**Building Public Values through Cross-sector Collaboration:**

**One Possibility of Creating Public Value[[1]](#footnote-1)**

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**Abstract**

Compared with the increasing prevalence of public value literature, the importance of public values research is seriously underestimated. This essay attempts to shed lights on this topic. Using a case study, we want to explore in which ways the public values could be constructed through cross-sector networking. The research findings are threefold: (1) the network collaboration is essential for building public values, however, it is difficult to be maintained; (2) the network is underpinned by three logics- the institutionalised measurement logic, the informal interpersonal relationship and core agent logic, and the bureaucratic logic; (3) the performance of building public values can be evaluated by a continuous spectrum; within this spectrum raising awareness and facilitating actions are more challenging.

**1 Introduction**

Generated from the seminal work of Moore (1995), the terminology of public value creation has been widely used in both academia and practice for decades. It argues that, the fundamental purpose of public service is adding value to the society through the effective using of public assets (Alford and O'Flynn, 2009). This type of value ought to be enjoyed collectively by the citizenry as a whole and meet the citizens’ general aspirations. Compared with the managerialism oriented New Public Management paradigm, public value theory believes that the reform of public management needs to focus on the long-term effects of public service to the social development and emphasise the public managers’ responsibility in terms of identifying and satisfying public desires. As a normative design, public value theory is deemed as a highly competitive candidate for the next public administration theoretical paradigm (Stoker, 2006, O'Flynn, 2007, Alford and Hughes, 2008).

However, before thoroughly leading the public management reform and study, public value academics still need to respond to a range of practical questions in at least two aspects. First, how to create public value when facing today’s ‘wicked’ public issue like mitigating climate change (Geuijen et al., 2016, Head and Alford, 2015)? These public issues are usually featured by substantive conflicting values, ambiguous beneficiaries, and uncertain policy expectation, which requires public managers to actively reconcile values controversy, balance diversified interests and seek democratic legitimacy. Second, how to create public value in a cross-sector collaboration network (Page et al., 2015, Bryson et al., 2017, Stoker, 2006)? As the solution of complex public issues increasingly relies on the operation of social cooperation network which consisted with different interest organisations and groupings (Andersen et al., 2012, Osborne, 2010), public sectors are required to have excellent negotiation and motivation leadership.

These practical questions reflect that, in the heterogeneous modern society, the public values are diversified and the multiple private interests’ pursuits are normally inter-conflicted. It means, creating public value not only needs the completion of certain public service programs following a simple linear way (Hartley et al., 2016); it is also related to the management of competing public and private values (Wal et al., 2011, De Graaf et al., 2016). In other words, more than the value creation procedure, the whole public value realisation chain also includes a preceding public value identification, definition, accommodation and final determination procedure(Moore, 2014). Further, according to the public service dominant logic analysis of Osborne and his colleagues (2013, 2016, 2017), any service, including public service, has no intrinsic value to the service users. Value is a kind of personal judgment. Correspondingly public value can only be created when the public believes the outcome of public service is worthwhile or beneficial (Alford and Hughes, 2008). Therefore, this study stresses that the building of unified public values, is the foundation of creating public value.

This paper plans to shed lights on the understanding of public values construction. Differentiated from the previous studies, such as Oldenhof et al. (2014), Stewart (2006) and Thacher and Rein (2004) which mainly discuss the strategies of tension management between public values, we aim to reveal the conceptualisation process of public values in practice and investigate the possibility of building public values through collaboration. Specifically, through a single case study, we will illustrate how citizens’ perceptions (namely the private values) towards mitigating climate change and carbon reduction are changed in the individual level and how the cross-sector network influences this public value shaping process.

In the following, the literature about public value and public values will be reviewed at first, which is followed by the research methodology, data collection and analysis introduction. In the fourth part, we will specifically discuss the research findings, and explain how our research findings could help us to extend and develop the present public value theory.

**2 Literature Review**

**2.1 From private value to public value**

The idea of public value, according to Moore (2014), is generated from a simple analogy: ‘*if private managers were committed to producing private value for shareholders, then public managers should produce public value for citizens* (p. 465)’. It means public value theory, although largely viewed as a rebel of New Public Management (NPM), also draws on the experience of private enterprise management. The difference is, NPM mainly introduces the private management skills and techniques; whereas, the public value theory advocates to re-understand the pursuit and logic of public management from a value-creation perspective.

Therefore, understanding public value requires understanding private value at first. Generally, a dictionary definition of value is the ‘*relative worth, utility or importance of something* (Bryson et al. 2014, p.448)’. From a service marketing viewpoint, value is the positive impacts upon those who enjoy a certain service or consume a certain product (Chandler and Vargo, 2011, Vargo and Lusch, 2012). It is the outcome of service generated from the service interaction procedure, rather than the simple outputs deliberately added into products and delivered by service suppliers (Grönroos and Voima, 2013, Grönroos, 2011). In this regards, the arbiter of value is the service consumers. They evaluate the value-in-use through the subjective comparison, which includes (but not restricted to) the comparison between subjective expectation and real experience; between service cost and service benefit; between the value(s) provided by different services; and between the value obtained at present and the value obtained previously (refer to, Osborne et al., 2016).

