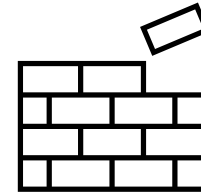
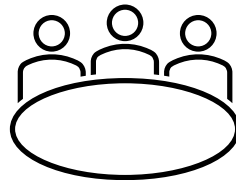
**Lightbulb
moment**



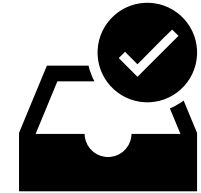
**Informing
others**



**Early
building**



**Full
rollout**



**Rough
note**

**Formal
proposal**

**Trial and
testing**

**Lightbulb
moment**



Ingredients

- Culture of engagement: staff involve them instinctively.
- Courage: senior staff admit they don't know it all.
- Clarity: showing how it can and should be done.
- Capacity: equipping staff (and students).

Benefits

- Confidence: maybe students will give their own ideas!
- Context: students can tell staff what works for them.
- Competences: students demonstrate their achievements.
- Credibility: if you are involved, you'll have faith in it.

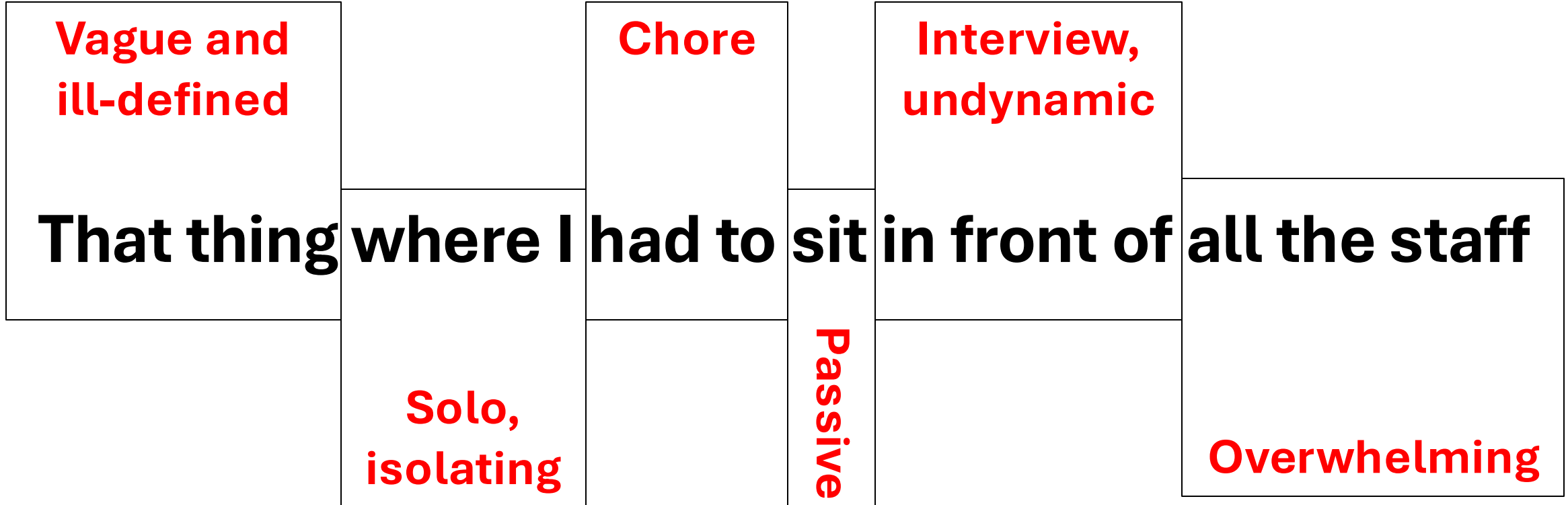
Two stories from Scotland

A college had a major campus redesign. External consultants ran a survey of students. The first time the college's students' association knew of the survey was when they got the results. They declared they had no faith in the outcome: the survey was confusing and full of jargon. They protested "if only you'd shown us the survey first, we could have helped!"

