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## Engaging With the Community


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# Engaging With the Community

**Elaine Ward**  
**Ellen Hazelkorn**



This article focuses on how higher education institutions (HEIs) engage with their external community, contribute to social and economic development, and underpin civil society and democracy. The external community consists of a wide-range of stakeholders from business and industry, the public, private and non-governmental sector, and civil society. While many HEIs have historically had a strong association to their city or nation, today the health of society and the economy is inextricably tied to greater collaboration between “town” and “gown”. The article has five main sections: i) Introduces the social and public responsibility of higher education, ii) Describes the policy context, iii) Defines “engagement”, iv) Offers some indicators to assess and measure engagement and v) Summarizes and makes some recommendations to help institutional leaders ensure engagement is successful and sustained.

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For your convenience, all articles have already been organised by chapter and subchapter online at [www.lg-handbook.info](http://www.lg-handbook.info). This article, C 4-1, has been assigned to:

Chapter            C: Change Processes: Vision – Decision – Action  
Subchapter       4: Engaging the Community

## 1. Introduction: The Public and Social Responsibility of Higher Education

*More than half of the world's people live in cities, and that number is growing rapidly. So if scientists want to help the majority of the population, they need to turn their attention to urban areas.*  
Editorial, Nature, 2010

*Engagement with the wider community must become more firmly embedded in the mission of higher education institutions.*  
National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030, Ireland, 2011

Recent decades have witnessed an extraordinary transformation in European society, from past manufacturing and industrial economies dependent upon productivity and efficiency to today's successful economies based on higher-valued goods and services innovated by talent. Productivity and efficiency are now more than ever part of the equation to remain competitive. These developments have occurred in tandem with the growing force of globalization, creating a single world market. The global financial crisis (GFC) of 2008 further accelerated the speed of change bringing more countries firmly into the competitive spotlight. As a consequence, higher education has become more important than ever. The EU, along with the OECD and UNESCO, have all called attention to the critical role of higher education, especially at this time, in providing human capital through education and training, attracting high-skilled talent and investment, actively engaging with the local and regional community through knowledge and technology transfer, and underpinning the global competitiveness of nations and regions.

### **The rising significance of higher education**

The significance given to higher education's contribution to society and the economy has been rising over time. In the years immediately following the end of WW2, Vannevar Bush (1945), Director of the US Office of Scientific Research and Development under Franklin D. Roosevelt, published *Science: The Endless Frontier*. It famously argued that the application of new knowledge for practical purposes was vital for the creation of "new products, new industries, and more jobs". More recently, there has been a growing realisation that many of today's key challenges cross borders and cannot be resolved by a single country; global challenges require collective responses from different disciplines and societal perspectives (OECD, 2009). The Lund Declaration identified "grand challenges" requiring "sustainable solutions [to problems] in areas such as global warming, tightening supplies of energy, water and food, ageing societies, public health, pandemics and security" (European Council, 2009).

### **Knowledge in service to society**

Higher education's connection *to* and relationship *with* wider society is not a new phenomenon. Since the establishment of the University of Bologna in 1088, the mission of higher education has been to advance knowledge in the belief that society would benefit from the scholarly

expertise generated. The modern European university<sup>1</sup> was strongly influenced by the scientific revolution and Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767 – 1835, founder of the University of Berlin, 1810) and Cardinal John Henry Newman (1801 – 1890, inspiration for establishment of Catholic University, Ireland, 1852 – 1858). While the latter saw the university as the place for teaching universal knowledge, the former viewed the university as a training ground for professionals underpinned by a close nexus between teaching and research. In the US, “service” has been included as a key mission of both private and public universities since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Land Grant universities, developed under the 1862 Morrill Act, were the first “mass” HEIs, established to meet the needs of a changing social class structure rather than simply concentrating on the historic core of classical studies. The commitment was to provide a place “where any person can find instruction in any study” (Boyer, 1990, p. 6) combined with a pledge that knowledge would serve society.