Public value belongs to a special type of value. It is brought by the use of public resources, judged in the social level, and enjoyed collectively by the citizens (Williams and Shearer, 2011). Moore (1995) initially applies public value framework into the executive training for public managers. In his well-known ‘strategic triangle’ framework, maximising public value within the constraints of the authorising environment and the operational capabilities is explained as the responsibility of a good government (Alford, 2016).

Benington (2009) attempts to define public value in two ways. First, public value could be described as ‘what the public values’. As Moore (1995) argues, the public value creation is equivalent to achieving something that is substantively valuable, and a well-established public in the liberal democratic society will act as the appropriate arbiter of public value (Moore, 2014). Under this viewpoint, public value is closely related to the private value-in-use: it is regarded as the value assembly enjoyed by public service users as a whole (Alford, 2016, Alford, 2009). In other words, public value is actually the intersection of the impacts of public service and the citizens’ general aspirations. However, allowing public evaluating public value has two shortages. On one hand, the public can be shortsighted, which may result in the lack of sustainability in public management; on the other hand, the public is normally self-interested, which may lead to the overlook of some ambiguous and potential public crises like climate change (see also Dahl and Soss, 2014).

Second, public value could be explained as what adds value to the public sphere. Benington (2011) sees the public sphere as the abstraction of democratic social space incorporating a range of social actors, activities, values, information and elements. Public value is the value added into this public realm by ‘*stimulating and supporting democratic dialogue and active public participation and citizen engagement*.’ (Benington 2009, p.237). This conception tends to view the public value as a type comparatively objective existence, which does not completely depend on the preference and satisfaction of citizens. It not only denotes the present value enjoyed by current specific users, but also incorporates the value in the long term and the value for wider potential beneficiaries. However, this understanding is also criticised by Stoker (2006)(also see, Dahl and Soss, 2014; Chohan and Jacobs, 2017), who believes that public value framework endorses the discretion of public managers and runs the risk of furthering neoliberalism’s de-democratising consequences.

Private value is the cornerstone constructing the foundation of public value, but it does not mean that public value is the mechanical summation of substantive private value(s). For some direct public service practice like health care and education, the creation of public value can be disassembled as realising several private value(s) to every service users (Hartley et al., 2017, Alford and Yates, 2014). In this condition, public value is ‘what the public values’, and ‘what the public enjoyed’. But for some ambiguous public service practices like national defence, which does not have specific customers, creating public value means ‘*adding value to the public sphere*’ or ‘*creating conditions that benefit the border public* (Moore 2014, p.469)’. This is to say that, if we think realising private value refers to realising something that users feel valuable, then creating public value means creating something that in accordance with public values.

**2.2 From private values to public values**

As stated before, value denotes the utility of something desirable. It is judged individually and is rooted deeply in people’s values. The conception of values here is the ‘*deep-seated beliefs about what is right and wrong* (Nalbandian 1998, p.622)’. It is not limited to determining the personal value evaluation, as Andersen et al. (2012) argue, values can also form the people’s reception of reality, ‘*give identity to individuals as well as organisations, and guide behaviour* (p. 716)’(see also, Kluckhohn 1951).

Correspondingly, the evaluation of public value is also rooted in the public values. Refer to the definition of values, public values can be understood as the social widely accepted beliefs about what is right and wrong. According to Alford et al. (2017), compared with the public value which refers to something like ‘utility’ or ‘worth’, the public values refers to a type of normative consensus concerning the standards of valuable. Bozeman (2007), another leading voice of public value literature, systematically defines the public values as: ‘*(1) the rights, benefits and prerogatives to which citizens should (and should not) be entitled; (2) the obligations of citizens to society, the state, and one another; and (3) the principles on which governments and policies should be based* (p.13)’. Among them, the last type of public values, also viewed as the government and administration criteria, firstly gains attention in academia. Jørgensen and Bozeman (2007) conducted a public values inventory through literature review and further discussed the proximity, hierarchy, and causality relationship among diversified public values. Starting from this research, a range of scholars such as Andersen et al. (2012), Wal et al. (2011) and Haynes (2017) begins to discuss the conflicts between public values and the effects of the competing public values upon public policy and management.

However, the other two types of public values, namely the social consensus regarding the benefits and obligations of citizens, is comparatively ignored. In practice, this type of public values is always full of contentious. As Jacobs (2014) argues, the extent of dissensus between disproportionate influence of citizens and organised interests is severely underestimated in Bozeman’s public values framework. If we see the public values as the widely-accepted values, then how the multiple competing private values reach consensus and how the public values are formed and accepted by different interest bodies in practice, still remains disputed in the current literature.

A straightforward and optimistic view believes that, the government can directly make the public value trade-offs through adopting some strategies or techniques (Thacher and Rein, 2004, Stewart, 2006, Oldenhof et al., 2014). By contrast, a large proportion of scholars believes, the modern deliberative democracy design is the reliable approach to integrate public values. For instance, Moore (2014) notes that, the appropriate valuation of public value should not rely on a simple summation of individual values. ‘*A liberal society has to have some kind of collective civic and political life in which individuals decide collectively what they should do for others* (p.468)’. He also proposed that, if the collective consensus cannot be reached, the government can also force the implementation of public policies through using the public authority (De Jong et al., 2017). Similarly, researchers including Nabatchi (2012), Alford and Hughes (2008) emphasise the potential of citizen participation to help administrators to identify and understand public values with regard to policy conflicts. However, as Jacobs (2014) argues, the fragmented public beliefs and opinions can hardly reach a consensus through the present governing structure and public discourse, as the present structure and discourse are ‘*too often dominated by organised interests with substantial resources* (p.491)’.

