Civic crowdfunding processes through the looking glass of participation

An exploration into the role and effects of citizen participation in civic crowdfunding processes

Colophon

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ABSTRACT

Civic crowdfunding processes through the looking glass of participation is an exploration into the role and effects of citizen participation in civic crowdfunding processes, viewed beyond the traditional funding benefits

This research hopes to shed light on the mechanisms of civic crowdfunding as more than an alternative form of funding. This study will explore other aspects of civic crowdfunding, from a social perspective, delving into discussions about the public goods produced by civic crowdfunding, as well as issues of responsibility and sense of ownership. Additionally, this study will delve into the issues of what civic actually represents, since the discussion is about civic crowdfunding. Also, this exploratory study aims not to provide an exhaustive set of conclusions, but more to ignite talking points about civic crowdfunding from a social perspective, the one of participation in the hopes of bringing people together to address the ever-changing challenges of urban living.

Keywords:

- Civic crowdfunding
- Participation
- Public goods
- Ownership
- Responsibility

SUMMARY

The financial context in Europe has changed drastically since the economic crises that started in 2008, causing a lack of funds from both public and private institutions for urban area development. This issue has further increased a certain level of distrust from the people towards public administration.

Civic crowdfunding, a practice originating from entrepreneurship, represents more than just an alternative way of funding, as it poses different challenges related to society. Researchers need to not only look into the financial aspects of civic crowdfunding, but also on the qualitative, communicative and participatory practices involved in civic crowdfunding. As participatory planning has been an approach encouraged and desired by most public administration, the matter in question becomes more challenging yet worthy to explore: participatory planning and civic crowdfunding under the same perspective.

This study aims to provide a better understanding of the participatory practices within civic crowdfunding processes in the context of public space. The goal of the research is to explore how participation, as a defining practice of participatory planning, is manifested in civic crowdfunding processes. This goal shapes this research as an exploratory study that has at its core the main research question:

> In what ways is participation, as an intrinsic characteristic of participatory planning, manifested in civic crowdfunding processes?

In order to answer this, the starting point of the research is an extensive review on the existing literature on participation, as a practice of participatory planning. Then, the research will focus on how civic crowdfunding has been discussed in academic literature to date, in order to have a clear image on how it first emerged and then evolved into the form that is in use today. These two main themes of participation and civic crowdfunding form the two pillars of this research. To help sustain the load, three concepts come in aide of the reader in order to better understand the connection

between the two: public goods as a result of civic crowdfunding processes, the (sense of) ownership that emerges and responsibility.

The empirical data of this study is represented by the case studies included, that showcase the instances of participation within their respective civic crowdfunding processes. These case studies help provide a more pragmatic approach to the topic, adding to the theoretical framework provided by the academic literature.

This research uncovered that, beyond its benefits as an alternative funding method, civic crowdfunding also has social and cultural valences that have not been the focus of academic research in the past. Participants in civic crowdfunding processes not only benefit from a material public good as a product of the project, but they also experience an increased sense of ownership, as well as a more poignant feeling of responsibility towards their communities. Beyond whatever material public good civic crowdfunding projects produce, it appears that this process allows communities to feel more empowered, thus more likely to take action for the betterment of their environment.

In a world re-emerging from a global lock-down, That is possibly on the brink of an economic crisis, civic crowdfunding seems to be more relevant than ever, not only for funding purposes. Additionally, the socio-cultural climate claiming a more mindful and inclusive approach, in which participation could be of great value, recommend civic crowdfunding due to its empowering traits as a participatory practice.

Chapter 1. STUDY OVERVIEW

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1.3.1. Research objective

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1.1. Societal Relevance

The fast-paced and ever changing global society seems to be in constant need of development at all levels: societal, cultural, and economical. These developments are also needed at a spatial level, as the needs of citizens evolve and old, dated infrastructures, spaces, policies quickly become obsolete. But ever since the post 2008 financial crisis, there has been a lack of financial power from the traditional public and private institutions to fund urban area development (Davies, 2014 b). As a result of the constant need for spatial improvement, an important task is to find new ways to raise capital. As the traditional market fails to fund these improvements, bottom-up initiatives emerge (Sewraj, 2013). However, the funding element of this civic participation lacks. In the light of the position that public participation has nowadays, seeming to be desired by many planning authorities at local and even national levels, and the lack of financial power from public and private institutions, using crowdfunding as a funding method in the urban area development seems to fit seamlessly. Despite that, there have not been consistent attempts to understand or use the participation practices in civic crowdfunding processes.

Starting in the 1970's, the real estate market and public investors (large companies) have been the engine of urban development, in terms of funding (Davies, 2014 a). But with the reality of the economic crisis that struck Europe in 2008, came the reality of a lack of funding for public projects. This was translated into an increased interest in finding new ways to raise capital (Davies, 2014 b; Zhao, Harris & Lam, 2019). The need for strategic, sustainable planning for urban area development is very high, and a cooperation between communities and stakeholders can contribute towards limiting the differences between 'what is planned and what is being built in practice' (Sewraj, 2013, p. 6). Civic crowdfunding heavily relies on participation from citizens, not only in the form of financial donations but other donations as well (volunteering, sharing skills, committing their time or non-financial resources, etc.). It is important to take into consideration that in civic crowdfunding projects participation appears at all levels and with different degrees of involvement. It's not only the citizens

that participate. As it will be further elaborated, civic crowdfunding projects are processes that involve a number of different stakeholders. According to multiple authors (Correia de Freitas & Amado, 2013; Belleflamme, Lambert & Schwienbacher, 2014; Davies, 2014 a), civic crowdfunding has been documented as increasing general participation rates among the community. Sometimes, civic crowdfunding creates a snowball effect in terms of ownership, initiative, commitment among communities, leading to an overall increase in the area's development projects. Civic crowdfunding also tends to extend its effects to areas adjacent to it, maximizing the scale of its impact in terms of civic and community public space development, as other scholars have observed (Correia de Freitas & Amado, 2013; Davies, 2014 b; Kleinhans, van Ham & Evans-Cowley, 2015).

It is also important to note that the community involvement seems to be related to its awareness of projects, and this is an important factor that plays a role in future participation. Donors in civic crowdfunding campaigns also tend to generally be more involved in their respective communities, according to scientific literature (Davies 2014 a & b; van Veelen, 2015; Doan & Toledano, 2018). Existing scientific literature signals a connection between people's involvement in a project and their respective donation, thus signaling a relation between finances and participation. But it is also true that, while some people cannot make a financial contribution, they donate in different ways, by sharing their time, skills or expertise (We make places, n.d.).

According to many scholars (Beyea, 2009; Davies 2014 a & b; van Veelen 2015; Doan & Toledano, 2018), public participation has become a valuable tool for projects related to urban planning, with well documented advantages. Since the 1980's, planning authorities have strived to encourage citizen participation, due to its documented beneficial outcomes (building trust, reducing the risk of unacceptance, general consensus, better representation) (Davies, 2014 a & b; Stiver et al., 2015; Baeck, Bone & Mitchell, 2017; Doan & Toledano, 2018). Although the issues related to public participation have been vastly discussed and documented in academic literature, there is still little knowledge about how crowdfunding works. The number of papers documenting the process of crowdfunding public projects is limited, providing little information on the underlying mechanisms of it. One reason for it might be the one of the biggest points of criticism for civic crowdfunding, that it is somewhat biased, being applied mostly in major cities, in middle-income neighborhoods and focusing mostly on environmental and green space-related projects. But despite that, the reality

of public projects based on crowdfunding in undeniable (Davies, 2014b; van Veelen, 2015; Baeck, Bone & Mitchell, 2017).

The economic crisis has been the white-card of municipalities and other policy makers when it comes to motivating their lack of action, since 2008. This has created a certain rupture between ‘officials’ and ‘individuals’. This rupture was layered on a pre-existing condition, the lack of trust in governments, stakeholders and policy makers, due to various political and social turbulences in the past years.

In the present, there is an effort from project initiators (whether they are policy-makers, governments, municipalities or private stakeholders) to take into consideration the opinions of citizens when developing of project. But how to do that when the existing level of distrust is this high? Different communities desire certain public spaces and appropriate projects for them, but the public administration cannot allow funds for these issues, furthering the gap between the two parties. Different attempts have been made to find alternative funding and to get people more involved in the planning process. As long as civic crowdfunding allows participants to be involved in other ways besides the financial donations, this mostly allows for contributors to also have a voice in the decision-making processes, to a variable degree. This ranges between contributors being able to give input on a project to them actually making certain decisions for the project above any other deciding entity. This relates deeply to Arnstein’s ladder of citizen participation (Arnstein, 1969).

One of the most talked-about phenomenon in the past few years was civic crowdfunding, as many scholars have observed (Agrawal, Catalini & Goldfarb, 2014; Davies, 2014 a & b; Care et al., 2017).

Although not a new concept, having been used in funding the pedestal for the Statue of Liberty in New York and the Romanian Athenaeum, this funding mechanism has gained traction in the last years due to a general lack of funding for public projects.

The Romanian Athenaeum has been through it all, having been altered and improved many times and having nearly been destroyed by the bombings of the Second World War. The neoclassic-style building is now the icon of Bucharest, but its existence is due to one of the earliest civic crowdfunding campaigns. The story of the Romanian Athenaeum begins in 1865, with the founding of the ‘Romanian Athenaeum’ Literary Society, with the goal of sharing useful knowledge to the middle class, such

as courses and public conferences, held in a different location. In 1885, intellectuals and scholars within the 'Romanian Athenaeum' initiate the process of building a new headquarters for the literary society (The Epoch Times, 2017). Due to their inability to provide the complete amount of funds, they start an entire campaign of raising funds. First, a partnership with the Romanian Lottery that relied on people buying raffles in the hopes of winning the jackpot of 75,000 lei. Secondly, a series of fundraising festivities organized throughout the country by intellectuals and socialites alike. With the simple yet effective slogan 'Give a leu for the Ateneu!', citizens are encouraged to donate in the public subscription campaign (Constantinescu, 1989). This proved to be a real success, as the donations amounted the sum necessary for the construction of the new building. Thus, under the supervision of its designing architect, Albert Galleron (Ungureanu, 2016), the construction of the Romanian Athenaeum begins on October 26th 1886. Although the construction was only finalized in 1897, the Athenaeum was inaugurated on January 14th 1888 (Agerpres, 2018). Now hosting the 'George Enescu' State Philharmonic, the construction of the Athenaeum would not have been possible without this campaign that can be categorized as an early example of civic crowdfunding.

Another example of civic crowdfunding in its infancy is represented by the campaign launched to fund the pedestal for the Statue of Liberty in New York. Received as a diplomatic gift from the French Government, the statue, designed by French sculptor Frederic Auguste Bartholdi, arrived in pieces in New York in 1885. The problem was that it needed a pedestal to be placed on, valued at 250,000 dollars. The American Committee of the Statue of Liberty was appointed in charge of raising the funds, but managed to only amount to two thirds of the total. Due to the refusal of the Governor to fund it and the inability of the Congress to establish a funding package, the issue remained unresolved. The initiative of launching a fundraising campaign was launched by publisher Joseph Pulitzer, in The New York World newspaper. In five months, using a the newspaper as the only collection point, the campaign managed to pool from over 160,000 donors a total of 101,091 dollars. This was enough to cover the remaining amount needed to fund the granite pedestal, by constantly publishing appeals for support as well as updates, making it comparable to the process of today's civic crowdfunding processes (BBC, 2013).

There have also been successful crowdfunding campaigns in modern times. One of these examples is the Liverpool Flyover, located in Liverpool, United Kingdom. The Liverpool Flyover became an idea as a response to Liverpool's 2012 Strategic Investment Framework. This plan included the demolition of Churchill way, an unused concrete structure, remnant of outdated infrastructure, demolition estimated at £3-4 million. (We make places, n.d.). Friends of the Flyover is an association that aimed to save the flyover and also create a new public space, project that would total less than half of the cost of demolishing (Ibid.). The project was successful at reaching its target goal of £40,844 (Spacehive, n.d.b; We make places, n.d.), covering the feasibility plan, specifically the design, surveying, and planning phases of the project. More than half of the amount was funded by individuals, whereas the other 50% was raised by four private partners. With successful completion of the funding phase, the project has moved forward with the design phase. As part of this process, the Friends of the Flyover has capitalized on the crowd's engagement and started outreach to gather ideas regarding the final design. Due to their very active presence on social media, which also lead to a big media coverage, the Friends of the Flyover managed to get people involved from the beginning, according to Kate Stewart, one of the founders. (Bailey, 2014). She also emphasized people's high involvement in the project, staring that 'What has become really important to the campaign is how strongly people feel about it. That is the benefit of the crowd funding process' (Kate Stewart, as cited by Brown, 2014). After achieving the goal of the crowdfunding campaign, Friends of the Flyover gained permission for the first phase of occupation on site, hosting many editions of Flyover Takeover, events that include music and dance performances, art installations, workshops and family-friendly events (Friends of The Flyover, n.d.).

Another interesting example of modern-times civic crowdfunding is the Glyncoch Community Centre in Glyncoch, Wales. By 2010, the first community center of Glyncoch that was built in 1997 was in a poor state (Davies, 2014 b). Glyncoch Regeneration Ltd., a non-profit organization lead by volunteers in hopes of building a new center, managed to raise about 95% of the sum needed for the new center from various funds (the UK government, European Union funds, Rhonnda Cyon Taf council), but £30,000 was still needed (Spacehive, n.d. a). Although having no previous experience with civic crowdfunding, the initiators turned to Spacehive in order to raise the remaining amount needed, as 'they could tap into lots of new

philanthropists, including some bigger ones' (Louisa Addiscott as cited in Davies, 2014 b, p. 77). The campaign launched on December 7th 2011 and gained traction with the support of local celebrity Stephen Fry, after he tweeted that 'It seems you can crowdfund a community center for the price of a cucumber sandwich', encouraging people to 'join in' and donate' (Lake, 2012). Combining individual donations from locals and large scale donations from various sponsors proved to be efficient in the Glyncoch case, as the campaign was successfully founded and the new community center was built. The social media frenzy created by people who backed-up the project attracted media coverage, which ultimately amplified the attention towards the campaign (Davies, 2014 b).

Perhaps one of the best known examples of civic crowdfunding nowadays is the Luchtsingel pedestrian bridge in Rotterdam, The Netherlands, as it not only managed to reach its crowdfunding goal that ensured the completion of the bridge, but also generated a wave of urban redevelopment in the area .The pedestrian bridge was needed to connect different areas of the city, as the area is traversed by a very busy road. The initiative was to complete in thirty years, as the local authorities did not have the budget to fund the construction. (Lear, 2014). In order to avoid that, the architecture firm ZUS (Zones Urbaines Sensibles) started a crowdfunding campaign in order to gather the funds needed for the project. By buying individual planks or even a segment of the bridge, the campaign raised over $130,000 from 2012 until 2014, using the slogan 'The more you donate, the longer the bridge', the crowdfunding campaign raised enough money to start the project (ZUS, n.d.). The project also competed and won a governmental grant of € 4 million in infrastructure money (Kleverlaan, 2012). Besides the completion of the bridge, there are three other initiatives were emerged in the area: DakAkker, a rooftop harvestable garden, also, installing a green roof on Hofplein Station be getting a green roof, and the transformation of the Pompenburg area, a former storage area transformed into a park, as a pivoting point within a larger network of public greens (Luchtsingel, n.d.). The pedestrian bridge design is the result of meetings between the initiators of the project, the architects at ZUS, entrepreneurs in the area as well as interested members of the community.

Despite many accounts of successful crowdfunding campaigns, the topic of civic crowdfunding seems to be under-studied in scientific literature.

Authors with expertise in the field of civic crowdfunding (Schwienbacher & Larralde, 2010; Davies 2014 a & b) have documented this gap in their studies. Their perspective is one more focused on the social aspect of civic crowdfunding, as it is in itself a social interaction. Their studies, while they appreciate the effectiveness of civic crowdfunding campaigns as alternatives for funding, delve more into the social aspects of this social action. As Davies (2014b) notes, 'work has begun on understanding the communicative and social dynamics that influence crowdfunding' (Ibid, p. 18), thus signaling the birth of a shift in attention from viewing crowdfunding as a 'financing mechanism […] to the qualitatively unique aspects of crowdfunding and participant behaviors' (Ibid, p. 18).

1.2. Scientific Relevance

This societal issue can easily be translated into the scientific realm, as it addresses a shift in crowdfunding practices. Documented by other scholars as well (Schwienbacher & Larralde, 2010; Davies, 2014 b; van Veelen, 2015), the author also identified a clear gap when discussing civic crowdfunding as more than just a funding method. This is what has been the nascent point of this research, as it is the author's belief that a better understanding of participation in civic crowdfunding is deeply needed.

Despite a variety of laudatory as well as incisive studies in the field of crowdfunding, it seems that in the past few years the academic world has begun to shift the focus point. According to other scholars, 'attention is beginning to turn from the outcomes and dynamics of crowdfunding purely as a financial mechanism like most others to the qualitatively unique aspects of crowdfunding and participant behaviors' (Davies, 2014 b, p. 18).

The existing academic literature mostly discusses the subject of crowdfunding, as a practice originating from entrepreneurship, finance and computer-supported cooperative work. Although this approach is valuable in order to understand the origins

of crowdfunding and how it evolved, it is not in tune with what crowdfunding means for planning. Civic or community-oriented crowdfunding has to deal with issues that are related to planning in the context of society, organizational behavior and political science (Davies 2014 a & b; Sewraj, 2013; van Veelen, 2015; Carè et al., 2018). This means that although civic crowdfunding is widely seen primarily as a method of raising funds, the context in which crowdfunding is used needs a better understanding of other aspects, which will be elaborated upon further. But this approach can have a different interpretation: the act of donating and being financially involved in a project increases the level of participation. This ultimately leads to more financial contribution and more engagement from the communities, which can only be beneficial for public space and the development projects associated with it.

Sewraj (2013) identifies different gaps in the context of planning 'between what is planned and what is being built in practice' (Sewraj, 2013, p. 6) and between 'the opportunities that are available and the proper use of Social Media by knowing the conditions' (Ibid., p. 192), thus highlighting a need for research in both the assessment of the results of civic crowdfunding projects as well as in the use of social media (in the form of crowdfunding platforms) to accurately represent a community's needs. This gap was also identified by Davies, that there are 'significant knowledge gaps due to the lack of reliable and consistent project data across platforms' (Davies, 2014 b, p. 143), thus encouraging an exploration into the types of goods provided by civic crowdfunding. The same author encourages further research to also analyze 'the opportunity and potential positive impact that institutional players could have on civic crowdfunding by engaging more actively with its design and development' (Ibid., p. 144) and that 'more robust analysis of the field will be required to support the effective application of civic crowdfunding (Davies, 2014 a, p. 22). His recommendations echo other researcher's observations that the issue of responsibility should also be addressed in the larger discussion on civic crowdfunding, with van Veelen noting that 'the citizens want responsibility for their urban area, but authorities are still needed' (van Veelen, 2015, p. 103). Another point of interest for further research pointed out by academic literature is the participants' sense of ownership, as this topic has not been sufficiently discussed in the existing body of literature (Stiver et al., 2015; Doan & Toledano, 2018; Zhao, Harris & Lam, 2019).