Over the decades, the numbers and types of institutions have grown exponentially to meet the demands and needs of society and the economy, and cater for a wide range of socio-economic and learner groups, and educational requirements (Trow 1974, p. 146). Today, higher education institutions (HEIs) are complex organisations; they provide education from associate degree to PhD and conduct research, actively engaging with a diverse range of stakeholders. Many institutions have medical schools, museums, theatres, galleries, sports facilities and cafes – all of which play a significant role in their community, city, region and nation.

The realisation that today’s complex problems require a holistic approach between higher education and society has helped transform higher education and heighten the significance of knowledge as a ‘public good’. In addition, as many societies struggle with the problems of rising public and personal debt, and the effects of austerity policies adopted in response to the GFC, a wide range of stakeholders have begun asking questions about the value, impact and benefit of higher education. These extraordinary times have provoked considerable scrutiny, especially about publicly-funded institutions. Accordingly, higher education has “a civic duty to engage with wider society on the local, national and global scales and to do so in a manner which links the social to the economic spheres” (Goddard 2009, p. 4). After all, HEIs have been “valued and funded, and are central to modern societies because they produce and share knowledge” (Calhoun 2006, p. 22). As a result, community or regional engagement has come to be seen as an integral and core component of higher education, not as something “confined to individual academics or projects” but embed-

**Higher education has  
“a civic duty to engage  
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global scales”**

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<sup>1</sup> University refers to all HEIs undertaking research and awarding higher degrees, irrespective of their name and status in national law.

ded within and across all parts of the institution while interacting with the wider society (Goddard 2009, p. 4).

The remainder of this article offers an understanding of the policy context and the concept of engagement. Lessons learned from across national and institutional contexts will provide some practical ‘advice’. In particular, we will look at the role of institutional leaders in initiating and mainstreaming community engagement at their institution. The work of international and national organisations will also be highlighted. There are five main sections: i) The introduction which presented the social and public responsibility of higher education, ii) Description of the policy context, iii) Definition of “engagement”, iv) Some indicators to assess and measure engagement and v) Summary and some recommendations to help institutional leaders ensure engagement is successful and sustained. This article is primarily addressed to leaders of higher education institutions and those responsible for carrying out the mission of community engagement at institutions. Research shows that institutional leaders (presidents, vice presidents, rectors, provosts, heads of school/department) are key in setting the direction for engagement by either setting or strongly supporting the institutional engagement strategy, “leadership needs to show that this is a serious conversation with consequences for individual staff, the institution, and the larger community” (Ward et al., 2011; Goddard, 2009). This article will help guide leaders as they embark upon or strengthen university-community engagement at their institution.

## 2. Policy Context

The current focus – by both policymakers and institutional leaders – on higher education’s civic and community responsibilities represents a “rediscovery and renewal rather than radical reorientation” of the purpose and mission of higher education (Watson, Hollister, Stroud, and Babcock 2011, p. 4). In Europe, this renewed commitment has been shaped by a determination, as set out in the *Lisbon Agenda*, to make the EU “the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-driven economy by 2010” (European Commission, 2000). The European Commission’s promotion of the “knowledge triangle” places higher education at a critical juncture between research and innovation, based on strengthened collaboration between stakeholders at national and regional levels. This role is reconfirmed in *Europe 2020*: “higher education plays a crucial role in individual and societal advancement, and in providing the highly skilled human capital and the articulate citizens that Europe needs to create jobs, economic growth and prosperity” (European Commission, 2011b). Accordingly, HEIs across Europe are being asked to address their commitment to engagement as part of the modernisation agenda for “renewed partnership for growth and employment ... [and] to reinforce

*the societal roles of universities in a culturally and linguistically diverse Europe*” (sic, European Commission 2006a, p. 2.)