Besides, one opinion believes that, different values works not only in competition but also in collaboration (Hartley et al., 2017), and the differences between different values is expected to be eliminated through the negotiation and education. Meynhardt (2009) argues that, the shared (public) values expresses objectivity and still bounds to subjects. It means although the public values presents as an objective criterion, in the individual level, every social body can also have different interpretations towards that public values. Further, he raises four dimensions of private values, based on the formal axiology and needs theory, namely moral-ethical, political-social, utilitarian-instrumental, and hedonistic-aesthetical. These dimensions illustrate that citizens subjective evaluation of basic needs is influenced by the environment, and is not entirely driven by the individual rationality and individualism. In a word, ‘*citizens value these things is because they personally benefit from them. But in many cases, they also value them and indeed value other things, for reasons that go beyond their individual self-interest* (Alford and Hughes 2008, p.3)’. The conflicts between public values and private values is possible to be conciliated.

To sum up, from the angle of public values, public value creation is the ‘*extent to which public values criteria are met*’ (Bryson et al., 2014). Conversely, if neither the market nor the public sectors can provide appropriate services to achieve public values, then the public value *failure* will occur as well (Bozeman, 2007, Bozeman, 2002, Kalambokidis, 2014). This is to say that, to some extent, the public values is the basic measurement of public value creation. One implication is that public managers should equally focus on how to identify public values and how to forge the public values agreements in an institutional way when committing to create public value in public programs (Davis and West, 2009, Moulton, 2009, Jacobs, 2014, Kalambokidis, 2014).

Public values is constituted by private values. It is centred by altruism and always conflicts with private value which largely bounds to egoism. To date, a large body of literature discussing the formation of public values focuses on the values competition and selection. By contrast, this paper, on the basis of the study of Alford and Maynhardt, would like to explore the ways in which private values are deliberately shaped and modified to bring into correspondence with public values. Compared with directly select the public values from diversified values options, making individuals actively accept public values is termed ‘building public values’ in our study.

**2.3 Public value creation and cross-sector collaboration**

It is widely acknowledged that, creating public value needs multi-sector participated collaboration. A recent study from Bryson et al. (2017) reiterates that, public value is created in a complex policy field in which overlapped actors, practices, policy arenas, public problems and operational functions are continually interacting. Each actor in that public field faces the challenges from their own ‘strategic triangle’: they have to define the value, harvest resources, and seek legitimacy by themselves (Bryson et al., 2015, Bryson et al., 2014). The research conducted by Osborne and his colleagues (2013, 2016, 2017), systematically illustrates that the individual-based interaction and co-production is the intrinsic procedure of public service, in which the genuine value is co-created. Besides, some empirical studies such as Koliba et al. (2017), Larson et al. (2017) also try to identify the key tools in facilitating public value co-creation in the public network. They find that the effective information sharing, institutionalised society-government communication and the social capital and public trust building are important.

Present literature mainly focus on the role of cross-sector collaboration in regards to the public value construction. In facts, the network governance and collaboration are also closely related to the competing public values. On one hand, the plurality of public values and the complex mix of values confliction are viewed as the core in a collaborative arena of public governance (Hartley et al., 2017). How to accommodate the multiplicity of these different actors and interest values will determine the performance of public service collaboration, and further determine the consequence of public value co-creation. On the other hand, the network governance is also regarded as the foundation to reconcile the values conflicts. Page et al. (2015) believe that the cross-sector collaboration is both necessary and desirable to the visible creation of public value, due to it could enhance the democratic accountability, the procedural rationality and the long-term problem-solving capacity of public management. However, how to realise the public values building and facilitate the individuals approving the public values through network collaboration, still requires further exploration. Based on the study of Huxham (2003), five example themes could be discussed in the collaboration theorizing: common aims; power; trust; membership structures and leadership.

As above, we reviewed the literature about public value(s), private value(s) and public value co-realisation. Public value as a metaphor of value extended to public sphere is evaluated by public values. We believe, realising public value not only includes ‘value creation’ which is widely discussed by previous studies, but also includes ‘public values acknowledgement’. This paper aims to reveal the latter procedure. The research questions are two-fold: (1) How do individuals change their private values and approve the public values? (2) How can the cross-sector collaboration facilitate this process?

**3 Methods**

**3.1 Research setting**

The Carbon Literacy Pilot Training (delivering accredited carbon literacy training) held from February 2015 to September 2017 in Edinburgh is the setting for our study (see the timeline illustration below). It is a programme developed to raise the social attention towards climate change and carbon reduction, and aims at helping every citizen reducing their carbon footprint through collective knowledge learning.

The idea of Carbon Literacy Training comes from Manchester in 2009. The Cooler Project, a Community Interest Company (CIC) initiated and oversees this whole programme. This training is designed to offer citizens and organisations the opportunity to receive a standardised one-day-training session about carbon reduction at an affordable price. Differentiated from other climate change related seminars, the core feature of Carbon Literacy is that the training is ‘bespoke to the organization (or individual), is delivered by peers, is integrated into current training programmes and is supported by an approved certification system’ (Report to the Transport and Environment Committee, Edinburgh City Council, 15 March 2016). All participants successfully completing the training will receive a certificate confirming their Carbon Literacy. The Carbon Literacy Training is an important component of the Manchester’s Climate Change Action Plan (Manchester: A Certain Future, MACF) and works closely with Manchester City Council.