This poses a unique challenge for researchers to not get tangled only in the financial aspects of civic crowdfunding and its related practices, but to also explore the qualitative, communicative and participatory practices that are involved in civic crowdfunding projects (Rydin, 2013; Davies, 2014 b). This translates into a lack of studies tackling this topic, which this research aims to contribute to, as well as to encourage other researchers to join this quest of gaining more insight into civic crowdfunding.

This research aims to focus more on the participatory aspect of civic crowdfunding, by going beyond the existing research and observing civic crowdfunding through a participatory looking glass, in the hopes of creating a better understanding of how participation manifests in civic crowdfunding processes.

Firstly, for the sake of clarity, this study will provide an initial definition initial, working definition for civic crowdfunding:

Civic crowdfunding is a practice that relies of public funding from various donors in order to cover the costs of a project delivering public goods

(Doan & Toledano, 2018; Zhao, Harris & Lam, 2019).

This will be considered a working definition, as crowdfunding will be discussed from its beginning, throughout its evolution and a distinction will be made to what civic crowdfunding currently represents in further chapters.

1.3. Research Objective, Research Design, Conceptual Model

1.3.1. Research objective

Despite a number of documented cases of projects achieving their goals through crowdfunding, as some authors have elaborated (Sewraj, 2013; Davies, 2014b; van Veelen, 2015), the practical problem is that too little is known about the mechanisms of civic crowdfunding that go beyond the stage of funding the

project (Belleflame, Lambert & Schwienbacher, 2014; Doan & McKie, 2018; Doan & Toledano, 2018; Gullino et al., 2018).

The existing literature on the phenomenon of crowdfunding is usually referred to as being new and not extensive enough (Schwienbacher & Larralde, 2010; Belleflame, Lambert & Schwienbacher, 2014). Despite there being numerous studies describing the funding models and the participants within the crowdfunding process, most studies focus on the analysis of campaigns carried out for social projects, the music or film industries of different 'isolated' products from different industries (Oradnini et al., 2011; Belleflame, Lambert & Schwienbacher, 2014).

Although the existing literature mentions that 'other sources of finance are likely to come from more creative forms of lending' such as crowdfunding (Rydin, 2013, p. 180), there seems to be a gap in the scientific literature that can provide a deeper understanding of this process. Very often civic crowdfunding is discussed from the point of view of its funding abilities, without exploring other aspects of it. As it was previously mentioned, civic crowdfunding is a specific branch of crowdfunding that is focused on communities. This implies that crowdfunding deals more with the human aspect, which is not enough understood from the perspective of how people behave and interact with the crowdfunding process itself.

The present study aims to tackle the gap existing in the academic literature: not looking past the financial aspect of civic crowdfunding.

The goal of this study is to explore the instances of participation in civic crowdfunding processes, in the hopes of better understanding the role and effects of citizen participation in civic crowdfunding processes.

Due to such limited existing literature on this specific niche of crowdfunding, this will be an exploratory study, aiming to shed light on the mechanisms of crowdfunding as more than a mere alternative for traditional funding methods. This study will explore other aspects of civic crowdfunding, from a social perspective, delving into discussions about the public goods produced by civic crowdfunding, as well as issues of responsibility and sense of ownership. Additionally, this study will delve into the issues of what civic actually represents, since the discussion is about civic crowdfunding. Also, this

exploratory study aims not to provide an exhaustive set of conclusions, but more to ignite talking points about civic crowdfunding from a social perspective as well.

The first step is to analyze the existing academic literature on civic crowdfunding, in order to analyze its origins and evolution. This will transition into providing an initial definition of civic crowdfunding, as it has been identified in previous academic works. Also, the mechanisms of crowdfunding will be discussed, in order to better understand the processes involved and to provide the theoretical framework that will guide this research forward.

Secondly, the subject of participation will be discussed, also as a theoretical framework for the research. This study will focus on what has been identified as participatory practices in the existing literature, as well as on the possible effects they might have.

This research will also discuss three main concepts as a backbone for providing the link between participation and civic crowdfunding, public goods, (sense of) ownership and responsibility. These concepts are extremely relevant, as they provide a logical connection between the main themes of the research, facilitating the understanding of a discussion about both of them. These concepts will be explored in the theoretical framework chapter, providing a strong background for discussing civic crowdfunding from a much broader perspective. In addition, these concepts will take the reader on a journey of civic crowdfunding, as they have contributed to its nascence and evolution until the form it has today.

1.3.2. Research design

1.3.2.A. General research question

Research claim:

Civic crowdfunding displays characteristics of participatory planning processes.

As previously stated, this research relies on the claim that civic crowdfunding processes, as deeply social interactions, use participation (as it is understood in participatory planning processes).

As previously elaborated upon in chapters 1.1. Societal relevance and 1.2. Scientific relevance, this claim leads to the question:

In what ways is participation, as an intrinsic characteristic of participatory planning, manifested in civic crowdfunding processes?

The purpose of the general research question is not only to identify types and levels participation, but also to place them as a practice of participatory planning within the context of civic crowdfunding, as civic crowdfunding is not only an alternative method of funding but, ultimately, a way for people to express their involvement. Upon further study of the available literature on civic crowdfunding and its participatory qualities, it became obvious that some authors recognized civic crowdfunding as more than just an alternative funding method, as previously mentioned in the chapter of Research Problem and Objective. This research question directly addresses that claim, in order shed light on the participation aspect of civic crowdfunding. The role of participation will be discussed within civic crowdfunding processes, based on participation practices that would have been found in participatory planning theory. Participatory planning processes could have different characteristics, thus possibly being able to relate to crowdfunding. Additionally, different types of crowdfunding processes could provide more opportunities to identify similarities with participatory planning processes, which are context dependent. This question aims to identify the common ground between participatory planning and civic crowdfunding in terms of participation, in order to enhance the effects of such processes and reach a much broader scope.

Not all civic crowdfunding projects have an opportunity for participatory planning, as donors don’t necessarily have the opportunity to decide or even give input to a specific solution. Despite this, the participatory aspect of civic crowdfunding campaigns is undeniable. The mere fact that individuals (with or without prior knowledge about the cause, with or without interest of benefiting

from the good that a project produces) choose to financially contribute is a participatory act. This does not mean that civic crowdfunding processes are equivalent to participatory planning ones. Instead, this study will try to shed light on why it is important to view civic crowdfunding as a process that is based on participation.

Additionally, it is important to note that civic crowdfunding processes pride themselves on being able to more than maintain the initial interest that they attract, by finding ingenious ways in which to involve the citizens even more.

1.3.2.B. Secondary research questions

The key concepts that this research considers to be a connection between the two themes of participation and civic crowdfunding are: public goods, (sense of) ownership and responsibility, as derived from academic literature as explained in chapter 1.2. Scientific Relevance. Thus, in order to shed light on these concepts and help answer the main research question, this study relies on the following secondary research questions:

SRQ1: How is the notion of public goods represented as results of civic crowdfunding projects?

This question comes to support the main research question, by first assessing civic crowdfunding as a mechanism that has evolved from its beginnings to its current form, as well as to shed light on their products, the public goods. The answer to this main question will provide a deeper understanding of not only the end goal of civic crowdfunding projects, but focus the research in terms of the interventions that civic crowdfunding produces in public space. This question is of undeniable value, as it is important to first understand what 'public goods' are, thus helping to avoid any misconceptions about the term. Davies (2014 b) notes that in itself, the term 'public good' is hard to pinpoint a definition for, as they are usually a representation of the interest of power holders. The definition that he accepts is one that 'public good is a good that once provided, cannot reasonably be withheld from any member of a group' (Davies, 2014 b,

p.29). For civic crowdfunding, this implies that the projects produce goods that are available to all the members of a community, disregarding their donation. This concept will further be discussed in chapter 3.

SRQ2: How is ownership manifested as a consequence of participation in civic crowdfunding projects?

This question aims to explore the already documented phenomenon of increased sense of ownership as a result of participating in civic crowdfunding projects (Mollick, 2014; Cordova, Dolci & Gianfrate, 2015; van Veelen, 2015). Lachapelle documents that while the term of ownership has become a common point of discussion in the context of community development, 'there is a paucity of research' in what this means and 'how this body of knowledge influences community development (Lachapelle, 2008, p. 2). As a result of their financial contribution to crowdfunding campaigns, donors have a sense of ownership of the products that the projects deliver, as authors like Davies (2014 b), Silva (2015) and Stiver et. al. (2015) have observed. This is relevant information as the donors are more connected to the product that is delivered by crowdfunding and they have a sense of it belonging to them. This question is interesting to investigate, as it will add value to the existing literature discussing the effects of civic crowdfunding, of which ownership has not been exhaustively delved into.

SRQ 3: What are the understandings of responsibility in the context of civic crowdfunding processes?

This research question will focus on the issue of responsibility in civic crowdfunding processes, as previous academic literature (Davies, 2014 a; Stiver et al., 2015; van Veelen, 2015; Doan & Toledano, 2018; Zhao, Harris & Lam., 2019) suggests that there is insufficient knowledge on it, as described in chapter 1.2. Scientific Relevance. The goal is to understand the meaning of

responsibility within the planning processes, as well as its implications and to whom is this responsibility usually attributed.

1.3.2. Conceptual model

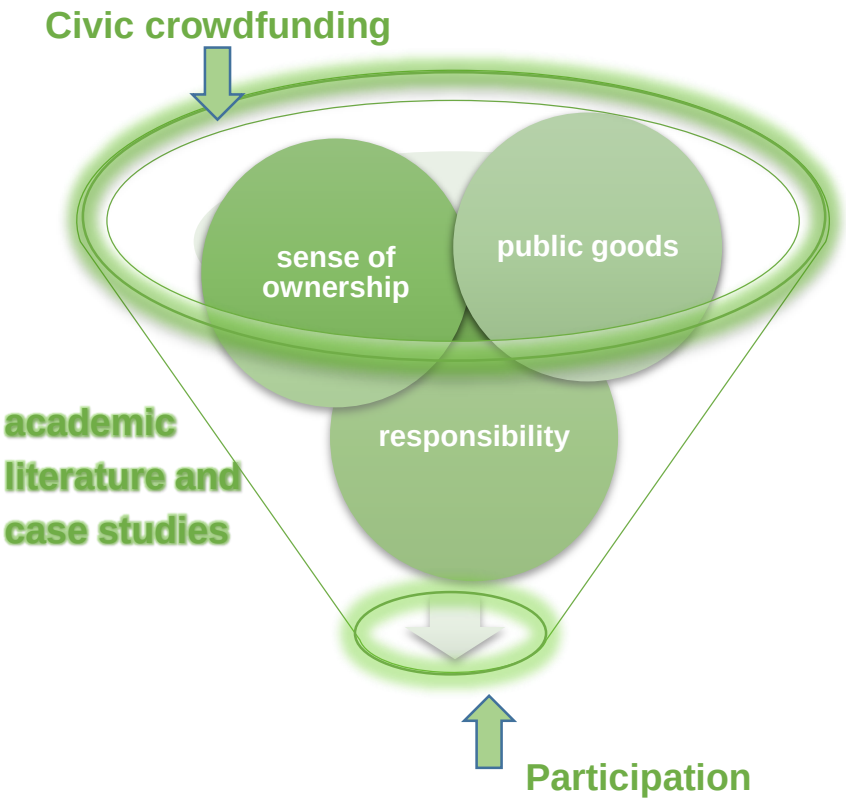


Figure 1. Conceptual model.

The conceptual model serves as a visual representation of the research design of this study.

Considering the approach of civic crowdfunding through the looking glass of participation, it is clear that the main area of interest of this research is civic crowdfunding. As it also shown in the conceptual model, civic crowdfunding represents a broad topic that has many areas of interest and can be approached in different ways. Participation acts as a funnel for the pool of civic

crowdfunding processes, as the interest of this thesis is to mainly focus on the participatory instances that appear in such processes.

As the goal of the research suggests, the purpose is to shed light on participation aspects of civic crowdfunding, as the latter represents much more than an alternative funding mechanism.

The three main concepts (public goods, sense of ownership and responsibility) are useful for the larger discussion about civic crowdfunding. As mentioned in previous chapters, civic crowdfunding has been approached in the academic writing up to date (mainly) as an alternative funding mechanism. Due to its use of participation, it has become more and more clear that civic crowdfunding has other valences that are worth being discussed. This is exactly what this research is trying to achieve, by expanding the talking points to the public goods that civic crowdfunding delivers, the (sense of) ownership that seems to appear for contributors in these processes and as well as the issue of responsibility in regards to civic crowdfunding processes.

The present research aims to provide a compelling case for a much larger use of civic crowdfunding processes in the future. By analyzing the existing academic literature in regards to the origin and evolution of civic crowdfunding, this process will not only be easier to understand as it is currently used, but also to use in the future, by taking into consideration its weaknesses and acknowledging possible criticism. The looking glass of participation serves not only to distance civic crowdfunding from its funding abilities, as they have been already recognized and documented in the academic literature, but to showcase its social aspects that are usually disregarded or insufficiently discussed. Due to the social nature of the act of participation, it seems evident at least from a transitivity perspective, that civic crowdfunding is a participatory and thus, deeply social process.

Although it has been documented that civic crowdfunding processes produces different types of public goods, it is the researcher's stance that this discussion has not been exhaustive. The research will argue that public goods are not only tangible, palpable products such as parks, community hubs or gardens, but also intangible ones, in the form of citizen empowerment. The sense of ownership

that has already been documented by academics will be presented not only as a motivation for the donor's involvement, but will hopefully also provide some valuable lessons for the future use of civic crowdfunding. The issue of responsibility has been extensively discussed in ethics discourse in regards to planning, but this research aims to also deepen the understanding or responsibility as belonging not only to planners and authorities, but also to citizens.

All the above talking points from the academic literature will be compared, corroborated and discussed by using the empirical data. This data will be gathered from two carefully selected case studies that use civic crowdfunding and participation. All three concepts will be exemplified with the use of the empirical data from the selected case studies.

All these findings will be discussed in the chapters Discussion and Conclusions, in the hopes of recognizing not only the learning points of this research, but also with the goal of contributing to the existing academic writings on the topic and of providing a starting point for more research.

Chapter 2. CIVIC CROWDFUNDING

2.1. The Origins And Evolution Of Crowdfunding

2.2. Civic Crowdfunding And Its Use In Planning

2.2.1. Crowdfunding platforms and their attributes

2.2.2. Types of projects funded through civic crowdfunding

2.3. Conclusions And Implications For The Study

2.1. The Origins And Evolution Of Crowdfunding

The origins of crowdfunding lie in the term ‚crowdsourcing'. A combination of the words ‚crowd' and ‚outsourcing', a 2008 definition states that ‚Crowdsourcing is the act of taking a task traditionally performed by a designated agent (such as an employee or a contractor) and outsourcing it by making an open call to an undefined but large group of people' (Howe, 2008, p. 1). Based on this statement, crowdsourcing can be seen as 'a form of outsourcing not directed to other companies, but to the crowd by means of an open call mostly via an Internet platform'(Schenk & Guittard, 2011, p. 94), where a crowd is defined as ‚a large set of anonymous individuals' (Ibid., p. 94).

From this definition of crowdsourcing, the following definition of crowdfunding naturally emerges: ‚With crowdfunding, an entrepreneur raises external financing from a large audience (the <<crowd>>), in which each individual provides a very small amount, instead of soliciting a small group of sophisticated investors' (Belleflamme, Lambert & Schwienbacher, 2014, p. 1). The same authors mention that crowdfunding 'involves an open call, mostly through the Internet, for the provision of financial resources either in the form of donation or in exchange for the future product or some form of reward to support initiatives for specific purposes' (Ibid., p. 4).

It has been documented that social media, online platforms and mobile applications have an impact in the way citizens get involved in matters of public budgeting. The public's online donations and interaction allow them to keep track of the progress made so far, as it also provides a platform for them to share their opinions and make claims of their desires in terms of possible outcomes (Rydin, 2013; Kleinhans, Van Ham & Evans-Cowley, 2015; Silva, 2015). According to Schroter (2014), the crowdfunding industry raised $ 5.1 billion in 2013. Despite Europe and North America being the largest markets for crowdfunding (Massolution, 2015), it is hard to assess whether crowdfunding will continue to maintain its growth or if the interest in it will subside (Davies, 2014 b). Other reports disagree, mentioning that the crowdfunding is on the rise, expecting to grow $89.72 billion from 2018 to 2022

(Bloomberg, 2019). Analysts also estimate that ‘global crowdfunding market is expected to grow to $162.47 billion by 2022’ (Technavio, 2019), although the growth ‘will decelerate in the coming years because of the decrease in year-to-year growth (Businesswire, 2019). While America is still in the lead in terms of its share of the crowdfunding market (50% share), Europe and Asia are closely following, with the latter likely to have the biggest growth in the years to come (Bloomberg, 2019)

In terms of attempts to create a typology, one of the most comprehensive divides the practice into five categories: donation, reward, equity, lending and royalty-based (Massolution, 2015). This categorization is taken further a report published by The World Bank, dividing crowdfunding into two master types: crowdfunding (donation and reward models) and crowdfunding investing (equity, debt and royalty-based) (infoDev, 2013). But recently there has been a shift in the crowdfunding research, as ‘attention is beginning to turn from the outcomes and dynamics of crowdfunding purely as a financial mechanism like most others to the qualitatively unique aspects of crowdfunding and participant behaviors‘ (Davies, 2014 b, p.18).

Various authors observed the importance of personal social networks and the quality of the final project have a dramatic influence on the overall success rates of crowdfunding projects (Cordova, Dolci & Gianfrate, 2013, 2015; Mollick, 2013; Rydin, 2013; Davies, 2014 b; Silva, 2015).

But scholars have identified early examples of campaigns similar to crowdfunding (although not specifically using the term ‘crowdfunding’) before the third millennium. The academic literature also provides early examples of civic crowdfunding (still in its infancy), dating back to 1886, when the pedestal for the Statue of Liberty was funded with the use of donations from New Yorkers (Zhao, Harris & Lam, 2019). Improvements have continued along the years. In 1997, Marilliom, a UK-based rock band, launch a campaign on their website asking for the financial help of fans in order to raise money for a tour (Davies, 2014 b). Another similar example is Donors Choose, a platform used by public school teacher to ask for donations for classroom resources, managing to raise $213 million since 2000 (Donors Choose, 2013). Other examples are fund-raising platforms for musicians and bands, such as ArtistShare and SellABand, which use subscription and royalty-based models. (Oradnini et al., 2011; Agrawal, Catalini & Goldfarb, 2014).

Year	Event
1886	New Yorkers fund the pedestal for the Statue of Liberty
2000	Launch of ArtistShare (a platform to help artists obtain funds)
2000	Sites like JustGiving appear, making internet donations more common
2006	Michael Sullivan, founder of FundaVlog, is believed to have coined the term ‘crowdfunding’
2008	Economic crisis begins – big banks reduce lending to small business
2008	IndieGoGo launches (reward-based CF platform)
2009	Kickstarter launches (reward-based CF platform)
2009	Gofundme launches (charity based CF platform)
2015 (US)	JOBS Act passes, meaning non-accredited investors can invest in company equities

Table 1. Timeline of crowdfunding. Adapted from Zhao, Harris & Lam, 2019, p. 3.