A

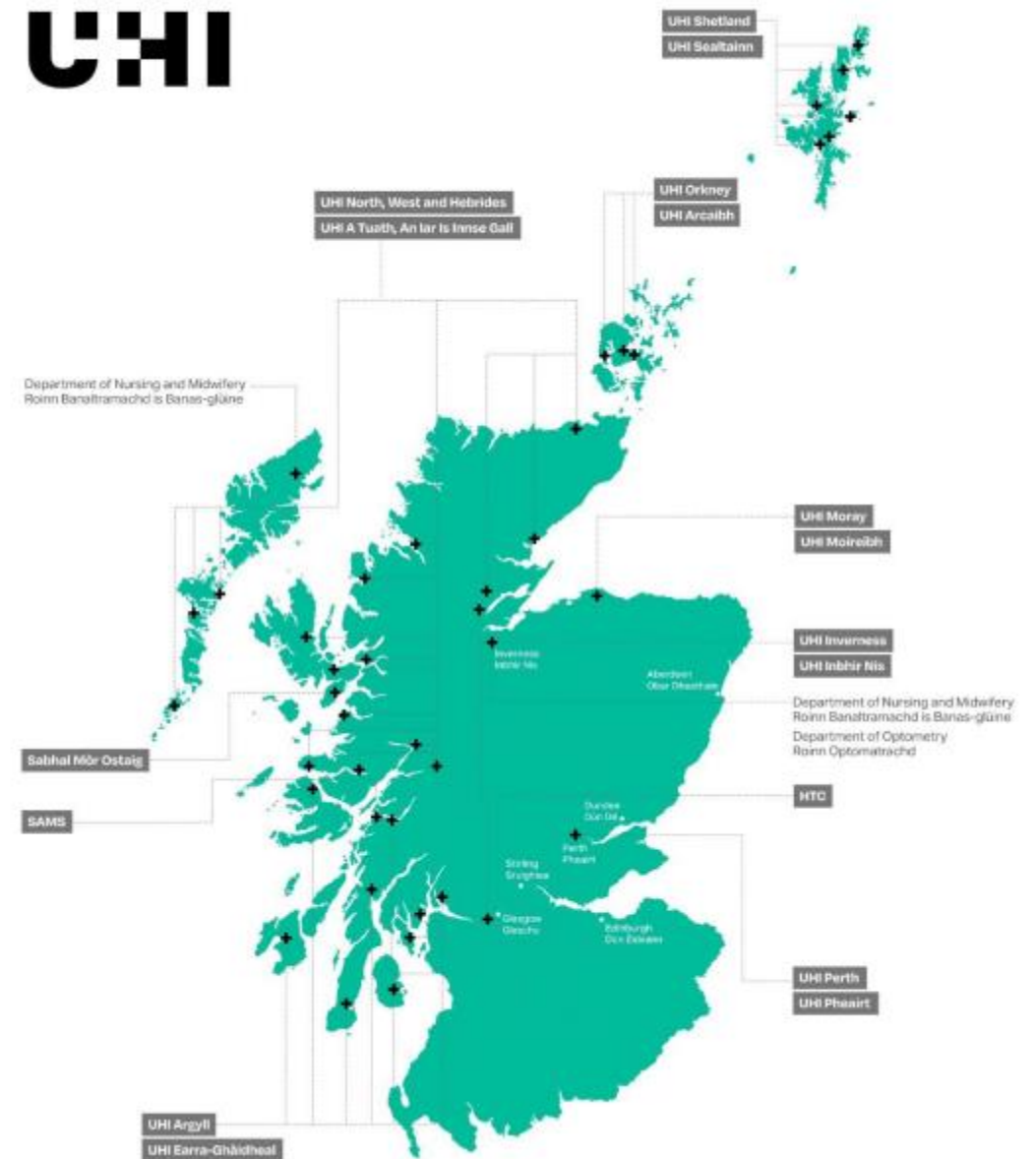
A students' association helped its college to introduce new suggestion boxes around campus, to gather students' views. One submission included something very offensive about a staff member, who told their trade union. The trade union protested to the college senior management. As a result, the college removed all the suggestion boxes.

B



UHI – a federal university

- **10 Partners** (colleges or research institutes) & central Executive Office.
- ...which means **11** governing bodies!
- Many learning centres & campuses.
- Programmes fit in Partner academic structures **and** UHI's own faculties.
- **Tertiary** and **blended** delivery.
- Process of **Transformation** begun.



How HISA responds

- Independently constituted charity and employer (like most British SAs).
- 16 elected student officers (paid full or part-time):
 - 2 full-time cross-campus officers.
 - 14 local officers in the 10 Partners.
- 500+ Student Voice Reps (SVRs).
- Staff support:
 - Led by CEO and senior management.
 - Some central staff; many based within the Partners and campuses (a bit like participation coaches!).
- Challenges of distributed working and many part-time staff and student roles.
- Dynamics of vacancies, capacity constraints, complex topics, and responding to change.



Mountains...

Major institutional change at UHI: can 11 governing bodies find an agreeable model?

Scottish Universities Grapple With Funding Crisis as Cuts Deepen

Most Scottish colleges not sustainable, says report

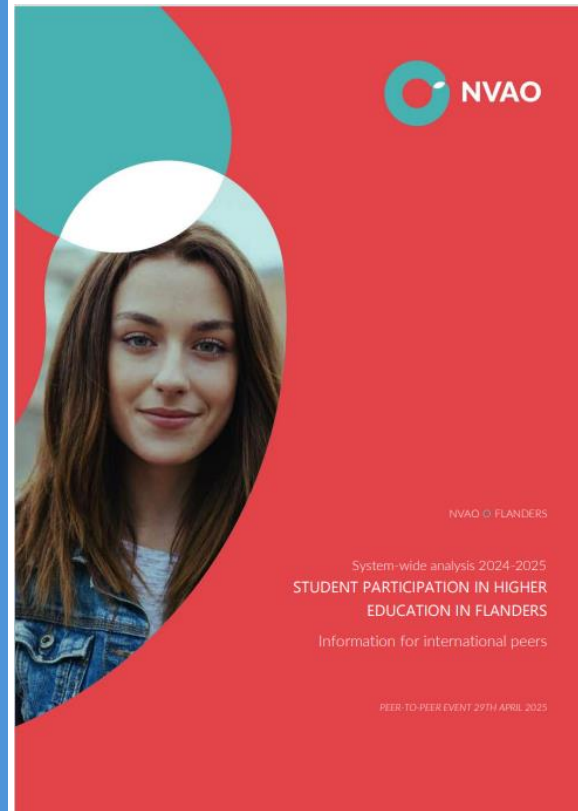
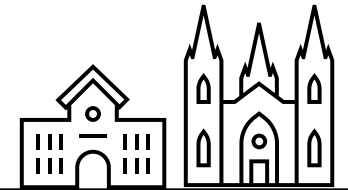
and pathways

- Strong tradition of sector collaboration in Scotland.
- World renowned education system... well, mostly!
- Sharing between further and higher education:
 - Learning articulation pathways.
 - A new common quality system.
- Students' associations with respect, resource and energy.