In early 2016, The Edinburgh Sustainable Development Partnership (ESDP) as a strategic partnership of the Edinburgh Partnership started to seek a way developing citizens’ awareness, knowledge and engagement with sustainability. They found the Carbon Literacy Project offers a promising possibility and actively contacted Cooler. The board of ESDP applied a start-up capital from the Edinburgh Partnership Enabling Grant and three organisations including Festivals Edinburgh, NHS Lothian and WEA Scotland successively launched the pilot training between November 2016 and March 2017. There should be four organisations participated as planned, but the training in Lloyds Bank is failed finally. Over 70 people were trained in total. This pilot training also assists the ‘Carbon Literacy Project’ and ‘Cooler’ enlarging their popularity and expanding their businesses in Scotland. For instance, they began to work with the Keep Scotland Beautiful (KSB, an arm’s length agency of Scotland Government committed to improving Scotland’ environment) from 2017, to frequently offer unscheduled Carbon Literacy Training to communities under the financial support of Scottish Government’s Climate Challenge Fund.

**3.2 Data collection and analysis**

The data collection in this study lasts for five months from October 2017 to February 2018. Data for this study came primarily from in-depth semi-structured interviews. People were asked: how did you and your organisation participate in this program? What are the main barriers impeding this program? And if give you a second chance, how could you improve this program? A purposive snowball sampling, which makes informants be viewed in relation to each other, was employed on selecting informants. Specifically, we first contacted a key person from Edinburgh City Council who is in charge of the Carbon Literacy pilot training in Edinburgh. According to the interviews with and the recommendation by this key person, we nominated a number of other informants and approached them based on the organisation as the unit. We only stopped approaching new informants when data were saturated and any new information is similar to our findings. Ultimately, from the training provider (the Cooler Project), the local operator (ESDP), and the training receivers (NHS Lothian, Festivals Edinburgh, WEA Scotland), we all interviewed relevant key informants and acquired a comprehensive understanding towards CLP training.

Besides, we also adopted observation and documents as complementary. The observation principally concentrated on the ESDP operating and CLP training process. We attended several meetings and seminars held by ESDP as well as one CLP training class, making notes and briefly interviewing a number of participants to draw to the full picture of these events. The documents came from three parts: the self-introduction and project plans from the Cooler Project; the reports submitted to Edinburgh Partnership/City Council by ESDP; and the feedbacks from training receivers. Finally, we triangulated our interview data with the observation and documents data, which enabled us to capture the ‘*richness and complexities*’ of a field study and assured the data validity.

The data analysis primarily consists of three rounds of coding. We reviewed data and transformed all interview recordings and digital files into transcripts and texts for the use of coding. Applying Nvivo Qualitative Research Software, we formed first-order discursive codes in an iterative fashion. During this stage, we moved back and forth between literature and data in order to clarify the emerging concepts and revise the coding scheme. After that, we started the second-order coding. For this, we clustered our first-order codes into common themes and derived significant second-order themes by associating these initial codes. We then iteratively revisited the data, first-order concepts and second-order themes until the theoretical saturation and no new emerging concepts or categories. Finally, in accordance with our two research questions reflected as network governance and public/provide values, we dug out the underlying theoretical dimensions of second-order codes, investigated the relationships among these themes aggregated the theoretical dimensions, and in the end summarized the theoretical codes to explain our research questions. The coding list is illustrated in table 1.

**Table 1. The coding list**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **First-order codes** | **Second-order codes** | **Theoretical Codes** | **Dimensions** |
| * Happy to facilitate peoples’ values change and especially see the ‘switch on’ point
* Develop themselves’ organisational skill
 | Receiving self-satisfaction and self-development | Loose Network | **Network Collaboration** |
| * It is a huge networking project or human relationship building project.
* Facilitating the pilot training through interpersonal relationship.
 | Interpersonal relationship |
| * Getting enough people at the senior level to put themselves at risk
* Failed to approach the senior level person is the main reason why we failed in Lloyds Bank
 | Dependence on senior leadership  | Bureaucracy |
| * It is about the people who are not interested in carbon
* The Festival wants to make it all available to every staff-some of them had interest but some of them are very sceptical
 | Forced participation under the hierarchical pressure |
| * The trainer believes that the certification criteria is strong enough
* The roles of player and referee cannot be held jointly
 | Independent training and certificating system | Institutionalisation Attempt |
| * The customer information is stored and managed in a database
* A well-established criteria checker, examination and verification system, and price matrix
 | Institutionalised management |
| * Facing the dilemma between inclusiveness or profitability
* The funding sources are very limited
 | The fund shortage | Survival Crisis |
| * The only certainty is the trademark and we only get certificate fee from KSB.
* We plan to give training in the organisation informally next year by ourselves, rather than following the formal carbon literacy framework.
 | Lack of control over the network |
| * The training is bespoke to the organisation
* The training materials are made through the collaboration between organisations and trainers.
 | Customised curriculums | Integrating Point | **Building public values** |
| * Giving the potential customers evidence to show the benefits of the training
* framing a way to let you know reducing carbon is not just what you should do for the environment, it can reduce the energy cost for you.
 | Link carbon with business  |
| * For the people who do not have any personal passion, it is difficult to get them care about it.
* We are the advocators. What we do is choosing organisations, providing the concepts, giving them evidence and trying to get people interested.
 | Awareness as foundation  | Values Hierarchy |
| * People who have the personal passion could translate it into the professional passion.
* Many people might be interested in climate change but think that is out of their control. Our job is showing them we can do something to make differences.
 | Personal passion and professional passion  |
| * The people who are forced to come tend to be disruptive
* I just want to use one and a half hour in science part, and use the rest of the time in the action explaining
 | Difficulty in generating motivation |
| * The benefits are uncertain--that is the biggest difficulty.
* You cannot make the budget saving straightaway, and actually, it will cost you more now.
 | Hysteresis and ambiguity | Egoism and Short-termism |
| * Another challenge comes from the priority of big businesses. Now, most of the organisations we worked with are non-profit and public sectors.
* The people who first got involved cannot see the value of this training--we faced the problem again that the people didn’t see it as the first priority.
 | Anything but priority |