The economic crisis of 2018 meant that already established platforms such as Justgiving were joined by IndieGoGo (launched in 2008), Kickstarter (2009), leading to 2015 when, in the US, Title III of the JOBS Act passes, ‘allowing non accredited investors to invest in equity of companies’ (Zhao, Harris & Lam, 2019, p. 3).

2.2. Civic Crowdfunding And Its Use In Planning

A clear distinction should be made for civic crowdfunding as a subgenre of crowdfunding (Davies, 2014 a & b, 2015; Hol & Daamen, 2014; van Veelen, 2015), which is the subject of this thesis. For the clarity of this research, civic crowdfunding will be further understood using the definition of ‘projects that produce some non-rival benefits that serve either the non-excludable public or broad sections of it’ (Davies, 2014 b, p. 29). This study will not dwell on the widely debated terminologies, though it

will regard the term ‘civic’ as ‘a value that supports collective activities with outputs that benefit the collective’ (Davies, 2014 b, p. 28).

Despite several reputable and successful previous civic crowdfunding campaigns, the phenomenon became much more popular in the 2000’s. This was enabled by two important aspects. The first one was the availability of online payments services, such as Paypal Merchant services (launched in 2004, serving eBay transactions), Amazon Payment (used by Kickstarter platform) and WePay (used by Citizinvestor and Spacehive). The second aspect was the massive growth of social media networks, which had a drastically positive impact (Rydin, 2013; Agrawal, Catalini & Goldfarb, 2014; Silva, 2015). This allowed for an intrinsic quality of civic crowdfunding projects to be achieved: the consistent updates regarding the evolution of the project (Davies, 2014 b).

2.2.1. Crowdfunding platforms and their attributes

It is also important to talk about the dynamics of modern-day crowdfunding that uses online platforms. In terms of participation, Davies (2014 b) distinguishes three main options. The first one is related to who is allowed to post on the platforms: IndieGoGo and Spacehive allow any individual to post a project for which it requires donations, while Citizinvestor restricts posting to government agencies and recognized non-profit organizations. The second aspect refers to disclosing the identity of donors (making the identity of all donors and the amount they contributed with public or not). Thirdly, some campaigns have a deadline until when they are supposed to reach their target or a mechanism that terminates the projects once they reach their fund-raising target. Another distinction in crowdfunding campaigns is whether they have a pledge system or provision of rewards (van Veelen, 2015; Stiver et al., 2015). For the pledge system, the funds are only delivered to a project is the campaign reaches its goal, while the provision of rewards ensures some specific benefits for the

donors. In terms of the economic aspects, there are platforms where funds are tax deductible, platforms that allow external organizations to match the funds raised by the crowdfunding campaign and platforms that allow campaigns to cash-in the amounts raised even if the campaign did not reach the financial target initially set up (Davies, 2014 b).

	Platform	Citizinvestor	IndieGoGo	Ioby	Kickstarter	Neighorly	Space hive
Participation Dynamics	Posting Type	Gov. orgs.	Open	Open	For-profit,Individuals	Gov., civic orgs.	Open
	Timing	Limited	Limited	Limited	Limited	Limited	Limited
	Donation Visibility	Public	Public	Public	Public	Optional	Public
Risk/Reward Dynamics	Volunteering Available	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
	Payment Type	Pledge	Pledge	Donate	Pledge	Pledge	Pledge
	Rewards	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	no
Payment Dynamics	Tax Deductible	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
	Match Funds	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	yes
	All or Nothing	No	Opt.	No	Yes	No	No

Table 2. Dynamics of crowdfunding platforms. Adapted from Davies, 2014 b, p. 40

The existing platforms illustrated above can be divided into civic platforms (solely focusing on civic projects: Citizinvestor, Ioby, Neighbor.ly, Spacehive)

and generic platforms (for a wider range of projects: Kickstarter). Civic platforms are the closest to an accurate description of how civic crowdfunding works today, in conformity to the definition that this study provides for it.

2.2.2. Types of projects funded through civic crowdfunding

With early evidence showing that civic projects have higher success rates than other crowdfunding projects, a typical crowdfunding project can also be distinguished, in the form of a 'small scale garden or park project in a large city that produces a public good for an under-served community' (Davies, 2014 b, p. 46). Van Veelen identifies four types of donation-based civic crowdfunding: small scale initiatives, small scale initiatives with the focus on creating public support, large scale with public support and large scale initiatives that also have a private element to a public facility, thus suggesting a need for 'local authorities to develop a new role-repertoire' (van Veelen, 2015, p. 104), meaning that in larger scale interventions the role of authorities is much more important than in small scale projects, as they can support the project not only financially but also institutionally, by helping navigate the systemic challenges initiators face in implementing new projects.

Category	Percent of total projects	Funding goal
Garden/ Park	28.6%	$14,165
Event	14.3%	$8,042
Education and Training	11.4%	$5,179
Food	7.1%	$3,060
Environmental and Wildlife	5.7%	$1,516

Maintenance and Renovation	5.3%	$43,365
Public Arts/ Monuments	4.9%	$28,752
Technology	4.3%	$30,910
Organization	3.7%	$4,464
Facility	3.1%	$97,585
Streetscape	2.7%	$23,220
Media	4.1%	$3,749
Sport	1.2%	$2,876
Mobility	1.0%	$146,015
Others	2.2%	$17,690

Table 3: Types of crowdfunding projects. Adapted from Davies, 2014b, p. 13

Although these small scale gardens or parks represent the majority of projects (28%), this type of project usually attracts less attention than large-scale projects that address a larger audience (Davies, 2014 b) and thus, benefit form a larger coverage in traditional or social media (Doan & Toledano, 2018).

Another important categorization should be made based on the type of goods that civic crowdfunding project typically produce. Most projects produce either classic public goods or common pool resources. However, there is a high percentage of projects that produce private goods (20%) suggesting that there is a clear relation between the civic quality of a project and the overall goals of the organization / individuals involved. A larger discussion on public goods will be added in chapter 4.1., as it is one of the concepts that this research uses in order to discuss civic crowdfunding.

2.3. Conclusions And Implications For The Study

In addition to the working definition of civic crowdfunding as *a practice that relies of public funding from various donors in order to cover the costs of a project delivering public goods* as stated in chapter 1.2. Scientific Relevance, this chapter has shown that there are also other definitions used for it, as it will be elaborated on below.

Crowdfunding can be defined as 'raising up front capital by receiving a small amount of money from external individuals in a large audience: the crowd, while doing an open request using an online platform as a transparent market place to network and pool resources in a fixed time limit' (van Veelen, 2015, p.5). It has been documented that social media, online platforms and mobile applications have an impact in the way citizens get involved in matters of public budgeting. The public's online donations and interaction allow them to keep track of the progress made so far, as it also provides a platform for them to share their opinions and make claims of their desires in terms of possible outcomes (Silva, 2015; Rydin, 2013; Kleinhans, Van Ham & Evans-Cowley, 2015). Another definition of civic crowdfunding project is provided by Davies, who states they are 'projects that produce some non-rival public goods that benefit the public or large sections of it' (Davies, 2014 b. p. 29).

Civic crowdfunding is also facing a vertiginous rise since the early 2010's, since it initially started gaining popularity as an alternative funding mechanism for small-scale public space projects. In the years following that, civic crowdfunding has evolved into more than just a simple mean for raising funds but also into a mechanism for participation. The increase in using civic crowdfunding as a funding mechanism for projects has been made possible by the availability of online payment services and also by the massive growth of social media networks, which had a drastically positive impact (Rydin, 2013; Agrawal, Catalini & Goldfarb, 2014; Silva, 2015). This allowed for an intrinsic quality of civic crowdfunding projects to be achieved: the consistent updates regarding the evolution of the project (Davies, 2014 b), thus people's participation.

Chapter 3. PARTICIPATION

3.1. Participatory Planning As A Planning Approach

3.2. Participation As An Integral Part Of Participatory Planning

3.3. Conclusions And Implications For The Study

3.1. Participatory Planning As A Planning Approach

Healey (1997) elaborates extensively on the history of planning practices, identifying three main forms. First, economic planning aimed to manage the productive forces of nations and regions, which linked to social policies would for together the framework of a ‚welfare state'. Secondly, physical development planning was focused on towns which promoted health, economy, convenience and beauty in urban settings. Thirdly, the management of public administration and policy analysis aimed to achieve both effectiveness and efficiency in meeting explicit goals set for public agencies (Healey, 1997).

After these three main planning traditions, Healey identifies the interpretive, communicative turn in planning theory, as there is a 'need to have a detailed appreciation of the nature of individual action and agency, in the context of the broader force which drive the flow of action' (Healey, 1997, xii). Collaborative planning is a postmodern approach to planning theory that appeared in the 1990's. It addresses the question of 'how can we <<make sense>> of what is happening and plan for the future within a dynamic and increasingly complex society?' (Allmendinger, 2009, abstract). Alongside this, there is the debate over rationality. The goal is to achieve joint actions, based on the principle that systems (capitalism, power relation, interests) dominate the life world (social interaction, sharing knowledge). The basis of communicative rationality and the goal of achieving consensus is instrumental rationality. This cannot be absolutely replaced, but it can take a subordinate role (Allmendinger, 2009). Language is an important discourse in communicative rationality, as it aims to produce knowledge and maintain and develop power relations. The aim to reach agreement is based on reciprocal understanding, shared knowledge and mutual trust. This could be achieved by using six elements of practical application: using an ideal speech (existent in daily communication between individuals), a public sphere created on discourse and holistic experimentation, discursive designs (institutions), incipient designs (existing situations within liberal democracy where communicative action is possible) and new social movements (for example, ecology).

In terms of purpose, planning is supposed to be an 'institutional approach to understanding urban and regional change' while 'focusing on ways of fostering

collaborative, consensus-building practices' (Healey, 1997, p. 5). According to scholars like Healey and Allmendinger, communicative planning is a complex process, than cannot be described by a single, coherent theory (Healey, 1997; Allmendinger, 2009). It is a process that involves multiple stakeholders, involved in the process. In fact, the focus of collaborative (communicative) planning is the involvement of different actors (communities, stakeholders, policy makers) in the planning process. The concept of equality between parties plays an important role. This attracts criticism in terms of the fuzzy distinction between authorities (government, municipalities) and the citizens. But participation is vital to collaborative planning, as 'planning should be done through face to face dialogue among those who have interests in the outcomes, the stakeholders' (Innes & Booher, 2000, p.19). Also, a good representation of citizens is highly needed, as their needs are most likely not well addressed by traditional, top-down structure planning. Collaborative planning does not try to shift between top-down and bottom-up hierarchies, but rather introduces the notion of structure as a horizontal network, where all the involved parties are well represented, they listen and they are heard. It is important to take into consideration participatory aspects of planning, as participation is the basis of this exploratory study.

Criticism of collaborative planning is linked to the lack of an adequate underpinning theory (Healey, 2003). Criticism also addressees current limitations of planners, such as incomplete information, limited time, skills and resources (Allmendinger, 2009), as well as the problematic issue of responsibility when it comes to not only planning, but also participation. Also, the decision-making process is not clear, due to the large number of parties and pretentions of equality between them. Reaching consensus can be time-consuming and can result in a weaker solution, as compromise has to be made. Despite this, collaborative planning in sensible towards community empowerment, making it a viable approach where there is a need for input from citizens. Academic literature discusses that the multitude of voices participating in a collaborative planning process can mean more alternatives, expanding the applicability of the solution (Innes & Booher, 2000, 2004; Healey, 2003; Allmendinger, 2009; Davies, 2014 a). Also, it is a democratic process, in which the quality of the result (consensus) is directly proportional to participation.

There has been a lot of room for debate in the academic world in regards to participatory planning, from acclaimed articles and books identifying participatory planning as a refined, mostly successful, 21st century planning approach, to works

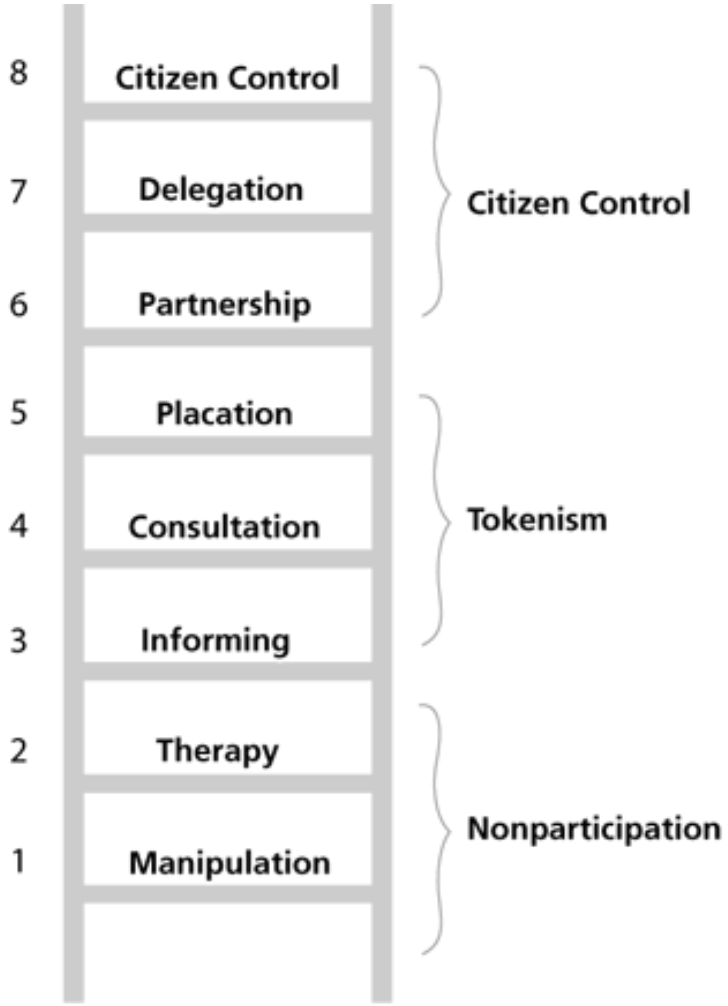
that abruptly pin-point and describe the failures and pitfalls of such practices. But the reality of the world that we live in is the fact that participatory planning is used, even more so in the context of the ever-changing urban landscape and the ambiguity of policy and funding capabilities for public space. The purpose of this study is not to pass judgment, categorize or assess the efficiency of participatory planning in any way. Although it will be discussed as a planning practice, this research will only focus on the participatory practices placed within the framework of civic crowdfunding, an example of this planning approach where the ‚crowd' contributes to the planning process not only with input in terms of opinions, but also with financial resources.

3.2. Participation As An Integral Part Of Participatory Planning

In discourse analyses, theory and methods are combined. Researchers take for granted the basic philosophical premises or the subject in order to use discourse analysis as a method of empirical study (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). This will also be the approach this study will adopt, first establishing the importance of participation. A United Nations report defines participation as 'sharing by people in the benefits of development and involvement of people in decision making at all levels of society'(Desai, 2001, p.119 as cited in Bonilla, 2009, p. 137). This research will refer to participatory planning as 'the systematic effort to envision a community's desired future and planning for that future, while involving and harnessing the specific competencies and input of community residents, leaders, stakeholders in the process' (Beyea, 2009, p. 4).

In order to talk about participation, it is important to acknowledge the work of Sherry Arnstein. This author's work, despite the passing of time, has remained a staple reference when discussing participation. This research identified eight rungs of participation divided in three instances: non-participation, degrees of tokenism and degrees of citizen power. Non-participation includes manipulation and therapy as the

first two rungs in the ‘Ladder of Citizen Participation’, as people are not allowed to participate in the planning process but are only educated about it. The nest instance, ‘tokenism’, qualifies participants to hear and to have a voice, but without ensuring that their views will be abided, in the three rungs: informing, consultation and placation.



The highest three rungs are included in the citizen power instance. The sixth rung, partnership, allows those interested to negotiate with the power holders. The next two and the highest-situated in the Ladder of Citizen Participation, delegated power and citizen control is where citizens obtain the majority of the power in terms of decision making (Arnstein, 1969).

Figure 2. Arnstein’s Ladder of Citizen Participation. Adapted from Arnstein, 1969

When it comes to participatory planning, the citizens are usually in the second and third instances, although for most current participatory planning projects involving civic crowdfunding the citizens are, most often, in a partnership with the authorities of power holders.

3.3. Conclusions And Implications For The Study

Participatory planning is a planning approach that heavily relies on citizen participation. This means that participation is a defining factor for the relative efficiency or success of using this approach.

A number of authors (Healey, 1997; Davies 2014 a & b; van Veelen, 2015; Sewraj, 2013) have stated that community engagement in planning initiative is highly dependent on their interest, based on their proximity to the project, likelihood of using it and other social factors. They have also identified a correlation between participation (people's involvement in a participatory planning process) and their inclination to be also financially involved (supporting or donating to the project budget). Participatory planning in sensible towards community empowerment, making it a viable approach where there is a need for input from citizens. The multitude of voices participating in a collaborative planning process can mean more alternatives, expanding the applicability of the solution. Also, it is a democratic process, in which the quality of the result (consensus) is directly proportional to participation.

Chapter 4. THE INTERSECTION BETWEEN CIVIC CROWDFUNDING AND PARTICIPATION – CONCEPTS

4.1. Public Goods

4.2. (Sense Of) Ownership

4.3. Responsibility

4.1. Public Goods

In order to discuss goods, it is important to first try to establish what the notion actually means. Business Dictionary defines goods as ‘a commodity, or a physical, tangible item that satisfies some human want or need’ (BusinessDictionary, n.d.)

In his extensive work on the topic of civic crowdfunding, Davies also discusses the types of goods generally produced by crowdfundign projects, noting that the ‘emerging, typical crowdfunding project […] produces a public good for an underserved community’ (Davies, 2014 a, p. 3) and that generally speaking, civic crowdfunding processes seem to have higher success rates than other types of crowdfunding.

His work also attempts a categorization on the types of goods that civic crowdfunding processes typically produce, as follows:

Type of Good produced by project	**Percent of total projects**
Public Good	49,5%
Private Good	21,3%
Club Good	18,2%
Common Pool Resource	10,8%

Table 4. Types of goods produced by crowdfunding projects. Adapted from van Davies, 2014a, p. 14.

Considering that the overwhelming majority of civic crowdfunding processes produce public goods, it is important to first introduce the notion. As Davies considers, public goods are ‘goods that are non-rival and non-excludable- that once produced can be enjoyed by all members of a community equally, perpetually and without regard to their contribution’ (Davies, 2014b, p. 28). This definition or public goods seems to

be agreed upon by other authors as well. Kaul, Grunberg & Stern note that 'public goods are recognized as having benefits that cannot easily be confined to a single <<buyer>> (or set of <<buyers>>). Yet once they are provided, many can enjoy them for free' (Kaul, Grunberg & Stern, 1999, xx).

