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**Abstract**

There is a widespread recognition across Europe, amongst policy-makers, university managers and scholars, that universities' societal roles (the 'third mission') are increasingly important. As universities become increasingly strategically managed, it is perhaps unsurprising that attention has turned towards the strategic management of this third mission. Universities risk becoming 'overloaded' with these missions and are forced to choose to dilute their strategic focus or only focus on a limited number of these missions. The third mission risks being regarded as a desirable but not an essential duty and therefore is unlikely to be an institutional focus. In this paper we therefore ask how can the third mission be meaningfully institutionalized given the pressures on university managers to focus on other areas. We explore this with reference to a detailed case study of a provincial Swedish university, Sjöstad University, with a long-standing commitment to creating a societal impact. We explore how Sjöstad University has created an impact, and then the tensions this raises for key university stakeholders, internally and with external partners. We then reflect on the

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institutionalization of the third mission and call for further consideration of how external stakeholders can provide universities with a strategic space to institutionalize the third mission..(HRK / Abstract übernommen)