**4 Discussion**

**4.1 Building public values through network collaboration**

From a perspective of structuralism, the Carbon Literacy pilot training in Edinburgh is supported by a loose self-organising network. The participants in this network can be briefly classified into three sub-groups: The Cooler in Manchester who provides the original training idea, sets the training standards and issues (also audits) the carbon literate certificate; the Edinburgh Sustainable Development Partnership (ESDP) as the specific initiator and facilitator this pilot training; and the trained organisations including the Workers’ Educational Association (WEA Scotland), Festival Edinburgh and the National Health Service (NHS Lothian). Between these participants, there is an equal collaborative partnership based on the shared values and the common commitments to sustainability.

**4.1.1 Institutionalisation attempts and anti-institutionalisation failure**

Cooler is a Manchester-based Community Interest Company (CIC) that delivers projects and advocacy related to behavioural sustainability. The Carbon Literacy training is one of the main services of Cooler and now is specifically organised by the Carbon Literacy Trust (CLT) which is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) recognised by the Charity Commission in March 2014. This training aims to cultivate literate population in terms of carbon reduction and advance the social understandings and actions on climate change. Its core activity is maintaining the operation of a certificating system. This system allows any individuals or organisations who complete the whole carbon literacy training and meet the related standards applying the ‘Carbon Literate’ certification or ‘Carbon Literate Organisation’ accreditation. Based on our interviews with the Cooler Co-founders, paid employees and volunteers, three characteristics of this training is emphasised here:

(1) The training course is made and delivered by the training applicants themselves. Cooler or the CLT only provides some basic guidelines and resources on their website as a reference. Several volunteers working with Cooler who have received the carbon literacy training and certificated as ‘carbon literacy trainers’ already could provide assistance to the training applicants during course designing and delivering processes if required.

(2) The certification standards are systematical and comparatively strict. Based on the standards, the training session is required to, at least, incorporate a half-day background knowledge introduction about global climate change and a half-day participatory discussion to find out the possible actions to reduce the personal carbon footprint and the collective footprint of their workplace. After the training, the participant organisations are asked to submit a detailed portfolio of evidence about the training, and individual participants are also required to write a participant form. As mentioned above, the reason why the CLT and Cooler do not directly deliver training is that they want to keep the neutrality and objectivity of their certificating system. As the standards are strict, one Cooler’s employees introduced: *‘a considerable proportion of people failed to get the certification, we will give them a further action sheet… they can fill out the form, and then we can go back and re-assess.’*

(3) The training is free because it is delivered by the trainees and the unpaid volunteers. The Cooler will only charge for the certification and criteria checking. The price of certificates varies considerably: from the lowest price--10 pounds for the individual certification, to the highest price—3500 pounds for the ‘Platinum-level Carbon Literate Organisation Accreditation’ (only for large organisations whose annual turnover is above 5 million pounds). Before the delivery of the training, the organisation needs to complete and submit a Criteria Checker form to state the training plan with a criteria checking fee varies from 200 pounds to 750 pounds.

A general carbon literacy training is consisted with five successive procedures: registering the training interest on-line; designing the training and submitting the criteria checker; delivering the training; collecting and providing evidence; approving evidence and issuing of certificates. As shown in table 1, it could be concluded that, Cooler is attempting to form an institutionalised training pattern, in which the training part and the certificating part are divided from the organisational level; a strict criteria checking system, examination and verification system, and pricing system are established and complied; and a series of scientific management techniques including the archives administration and employee motivation are gradually adopted. As one of the trainers in the focal case argues: *‘I like Cooler program. And I think it is very well-designed, their contact is excellent and their criteria is very strong.’* In this regards, Carbon Literacy Training is a successful innovation. For changing individual’s values towards carbon reduction and improve the behavioural sustainability, it provides an operational and replicable way with an especial focus on the supervision and evaluation of training efficacy.