Essentially, the message is that higher education is a critical component of the social and economic eco-system, which con-joins higher education, industry and business, the public and private sector, and civil society. Benefits of this relationship flow in both directions – to society and the economy, and to higher education – underpinning teaching and learning, and research. Society benefits from new products and services, knowledge exchange and transfer, technological innovation, improvements in societal health and lifestyle through new research and educational provision. Higher education is a major employer, purchaser of goods and services, contributor and provider of cultural activity and urban life, and attraction for investment and mobile talent. In turn, higher education benefits from a close interaction with its region. Most HEIs recruit locally and their students and graduates live and work locally. This close relationship ensures that educational and research programmes remain relevant to societal needs and demands, in addition to providing opportunities for ongoing educational and training opportunities. Concepts such as *Learning Regions or Cities of Knowledge* demonstrate the way in which the interests and advantages of higher education and their region can become intertwined for the benefit of each. Accordingly, many national policies endorse engagement as a key pillar of higher education; the OECD and EU have both endorsed closer links between HEIs and their region (OECD, 2007; European Commission, 2011a). Handout 1 below outlines the strategy adopted by the Irish government.

**An eco-system of inquiry, knowledge production and use**

The Irish *National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030* (2011) identified higher education’s relationship to and engagement with wider society as a core function: HEIs “should have open engagement with their community and wider society and this should infuse every aspect of their mission. Outward-facing systems and structures should be embedded into institutional activity, so that there are inward and outward flows of knowledge, staff, students and ideas between each institution and its external community” (Review Group, 2011, p. 3). HEIs should embed engagement with “business and industry, with the civic life of the community, with public policy and practice, with artistic, cultural and sporting life and with other educational providers in the community and region” in the mission of the institution, by

- Encouraging greater inward and outward mobility of staff and students between higher education institutions, business, industry, the professions and wider community.
- Responding positively to the continuing professional development needs of the wider community to develop and deliver appropriate modules and programmes in a flexible and responsive way.
- Recognizing civic engagement of their students through programme accreditation, where appropriate.
- Putting in place structures and procedures that welcome and encourage the involvement of the wider community in a range of activities, including programme design and revision.

## Handout 1

## National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030, Ireland

### 3. Defining Engagement

Despite a policy drive for greater engagement by higher education in their communities and region, there is little consensus about the terminology (Giles, 2008). Even the concept “community can, and does, mean anything from a university’s own staff and students and a *community of practice* to civic organisations, schools, townships, citizens at large and ‘the people’ in general” (South African Council on Higher Education, 2010, p. 2). Historically academic involvement in activities beyond teaching and research or scholarship was described as “service”, albeit this usually referred to involvement on university committees and membership of professional organisations. Today, the concept of engagement or “third mission” is increasingly favoured.

Engagement is often used as an umbrella term for university-based activities that connect with issues, problems or organizations outside of the campus. When considering complex and embedded engagement, also consider the purpose and process of engagement so that the efforts of engagement are not an end in themselves, reduced to a public relations function of making known what the institution is doing for the community. When defining engagement at the institutional level, the following may be considered:

*Mere activity in a community does not constitute engagement. Engagement defined by process and purpose has a particular meaning in higher education and is associated with implications for institutional change. The processes of engagement refer to the way in which those at an HEI – administrators, academics, staff and students – relate to those outside the HEI. Purpose refers specifically to enhancing a public culture of democracy on and off campus and alleviating public problems through democratic means. Processes and purpose are inextricably linked; the means must be consistent with the ends and the ends are defined by democratic culture. The norms of which are determined by the values of inclusiveness, participation, task sharing, lay participation, reciprocity in public problem solving, and an equality of respect for the knowledge and experience that everyone contributes to education and community building. Democratic processes and purpose reorient engagement to what we are calling ‘democratic engagement.*

Saltmarsh, Hartley, and Clayton, 2009b, p. 6

There is an ever-growing list of terms used. For example, in the United States, a range of terms is used: from community engagement, service to the community, outreach, service learning, to engaged scholarship and civic engagement (Saltmarsh et al., 2009a). There is a strong focus on civic and democratic participation in society and the production of knowledge. There is also a focus on how the primary work of the academic – his/her research or scholarship – is relevant to

the needs of the wider community and how, ideally, it is developed in collaboration with community. New ideas are increasingly the result of interdisciplinary work focused on useful application, conducted in collaboration with partners including the wider community (Gibbons, 2002, p. 59).