Strengths

- Clarity of message and structures.
- Highly localised: where students are.
- Inclusive, supportive and responsive.
- Responsive to structures and governance.
- Focussed on barriers and solutions.
- Facilitative, empowering, rewarding.
- Well planned and strategised.



Opportunities

1. Supporting and identifying the roles, impact and professional development of participation coaches.
2. Developing shared commonalities and templates for approaches to student rep training.
3. Developing common resources and support for student council elections.

Student participation professionals

Values 	Knowledge 	Activities 
V1 A belief in education as a positive, inquisitive and liberating force for wider societal change. V2 Placing the student voice at the heart of continuous enhancement and co-creation of the student learning experience. V3 Recognition of the centrality of equality, diversity, liberation and inclusion to student engagement. V4 A belief in students' associations as vital collective, democratic contributors to institutional life and students' experiences. V5 A commitment to transformative partnership as an underpinning aspect of work with staff and students.	K1 The implications of the diversity and intersectionality of the student population in its demography, pedagogy and geography. K2 How institutions manage and develop learning and teaching. K3 The role of evidence and data in effective student engagement in quality enhancement and assurance. K4 The purpose, role and dynamic structures of students' associations. K5 How the national and international policy and agency landscape affects, and is shaped by, students. K6 Policies, theories and strategies relating to student engagement, feedback and partnership in quality.	A1 Empowering all students to own and shape their learning. A2 Supporting and enabling academic representative systems. A3 Facilitating and promoting the recognition of student engagement activities. A4 Working with, supporting and developing student officers as they engage in strategic decisions about learning and teaching. A5 Informing and advising decision-makers on students' views and priorities. A6 Enabling the generation and use of data about the learning experience. A7 Championing partnership-based collaborations between staff and students. A8 Acquiring, sharing and applying knowledge about student engagement policy and practice.

Professional Standards Framework for Student Engagement

Values



- V1** A belief in education as a positive, inquisitive and liberating force for wider societal change.
- V2** Placing the student voice at the heart of continuous enhancement and co-creation of the student learning experience.
- V3** Recognition of the centrality of equality, diversity, liberation and inclusion to student engagement.
- V4** A belief in students' associations as vital collective, democratic contributors to institutional life and students' experiences.
- V5** A commitment to transformative partnership as an underpinning aspect of work with staff and students.

Knowledge



- K1** The implications of the diversity and intersectionality of the student population in its demography, pedagogy and geography.
- K2** How institutions manage and develop learning and teaching.
- K3** The role of evidence and data in effective student engagement in quality enhancement and assurance.
- K4** The purpose, role and dynamic structures of students' associations.
- K5** How the national and international policy and agency landscape affects, and is shaped by, students.
- K6** Policies, theories and strategies relating to student engagement, feedback and partnership in quality.

Activities



- A1** Empowering all students to own and shape their learning.
- A2** Supporting and enabling academic representative systems.
- A3** Facilitating and promoting the recognition of student engagement activities.
- A4** Working with, supporting and developing student officers as they engage in strategic decisions about learning and teaching.
- A5** Informing and advising decision-makers on students' views and priorities.
- A6** Enabling the generation and use of data about the learning experience.
- A7** Championing partnership-based collaborations between staff and students.
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Student participation professionals

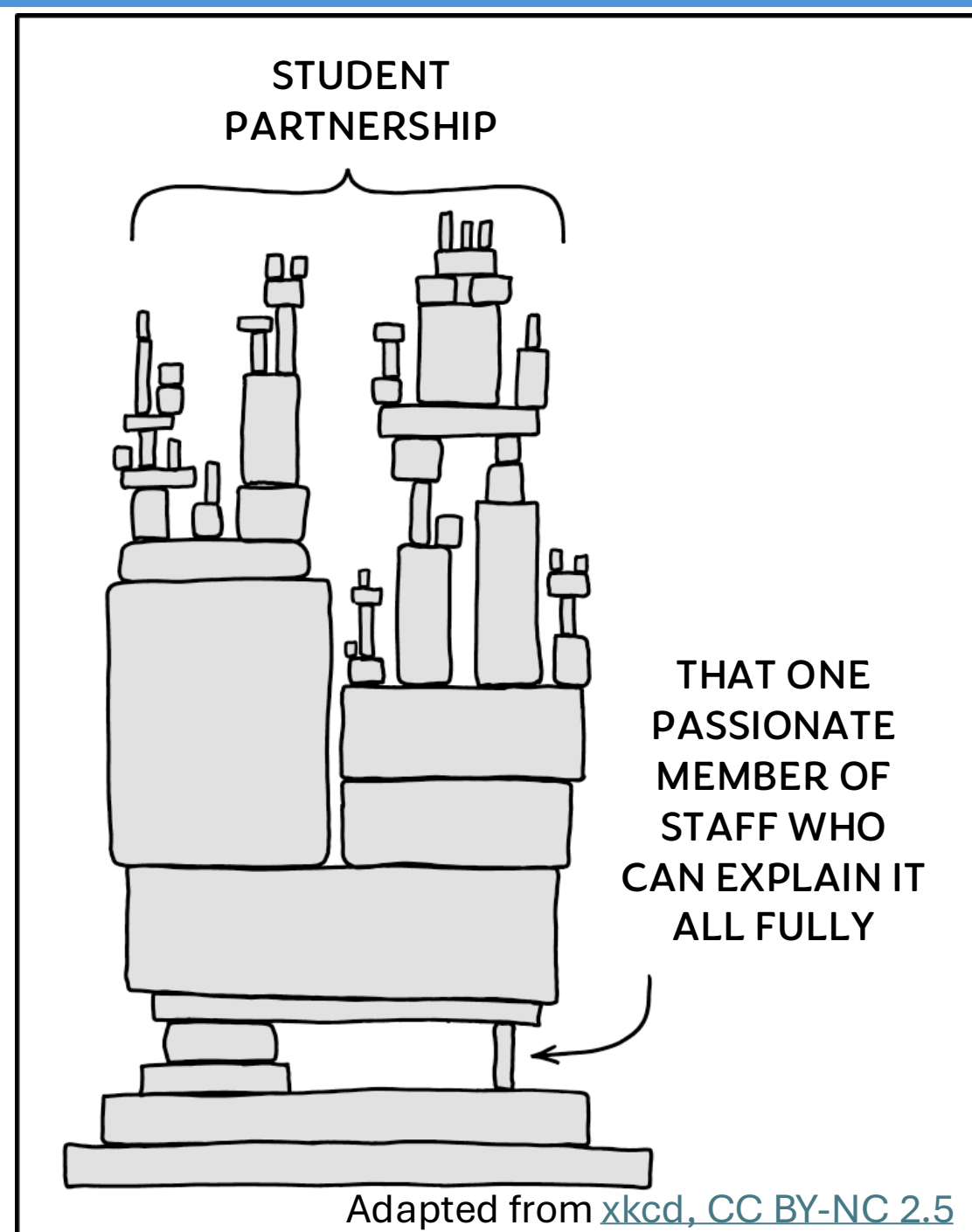
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- Student Engagement Staff Network: learn, share, develop.
- Buddy Scheme, bringing staff together informally.