However, although Cooler succeeded in institutionalising the training part, it failed to get people involved in an institutionalised approach. A formal training is designed to start from ‘registering the training interest on-line’. But in practice, the training is more likely to start from the active target-finding and contacting, and highly relies on the Cooler leader’s personal social relations and advocating skills. One of the Cooler co-founders said:

*It (getting people involved) is not easy, it’s very hard! We (co-founders) are the advocators. So what we do is we choose organisations, research on them, provide the concepts to them, give them evidence to show the potential benefits and try to get people interested … Cooler project is actually a huge networking project or human relationship building project.*

This situation is further confirmed by the Advocacy Manager, she said:

*It (persuading your customers) is difficult because you didn’t always get response. It is not everybody’s first priority…Largely, at this time Dave and Phil are the persuading leads, and I generally follow up. Depending on what organisation is and depending on how we frame the training, how we trying to persuading them. Every organisations is different and has different priorities. That means we have to do different research on them before we contact them.*

The work of carbon literacy training is helping individuals recognising the importance of carbon reduction and facilitate related personal footprint reducing behaviour. It belongs to a typical public values building practice. As stated in the literature review section, the private values are diversified and the methods of shaping private values also should be individualised. Therefore, the flashpoint of carbon literacy training is that it attempts to balance the personalised knowledge learning process (delivery customized training) with the unified quality monitoring system (certification and criteria checking). However, it also means that Cooler does not have any absolute competitiveness in the carbon-related training field such as the control of cutting-age knowledge, which forces the managers of this program to extend their business by informal contacts and personal relation establishment.

In a word, Cooler insists an institutionalised logic in the values building whereas utilises anti-institutionalised logic in regard to the external network construction. This antinomic situation brings negative impacts in threefold: (1) result in the unequal position between the Cooler and the trainees, which may weaken the neutrality and credibility of training measurement; (2) result in the randomness of public values building; (3) result in the funding shortage and instability.

**4.1.2 Networking with bureaucracy**

The Edinburgh Carbon Literacy pilot training was initiated by the Edinburgh Sustainable Development Partnership (ESDP), which is a council sponsored association aiming at promoting sustainability-related social collaboration across the city. It means, differentiated from most of the carbon literacy trainings which relies on the Cooler’s active socialising, the focal case strictly follows the normal carbon literacy training design and started form the ‘training interest registration’. Using the words of Cooler’s co-founder, ‘*I don’t know these people before, and this pilot was more like a contingency.*’

In the first half of 2016, the members in the ESDP held several board meetings to discuss ‘*how to change the culture of people in relation to carbon and particularly how to involve people that are not engaged with it already (A director in ESDP said).*’ The vice-chair of ESDP recommended the Carbon Literacy program to the board meeting. He recalled:

*I first knew the idea Carbon Literacy in a forum of Manchester: A Certain future… I did a bit of research on it, and I told Jenny we should go down and talk with them… We had talked a lot in the ESDP to discuss what sort of training in carbon is valuable. We also did quite a lot of work to persuade people in ESDP to believe that is a good approach, as there were quite a lot of interests in other areas and trainings like Carbon Conversation.*

The ESDP board members then came to the Edinburgh Partnership (a community planning partnership for Edinburgh and ESDP is a part of it) and successively applied 8,000 pounds to launch this pilot training in July 2016. After that, according to a Project Report submitted to Edinburgh Partnership in March 2017, the ESDP separated met with three sectors including the NHS Lothian, Lloyds and WEA Scotland. They also prepared the Criteria Checker, training lesson plans, bespoke PowerPoint slides together/ with several Carbon Literacy trainers and the trainee organisations. The first two-days training is held in November 2016 with Festival Edinburgh, which followed by another training within the same sector in January 2017. The training in NHS Lothian and WEA Scotland successively held in February and March 2017 (as shown in Figure 1).

Board meetings, training preparations and contacting the Cooler Project

**2016.07**

Succeed on funding application for launch the CLP training

**2016.11.25**

1st training of Festivals Edinburgh

Successively met people from NHS, Lloyds Bank, and Festivals Edinbrugh

**2017.01.19**

2nd training of Festivals Edinburgh

**2017.02.24**

NHS Master Class

**2017.03.02**

Project Midterm Report

Training day of WEA

**Before 2016.07**

**2017.03.24**

Submitted the final project report to Edinburgh Partnership

**2016.07-11**

**2017.09**

**Figure 1. The timeline of CLP Training**

The training planned in the Lloyds bank is cancelled finally. The program organisers attributed it to failing to get enough support from the senior level in the targeted organisation. One director of ESDP said: *‘I think the people who first got involved cannot actually see the value of this training. You do need people who are keen to this topic at the top in somewhere of the organisations to say ‘yes, we will do this’.* Another council person also mentioned that ‘*we found it is hard to get in the organisation in terms of getting to know the key people.*’ This failure is not that surprise and it also partly resonates with the argument of Elliott (2002) who indicates that the cross-sector collaboration between governments and nonprofits may be easier to realise than that between government and business.

As displayed in Figure 2, in this pilot training network, there is no relationship of administrative subordination. The ESDP mainly acts as a loose alliance providing a field for actors to discuss and collaborate with each other in a relatively formal style. The governance of ESDP and the pilot training network follows the principle of voluntariness and every participated organisation shares the equal position in the network.