Criticism on the provision of public goods by is usually related to the fact that it is difficult to correctly assess the qualities of excludability and rivalry common to private goods (respectively, non-excludability and non-rivalry for public goods), thus making it hard to correctly judge if a public good is indeed available as a free-for-all (Davies, 2014 a). Another point of criticism is the issue of free riding (the phenomenon in which a person or group not having been involved in the process still benefits from the goods the process produces) (Sager, 2007; Davies, 2014a). Fung & Wright also signal that civic crowdfunding, as a type of participatory budgeting, 'produce public goods that benefit even those who choose not to participate directly' (Fung & Wright, 2001, p. 35)

In his work on the theory of public goods provision and the theory of communicative planning, Sager notes that, in accordance to one of communicative planning's key concepts, the Habermasian dialogue, 'all concerned should take part, freely and equally, in a cooperative search for truth, where nothing coerces anyone except the force of the better argument' (Sager, 2007, p. 498). His article, focusing on the problem of free-riding, discusses whether different procedures proposed by economists for solving this issue are 'attractive and also satisfactory from the perspective of communicative planning' (Sager, 2007, p. 497). Another point of interest in his work is drawing what are the consequences of efficiency problem-solving solutions would be on the provision of public goods. He argues for the need of more dialogue between 'local constituency […] involved in revealing the potential demand for the good', the 'external planning authority […] needed to keep free-riding in check' and planners. Quoting the claim of economists that 'strong democracy and a broad democratic citizenry can improve public goods provision' (Clarke, 1999; Falaschetti & Miller, 2001, as quoted in Sager, 2007, p. 507), Sager agrees that 'it should be possible to design the dialogical planning process so as to improve the provision of public goods' (Ibid.), meaning that the process revealing the citizen's preference (or need) for a specific public good can be tweaked in order to align with the core values of

communicative planning, such as dialogue and consensus. Despite acknowledging criticism that 'such practices are cumbersome and overly time-consuming' (Ibid., p. 509), Sager brings into light the common ground between planning theory and economic incentive theory, another example of the multitude of inter-related domains involved in participatory processes such as crowdfunding.

Lefebvre's body of work on the right to the city is of undeniable value, arguing that '(Social) space is a (social) product' (Lefebvre & Nicholson-Smith, 1991, p. 298). His work thus argues for some of the same inclusive values of participation that this research is focusing on, viewing the act of production not only as a production of goods but also a production of communities and relationships (Elden, 2004). Another scholar discussing Lefebvre's 'right to the city' is Purcell. He brings into discussion the issue of disenfranchisement, as being one of the main problems of global restructuring after 1999 (Purcell, 2002). Despite the extensive work on Lefebvre's right to the city, it 'remains unclear what the right to the city entails' (Ibid., p. 99). Purcell himself a proponent of democratic movements that 'have the potential to […] help create a more radically democratic urban polity' (Purcell, 2008, p. 171), he acknowledges that nowadays more and more initiatives are 'actively engaged in building counter-hegemonic projects' (Ibid., p. 174), thus recognizing the power of civic initiatives.

All of these incredible bodies of work are deeply relevant to the discussion on public goods that this research is proposing, due to the recognition they give to civic initiatives and simply-put, ideas that come from the people.

4.2. (Sense Of) Ownership

The discussion on the sense of ownership had or developed by contributors to civic crowdfunding campaigns starts from Davies's statement that 'Agency over the outcomes of a process implies that communities should enjoy some degree of ownership or control of the assets being produced' (Davies, 2014 b, p. 110), which can be seen as 'a version of the <<complete control>> envisaged by Arnstein' (Davies, 2015, p. 7). Van Veelen also noted that 'the investors experience a sense of ownership

pertaining to the project' (van Veelen, 2015, p. 16). A community study done in Scotland, on the topic of how to engage local people in identifying and assessing their needs showed promising results, noticing that discussions with participants generally foster a sense of ownership on the project (Watt, Higgins & Kendrick, 2000).

The goal of this research is not to discuss ownership solely in the sense of propriety, but also in the sense of a natural connection that forms between donors and the project they choose to support, an applicable situation of how people appropriate the space, according to Jan Gehl, in his iconic work 'Cities for People' (Gehl, 2013). Gullino et al. argue that participation in making and shaping the surrounding offer a sense of collective ownership (Gullino et al., 2018), Academic literature has observed that a sense of ownership tends to develop in civic crowdfunding processes (Davies, 2014 b; Silva, 2015; van Veelen, 2015; Gullino et al., 2018). Whether they are property rights of just the feeling of belonging to a community that has achieved something, it is the researcher's opinion that sense of ownership is a discussion worth having in the context of participation in civic crowdfunding processes.

In some projects, the involvement in a civic crowdfunding campaign means revitalizing the people's sense of ownership. In Glyncoch, where a crowdfunding campaign managed to raise funds to build a new community center, people felt like they have regained their connection to their own community by having participated (not necessarily in the planning process, but in the crowdfunding campaign) (Spacehive, n.d. a).

Observing the 'paucity of research' on ownership, Lachapelle discusses this notion using three main characteristics. The first one refers to the processes of opinions being hard and considered legitimate. This characteristic examines whose voice is being heard in the process of community development, as 'the process of gathering information and the privileging of who has a voice and whose voice is heard as essential to understanding cause and effect in community development' (Lachapelle, 2008, p. 4). The second characteristic of ownership refers to the influencers in the decision making process. Here, the author advocates for more than participation as 'tokenism' (one of Arnstein 1969's lowest levels of citizen participation), as there are also other forms of promoting a sense of ownership in outcome. The third characteristic of this concept involves 'analysis of those who are

affected by a decision as well as how the effects of a decision are distributed, accepted and <<owned>>, both spatially and temporally' (Ibid., p. 5).

Lachapelle emphasizes that 'a high degree of trust in a community development process or outcome can help to determine the potential for ownership' (Lachapelle, 2008, p. 55). A clarification that trust is neither a behavior nor a choice must be made. In exchange, the author uses the statement that trust 'emerges out of the interactions between individuals and it serves to order these relationships by influencing interaction' (Weber & Carter, 2003, p.5 as cited in Lachapelle, 2009, p. 56).

4.3. Responsibility

Although Bratman's work 'Responsibility and Planning' is deeply embedded in the psychological discourse, it is deeply relevant when discussing the concept of responsibility in planning. The premise of his work is based on the question of how the agencies of responsibility and planning are related. He elaborates some of the key points in having 'shared intentional activity', understood as the intention of two parties working together for a common goal. This is of relevance to this study, as the basis of civic crowdfunding is the end goal that people participate towards. Bratman identifies some key concepts as rules for shared intentional activity. The first one refers to the responsible agency and its dependency to reactive attitudes, which he defines as 'responses to someone as a potential participant in ordinary inter-personal relationships (Bratman, 1997, p. 38). He then goes into explaining that these relationships usually involve agents that have common activities in time and that make their intentions and shared intentions known by communicating with each other, thus reinforcing the importance of communication in achieving a common goal. His research also stresses that in these activities, a sense of planning 'is normally involved and needed' (Ibid.), once again stressing that when working towards a common goal, intentions are not sufficient; they are validated by the ability to plan for actions that may lead to achieving said goal. His work then goes to elaborate upon shared agency and what it actually involves, thus answering the question 'what it is for you and me to

share an intention'. This question translates into three conditions that are to be met when parties share a common goal, such as: that the parties recognize each other as participants, that they are willing to be effective in their activity and that each of them is to do their individual part in that activity, thus enforcing the idea that 'shared intentions involve capacities for subtle forms of inter-personal responsiveness'(Ibid., p. 39), as the planning agency involved implies the ability to imagine each of the parties' agencies as extended over time, with a deeply (mutually) responsive quality attached to them. His research is deeply relevant for this exploration into civic crowdfunding through the looking glass of participation, as is stresses the importance between the common goal (civic crowdfunding) and inter-personal relations (participation), all the while cooperating towards a common goal (the public good that the civic crowdfunding delivers). Bratman's research is also a call to action, that 'we – ordinary adult human agents in a broadly modern social world – are responsible agents in part in virtue of our planning agency' (Ibid., p. 43).

Gunder and Hillier argue that 'responsibility' has become a social construct, that signifies more than accountability, duty, responsiveness to the acts of others, and that responsibility should also be viewed in the context of the 'interconnectedness of the planet' (Gunder & Hillier, 2007, p. 63). They ponder on the question of responsibility by analyzing two theoretical perspectives. The first one (rooted in Immanuel Kant's studies) views responsibility as a deontic duty (viewing responsibility as a response to duty and not to achieve a personal self-interest), which is an approach than standardizes it but fails to make it sensitive to particular events or relationships, thus lacking a deeply social aspect. The second one analyzes responsibility as a delineation of the good, as a means for the attainment of good ends, but fails to answer the questions of 'whose <<good>> and at whose cost' (Ibid., p. 71). Their research is heavily based on acknowledging the qualities and limitations of two French thinkers' views on responsibility. Emmanuel Lévinas views responsibility as an interaction with 'the other' (a separate entity) as a threefold approach: responding to the other, responding for oneself to the other person and responding for the other, thus accentuating the importance of taking account of others (world contexts) in planning. Somewhat in contrast, Jacques Derrida's approach is that responsibility should be viewed as a combination between acknowledging the uncertainty of the future and intentional rule-breaking (seeking new approaches that don't necessarily comply with

existing rules or guidelines). Their research provides suggestions for ‘globally responsible practice’, with focus on acceptance and willingness to act under uncertainty, willingness to be held accountable for the outcomes of our actions, care and consideration for others and the global context. They also accentuate that a responsible planning practice should also have willingness to advise political decision-makers, in the hopes on inspiring change that is suitable to current contexts. Their research concludes that spatial planners should ‘think about their own environmental and social practices; whom and what they affect, where and how, and attempt to […] incorporate more distant others’ (Ibid., p. 89). Thus, it can be inferred that Gunder and Hillier’s research, while not dwelling on a definition for responsibility, advises that responsible planning should have a more holistic approach, humble in the face of uncertainty but daring enough to push the norms, a more empathic approach to social and political contexts that expand past a state’s borders.

This concept of collective responsibility is not new, as Hannah Arendt’s work discusses this concept extensively (Arendt, 1987). While unsure ‘when the term <<collective responsibility>> first made its appearance’ she argues that ‘not only the term but also the problems it implies owe their relevance and general interest to political predicaments’, and not legal and moral ones. Thus, she emphasizes that a distinction should be made (Ibid., p. 44); her approach is encouraging viewing responsibility twofold: one is a legal and moral responsibility where ‘we are treated as autonomous beings’ and the other form refers to ‘our political responsibility where we are treated as representatives of a particular socio-political or national group’ (Alweiss, 2003, p. 309)

Sager (2012) discusses responsibility in the context of communicative planning, which he argues should take a critical view of society called critical pragmatism. His research ponders on the question ‘what right planners have to drag ordinary people […] into co-opting and exhausting participation processes’ if there is no real alternative for opposition against real-estate developers (Sager, 2012, xviii). His work focuses on assessing the critiques against communicative planning theorists, arguing that their common denominator is the responsibility for end-uses and for inclusion, which is at the heart of communicative planning itself

Chapter 5. DATA COLLECTION AND DATA ANALYSIS METHODS

5.1. Research Design

5.1.1. Methodological framework

5.1.2. Analysis of actors involved in civic crowdfunding

5.2. Types Of Data

5.2.1. Scientific data

5.2.2. Empirical data

5.3. Analytical Scheme

5.4. Validity Strategies

5.5. Limitations

5.1. Research Design

This chapter will provide a refresher perspective on the issues discussed in chapter 1.3. Research Objective, Research Design, Conceptual Model. They will be addressing the research goal corresponding to the previously formulated research question, as well as an analysis into the types of stakeholders involved in civic crowdfunding processes and the roles that they play.

5.1.1. Methodological framework

Scholars like Davies have observed that ‘attention is beginning to turn from the outcomes and dynamics of crowdfunding purely as a financial mechanism like most others to the qualitatively unique aspects of crowdfunding and participant behaviors’ (Davies, 2014 b, p. 18). This research uses this statement as a starting point and combining it with the findings of other authors (Schwienbacher & Larralde, 2010; van Veelen, 2015) that participatory planning is a useful tool in planning for public spaces.

The existing academic literature mostly discusses the subject of crowdfunding, as a practice originating from entrepreneurship, finance and computer-supported cooperative work. Although this approach is valuable in order to understand the origins of crowdfunding and how it evolved, it is not in tune with what crowdfunding means for planning. Civic or community-oriented crowdfunding has to deal with issues that are related to planning in the context of sociology, organizational behavior and political science. This means that although civic crowdfunding is widely seen primarily as an alternative method of raising funds, the planning context in which crowdfunding is used needs a better understanding of other aspects, which will be further elaborated upon. But this approach can have a different interpretation: the act of donating and

being financially involved in a project increases the level of participation. This ultimately leads to more financial contribution and more engagement from the communities, which can only be beneficial for public space and the development projects associated with it.

This poses a unique challenge for researchers to not get tangled only in the financial aspects of civic crowdfunding and its related practices, but to also explore the qualitative and communicative aspects of participation that are involved in civic crowdfunding processes. This translates into a lack of studies tackling this topic, which this research aims to contribute to, as well as to encourage other researchers to join this quest of gaining more insight into civic crowdfunding.

The starting point of this research study is the claim civic crowdfunding displays characteristics of participatory practices. Thus, the goal of this research is to focus more on the participatory aspect of civic crowdfunding, by going beyond the existing research and observing civic crowdfunding through a participatory looking glass, in the hopes of creating a better understanding of how participation manifests in civic crowdfunding processes. This will be done by paying attention to the three concepts elaborated upon in chapter 4, which appear at the intersection between civic crowdfunding and participation.

The general research question will be tackled with the use of the secondary research questions, that will help achieve different research goals that ultimately will converge into the formulation of an answer. Each of the three concepts has been assigned to a secondary research question, that will be answered using both scientific and empirical data. The research goal will then be assessed, based on how the general research question has been answered. This discussion, as well as revising the initial premise for this research, will be elaborated upon in chapter 7. Discussion.

Claim	Civic crowdfunding manifests aspects of participatory practices	
Aim	Observe how participation appears and is used in civic crowdfunding processes.	
Question	In what ways is participation, as an intrinsic characteristic of participatory planning, manifested in civic crowdfunding processes?	
Concepts	Public goods (Sense of) ownership Responsibility	
Aim	Analysis and understanding of participation practices	
Question	SRQ 1. How is the notion of public goods represented as results of civic crowdfunding processes?	
Methods	Study public goods in literature	Observe public goods produced by civic crowdfunding processes used as case studies
Aim	Data collection, data analysis and data comparison	Empirical observation
Techniques	Literature review Document analysis	Case study analysis Interviews with different stakeholders involved in the processes
Question	SRQ 2. How is ownership manifested as a consequence of participation in civic crowdfunding processes?	
Methods	Study (sense of) ownership in academic literature	Observe evolution of donor's (sense of ownership)
Aim	Data collection, data analysis and data comparison	Empirical observation
Techniques	Literature review Document analysis	Case study analysis Interviews with stakeholders involved
Question	What are the understandings of responsibility in the context of civic crowdfunding processes?	
Methods	Study responsibility in academic literature	Observe how responsibility is perceived by stakeholders
Aim	Data collection, data analysis and data comparison	Empirical observation
Techniques	Literature review Document analysis	Case study analysis Interviews with stakeholders involved

Table 5. Methodological framework and research questions.

5.1.2. Analysis of actors involved in participatory planning and civic crowdfunding

The actors identified in the planning processes associated to civic crowdfunding and participatory planning are:

- Project initiators – the curators of a project, whether they are a private entity (single or multiple initiators, not related to spatial planning) or specialized (professionals in the domain of architecture, urbanism, spatial planning)
- Policy makers – local or regional governments, municipalities, representatives of higher institutions
- Donors – contributors to a civic crowdfunding campaign, either single or in the form of a cooperation, initiative or other forms of social organization.
- Allies – media representatives, lawyers, real-estate agents, experts in different domains, philanthropists and any other people that help out in a civic crowdfunding process (not part of any of the above categories)

Due to the large range of different aspects that are involved in the participants' involvement, this research study will assume a sociological perspective, in order to better understand the underlying challenges associated with the participation of donors in civic crowdfunding processes.

5.2. Types Of Data

The methodology used in this paper relied on two types of data: scientific and empirical. The purpose is to assess the existing scientific data and refine the understanding of civic crowdfunding with the use of the three main concepts (public goods, sense of ownership, responsibility), elaborated in chapter 4. The intersection between civic crowdfunding and participation – Concepts. The previously identified instances of participation and notions of the concepts will be followed through in the empirical data as well, which will be presented in depth in chapter 6. Empirical Data -

Case Studies. The purpose is to check if the overall understanding and use of these main themes and concepts found in theory (scientific data) can also be corroborated in the selected case studies (empirical data). This will allow conclusions to be drawn, based on whether there is sufficient evidence that the concepts are applicable in real life planning practice and civic crowdfunding, thus allowing to shape an appropriate perspective on the instances of participation in civic crowdfunding processes.

5.2.1. Scientific data

The scientific data represented in this research is structured into three chapters: 2. Civic Crowdfunding, 3. Particpation, 3. The intersection Between Civic Crowdfunding and Participation. The scientific data was provided by scientific papers (articles, books, reports). The main themes that this research addresses are civic crowdfunding and participation, with the support of three concepts: public goods, (sense of) ownership and responsibility. The purpose is to create a better understanding of civic crowdfunding processes as more than mere alternative funding methods, but as processes that involve participation from the different categories of actors involved in these processes.

5.2.2. Empirical data

The empirical data (presented in chapter 6. Empirical Data – Case Studies) will be obtained through case study analysis, leading to empirical observations. These observations will then be compared to the findings previously identified in the scientific data part of this research (chapters 2, 3, 4). The goal is to better understand the role that these concepts play in the practice of civic crowdfunding processes, from a participatory stand point.

Introduction of case studies

This study aims not to provide a general set of rules on how civic crowdfunding should be used. Instead, it focuses more on a descriptive process, analyzing cases in which civic crowdfunding was proven to be not only an effective tool

for funding, but also for engaging people in the civic crowdfunding process. This means that the information that will be provided will be context-dependent, as the unique particularities and conditions of the project type and the legal and administrative procedures differ, and the final outcome and palpable results produced by each project vary.

These case studies were chosen due to their relevance for the type of information they provide but more importantly, for their use of participation as a tool in civic crowdfunding processes. The Abel Awaroa Tasman Beach is a civic crowdfunding project that shows a large amount of funding being raised through civic crowdfunding, as it also showcases the role of authorities later on in the process, with only a small (relative to the toal amount) donation, but with help in further managing the project, as the beach was later transferred to the Department of Conservation as to become part of public ownership. The Community Brain case study focuses on the initiatives of the eponymous organization, which vary in size and purpose. This case study was chosen in order to display a more central role that local authorities can play in, as these initiatives were run through a program of the Greater London Authority that match funds community initiatives in a more organized and regulated manner than in other places in the world.

5.3. Analytical Scheme

As stated before, this research paper will be designed as a qualitative study investigating the participatory practices of civic crowdfunding processes. The primary and secondary data will be collected from various sources, such as a thorough literature review focused on the two main themes of civic crowdfunding and participation and the three concepts of public goods, (sense of) ownership and responsibility. Another source of information will be case studies depicting the evolution and practices used in different crowdfunding projects. These case studies will provide crowdfunding platform descriptions of the project, progress reports, interviews of the stakeholders involved in the projects and other secondary data in the

forms of articles and papers discussing the cases. This study will be approached from a social constructivist perspective, with special attention to the position of the researcher as an observer.

