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The role of universities in strengthening local capabilities for innovation : a comparative case study / Petter Westnes ...

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**Abstract**

This article reports on a comparative case study of the role played by local universities and public research organizations in the development of local capabilities for innovation in two key gateways to the North Sea oil and gas province: the Stavanger region on the southwest coast of Norway and the Aberdeen region in northeast Scotland. These two regions provide an ideal setting for a matched pair comparison, as the circumstances under which they developed into 'oil capitals' are strikingly similar. Despite circumstantial similarities, the local education and research organizations in the two regions embraced their 'third role' of engagement in regional development quite differently. While the education and research institutions in Stavanger developed relevant technological capabilities based on implicit and explicit coordination and collaboration with the local oil and gas industry, the Aberdeen institutions developed ties to industry not as a result of institutional efforts to respond to industrial needs, but rather through the actions of individual academics in a diverse range of disciplines. Two very different innovation systems emerged but so far, there is no evidence stating that one is more successful than the other in building strong and competitive regions.(HRK / Abstract übernommen)