In Europe, the language of the economy is more often used with a focus on economic development and innovation. Hence, the term “Third Mission” describes a wide range of activities from social and cultural, to continuing education, technology transfer and innovation which are additional to the first mission which is teaching, and the second mission which is research. The EU has identified the interaction between research, education and innovation as being the key driver of a knowledge-based society (European Commission, 2006b). Its conceptualization of the *Knowledge Triangle* (European Commission, 2005, p. 24) builds upon the concept of clusters, innovation systems, and the ‘triple helix’ (Porter, 1985; Nelson, 1993; Lundvall, 1992; Etzkowitz and Leydesdorff, 1997) in an effort to overcome fragmentation of the knowledge system by linking the three elements of education, research and innovation – often referred to as an eco-system. This has been formalized in the EIT, the European Institute for Technology and Innovation (European Commission, 2006b).

Finally, as university engagement with communities, cities and regions has grown and deepened, our understanding of what engagement means in practice has developed. It has also influenced how we define research. The basic definition of research is taken from the OECD *Frascati Manual* (1963, 2002), where research “comprises creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of man, culture and society and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications”. Engagement challenges traditional understandings of research as a hierarchy of functions between basic and applied research. Boyer (1990) described an expanded quadrant of scholarly activity:

- *Scholarship of discovery*: investigation which contributes to stock of human knowledge;
- *Scholarship of integration*: giving meaning to isolated facts and putting them into perspective through synthesis;
- *Scholarship of application*: applying knowledge through problem-solving;
- *Scholarship of teaching*: not just transmitting but transforming and extending knowledge.



In 1996, he coined the term ‘scholarship of engagement’ where knowledge was no longer merely *applied to* but *connected or engaged with*. This occurred when the “rich resources of the university [are connected] to our most pressing social, civic, and ethical problems” (Boyer, 1996, p. 32) through research/scholarship<sup>2</sup>.

**Levels of engagement:  
from surface and  
superficial to embedded  
and complex**

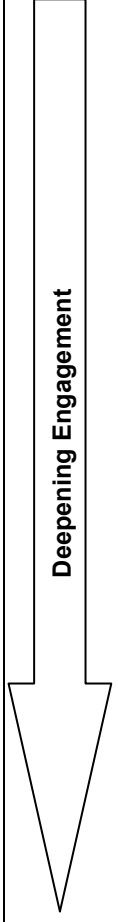
This range of terms indicates not only the broad spectrum of higher education engagement with wider society, but also the variation in the levels of engagement at different institutions. Evidence shows that levels of engagement can vary from “surface engagement” or what is typically referred to as “town and gown” relationships between the institution and the community, to pockets of “isolated engagement” whereby a few individuals or departments across a HEI are engaged to what we call the “Embedded Institution”, where the institution is deeply and pervasively engaged with community at all levels.

There are a variety of ways that a HEI might engage with its community or region and mobilise the resources of the university to promote innovation and growth. Not all ways of engagement are equal and some ways of engagement are more complex than others and some are more transactional than transformative in nature (Goddard, 2009). For example, an academic giving a public lecture is low in complexity and transactional in nature. Offering a consulting service to the community may be a little further along the spectrum of complex and transformative but less so than an academic identifying research problems with the community and co-designing a study to address those problems. Such collaborative research design and inquiry can be complex, take sustained effort over time, and can ultimately lead to transformative change and benefit for both the institution and the community.

There is increased appreciation of the growing complexity of our understanding of the purpose, processes and practice of community-university engagement. Engagement can take many forms from transactional to transformational and from superficial to deeper/embedded, from one dimensional to multifaceted, and from civic to democratic. Table 1 attempts to capture this through the ordering of some of the existing definitions of engagement.