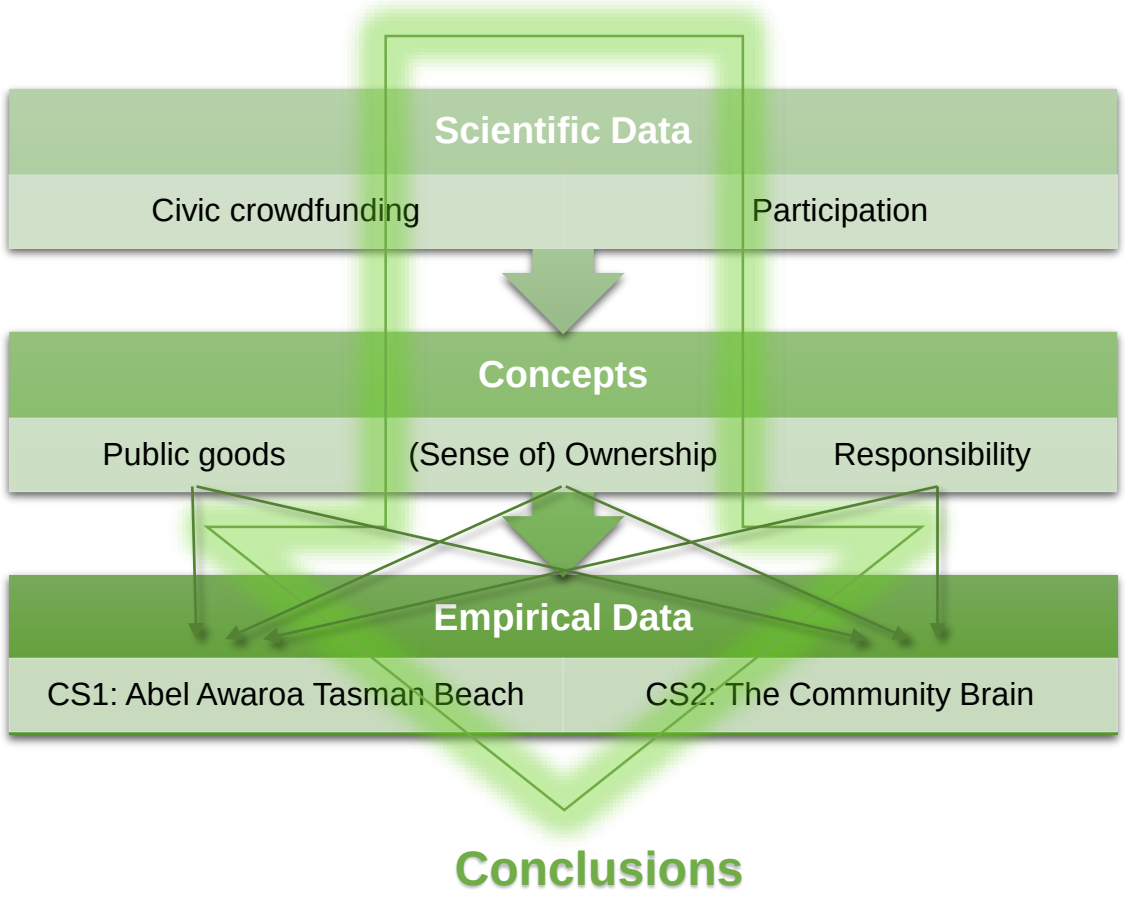


Figure 3. Analytical Scheme

It is important to note that civic crowdfunding will be regarded as not only a funding mechanism but also as an intricate human process that allows for a deeper involvement and understanding of existing societal issues. This study will not provide a definitive fall-proof method of civic crowdfunding processes. The purpose of this study is to explore the process of crowdfunding in the way it naturally unravels, with its use or participation practices.

The methodology most appropriate for this type of research uses the conceptual model (stated in chapter 1.3.3. Conceptual Model) and subsequently the themes and concepts explained in chapters 2, 3 and 4. These

concepts are used to provide a support for the general research questions. These concepts also serve as a support for the findings in the case studies and additional data, in order to mold them and thus responding to the research questions formulated in the beginning of this study.

As a framework for qualitative studies, this research also relied on Silverman's recommendations. This research has been an iterative process, having suffered multiple transformations in terms of the 'right' research questions to ask as well as to the entire goal of the research. Additionally, this study also relied on the systematic approach to data analysis, by open-coding the data. (Silverman, 2015).

5.4. Validity Strategies

Validation of the findings (both in scientific literature and in the case studies) will occur along with the development of the research, in order to check the accuracy of the findings. This study will use multiple approaches for validity strategies, as selected by Creswell (2013):

- Triangulation of sources: As it was previously stated, the main source of information for this qualitative study will be the literature review on civic crowdfunding and participation (scientific literature including books, articles and other available works). Additionally, I will also refer to the existing webography on the subject of civic crowdfunding (such as platform websites, project websites or other web addresses correlated to civic crowdfunding) and a consultation of documents regarding crowdfunding projects. Another source of information will be the case studies, which will be analyzed by reviewing the existing documentation available for each of them (crowdfunding campaign statements, interviews given by the initiators of the projects, progress reports if available, media coverage and scientific papers) and also conducting personal interviews with representatives from different categories of stakeholders. These

three main sources will be interrelated and combined in order to achieve an in-depth information about civic crowdfunding as a participatory planning method.

- Rich and thick descriptions: This qualitative research will provide in-depth descriptions on both the scientific data and the empirical data from the case studies, in order to convey the conclusions. This strategy will allow for a plethora of information for the methods used as well as for the processes that this research implies, leading to a cohesive and rich explanation of this study.
- Inclusion of criticism: If available, the present research will include relevant criticism on the existing crowdfunding projects chosen for the case studies. This will be achieved by searching for possible critiques in the interviews, but also by searching for criticism in scientific papers and other documents. This information will be included in the research, in order to get a clear image of the possible advantages and disadvantages of this type of project. Criticism will also be provided for each of the theoretical concepts used in the research, in order to better understand the possible pitfalls of the research approach.
- Expert opinions: In order to ensure the validity of the findings and thus the conclusions of this research, experts (professionals and/or academic in the field of civic crowdfunding and participation) will be consulted.
- Member checking: If possible, the primary data in the forms of interviews that I would gather from different stakeholders will be coded and then checked and discussed again with the respondents. This will allow for no misunderstandings between their statements and the use that they will be put to in this paper.
- Clarification of biases: The qualitative approach of this research on civic crowdfunding processes brings with it the subjectivity of stakeholders involved, from positive reviews on websites to the complete range of feelings towards crowdfunding, based on people's personal experiences. Also, the time span is limited, as the case studies analyzed have taken place at a specific moment in time, so it is hard to predict a long-term scenario in terms of the benefits they provide for a longer time frame. Also, a language barrier may occur when conducting the research (literature review, case studies and interviews), due to the fact that the available information is in either English or Dutch, none of them being in the researcher's native tongue. Despite the possible limitations of this

research, the researcher took all measures in order to provide a trustworthy narrative, with mentioning of personal reflections on it. Due to the researcher's status of expat, the researcher will be aware of the possibility of being biased to this study. This might affect the way the researcher understands the processes of the different civic crowdfunding projects in relation to the legal and administrative policies of the countries that they are based in. The researcher intends to take into account the differences in these case studies and the different policies, by being knowledgeable on the particularities of each analysis.

5.5. Limitations

This study's starting point is the existing academic literature on civic crowdfunding and participation. The researcher chose to look at both of the practices, leaving aside civic crowdfunding's specific ability to raise funds. The premise of the research is that civic crowdfunding displays instances of participation. This claim, based on the opinion of other authors as well, may have veered the research in a specific direction.

Additionally, the choice of the concepts, although rooted in and motivated by the existing academic literature, could have overlooked other important concepts. The choice of case studies was motivated by the major differences between the two, leaving the possibility for different cases to have yielded different results. It is important to mention that these choices made by researcher could have, unwillingly, veer the result of this study in a specific direction.

Chapter 6. EMPIRICAL DATA – CASE STUDIES

6.1. Abel Awaroa Tasman Beach

6.1.1. Project overview – Abel Awaroa Tasman beach, a place engraved in the collective memory

6.1.2. Project particularities – 'The people, the people, the people!'

6.1.3. Conclusions and implications for the study

6.2. The Community Brain

6.2.1. Project overview – The Community Brain at the heart of community development

6.2.2. Project particularities – 'Success has many parents. Failure is an orphan'

6.2.3. Conclusions and implications for the study

These case studies were chosen due to their relevance for the type of information they provide but more importantly, for the participation practices they used. After presenting an overview of each case study, their particularities will be discussed. Further, they will be annotated with their own set of conclusions, based on the secondary data used (academic literature, scientific articles, media coverage, progress reports, crowdfunding campaign pages, etc.) and the empirical data gathered from conducting interviews with stakeholders involved in the processes. Further, this research will highlight, for each case studies, the connection to the three concepts used. The goal is to draw conclusions from both literature and case study to help answer the main research question, referring to manifestations of participation in civic crowdfunding processes. The case studies will be compared further in chapter 7. Discussion, while linking them to the findings in literature.

6.1. Abel Awaroa Tasman Beach

Goal of campaign: Buy a beach for everyone to enjoy

Period: January 22nd – February 15th 2016

Funds raised: $2,276,183

Platform used: Givealittle

Initiators: Adam Gard'ner & Duane Major

Involvement of policy-makers: New Zealand's Department of Conservation ($3,500 donation and facilitation of relations)

Donors: 39,239

Sources of information:

- *media coverage*
- *academic articles*
- *crowdfunding campaign and Facebook pages*
- *personal interviews*
    1. *Adam Gard'ner*
    2. *Adam Gard'ner and Duane Major (joint interview)*
    3. *Roy Grose – Department of Conservation, New Zealand government*
    4. *Barney Thomas – Department of Conservation, New Zealand government*
    5. *Geoffrey Harley, lawyer*
    6. *Donald Bubbins, campaign manager*

6.1.1. Project overview – Abel Awaroa Tasman beach, a place engraved in the collective memory

The story of the Abel Awaroa Tasman beach campaign begins at the end of 2015, when real estate company Bayleys was given the chance to sell the Abel Awaroa beach, which had been privately owned up until that point (McConnell, 2016). Once the media channels reported the news that the beach was on the market, it wasn't long before Duane Major, a church community coordinator from Christchurch thought 'Why should just one person have this?' (Major as quoted in McConnell, 2016). On Christmas Day 2015, while discussing with his brother in law, Adam Gard'ner about how they knew the beach and had visited it with their families several times (Doan & Toledano, 2018), the wheels were put in motion. The pair then decided to use Givealittle platform in order to form a call to action to fellow citizens of New Zealand (known as 'Kiwis') in order to launch a crowdfunding campaign and ultimately, buy the beach with the resulted funds (Gard'ner & Major, personal communication, 2020). But their goal wasn't to buy the beach for their own personal use, rather to gift it to New Zealand for anyone to enjoy (Ibid.). The campaign was launched on Friday January 22nd, 2016 and lasted for three weeks (Doan & Toledano, 2018) and ended on February 15th, 2016, after having raised over $2 million from around 40,000 pledgers (Givealittle, 2016).

The campaign was smartly set, asking people to pledge instead of donate. This meant low risk for the pledgers, as the amount would only be debited from their accounts if the campaign reached the two million dollar target at the end date (Doan & Toledano, 2018). Adam Gard'ner mentions that this was, ultimately, the best possible idea, although they worried about payments not coming through in the end. But Kiwis honored their promises (Gard'ner, personal communication, 2020), and the percentage of payments not coming through was only 1.5% compared to the average rate of 5%. In addition to the crowdfunding campaign, people also sent money and checks directly to the two initiators (Doan & Toledano, 2018).

After the launch of the campaign, the media got around to broadcasting the news on January 25th on radio stations and later on Stuff, one of the top news sites in the country (Doan & Toledano, 2018). While the initiators first somewhat feared having to deal with the media for the fear of public scrutiny and ridicule, they came to appreciate their support immensely and recognize the importance of media coverage and involvement (Gard'ner & Major, personal communication, 2020).

From the very beginning, the initiating duo were focused on a philosophy of 'positive people power' (Gard'ner & Major, personal communication, 2020), making it clear that their goal was 'to buy it and gift it to NZ' (Givealittle, 2016).

According to Roy Grose, Director of the Department of Conservation, the land that the Abel Awaroa Tasman beach was located on has a rich history, dating back to the very first inhabitants of New Zealand (Grose, personal communication, 2020). Throughout history, the indigenous Maori population has faced massive discrimination in terms of land owning. Although there was an agreement in place, between the first European colonists and the Maori, that land purchases should be done in agreement with both parties, history has not been fair to the indigenous people (Thomas, personal communication, 2020). Not even in modern history have reparations been made. Thus, before its gifting for every Kiwi to enjoy, the indigenous population did not have access to the pristine beach, it being privately owned (Ibid). This fact was taken into consideration by both Gard'ner and Major, who realized it was important to involve these previously ignored communities, by establishing contact with them and, in a respectful, collaborative and ceremonious way, asking their opinion and permission for the project. This was done even before the crowdfunding campaign was launched on Givealittle, by having Barney Thomas, a representative from the Department of Conservation that was deeply involved in communication to the indigenous, act as a mediator between them and the initiators (Gard'ner, personal communication, 2020; Thomas, personal communication 2020).

Dating to pre-European Maori society, members of a family (whānau) were organized in a larger political unit called hapū, which controlled a fraction of the

tribal territory. Several related hapū then formed an iwi, ‘the largest political grouping in pre-European Maori society’ (Taonui, 2005).This organization in iwi exists even today, and what the two initiators did was get in touch with the local iwi in the area of the beach. Mr. Thomas considerately guided the discussions between the two parties. The iwi were pleased with the idea of having the beach gifted back for everyone to enjoy, although not all have financially participated in the civic crowdfunding campaign. The sense of ownership was already there for the iwi, as they were historically entitled to the land. But despite their inconsistent donations to the campaign, they were pleased with having the beach to enjoy once the campaign would be over. According to Maori tradition, the meetings between the two parties were preceded by a typical opening of the discussion (in which divine inspiration is invoked, in the hopes that the communication is mutually beneficial) and also ended with a similar speech of thanking both parties for their input and hoping for peace and harmony (Thomas, personal communication, 2020).

The campaign on Spacehive launched at the end of January 2016. Consequently, a Facebook page was created. When Donald Bubbins, a neighbor to Duane Major, heard about the campaign about ten days after it was launched, he knew that it needed a bigger social media presence. That’s when he came on board the team. His responsibilities were being in charge of the campaign page on Givealittle, the Facebook page and trying to reach as many media outlets as possible. Having worked on other crowdfunding campaigns before, Mr. Bubbins’ expertise allowed him to push for better communication. Thus, together with the initiators, he ensured that the Givealittle campaign had a more appealing and clear statement, strived to make regular Facebook updates, ‘sometimes even twice a day’ and made sure that the campaign page’s update section would also be regularly kept up to speed with the progress of the process (Bubbins, personal communication, 2020). Although in the beginning the start was slow, it soon became clear that this project would need everyone’s 100% involvement. The initiators ‘were running on four hours of sleep each night’ towards the end of the campaign, showing how much they dedicated their time and efforts to it.

Unlike the media, which has picked up the story pretty quickly and even invited the initiators on radio shows or televised interviews (Ibid.), the 'NGOs and corporations couldn't keep up with the pace' (Gard'ner and Major, as quoted in Doan & Toledano, 2018, p. 42). Adam Gard'ner acknowledged the involvement of the media, not only for covering the topic and helping the cause gain momentum, but also for donating various amounts (one of the largest coming from media platform Stuff, that donated $20,000) (Gard'ner & Major, personal communication, 2020).

There was another possible help for the campaign, as Gareth Morgan, known economist and philanthropist offered to donate. He vouched a week before the crowdfunding campaign was due to end, that he would 'donated the difference between the crowd-funding amount and the tender offer of $2m (Morgan, 2016 a). But his offer came with a caveat: he was to use the beach for an unknown period before giving it to the DOC. His offer did not sit well with the initiators, as they declined it but not before carefully phrasing a response. According to Adam Gard'ner, his potential contribution (and implicitly, the caveat of it) simply did not resonate with what the initiators were trying to achieve, which was to have people contribute for everyone to later use the beach whenever (Gard'ner, personal communication, 2020). Although he later clarified that he didn't want 'to see Kiwis excluded from this beach any more than the rest of us' (Morgan as quoted in Stuff, 2016), his offer was ultimately declined. While acknowledging that Mr. Morgan's offer should be refused, they also paid special attention to the media release of the rejection, by enlisting the help of Lucy Gard'ner, Adam Gard'ner's wife, an English teacher (Gard'ner, personal communication, 2020). They posted a status arguing the rejection of Mr. Morgan's offer on their Facebook page, after also taking into consideration that his reason 'went against the egalitarian principle of civic crowdfunding and non-excludability of common goods' (Doan & Toledano, 2018, p. 43). Much later, after the beach had been bough, Mr. Morgan actually backtracked his offer, by arguing that he only did it in order to polarize people and, in a way, encouraging them to donate more (Morgan, 2016 b), but Gard'ner and Major mention that they are unsure whether this is true (Gard'ner and Major, personal

communication, 2020). Mai Anh Doan, a researcher herself, also rallies with the intiators' opinion in this sense (Doan, personal communication, 2020).

Once the crowdfunding campaign ended, it was still unsure whether the duo would achieve their goal, since the buying of the beach needed to be done using a tender process. Mentioning that 'tendering is certainly a precarious process', the initiators didn't know 'how much to share, because potential tender competitors are listening in' (Facebook Gift Abel Tasman Beach, n.d.).

Figure 4. Timeline of Abel Awaroa Tasman beach project.

Geoffrey Harley, one of the members of 'The Tender Team', recounts the 5-day tender process fondly, as having been a learning experience for him as well, for 'having to learn how crowdfunding works' (Harley, personal communication, 2020). Despite everyone's hopes, there have been other competitors in the tendering negotiation, meaning that 'the strength of the bid is paramount' (Facebook, 2016). Geoffrey Harley recounts that the last few days of the tender process were a whirlwind, with people actually trying to donate directly to the lawyers that were in charge of the process. The Department of Conservation donated $3,500 and Joyce Fisher Charitable Trust (Gard'ner & Major, personal communication, 2020), on the last stretch, that apparently was just enough to

win the tender. On February 23rd 2016, after 'one of the craziest days', involving media that had gathered to a barbecue at the duo's house in hopes for an announcement of either success or failure in the tender process, it was announced that 'a pristine piece of beach and bush was delivered into the hands of everyone to enjoy forever' (Facebook, 2016).

Since the donations were pledge-based, there was a small fear that once the tender process finalizes, there would be issues with the pledge conversion. Luckily, only '343 pledges could not be converted' meaning a very small default of just 0.85% (Facebook, 2016). On March 16th 2016 the beach was officially bought.

Since the very beginning, both Gard'ner and Major were keen on stressing that they would buy the beach for everyone and then donate it to the DOC for managing and safekeeping. As Mr. Harley explained, this process wasn't an easy one either. Since Australia is part of the Crown, the beach was going to be transferred to the Crown and then donated to the DOC. On May 19th 2016, the beach was added to the Abel Tasman National Park, ensuring that the beach would be available for everyone to enjoy, since it could not be sold or bought privately (Harley, personal communication, 2020)..