➀ Informal interpersonal relations and core agent logic ➂ Bureaucratic logic

➁ Institutionalised measurement logic

**NHS**

**Members**

(training receivers)

**Leaders**

**➌**

**WEA**

**Members**

(training receivers)

**Leaders**

**➌**

**FsE**

**Members**

(training receivers)

**Leaders**

**➌**

**Training Receiving Organisations**

**ESDP**

**Cross-Sector Partnership**

**Cooler**

**Criteria Setter & Supervisor**

➁

➀

➀

**Figure 2. The CLP training network and organisational logics**

This main adhesive of this loose network is personal relationship, and just in accordance with other Carbon Literacy trainings, the success of the networking in Edinburgh also highly relies on the key persons’ promoting efforts. For example, the original training idea, as mentioned before, is introduced by the vice-chair of ESDP. He is also a senior manager in the Creative Carbon Scotland, a third sector working with artists and cultural sectors to improve environmental sustainability. The Creative Carbon Scotland is established by Festival Edinburgh and these two organisations still remains a very close working partnership now. With the joint efforts of him and his one program administrator working jointly for Creative Carbon Scotland and Edinburgh Festival, the carbon literacy training was successfully held in Festival Edinburgh. Festival Edinburgh even did not use the funds provided the ESDP but paid the venue costs and certificate costs all by themselves. The training in WEA Scotland and NHS Lothian is also facilitated by another person. He is keen on the carbon literacy program, holds the Education Development Manager position in WEA Scotland and also has a wide interpersonal connection in the NHS Lothian.

As shown in Table 1, facilitating the pilot training in the loose social network is also determined by the informal interpersonal relationship and the key person’s actions. Moreover, the effects of bureaucracy also could be found in the collaborative network, which means, the carbon literacy training inside of the organisation is executed top-down through the formal hierarchical organisational structure. For example, the program administrator in Festival Edinburgh told us:

*People’s motivations for coming to the training were different. For some people, before they came, they already cared about the carbon emission… For other people… it’s like the CEO said ‘the people in the organisation have to go!’ So you would find, ‘oh that’s great we have everyone’. But you can find these people are very disruptive because I don’t think they actually want to be there. They were just forced to go.*

This pilot training’s organisers largely believe that, utilising the bureaucracy to urge people to participate is an advantage of the Carbon Literacy training. As the Vice-chair of ESDP argues: ‘*Some of them had interest but some of them are very sceptical I have to say… Cooler focuses on the people who aren’t interested in carbon. It is not for people who are interested in carbon already. I think it is really important.’* However, the training effectiveness for the forced trainees is disputable. As the interview recording stated above, the reluctant participation may result in people’s psychological inversion and ‘disruptive behaviour’. In other words, with the help of bureaucracy, it is easier to get people involved but it is still difficult or even more difficult to reach consensus and build public values.

In the above, we illustrated what we find from the case study and from the examination of the general Carbon Literacy training experience. This training as a typical public values building practice is based on a loose social network and the development of this program is encountered a lot of barriers. As shown in Figure 2, three organisational logics underpinned this practice are summarised: the institutionalised measurement logic to evaluate the performance of public values building; the informal interpersonal relationship and core agent logic to spread the training idea among senior people across-sectors; and the bureaucratic logic which ensures the implementation of the training inside of organisations.

**4.2 Building public values at the individual level**

This paper defined the public values building as an active learning or training process in which the diversified private values are shaped and unified, and the conflicts between public values and private values are eliminated. Thus, this topic is required to be examined not only at the network level but also from the individual level.

As illustrated in the literature review section, a range of present literature argues that, generally, individuals tend to evaluate something based on the personal interests primarily and then consider its value from the social benefits viewpoint. This opinion is confirmed in this case. The phenomenon that in our case the public values including reducing carbon footprint, mitigating climate change and protecting the intergenerational equity is conflicted with private values, is deeply rooted in the confliction between altruism and egoism/short-termism and long-termism. As many interviews reflected that, doing carbon literacy training is more difficult in private business as they care more about their profitability and reducing carbon is far from their priority list. For instance, the Cooler project coordinator told us:

*Another challenge comes from the priority of big businesses. Because most of the organisations we worked with are, the majority are, non-profit and public sectors. There is still a lot to be done in the private sector. So it is about breaking through that organisation really. That will take more time, more hours to go around and persuade them to take the carbon literacy.*

The value of Carbon Literate is difficult to be appreciated by the business is also due to the hysteresis and ambiguity of carbon reduction. It means carbon reduction has the potential to create public value, but mainly create value for the future and next generations. Its positive effects cannot be seen immediately and its policy expectation is also contentious (Brunner et al., 2012, Helm et al., 2003). This hysteresis is conflicted with social actors’ short-termism assumption. As the Chair of ESDP summaries that is a ‘cost upfront and benefit unfelt issue’:

*The complexity of it…especially in the time of the lower budget, is extremely difficult to ask people spend money now and will result in better things in the future. You cannot make the budget saving straightaway, and actually it will cost you more now. So there is a time issue, again, that is cost upfront and benefit unfelt.*

Briefly, private values is largely dominated by egoism and short-termism, which is quite possible to be conflicted with the altruism-centred public values. The ambiguity and hysteresis characteristics of carbon reduction in this case further exacerbate this conflict. For addressing this conflict, Carbon Literacy Training wants to facilitate trainees finding the ‘integrating point’ which could connect the public values with the private values. As one Cooler employee said: ‘we want to frame a way that is you know it is not just you should do for the environment; carbon literacy has been showed in organisations to reduce the energy cost.’

Normally, there are three basic approaches to find out the ‘integrating point’ with regard to carbon reduction. First, reducing carbon footprints could reduce the energy cost for families and organisation, which is a comparatively common thought. Second, reducing carbon footprints could allow individuals to change their backward lifestyle and give organisations an opportunity to transform their development model and realise the technologies upgrade. Third, reducing carbon footprint and becoming Carbon Literate could help individuals better integrating into society (Cooler told us, many refugees in Manchester received the carbon literacy trainings freely. The Carbon Literate certificate could expand their CV and contribute to their job-hunting) and help organisations improving their social reputation.