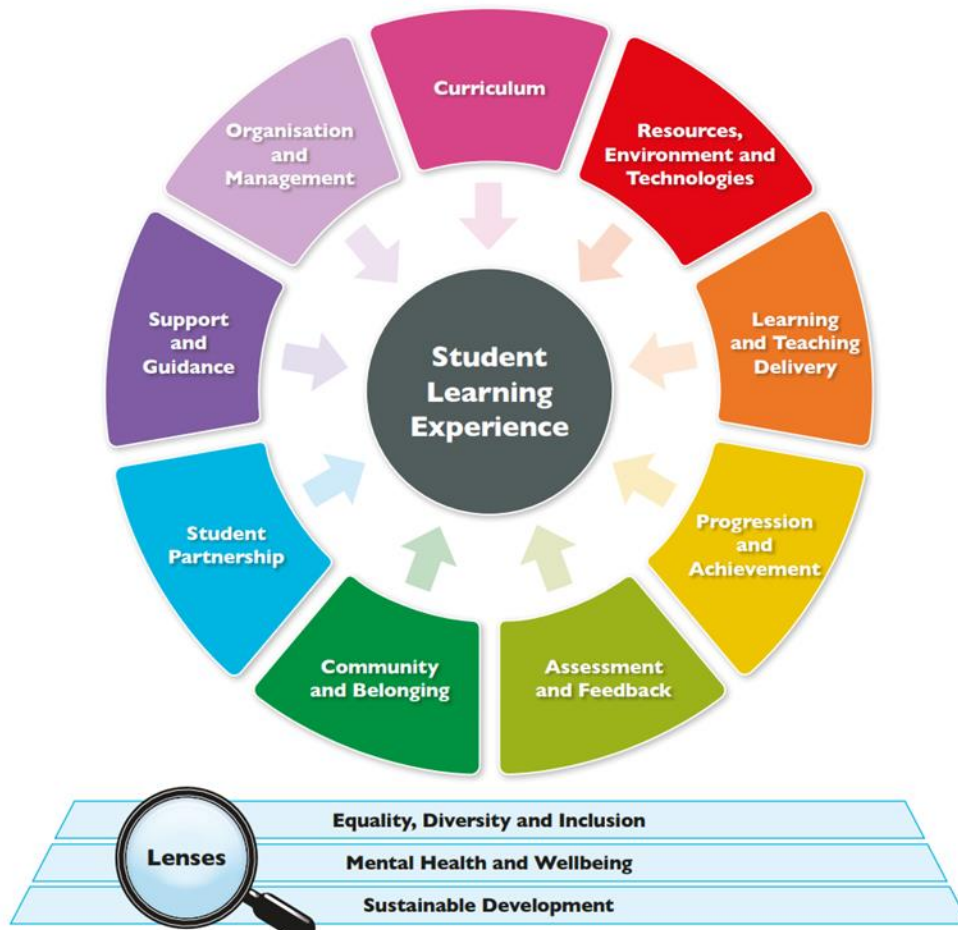
Developing other staff

- Engaging in staff conferences and development programmes.
- Partnership as collaboration.
- “What can reps do for you?”
- Demystifying and co-creating the student rep system/training.
- Student voice as key to retention, satisfaction and achievement.
- Identifying and celebrating successful practice.