The journey was completed on July 10th 2016, in a gifting ceremony that took place on the Abel Awaroa Tasman beach, with initiators Adam Gard'ner and Duane Major, DOC representatives, members of the tender team and last but not least, donors, marking the end of 'a wonderful journey of trust' (Facebook, 2016) and the finish to a process in which everyone seems to have learned valuable lessons on the power of community.

6.1.2. Particularities of the case – 'the people, the people, the people!'

While campaigning and sharing the cause with various media outlets, the two initiators were clear from the very beginning that the main purpose of the

campaign was not the amount that was to be raised. It wasn't even the goal of saving the beach from falling into the wrong hands of private ownership. It was the people. They re-iterated their reason for the initiative on the campaign's Facebook page of February 3rd 2016 within their 'Our News' video updates (Facebook Gift Abel Tasman, n.d.). They introduced a new section of their video updates, which answers a known Maori proverb asking 'He aha te mea nui o tea o?' (translation: 'What is the most important thing in the world?'). The answer to this proverb, 'He tangata, he tangata, he tangata!' (translation: 'The people, the people, the people!') became a sort of mantra for the rest of the campaign, as it represented the goal from the very beginning (Gard'ner, personal communication, 2020).

What makes the Abel Awaroa Tasman beach case unique is not only the whopping amount of funds that were raised solely using crowdfunding. An important aspect of the initiative is that there was no initial support from local authorities or from the New Zealand government. Although the Department of Conservation did, in the end, contribute financially and helped the process of transferring the beach into state property and encompassing it in the Abel Tasman National Park, the initiative did now benefit from an already established practice of using civic crowdfunding via an institutional framework.

As simple as it sounds, the initiative was as bottom up as can be. New Zealand is not actively using civic crowdfunding frameworks to fund projects at the moment. Meaning that despite their later involvement, the Abel Tasman beach campaign was completely free of any kind of institutional involvement in the process of raising the funds. The financial goal was met only with the participation of different people, regardless of how big or small their contribution was. Despite traditional practices of rewarding pledgers depending on their donations, it seems that in this case the initiators were keen on valuing the pledgers the same, regardless of their financial contribution. At the end of the campaign, as per tradition, the donors were rewarded the same high-resolution photographs of the beach, regardless of how much they donated (Bubbins, personal communication, 2020).

Participation in this process was outstanding, as the number of pledgers (around 40,000) shows. What is interesting is that not only people in the vicinity of the project site donated; not even New Zealanders were the only nationality that donated. As the initiators mentioned, some of the donors were Europeans or Americans who, most likely, would never even get to visit the beach. This, in a way, contradicts a presumption often made in academic literature that donors are most-likely, locals or people who actively plan on using the public goods provided by a civic crowdfunding project.

6.1.3. Conclusions and implications for the study

Abel Awaroa Tasman beach has become a staple for successful civic crowdfunding campaigns. At the time, it was the biggest campaign ever run on the Givealittle platform, thus becoming so recognizable. As previously mentioned, this research aims to look at civic crowdfunding not only as an alternative funding method, but also take into account its social aspects, like participation. This chapter aims to highlight the parallels between the empirical data elaborated in chapters 6.1.1. and 6.1.2 and the scientific data gathered through literature review and previously discussed in chapter 4. The intersection between civic crowdfunding and participation – Concepts.

From the very beginning of the process, it seems that the initiators had a clear view that the campaign was to be focused more on the people and their involvement, rather than on the end goal of buying the beach (which no one knew if it would be met or not). This translated into a lot of communication happening not only on the Givealittle campaign page, but also on the Facebook page created for it. People's participation in discussions regarding the initiative also moved into the real world, as some groups of citizens organized bake sales and other related events in order to raise money for pledges.

In terms on the public goods delivered, it is clear that this project met the brief, by providing a piece of land that would be enjoyed by everyone. But beyond that, most of the interviewees mentioned that the project delivered more than the beach: it delivered empowerment to the people. Deeply rooted in Kiwi culture, this sense of initiative was not new; but having a common goal that people could rally up behind brought them together. This is something that the initiators strongly feel was much more important in the end, mentioning that this was also, in their opinion, a great example of a public good that the process delivered (Gard'ner & Major, personal communication, 2020).

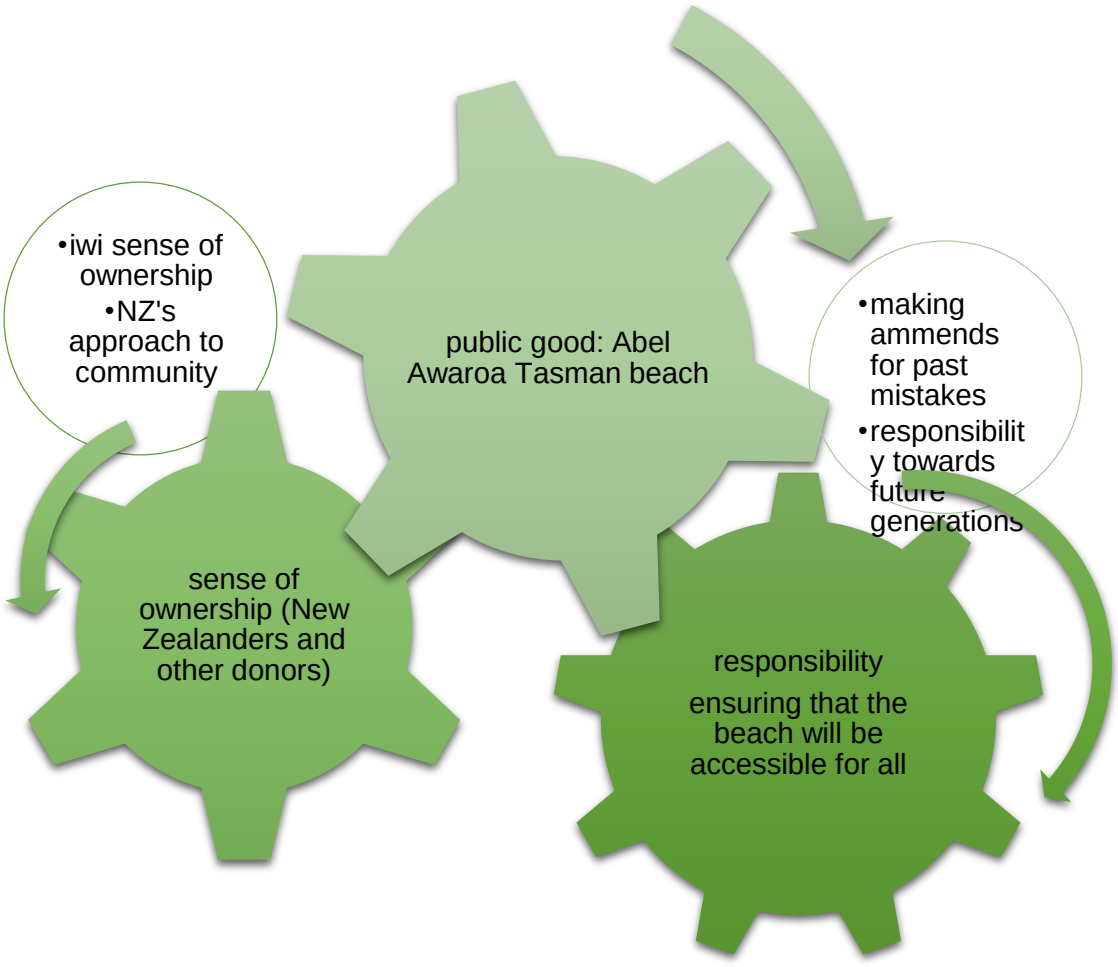


Figure 5. Abel Awaroa Tasman beach - conclusions

The Abel Awaroa Tasman beach is also a good example on the complex aspects regarding the donor's sense of ownership. As previously explained, the land was rightfully belonging to the indigenous people (iwi) before it was privately owned. So the iwi already had a sense of ownership of the beach, even before the campaign started. In regards to the other donors, it seems that people's involvement in the crowdfunding campaign did trigger the development of a sense of ownership, as many donors stated referring to it as 'our beach'. This was also a desire of the initiators, which wanted for the community to come together and rally together for the goal.

Although having been a very intense process with many variables, the Abel Awaroa beach campaign is reflective of the participatory instances involved in civic crowdfunding processes, as well as a testament that public goods are not only (necessarily) material and that sense of ownership is directly related to participation in the process.

During the interviews conducted for the Abel Awaroa Tasman beach campaign, it became evident that the people involved acknowledged that the process did indeed result in a public good, namely the beach. But beyond this material good, most interviewees acknowledged that the key take0away from this process was the manner in which the community respondent to the call of gifting the beach back to the people.

Adam Gard'ner and Duane Major, the two initiators of this process, were quick to mention that, from the very beginning, their process was focused on the people more so than the beach itself. Upon reflection on the process, they concluded that the sense of unity for a greater good was also a product of the civic crowdfunding campaign.

6.2. The Community Brain

Goal of campaign:

- *The Museum of Futures (transforming a dilapidated shop to a community hub);*
- *The Community Kitchen (enabling emerging local businesses);*
- *SHEDx and The Farm of Futures (incubator for community ideas and allotments for farming*

Period: (ended) December 18th 2015; (ended) October 21st 2015; (ended) August 29th 2017

Funds raised: £27,000; £23,093; £17,565

Platform used: Spacehive

Initiators: The Community Brain

Involvement of policy-makers: Greater London Authority through the Crowdfund London program (donations of £20,000; £17,000; £5,000)

Donors: 2; 61; 122

Sources of information:

- *Media coverage*
- *Policy documents (local and municipal governments, funding application forms, Mayor of London reports)*
- *Crowdfunding campaign and Facebook pages*
- *Community Survey realized by the Community Brain (2020)*
- *Personal interviews*
  1. *Robin Hutchinson, Simon Tyrrell, Charlotte Levy (joint interview)*
  2. *Simon Tyrrell, member of the Community Brain*
  3. *Charlotte Levy, member of the Community Brain*
  4. *Georgia Neesham, member of the Community Brain*
  5. *Robin Hutchison, Director of the Community Brain*
  6. *James Parkinson,* Senior Programme Manager, Regeneration & Economic Development, Greater London Authority
  7. *Tina Jadav, Regeneration and Economic Development, Greater London Authority*

6.2.1. Project overview – The Community Brain at the heart of community development

The Community Brain is an organization that focuses on community activities empowerment, by either organizing or offering consultation towards organizing art festivals, creating myths and legends as a way to imagine a community's shared past, using games to build trust, all by 'utilizing people's natural talents

and energies to develop stronger communities and relationships' (The Community Brain, n.d.).

Founded in 2010, the Community Brain usually activates in Surbiton, a London suburb that used to be the staple for boring, middle income living in the UK. Robin Hutchinson, the Director of the Community Brain, is quick to praise his team as a pair of amazing individuals that focus on communities 'where people feel isolated, disenfranchised, disconnected and do not feel they can engage' (Ibid.). With a number of team members with backgrounds in the arts, research, media and project management, they seem to be changing the Surbiton landscape not only in terms of the public space, but in terms of the community that animates it.

A firm believer in collective power for innovation and success, Robin Hutchinson and his team have developed many initiatives responding to different community needs over the years (Hutchinson, personal communication, 2020). One of the most notable ones is the Museum of Futures. This initiative's goal was to transform a decrepit shop in London's suburb, Surbiton, into a community hub that would invite and allow people to express their ideas and exercise their ludic sense. London's program for the High Street would allow for the crowdfunding.

According to Mr. Hutchinson, the Museum of Futures was an initiative born from the desire to create a space that allows the community in and around Surbiton to express their ideas and come together in different activities (Hutchinson, Tyrrell & Levy, personal communication, 2020).

The crowdfunding campaign was launched on the Spacehive platform, as per the recommendations of the Greater London Authority, a section of the government that focuses on supporting local initiatives and allocating funds to them (Museum of Futures Funding agreement n.d.). Although initially designed to be a temporary project (Facebook Museum of Futures, n.d.) , the Museum of Futures had the goal of enabling people 'to engage with and respond to community activity, help develop a shared vision […] and share with pride and involvement the broadest cross section of the community' (High Street Fund application, n.d., p. 3). Among its other goals, MoF would provide a starting

point for businesses to respond better to community needs, work in collaboration with the department of Anthropology from University College London to better understand community behavior, encourage new activities and provide a thinking space for people to create activity around the town centre. The initiative was set to occupy a vacant shop in Surbiton from March until September of 2015. All of these activities fitted the brief set up by the Mayor of London in order for initiatives to be granted funding from the High Street Fund (Mayor of London Action For High Streets report, n.d.).

This initiative aligned with the goals of the GLA, by occupying a vacant space in Surbiton, but also because the idea was to create a community hub that would strengthen community bonds. The project was estimated to cost £ 25,000, broken down as following: £4,000 from The Surbiton Neighborhood, £ 2,000 from Surbiton Business Community, £17,000 from the High Street Fund and aimed to raise the remaining £2,000 through local fundraising. This is where the Spacehive crowdfunding campaign came in, having met its funding goal set for £26,920, the crowdfunding campaign ended on December 18th 2015 (Spacehive, n.d. c).

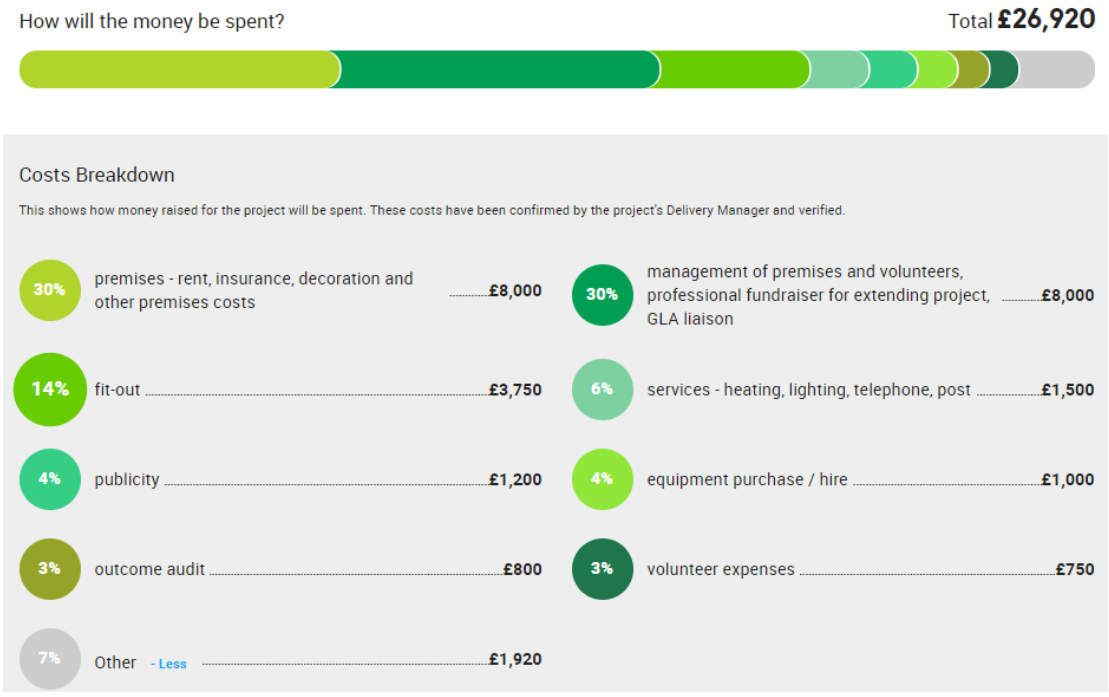


Figure 6. Cost breakdown for the Museom of Futures. Extracted from Spacehive, n.d. c.

Not even a year later, after having successfully set up the Museum of Futures as a functional community hub, the Community Brain developed the Community Kitchen initiative, which would 'enable local start-up or home-based food businesses with the opportunity […] to explore the potential for a sustainable business future in cooking and catering' (Spacehive, n.d. d). This would function as a testing ground for people interested in home cooking and baking that wanted to expand their possibilities and maybe launch an entrepreneurial venture in this domain. The project proposed equipping an area of the existing Museum of Futures with professional appliances that could then be used by locals as 'trial run' for their potential business. Additionally, this space could also serve as a kitchen for preparing food for community events. Having recognized the success of the Museum of Futures in strengthening the Surbiton community, the GLA pledged £17,000 towards their funding goal. With more community awareness on the initiatives developed by the Community Brain, the Spacehive campaign was able to raise over £6,000 more from independent donors, mostly locals in the area.

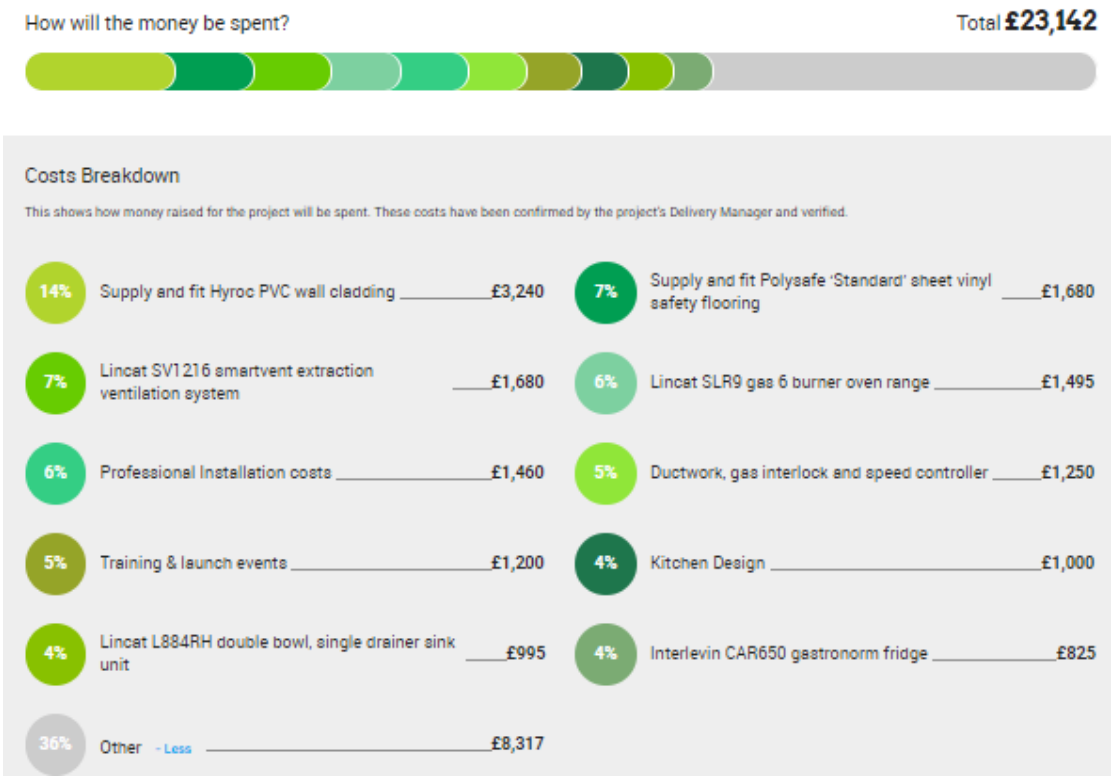


Figure 7. Cost breakdown for the Community Kitchen. Extracted from Spacehive, n.d. d.