However, finding the ‘integrating point’ also has limitations. It doesn’t fundamentally eliminate the conflicts between public values and private values. Or we can say that people choose to reduce their carbon emission (changing behaviour following public values), but have not totally embraced the low-carbon values such as natural sustainability and intergenerational equity. They chose to change behaviour merely because it will bring them more interests. Finding the ‘integrating point’ shelved the conflicts between public values and private values and has limited contributions to the public values building. Cooler also realised this problem. That is why in their standardised one-day training plan, half-day is used as the discussion session to find out the ‘integrating point’; and the other half-day would be used to introduce the knowledge of climate change and carbon reduction.

Based on the case study of public values building in the network level and individual level, we finally conclude that, shaping people’s private values should follow the values hierarchy. It means as far as a certain kind of values, for instance reducing the carbon footprint for the eco-environmental sustainability, the individual’s acceptance level is hierarchical. The lowest level is termed ‘awareness’, means people get interested in this topic. In our focal case, it means people heard the concept of carbon footprint or climate change, and be interested in them. One trainer in Festival Edinburgh defined this values hierarchy as the ‘personal passion’. She said: ‘From my experience, people who have the personal passion then could translate it into the professional passion; but if the people do not have the personal passion initially, it is very difficult to get them care about it’.

The second level is termed ‘understanding’, means people begin to know what is the meaning of this topic and gradually get enough knowledge about it. In order to get enough knowledge, the learning methods are diversified, and for different people who have different knowledge background and learning capacity, the extent of understanding varies. Using the trainer’s words above, this values hierarchy is the ‘professional passion’. The knowledge is only enough when the individuals could make a personal judgment about this topic independently. The higher level of values acceptance is termed ‘Recognition’, means individuals not only know this topic but also approve the related values. In our research case, it means people believe the carbon reduction is a good thing for the society. Even though he/she does not want to contribute to carbon reduction, he/she will admire the carbon reduction behaviour of other people or other organisations.

The highest level of private values shaping is ‘support’. It means people totally accepted the values and would like to change behaviour following this values. In the focal case, it means individuals are willing to reduce their personal carbon footprint and the carbon footprint in their workplace. It is also the core purpose of Carbon Literacy training. The Cooler co-founder said:

*We work with thousands of people and hundreds of organisations. We want our training as inclusive as possible. Many people might be interested in climate change but think that is out of their control. We show them these, we show them we can do something to make difference.*

Taken together, if we want to build public values in the individual level, our aim is making people care about the topic at first, then training them to be knowledgeable; then making them accept this values; and finally facilitating the behavioural change and related actions. This hierarchy can also be used to evaluate the performance of public values building. Based on our case study of Carbon Literacy program, within these four levels, realising the first one and the last one is more difficult. The awareness raising is the foundation. As illustrated before, people can be forced to participate in the training, but they still have the defensive mechanisms. The behaviour change is the ultimate pursuit of public values building. Because different organisations have different priorities and the social actors are largely self-interested, it is hard to persuade them to spend personal time and efforts to contribute to the public value.

**5 Conclusion**

If we consider the public values as a normative social consensus concerning the standards of valuable, then creating public value could be interpreted as the value created by public service in accordance with the requirements of public values. Compared with the increasing prevalence of public value literature in the past decades, the importance of public values research is seriously underestimated. Differentiated from some previous studies which believe that public values is decided by the modern democratic system from the premise of the dichotomy between politics and administration, this essay raises a question: can we consciously build public values? Specifically, we seek to explore in which ways the public values could be constructed through cross-sector networking; or in a simple word, how could we facilitate the values assimilation in the society to improve the degree of acceptance of a certain kind of public values through social collaboration.

The Carbon Literacy training is used as our research case. It seeks to help citizens recognise the importance of carbon reduction and leads a green lifestyle through collective learning and participative discussion. We especially examined the Pilot Carbon Literacy (PCL) Training in Edinburgh from 2016 to 2017. This study found that, the conflicts between public values and diversified private values is rooted in the contradiction between egoism and altruism, which is aggravated by the hysteresis and ambiguity of carbon reduction in the focal case. This is the basic barriers impeding the public values construction. Further, in the cross-sector network analysis, we found that it is easier to build an institutional measurement system to evaluate the performance of public values building. However, because public interest is normally not the priority of private sectors, the process of building public values highly relies on the informal interpersonal relationship, the key agent’s action, and the function of bureaucracy.

Building public values also follows a hierarchical order in the individual level. People at first should have an awareness of the targeted public values; then gradually understand it; followed by the personal recognition of it, and finally become willing to support it through personal actions. For building public values, raising awareness and facilitating action are extremely challenging.

According to Bozeman (2007), ‘*values are difficult to change and a change can be brought about only after careful deliberation* (p. 117)’. Because the network of building public values is mainly supported by institutionalised mechanisms, the structure of it is very unstable. Network collaboration is essential to building public values. However, we found that, as the spreading of the training idea, more participants tend to organise their own training courses. The brand reputation of the training initiator is decreasing as the extending of the network, which results in that the decentralised network has a high risk of further disintegration and the whole public values building process becomes more uncontrollable.

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