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<sup>2</sup> Boyer used the terms research and scholarship interchangeably.

	Terms	Definition
	Volunteerism	Long-term, planned, pro-social behaviour that benefits strangers and occurs within an organizational setting. This can include students working alongside the local community to salvage an old house or rebuild a community garden as part of a student group activity. Volunteerism is not connected to academic learning. (Penner, 2002)
	Outreach/ Extension	“Extending” the resources of the university to the local community particularly as related to the needs of the workforce. This can include workplace training for a local union.
	Service-Learning	Pedagogical and curricular engagement, where students and academic staff work collaboratively with community partners and link this work back to classroom learning, theory, and reflection. This could include undertaking a study of obesity in the local community as part of the study of nutrition, reflecting on one’s involvement and then sharing the results of the research with the community.
	Knowledge Transfer/ Knowledge Exchange	Knowledge transfer (KT) refers to a very broad range of activities which support the transfer of tangible and intellectual property, expertise, learning and skills between academia and the non-academic community. It is often used in conjunction with technology transfer, which focuses primarily on the commercialization of research and entrepreneurship. KT can be a two-way exchange of ideas and perspectives, as the building-blocks of successful and sustainable collaboration.
	Community Engagement	Collaboration between a HEI and the larger community (local, regional, national) for mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching). This can include university staff and students working with community partners to research social problems and form a community development council to work on comprehensive revitalisation plans and offer solutions to the problems. Terms such as Public Engagement (National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement, the Scholarship of Engagement), the Scholarship of Engagement (Boyer, 1996), civic engagement (Ward et al, forthcoming), and democratic engagement (Saltmarsh et al, 2009b) are used to describe similar activity.
	Regional Engagement	Regional engagement has a strong socio-economic focus involving: 1) research and innovation, 2) enterprise and business development, 3) human capital development and 4) enhancing social equality, all of which involve mobilising the resources of the university for the benefit of the development of the community, city or region (European Commission, 2011). Examples include: science parks, innovation parks, enterprise centres, city-university-enterprise initiatives, etc. Dublin’s regional governments have formed an innovative alliance with HEIs and the business and cultural community in order to create a shared vision of a region of knowledge. <a href="http://www.dublincity.ie/Planning/EconomicDevelopment/Pages/TheCreativeDublinAlliance.aspx">http://www.dublincity.ie/Planning/EconomicDevelopment/Pages/TheCreativeDublinAlliance.aspx</a>

**Table 1** Defining Engagement and its Graduated Levels of Complexity

**Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT)** –DIT’s Environmental Health Sciences Institute (EHSI) is the newest example of DIT’s long standing commitment to engagement within the city of Dublin. The EHSI is a dedicated institute for inter-disciplinary research and was established in partnership with Ireland’s National Health Services Provider and the city’s government agency, Dublin City Council. Specific areas of research focus include: Lifestyle and Policy; Water Quality; Air Quality; Radiation and Noise; Bio-monitoring; Energy; and Food Quality and Safety. Researchers develop evidence-based interventions addressing environment health problems identified in the National Environmental and Health Action Plan informing the Research Strategy for Environmental Health (2009 – 2012).

*<http://www.dit.ie/researchandenterprise/researchinstitutes/environmentalhealthsciencesinstitute/aboutehsi/>*

**Portland State University** – “Let Knowledge Serve the City” “Oregon Is Our Classroom”. Engagement describes the collaboration between Portland State and its larger communities (local, regional, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity. In keeping with the Portland State University motto Let Knowledge Serve the City, the Community-University Partnership has the support of over 400 faculty, 7,800 students, and 1,000 community partners via community-based learning (CB) and other civic engagement initiatives to address specific and compelling issues locally, regionally and worldwide. The institution supports and co-ordinates its engagement efforts through their Vice Provost for Engagement and Director for Community-University Partnerships.