After having been donated a shed just at the entrance of some abandoned community lots for farming, the Community Brain launched two other initiatives that were interlinked (Hutchinson, Tyrrell & Levy, personal communication, 2020). The Community Brain turned to the community and together developed the idea of a community incubator and using the existing allotments nearby for testing and developing sustainable ways of growing food through aquaponics, investing in solar panels and even raising chickens. The produce grown here could also be used in the Community Kitchen. The GLA pledged £5,000 for this project, having the majority of funds (over £12,000) be raised via Spacehive.

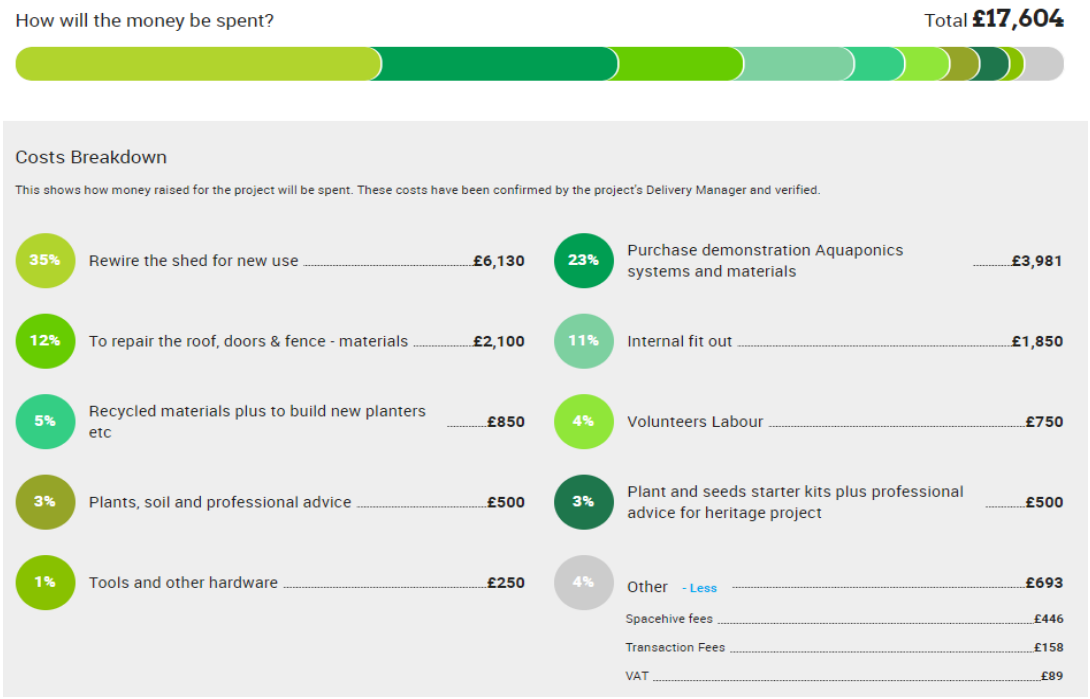


Figure 8. Cost breakdown for the Tolworth Suburban Farm. Extracted from Spacehive, n.d. e.

The Tolworth suburban farm would use the existing allotments to 'introduce the community to suburban farming possibilities, teaching food growing, and building productive, sustainable sources of locally produced food' (Spacehive, n.d. e).

The other part of this initiative was the building itself, an old and poorly maintained shed, would become SHEDx, a 'multi-faceted project […] designed to achieve strong community engagement' in Tolworth, another London suburb

(SHEDx Good Growth Fund form, n.d., p. 6). According to Charlotte Levy, after the inauguration of the shed, the shed and the farm 'grew organically around each other' (Levy, personal communication, 2020). While the farm now focuses on installing solar panels and experimenting with aquaponics, the shed works as a hub for the Tolworth community, with both having grown in interest and activity in the last year. According to Robin Hutchinson, Director of the Community Brain, having secured £385,239 from the Greater London Authority meant 'a demonstration of faith from the GLA in our plans to engage the communities of Tolworth in reimagining the area and ensuring that the local voices have an active say in our futures' (Hutchinson as cited in Kingston Council, 2018).

Having an affinity for community born initiatives, the Community Brain did regular community surveys, a useful tool for assessing community involvement and awareness in matter that regard it. One of these surveys, conducted in 2020, shows people's opinions regarding community involvement. The survey was administered on 335 respondents divided into four categories: UK respondents, Kingston respondents, Kingston respondents that do not participate in the Community Brain's initiatives, Community Brain event attendees and participants. The survey reveals that in comparison with UK respondents, the percentage of local participants who believe it's very important to feel part of a community is much higher (92% compared to 96%). An even bigger difference was noted when asking how people rate their community, with 76% of UK respondents stating that they rate it excellent and 87% of event participants. According to the Community Brain survey, 'engagement and participation encourage individuals to believe they can improve their communities', showing that having participated in community oriented events makes people feel that they would have a big impact in improving their community.

The Community Brain survey also showed what contributed to a sense of community, with 77% of respondents (participants) feeling that community events are extremely important (The Community Brain Survey, 2020).

6.2.2. Project particularities – ‘Success has many parents, failure is an orphan’

The Community Brain, as an organization that focuses on community cohesion using arts, education and local history, has a large background in developing community-oriented initiatives.

In their mission to ‘give people and place renewed importance and pride’, the Community Brain seems to value participation and consider it a prerequisite for the success of any kind of initiative (The Community Brain, n.d.). Their sensibility towards social and cultural aspects seem to entice many participants, who become not only donors in various crowdfunding campaigns launched, but also volunteers or even long time collaborators of the organization.

Robin Hutchinson, who is steering the organization, often uses the expression ‘Success has many parents, failure is an orphan’ (Hutchinson, personal communication, 2020), with the understanding the good ideas (successes) have no value unless they are shared (the parents), once again showing the importance of community as an incubator for ideas.

The particularities of The Community Brain case study make it appropriate for a more thorough analysis on the role that the local authorities and policy makers have in civic crowdfunding. Although not the topic of this thesis, this research has shown that the existence of the Greater London Authority’s initiative of supporting local organizations that want to make use of the High Street Fund is of great help. The Community Brain probably could not have achieved the funding goals for any of their initiatives if it hadn’t been for Crowdfund London.

One important particularity of the initiatives developed by the Community Brain was the involvement of local authorities and their support in these processes.

In 2015, the Mayor of London committed to reviving high streets in London and its boroughs, through the Greater London Authority. The same year, they launched the Crowdfund London program, which allocated funds each year in

order to financially support different community initiatives. According to James Parkinson, their role is to help communities not only achieve their crowdfunding goals, but also help them implement the initiatives. In terms of the process, each year applicants need to send in their forms, containing descriptions of the projects, the amount of funds that they would need and a sketched timeline of actually delivering the project. After the submissions are entered, the GLA assesses them individually. One of the most important criteria in assessing such initiatives is not only how well they align with the existing strategic plans (renewing the high streets, eliminating unnecessary vacancies, improving infrastructure, removing social and cultural barriers in communities, contributing to re-greening areas), but also how good of a 'support systems' these initiatives have (Parkinson, personal communication, 2020).

James Parkinson mentions that they are looking for projects that would be able to continue more or less independently once implemented, noticing that maintenance is an issue that is often overlooked by initiators. Another criteria for entering the application process for funds is that the initiators prove they tried securing funding from local municipalities but were unable to. There are also strict rules when applying for the program. Besides a detailed description of how the needed funds would be spent, the projects cannot request more than 75 % percent of funds from the GLA (Parkinson, personal communication, 2020), meaning that the rest of 25% need to come from crowdfunding or other donations (funds, charities, sponsors) (this rule has been subject to change over the years, in 2015 having been no such limit).

Another important condition is that the projects use Spacehive platform for running their crowdfunding campaigns, and that they are successful in achieving their goal. This is not a gratuitous condition, it's also a test of sorts to see if an initiative has and will have traction in terms of community support. If all these conditions are met, then the GLA decides what particular amount to pledge for a specific initiatives, keeping track of all entries submitted that specific year.

Although having made substantial financial contribution to the first two initiatives developed by the Community Brain, the GLA only invested £5,000 for the Farm

of Futures and SHEDx. According to Mr. Parkinson, the substantially smaller financial contribution (compared to the previous two initiatives) did not represent less trust in the Community Brain. On the contrary, it represented that the GLA, having acquired valuable experience in predicting the outcomes of initiatives, could foresee that the community of Tolworth, where the farm is located, but also other Londoners (locals from Surbiton and other adjoining boroughs) would band together again to support this project as well (Parkinson, personal communication, 2020).

Tina Jadav (GLA) recognizes the importance of having support from communities in developing initiates. She notes that 'one of the great things that Robin and his team did was listen to the communities, […], allow them to express themselves and their needs', thus ensuring that they will have support along the way. For each initiative they developed, the Community Brain already had an existing 'core' of supporters, people who have financially donated and who have actively participated in previous initiates (Jadav, personal communication, 2020). Georgia Neesham also stressed the importance of people actively and physically participating in the initiatives, attributing them to an increase in participation (financial and not only) but also in people's sense of ownership (Neesham, personal communication, 2020).

Despite other places in the world that seem to struggle with developing a framework for civic crowdfunding within the existing planning structures, London seems to be leading the progress. While it is true that having the support of the GLA legitimizes the initiatives and gives them a 95% chance of successfully raising the funds needed, the Crowdfund London program also serves the authorities in a way. By having the support of policy makers, communities re-gain some trust that has probably been lost along the years. This kind of program also allows for 'real, valid' participation to be achieved, according to representatives of the GLA (Jadav, personal communication, 2020; Parkinson, personal communication, 2020).

6.2.3. Conclusions and implications for the study

Having already been an established organization by the time they launched the first civic crowdfunding campaign (with support from the GLA), the Community Brain deeply benefitted from the community's involvement.

Their Museum of Futures initiative was one of the first ones ever to have been funded via Crowdfund London program. As previously mentioned, this helped bridged a gap of trust between communities and local authorities.

The three initiatives depicted in this research seem to have organically followed one another, developing on the basis on the one before. Thus, the Museum of Futures was born from people's need to have a community hub where to interact with each other and develop the Community Brain's initiatives. In a way, it became their headquarters, not only representing their presence of the Community Brain in the area, but also a useful space for events, workshops and community meetings. Having the space in Surbiton increased the local's sense of ownership in the initiative, but also boosted their pride in living in what is considered a 'standard, sometimes boring' suburb of London, often referred to as Suburbiton (Tyrrell, personal communication, 2020), a play on words between the name of the place,Surbiton, and the word 'suburb'. This allowed people to feel more proud of their neighborhood, be more connected to their peers and gave them a fresh perspective on the area that they now sometimes call Superbiton (Ibid.).

By listening to the locals of Surbiton, the Community Brain recognized cooking as a passion and possible entrepreneurial venture for many. Developing the Community Kitchen allowed local to use the space as a testing ground for their culinary talents as well as for their side businesses. This helped boost their confidence, which translated into a bigger willingness to participate in projects and initiatives happening in the neighborhood or supported by the Community Brain.

Due to their general inclusivity of people and their ‘strategy’ (that is a laudable effort, not easy to do and even harder to maintain) of genuinely communicating with locals, the need for sustainable food sources (that could be used in the Community Kitchen) became evident for the Community Brain. The decrepit shed that went to become SHEDx was a donation made to Robin Hutchinson by its previous owner, due to the trust the latter had in the power of the organization of putting it to good use. Now used to also host school events and teaching people how to grow plants and vegetables in their own homes, SHEDx teaches responsibility. The Farm of Futures continues this legacy, although the two initiatives also have independent projects from one another. The Farm of Futures in very much focused on sustainability in agriculture and energy as well, thus contributing to promoting responsibility in the use of resources.

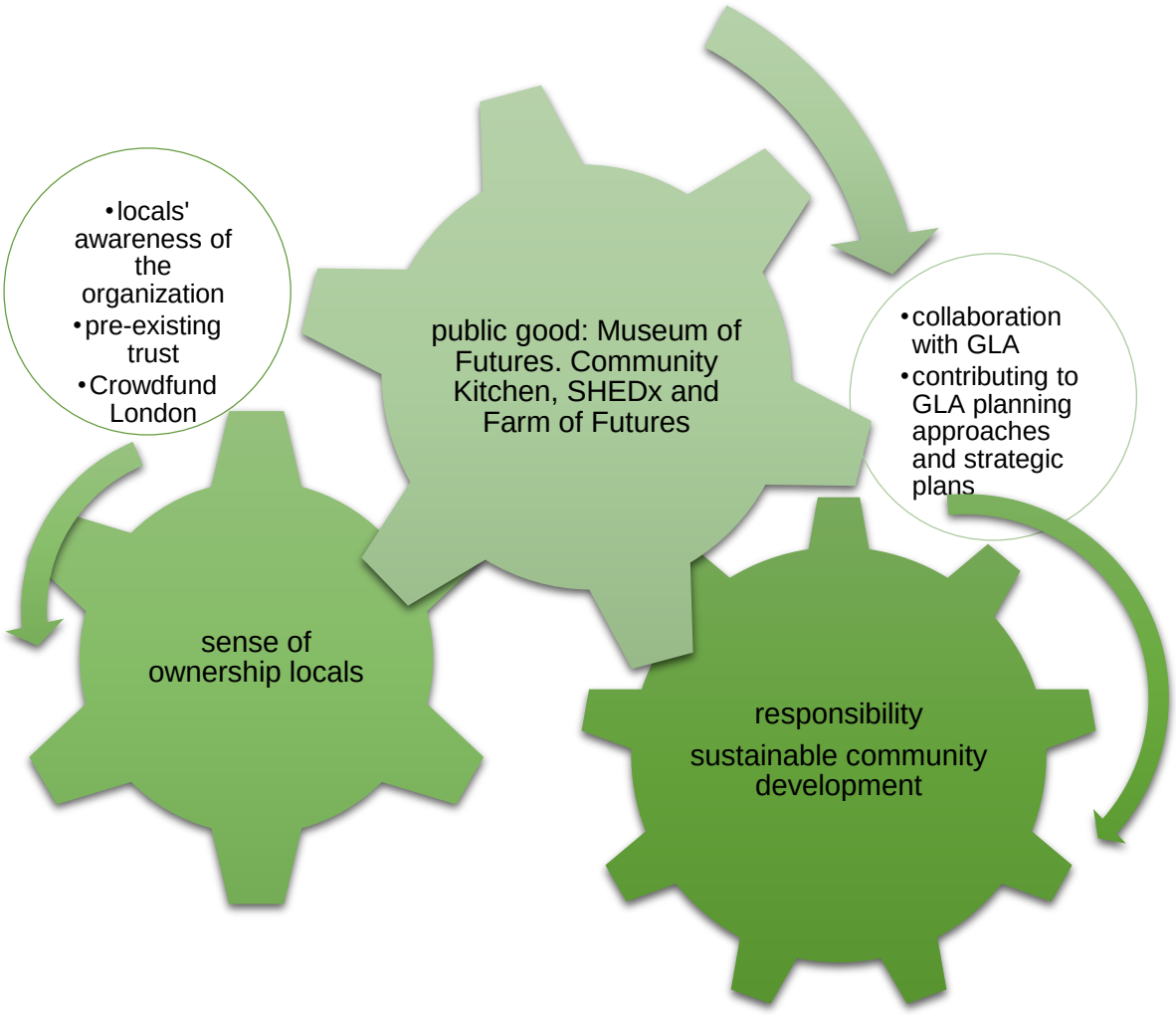


Figure 8. The Community Brain - conclusions

It is undeniable that these three initiatives delivered public goods, as all three have provided spaces that have been used by their contributors and not only. What is striking in this case is that all the people interviewed while researching it noted that the result of the campaigns represented much more than a physical public goods, such as the spaces created; they garnered participation in an inclusive manner, helped strengthen community bonds and beneficially contributed to the relation between participants and the areas they reside in and their community. As previously mentioned, a community survey done by the Community Brain clearly show that participants have reported a much higher awareness in community issues, involvement in events and even sense of ownership. Additionally, it seems that the initiatives also helped improve people's general perception of their neighborhoods, with most people reporting feeling more safe. Additionally, their involvement seems to have also boosted their individual esteem, with a majority of them reporting that they now felt that they could positively contribute towards their community.

By noticing the positive changes that each initiative triggered, locals also became feeling more responsible in bettering their communities. By allowing them to voice their opinions, by listening to their wants and needs, the Community Brain has allowed people to metaphorically climb on Arnstein's highest rungs of Citizen Participation. By first consulting them and then creating partnerships with the communities, to then delegating tasks to them and ultimately allowing them to take control, The Community Brain alongside the GLA have truly achieved genuine participation, while also providing them public goods (not only the spaces, but also the social effects of the initiatives – empowerment, pride, increased safety), fostering their already existing sense of ownership into a more involved form of it and supporting the empowerment by allowing communities to take responsibility for their own wellbeing and further progress.

Chapter 7. DISCUSSION

7.1. Discussion Of The Results From Scientific And Empirical Data

7.2. Discussion Of The Results According To The Research Goal And Research Questions

7.3. Consequences Of The Results

7.3.1. Advice for further research

7.3.2. Reflections on the validity / limitations of the research

7.3.3. Conclusion

7.1. Discussion Of The Results From Scientific And Empirical Data

As mentioned in chapter 6. Empirical Data - Case Studies, the case studies were chosen specifically to showcase a variation in forms of participation as well as approaches to civic crowdfundig. The case studies are also different in how the policy makers (municipalities, planning authorities) were involved in the processes. The analysis of these case studies was based on the methodological approach of the two main themes, civic crowdfunding and participation, and the three main concepts of public goods, sense of ownership and responsibility, as they have been discussed in scientific literature. Upon collection of the case studies results and comparing them to the aforementioned scientific literature, a number of conclusions can be drawn. This subchapter will elaborate and argue on these conclusions.

The case studies selected for this research show various instances of participation in the civic crowdfunding processes. The case studies that this research analyses also focus on civic crowdfunding through the looking glass of participation.

The case of the Abel Awaroa Tasman beach showcases ‘positive people power’ (Gard’ner & Major, personal communication, 2020), as the goal of the campaign was not only to raise funds in order to gift a beach to the Kiwi’s, but also to bring people together. Regardless of the process of crowdfunding, what the two initiators, Adamn Gard’ner and Duane Major, managed to achieve was a staple of not only a community coming together, but of a thoughtful and considerate (to all involved parties) process of ensuring that a space could be used by everyone.

The initiatives developed by the Community Brain have also developed some interesting results when comparing the empirical findings to the scientific literature. While achieving sufficient participation was not an issue in this case, the use of civic crowdfunding was different than in the case of the Abel Awaroa Tasman beach.

Through the Greater London Authority and its Crowdfund London program, the Community Brain had a systemic support in navigating and efficiently using crowdfunding. Although not an element of debate in this study, it seems that the Crowdfdung London program is one of the most updated and adapted frameworks of implementing civic crowdfunding not only as a method of alternative fund raising, but also as a method of using valid participation in community development.

7.2. Discussion Of The Results According To The Research Goal And Research Questions

As stated in chapter 1.3.1., the goal of this study was to analyze civic crowdfunding through the looking glass of participation, as it is not only an efficient tool in raising funds necessary to develop a project, but also to foster participation that leads to community empowerment. The following section will discuss how the secondary research questions were answered and what the results were.