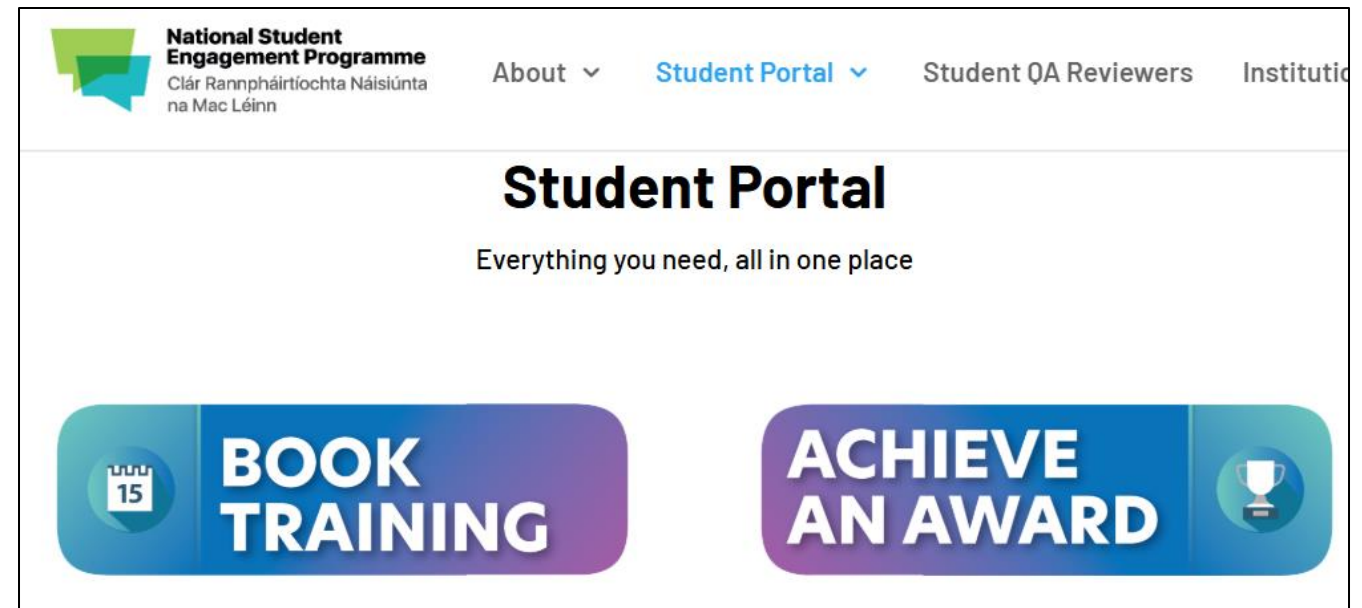


Student rep training

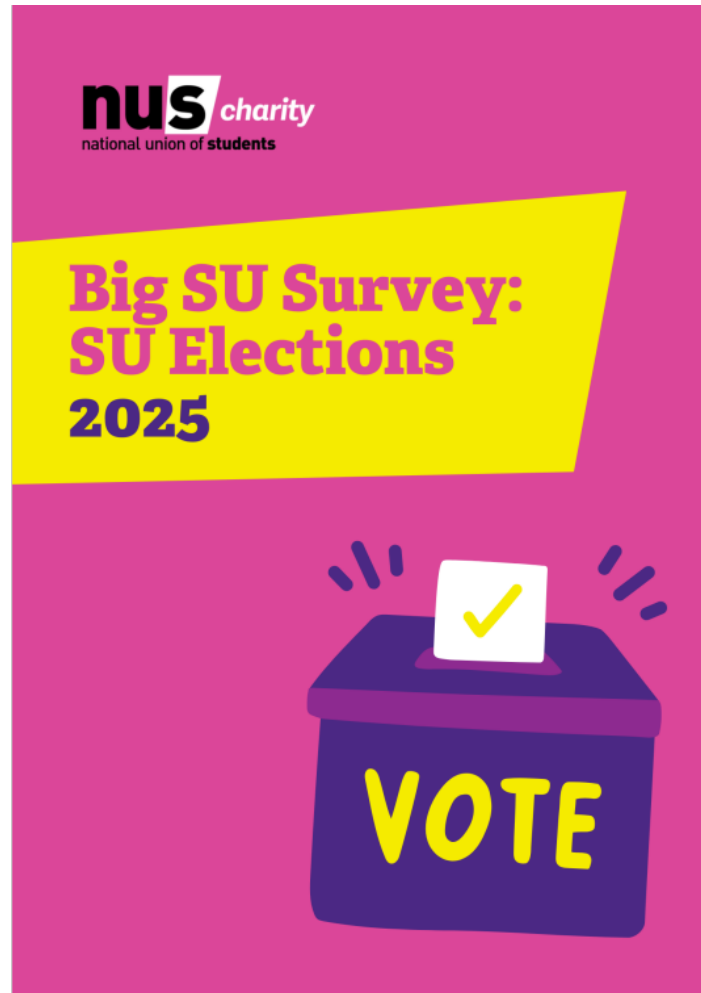
Student Learning Experience (SLE) model



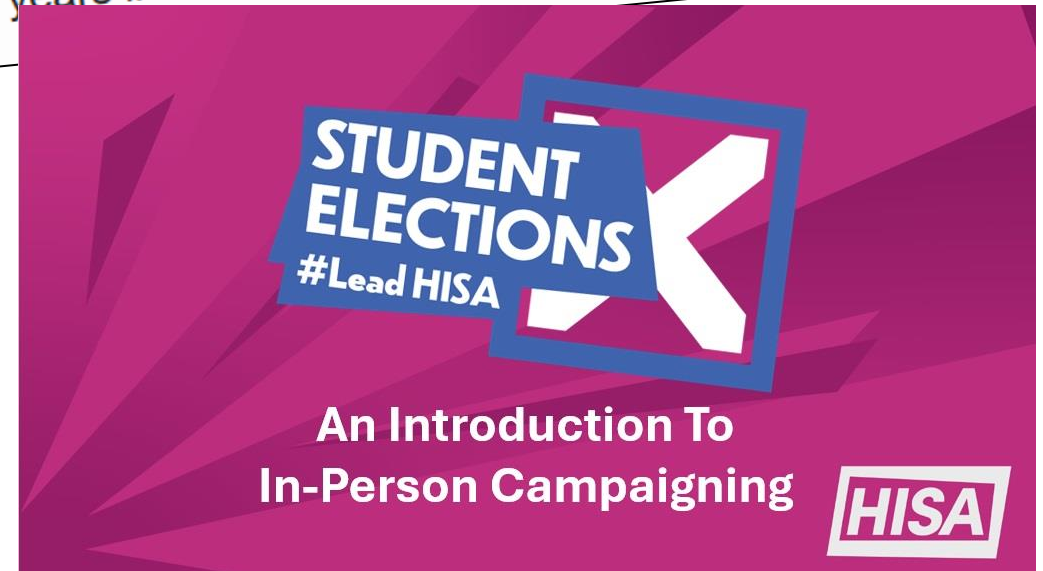
- sparqs' student training team.
- Annual training event for student rep trainers from institutions/SAs.
- Model exported to Ireland:



Approaches to student elections

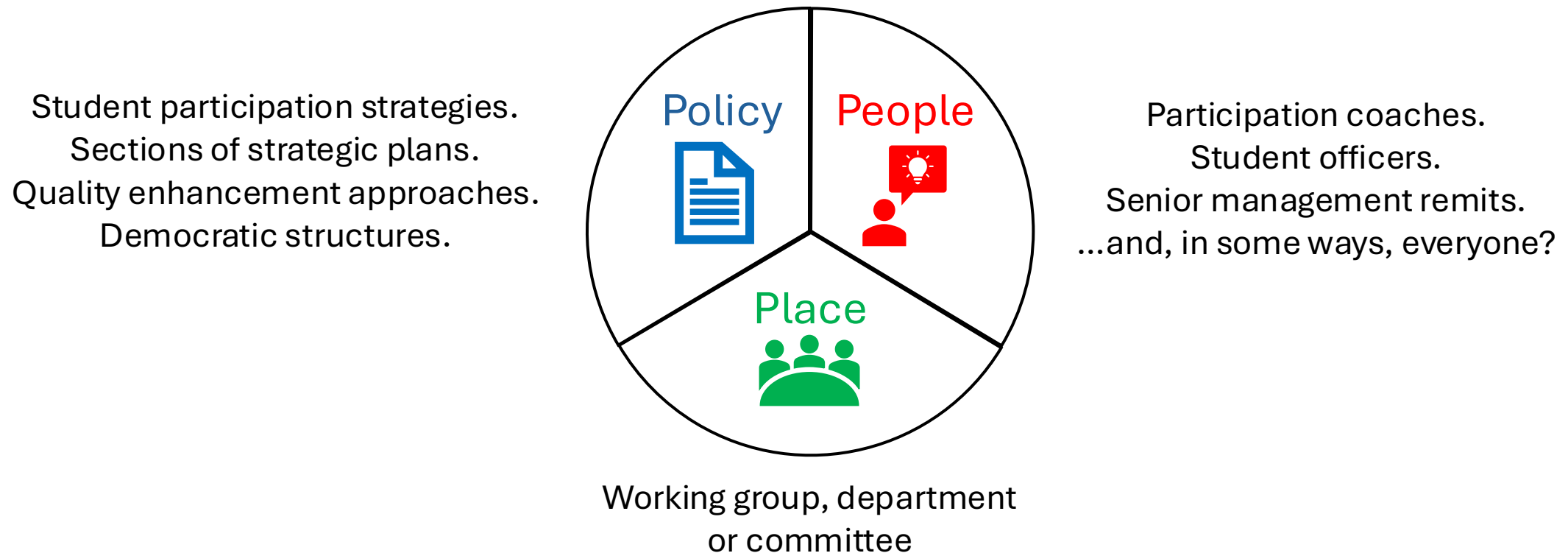


- (d) appointment to major union offices should be by election in a secret ballot in which all members are entitled to vote;
- (e) the governing body should satisfy themselves that the elections are fairly and properly conducted;
- (f) a person should not hold sabbatical union office, or paid elected union office, for more than two years in total at the establishment;



Where next on the mountains and pathways?

- Sustainability beyond the Systems-Wide Analysis.
- For institutions and as the Flemish sector, consider **three Ps**:



Resources and contact details

- Brown, M., & Varwell, S. (2024). Scotland's Student Learning Experience model: Building partnership in quality in a tertiary context. *Journal of Perspectives in Applied Academic Practice*, 12(2). <https://doi.org/10.56433/jpaap.v12i2.605>
- Varwell, S. (2024, October 10). *That thing where I had to sit in front of all the staff*. Wonkhe. <https://wonkhe.com/blogs/that-thing-where-i-had-to-sit-in-front-of-all-the-staff/>
- sparqs' [Professional Standards Framework for Student Engagement](#).
- Scotland's [Student Learning Experience model](#).
- NStEP's [Student Training Programme](#) (Ireland).
- NUS UK's [elections support](#) (much more behind login).