How is the notion of public goods represented as results of civic crowdfunding projects?

While the academic literature discusses the notion of public goods as ‘a good that once provided, cannot reasonably be withheld from any member of a group’ (Davies, 2014b, p.29)’ , it also seems to imply the material, palpable attributes of these public goods, focusing more on the specific type of project that civic crowdfunding campaigns typically produce: small parks, community gardens, playgrounds, etc. (as shown in chapter 2.2.2. Types of projects funded through civic crowdfunding). The empirical findings from both case studies show that the public goods produced by these processes are also of a different nature. Both case studies showed that the result of the crowdfunding campaigns were more tight-knit communities, an improved sense of pride of participants in their

communities and also a general sense of empowerment. Despite having yielded very different projects, the two case studies have revealed that an additional outcome to running civic crowdfunding campaigns has been the community empowerment as well as another layer of participation that would allow people to be more invested in future endeavors supported by the initiators.

How is ownership manifested as a consequence of participation in civic crowdfunding projects?

As can be inferred from scientific literature (chapter 3.2. Participation As An Integral Part of Participatory Planning), civic crowdfunding processes tend to increase the participants' sense of ownership.

In the Abel Awaroa Tasman beach case, considering that the land had previously belonged to the iwi, the sense of ownership was partly pre-existing. This meant that the final product good, the beach itself, did not necessarily mean new ownership for the iwi, but more reparations for years of injustices of having their land taken away. For other donors (New Zealanders and other nationalities), their financial contribution did increase their sense of ownership, in the end the project being referred to as 'our beach'.

The initiatives of the Community Brain also relied on some pre-existing sense of ownership, as the spaces already existed in the community (the dilapidated shop in which the Museum of Futures and the Community kitchen were established, as well as the shed and the allotments in Tolworth), but they were unused. The completion of the projects increased this sense of ownership, by providing locals with spaces that were not only there, but were also useful and made available to their needs. For citizens that were not previously involved in the Community Brain's various initiatives, with involvement in the projects also came an increased sense of ownership, as the Community Survey conducted by the organization showed (chapter 6.2.1. Project Overview – The Community Brain At The Heart of Community Development).

Referring back to chapter 4.1. (Sense of) Ownership, where Lachapelle notes that it is important to also establish the voices that are being heard in the process (Lachapelle, 2008), it should be noted that the empirical data from case studies shows that the issue of representation is something that should be the subject of further research. While in the Abel Awaroa Tasman beach case the participatory instances did not contribute to decision-making in planning, the initiatives of the Community Brain archived levels of participation beyond tokenism, as Lachapelle (2008) calls for. In this case, there was a high degree of citizen control, as locals had a deciding voice in the initiatives that would be implemented. Lachapelle third point of discussion regarding sense of ownership was also touched upon in the two case studies. The beach was included in the Abel Tasman National Park, thus making it a public property that would be managed by the Department of Conservation. The initiatives developed by the Community Brain are not the responsibility of the GLA, this institution being only helping in the crowdfunding process. But representatives of the institution interviewed for this research did argue that the issue of who will maintain the projects once completed and delivered to the public is an important aspect. Luckily, in this case, it seems that the empowered communities seem to have a handle on how the spaces will be looked after and seem to have already taken steps in this direction.

Both case studies seemed to confirm the findings in academic literature that sense of ownership is affected for participants, in the sense that citizens' participation in crowdfunding processes increses their sense of ownership. Additionally, the case studies showed that this increased (or sometimes renewed) sense of ownership leads to more participation in either the same process or in similar initiatives.

What are the understandings of responsibility in the context of civic crowdfunding processes?

The concept of responsibility discussed in chapter 4.3. Responsibility, showed that academic literature considers responsibility as more than just deontic duty, focusing more on responsibility as a means to attain goods, but with the

interrogative caveat of ‘whose <<good>> and at whose cost’ (Gunder & Hillier, 2007, p. 63). The idea of planning in the context of uncertainty seems more current than ever, with communities being isolated due to pandemic restrictions. While 2020’s first months came with almost global restrictions of free-circulation and strict lockdown measures, it seems that there were also communities that managed to become more autonomous and support their residents. From small scale initiatives of neighbors shopping for the elderly, to architecture professionals 3D printing protective equipment for medical personnel, it seems that the term ‘community’ seems to have expanded beyond the previous notion of neighborhood or area, signifying more a group with shared intentions. This aligns with Gunder and Hillier’s responsiveness to ‘the other’ and their plea of planning with willingness to act under uncertainty, as well as to Hannah Arendt’s concept of ‘collective responsibility’. Empirical data from the case studies support these propositions, by noting that planning responsibility should not be solely attributed to planners and policy makers. As evident from the two cases, community responsibility also exists and seems to deliver results, as locals feel more empowered after being involved in crowdfunding campaigns. With the right help from authorities (either in managing projects once completed, as the Department of Conservation did in the Abel Awaroa Tasman beach case, or helping set up and navigate institutional processes and even financially supporting projects, like the GLA did for the Community Brain initiatives), civic crowdfunding seems promising to increase community development by allowing them to take responsibility and foster initiates that they are in need of, thus highly raising the levels of participation.

As previously discussed in chapter 1.3.2. Research Design, the main research question - ***In what ways is participation, as an intrinsic characteristic of participatory planning, manifested in civic crowdfunding processes?*** – can be answered using the information gathered from the secondary research questions. The three concepts considered for this research, namely public goods, (sense of) ownership and responsibility, offer the connection between the main themes of participation and civic crowdfunding.

As explained in chapter 5. Data Collection and Data Analysis Methods, this study originated from a careful analysis of the existing literature on both civic crowdfunding and participation. The three concepts, public goods, (sense of) ownership and responsibility, analyzed in both empirical and scientific data, show that participation in civic crowdfunding processes affects participants' perception of the three, as discussed in the previous subchapter.

The concepts of public goods links the main themes of civic crowdfunding and participation as they are a result of civic crowdfunding processes in which, naturally, participation is involved. The discussion on public goods in the scientific data chapter 3.2. Participation As An Integral Part of Participatory Planning, accounted for what is usually perceived as a public good yielded by civic crowdfunding, which is a palpable, material product, while the empirical data (results from the case studies) have showed that the changes in the citizens' participation (empowerment, increased sense of ownership, a stronger sense of community) could also be considered a public good.

The concept of (sense of ownership) helps relate the two themes, by showing that participation in civic crowdfunding processes increases or renews it. This comes to answer a part of the main research question, by proving that participation in civic crowdfunding processes is manifested in the form of people sensing ownership of the project that they helped fund, but also by the reverse: people's newly increased sense of ownership is likely to foster more participation in the future.

The discussion on responsibility shows that people's participation in civic crowdfunding is a manifestation of responsibility towards the community that they are a part of. As shown in chapter 6.1.3 and 6.2.3, this responsibility is likely to be carried forward, as the involvement in these processes seems to also trigger a bigger sense of responsibility, meaning that people are more likely to be aware of their community's needs and thus, have a greater sense of urgency in addressing these needs with or without involvement from the authorities.

It seems evident that participation is manifested in both a physical sense of actually participating in certain initiatives and events of civic crowdfunding (like in the Community Brain case), but also in a sense of financial contribution. Although this research started as somewhat disregarding the financial aspects of civic

crowdfunding, by considering they have been widely discussed by previous research, it seems that the financial aspects are still important and relevant.

Furthermore, the initial working definition of civic crowdfunding provided in chapter 1.2. Scientific Relevance, as *a practice that relies on public funding from various donors in order to cover the costs of a project delivering public goods* can be enhanced with the findings from scientific and empirical data. As it was shown, civic crowdfunding has many other relevant aspects (social and cultural) that add to its value as an alternative funding mechanism. Additionally, it appears that the public good previously identified by scientific literature as results of civic crowdfunding can be material (the spaces and specific additions/ alterations made) but also non-material (in the form of a higher degree of participation and community empowerment). As the two case studies have shown, civic crowdfunding can function even in the absence of support (financial and otherwise) from public authorities, but can benefit from it. Thus, this study can formulate an updated definition, as follows:

Civic crowdfunding is a participatory practice of raising funds from multiple, individual donors to cover the cost of a public project, via an open call (usually online) that can be supported by authorities and which provides public goods (material and non-material).

Having used the three concepts to address the main research question and provide an updated definition of civic crowdfunding, it appears that participation is manifested not only as a motivation for involvement in civic crowdfunding, but that the public goods (material and non-material) provided by these processes also act like reward, in the form of increased sense of ownership and as an incentive for an increased responsibility in the betterment of communities.

The present research has also addressed some of the gaps in literature previously identified in chapter 1.2. Scientific Relevance. This research has touched upon Davies' advice on following 'the longer impact of projects on the attitudes of residents in crowdfunding project locations to their neighborhood' (Davies, 2014 a, p. 22), by presenting empirical data from the Community Brain case study that showcase a definite increase in participants' feeling more empowered to inflict positive change, more confidence in their communities and an increased sense of ownership. The Abel

Awaroa Tasman beach case study focused more on the social and cultural aspects of the process, as the project addressed multiple communities and local indigenous tribes, thus taking into consideration 'the social and political valences and long-run consequences of civic crowdfunding' that Davies (2015, p. 353) called for.

Other researchers mentioned that 'research should continue into the benefits of civic crowdfunding beyond funding, such as ability to create support networks and to communicate directly with elected government officials' (Stiver et al., 2015, p. 265), which this study has successfully addressed, in not only choosing different case studies in terms of the involvement of authorities, but also in terms of the communities involved in the processes. While The Abel Awaroa Tasman beach focused more on people rallying together to support a common goal, thus increasing the support network, the Community Brain case study showed that the involvement of the GLA seems to be of high relevance, as they provide an institutionalized framework for communities using crowdfunding.

7.3. Consequences Of The Results

7.3.1. Advice for further research

The previous chapter has discussed the relevance of the three concepts in answering the main research question. While the public goods provided by these projects can also be non-material (in the form of an increased sense of ownership, the feeling of belonging to a community, empowerment – individual and communitary), the participants' sense of ownership and responsibility seems to act as both a motivator for involvement but also as an effect of it. This

two-way implication is an interesting aspects that was not found to be discussed in the academic literature to date.

While both Davies (2014 b) and Lachapelle (2008) extensively discuss sense of ownership, their work only touches on increase in sense of ownership as a result of participation in civic crowdfunding. Future research is likely to benefit from an approach of sense of ownership as a motivation for involvement. As the Abel Awaroa Tasman beach case showed, this sense of ownership can also be a high motivator for participation: people will donate because they want to have ownership of a place. This would make for interesting future research, focusing on how pre-existent sense of ownership (as in the case of iwi for the Abel Awaroa beach and the citizens of Surbiton for the Museum of Futures) can be used as an incentive for participation.

While the discussions on responsibility have focused on the philosophical discourse of what it actually represents and how it should account for 'who' ('who' are the voices that are being heard and 'who' are the bearers of the costs for collective responsibility, as asked by Gunder and Hillier, 2007) thus placing responsibility on the shoulders of professionals and policy makers, this research has uncovered that there is a desire (both from authorities and from communities) to hand over some of this responsibility to the citizens as well. Although Hannah Arendt's work (1987) touches on collective responsibility as a twofold aspect of individual autonomy and as representatives, perhaps a useful approach for research of more actuality would be on how citizens' responsibility towards their community can be fostered and then used for the development of communitary projects.

The three concepts discussed in this research have all had a common point of criticism: the issue of representation. As it seems that civic crowdfunding projects tend to me successful in neighborhoods of (at least) median income, and seeing as the participants in the processes are not sampled as to reflect the social, financial and cultural diversity of a community, this present research suggests that the topic of representation be addressed in future research. The issues diversity and representation of all races, cultural backgrounds, social and financial classes are currently of more actuality than ever before, as it

seems that reparations need to be made in order to re-unite divergent national and global communities and to move forward in a more unified manner, from a social point of view. Thus, considering the lack of focus on this topic in existing academic literature and the current socio-political movements demanding it, this research recommends that the issue of representation be considered when discussing participation.

The Covid-19 threat that has dominated the first half of 2020 has also affected how societies will move further, by possibly triggering a global economic crisis even greater than the one in 2008. In this world of globalized yet isolated lockdowns, it seems that some communities have banded together, while other simply couldn't make do. As the lockdown measures are being lifted, it seems that the need for unity in diversity is pressing. It seems that the civic crowdfunding will become an increasingly valuable tool not only for funding, but also for rebuilding communities at local, national and global levels. Chris Gourlay, CEO of Spacehive, was quick to recognize the challenges that the ongoing or post-pandemic world will face, as he urged that 'we should seize the chance not just to recover – but to #BuildBackBetter so that communities, local economies and the natural environment emerge more vibrant and resilient than ever' (Gourlay, 2020 in 'Let's help communities #BuildBackBetter' email June 10th 2020, sent to platform users, courtesy of Georgia Neesham).

7.3.2. Reflections on the validity / limitations of the research

This research has started as a presumably simple (although not simplistic) overview of civic crowdfunding. As seeing the lack of literature documenting the social aspects of these processes, this research has focused on going beyond the financial benefits of civic crowdfunding, delving more into the participatory instances.

As discussed in chapter 5.3. Validity Strategies, this research has used data from multiple sources. From literature reviews, to document analysis and

interviews, this study has tried to provide a trustworthy and accurate narrative of not only the civic crowdfunding processes, but its effects as described by stakeholders involved. The triangulation of sources and rich descriptions of each case study, as well as the inclusion of criticism related to the main themes of civic crowdfunding and participation and the three concepts have contributed to a more accurate detailing of the aforementioned topics. Despite that, this research acknowledges that there are possible limitations in terms of the approach used and the results it yielded. One of those possible limitations is the availability (or lack thereof) of interview respondents for the case studies. While the researcher has reached out to representatives of all major stakeholder categories, in both cases it was not possible getting a response from crowdfunding platform representatives. While initiators of the two case studies (Adam Gard'ner and Duane Major for the Abel Awaroa beach and Robin Hutchinson and his team fo the Community Brain) and representatives of local/ national authorities (The Department of Conservation of New Zealand and Greater London Auhtority) have been interviewed and the responses embedded in the empirical data chapter, a possible limitation of this research could be the lack of responses from donors. Additionally, due to the limited time span and global work-from-home policies, it is worth considering that a greater number interviews and additional member checking could have been conducted.

The three concepts, public goods, sense of ownership and responsibility provided valuable lessons from the case studies, showcasing the versatility and utility of civic crowdfunding not only for funding, but for empowering communities and bridging the gap between them and policy makers. Although the issue of representation has not been discussed, it is the researcher's belief that the present study has will have a beneficial contribution towards the academic literature on civic crowdfunding, as it provides a unique perspective through the looking glass of participation. As previously discussed in chapter 5.4. Limitations, the qualitative nature of this exploratory study as well as the choice of concepts that show the relation between civic crowdfunding and participation could have steered the present research in a particular direction. Combined with the limited number of case studies analyzed, the findings of this

research are not globally valid and the results of this research should not be taken ad-literam as a blueprint for other instances.

Another important aspect worth noting is referring to the time frame of this research. Due to its stretch over multiple months in which the Covid-19 pandemic has disturbed the economic, social and cultural aspects of the global community, it is possible that some of the respondents' answers were veered towards a plea for more unity in the currently divided world. Further research would greatly benefit from analyzing the role of the global health crisis in economy (by possibly reducing funding for future community projects), society (by allowing some communities to further their autonomy and exert resilience, while under-priviledged ones struggled) and culture (as seeing that this crisis has also uncovered older cultural issues of diversity and representation). The role and effects of crowdfunding will be more than interesting to observe as the global society will emerge from the Covid-19 crisis and there will be a focus on rebuilding societies, communities and places.

7.3.3. Conclusions

The gap in existing academic literature on civic crowdfunding has directed this research into structuring as a qualitative study, focused on the participatory practices of civic crowdfunding. The results from both scientific and empirical data have lead to the conclusion that participation is a valuable tool in civic crowdfunding, not only for raising funds, but to empower communities and thus contributing to a more responsible, sustainable approach to community development, which is deeply needed if, after the medical challenges experienced and the possible economic challenges to come, the global community is to rebuild stronger than before.

As elaborated upon in chapter 7.2. Discussion Of The Results According To The Research Goal And Research Questions, this qualitative case study focused on three main concepts.

First, the findings from academic literature and the case studies revealed that public goods, as results of civic crowdfunding projects can also be non-material, which seems to be of novelty to this area of research. Participation in civic crowdfunding has showed to also foster community engagement, empowerment and encourage even higher degrees of participation in future initiatives regarding community betterment.

The findings on sense of ownership have gone beyond the already documented increase of it triggered by participation. As evident from the case studies, sense of ownership can also play a role as a motivator for participation, as it closely relates to the issue of responsibility that this research also discussed, meaning that engaged citizens' sense of ownership can also mean an increase in their responsibility to take action.

The concept of responsibility has added an important and often overlooked in academic literature dimension to the discussion of participation. The empirical findings have shown that citizens do feel and sometimes even want to take on responsibility for projects regarding community development. This is an interesting valence of responsibility that contributed to the existing body of knowledge on the topic, by opening the door towards more responsibility possibly granted to communities, as they are most likely to be aware of their specific wants and needs.

In a world re-emerging from a global health crisis, that is likely to face a drastic economic crisis, it seems that the mechanisms of civic crowdfunding as more important than ever, as they will allow for a better use of this method of funding. Additionally, the socio-cultural climate seems to need a more empathic, mindful and inclusive approach, in which participation could be of great value, not as a financial means for civic crowdfunding but also as a catalyst for empowerment and unity in diversity, in a world that is hoped to be more resilient and unified than ever before.

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APPENDIX

Appendix 1. Semi-structured interview protocol

Questions:

[Ice-breaker]

What was the motivation behind your involvement in this particular case?

What has your experience been so far in working with participatory planning and/or civic crowdfunding?

[Questions on participation]

What is your take on the role that participation plays in civic crowdfunding processes?

How have you experienced participation manifested in civic crowdfunding projects?

How do you think participation could be enhanced/ improved?

[Questions on public goods]

What is, in your opinion, the result of a civic crowdfunding project? Do you believe that civic crowdfunding processes are meant to deliver public goods?

Do you agree with the following definition: ‘a public good is a good that once provided, cannot reasonably be withheld from any member of a group’ (Davies, 2014b, p.29)?

Do you believe civic crowdfunding projects produce more/ something else than public goods?

[Questions on ownership]

Have you noticed/experienced a change in the donors' sense of ownership once involved in the civic crowdfunding process?

What is your opinion on viewing ownership as a motivation for involvement in civic crowdfunding processes?

[Questions on responsibility]

How do you view responsibility in the context of civic crowdfunding processes?

What is your position in regards to the role that responsibility has in civic crowdfunding?

[Wrap-up or summary questions]

In your opinion, how would the results of this study impact the further research in this area?

What other research approaches would add value when analyzing participation in the context of civic crowdfunding?

Besides the notions of public goods, ownership and responsibility, what other issues do you believe are relevant in the discussion about participation in the context of civic crowdfunding processes?

[Additional questions]

What other key actors would you recommend that I get in touch with in order to better understand this particular process?

Appendix 2. List of tables and figures