Email: simon.varwell@uhi.ac.uk

Bluesky: [hisasimon.bsky.social](https://bsky.social/hisasimon)

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/simonvarwell/>

**Let this be the start, and not de staart.
Bedankt!**

Zaalverdeling

Rode/roze kleuren: in zelfde gebouw als de aula (485)

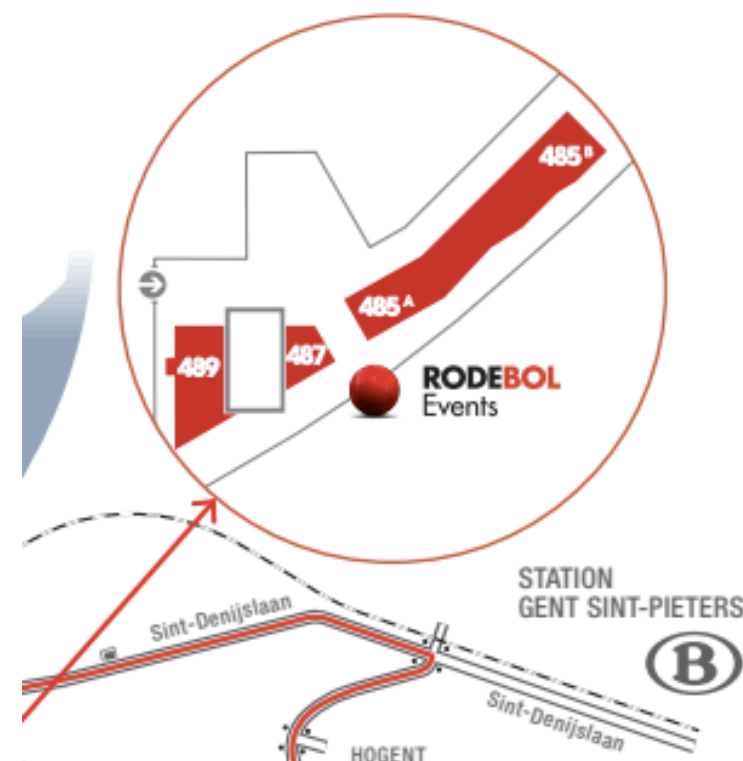
Blauw/groene kleuren: in gebouw aan straatkant (489)

- Slot 1: 10:55-11:35

VUB	Zaal: JaRdin4
VIVES	Zaal: Multimedia
AP	Zaal: CouR4
HOGENT	Zaal: Perspectief

- Slot 2: 11:45-12:25

Howest	Zaal: JaRdin4
UCLL	Zaal: Multimedia
Thomas More	Zaal: CouR4
UAntwerpen	Zaal: Perspectief





Systeembrede analyse Studentenparticipatie
Van inspraak naar impact

Inspiratiesessies



Interactieve sessies deel 1

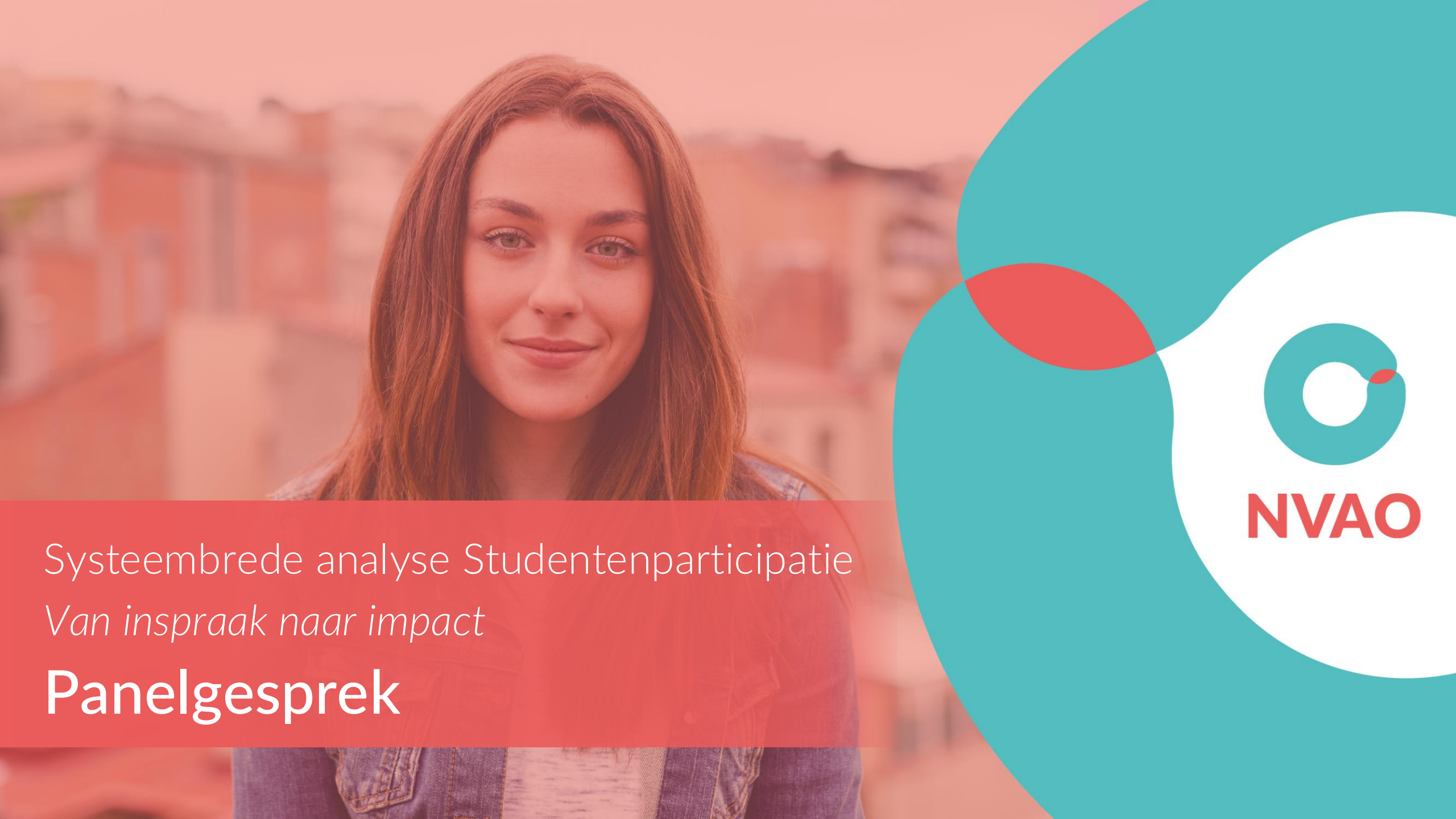
VUB Niet vanzelfsprekend, wél mogelijk: hoe ondersteuning studentenparticipatie versterkt	Zaal: JaRdin4
VIVES Credits voor commitment	Zaal: Multimedia
AP Stuvers als ervaringsdeskundigen	Zaal: CouR4
HOGENT Studentenraad met smoel	Zaal: Perspectief

Interactieve sessies deel 2

Howest Informeel en laagdrempelig inzetten op studentenparticipatie	Zaal: JaRdin4
UCLL Participatie aan UCLL: een combinatie van “Stratego”, “Wie-is-het” en “Mensch erger je niet”	Zaal: Multimedia
Thomas More De participatiecultuur en -coach, sleutels tot succes bij studentenparticipatie	Zaal: CouR4
UAntwerpen Communicatie als motor van participatie	Zaal: Perspectief



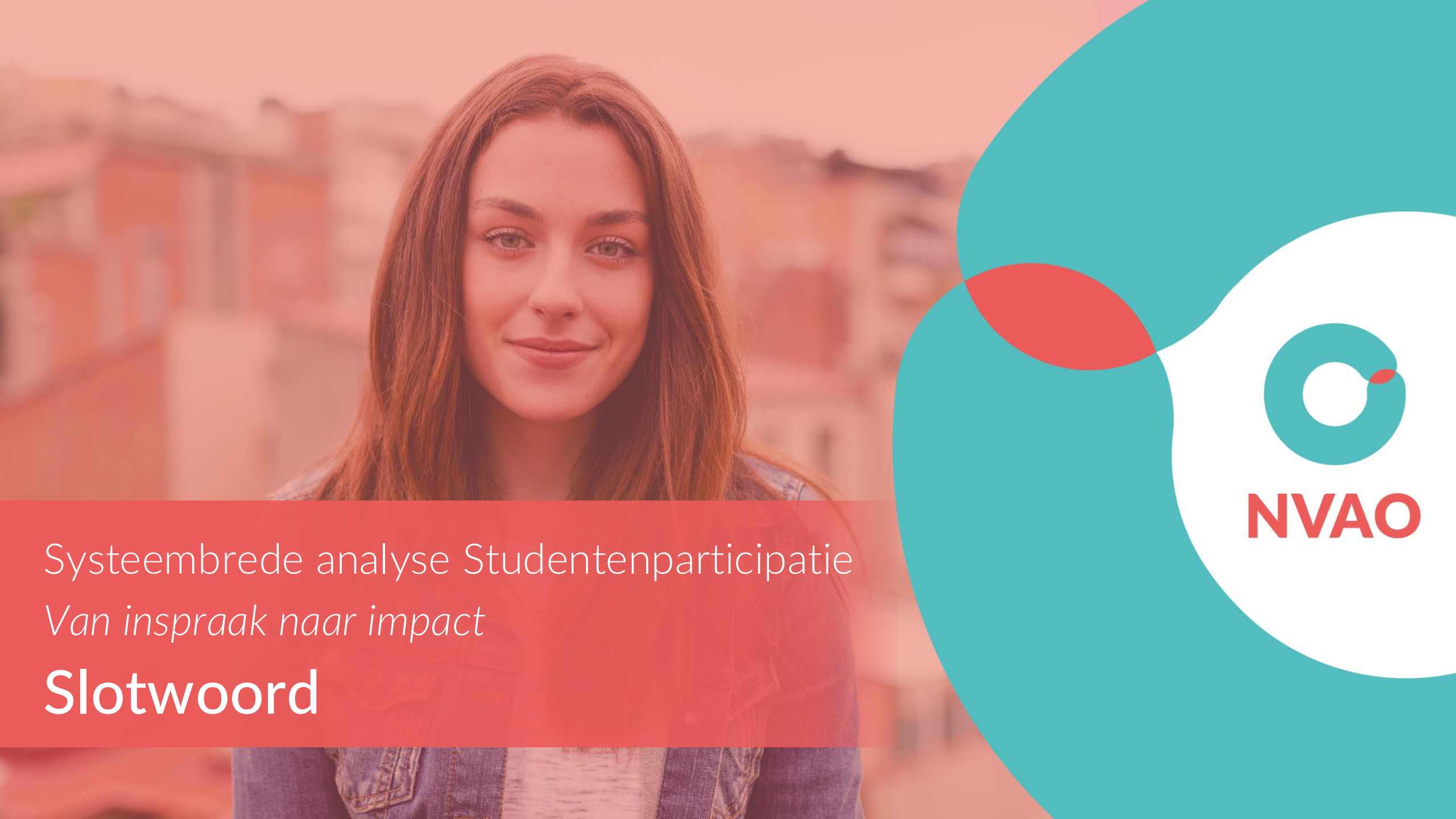
Voorzitter VVS, Nele Van Hoyweghen
Reflecties door VVS



Systeembrede analyse Studentenparticipatie
Van inspraak naar impact

Panelgesprek





Systeembrede analyse Studentenparticipatie
Van inspraak naar impact

Slotwoord





Bedankt voor uw aanwezigheid!

info@nvao.org