*<http://www.pdx.edu/cae/engagement>*

## **Handout 2                      Engaged Institutional Profiles – Examples of Good Practice of Institutional Engagement**

Engagement has also become a way in which HEIs can differentiate themselves from each other while enhancing the value, impact and benefit of their educational and research environment. This is especially true in an increasingly competitive national and global market. US Land Grant Universities were probably the first set of mass HEIs to describe themselves accordingly, but today use of terms such as metropolitan, civic, city or community are regularly used to emphasize a HEI’s commitment to its city or region or to community, civic or regional engagement as a distinguishing characteristic or in the title of the institution. Handout 3 provides some examples of engaged mission statements, where commitment to learning beyond the campus walls, discovery which is useful beyond the academic community and

service that directly benefits the public are made explicit defining characteristics of the institution.

**Portland State University's** (US) mission is to enhance the intellectual, social, cultural and economic qualities of urban life by providing access throughout the life span to a quality liberal education for undergraduates and an appropriate array of professional and graduate programs especially relevant to metropolitan areas. The University conducts research and community service that support a high quality educational environment and reflect issues important to the region.

*<http://president.msu.edu/mission/>*

Portugal's **University of Aveiro's** mission is to create knowledge and expand access to knowledge through research, education and cooperation for the benefit of people and society; to undertake the project of global development of the individual; to be active in the construction of a European research and education community; and to promote a model of regional development based on innovation and scientific and technological knowledge.

*<http://www.ua.pt/PageText.aspx?id=14557&ref=ID0EEBA/ID0EDEBA>*

The **University of Eastern Finland** (Finland) is a multidisciplinary university which is internationally recognised for its high standard of research and education. The university has a strong profile in its area of expertise and it takes a particular interest in promoting the regional development of eastern Finland.

*<http://www.uef.fi/uef/strategia>*

The mission of the **University of Western Sydney** (Australia) is to be a university of international standing and outlook, achieving excellence through scholarship, teaching, learning, research and service to its regional, national and international communities, beginning with the people of Greater Western Sydney.

*[http://www.uws.edu.au/about\\_uws/uws/mission\\_goals\\_strategic\\_plan](http://www.uws.edu.au/about_uws/uws/mission_goals_strategic_plan)*

### Handout 3                      Examples of Engaged Mission Statements

Since 1985, there has been a steady growth in national and international networks to promote and support the work of higher education engagement. Beginning in the United States, Campus Compact has grown to a coalition of more than 1,100 college and university presidents and through its programming, workshops, training, and volunteers, helps HEIs create institutional support structures and coordinate community engagement efforts at institutions. National net-

works and international networks such as the Talloires Network regularly convene members to discuss engagement and offer incentives with awards, such as the MacJannet Prize, for example, which recognises exceptional student community engagement initiatives. In addition to Table 2, which shows examples of networks whose mission centres on engagement, there are also examples of other organisations where engagement is part of their remit. These include the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU), American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU), the OECD Higher Education in the Regions project, and the European Centre for Strategic Management of Universities (ESMU) EU-Drivers project.

<b>NATIONAL NETWORKS</b>	
Australian Universities Community Engagement Alliance (AUCEA) <i>www.aucea.org</i>	Established in Australia in 2004 to “achieve excellence in university-community engaged teaching and research, to further develop communities, and to shape our future citizens”.
Campus Compact <i>http://www.compact.org/</i>	Established in the US in 1985 to advance the civic purposes of higher education, it is a coalition of more than 1,100 college and university presidents.
CampusEngage <i>www.campusengage.ie</i>	Established in Ireland in 2009 to “strengthen the relationship between higher education and the wider society, through promoting civic engagement activities in higher education in Ireland and facilitating the sharing of knowledge and resources between academic and civic communities”.
Council on Higher Education and the Community-Higher Education-Service Partnership (CHESP) <i>http://www.che.ac.za/documents/d000153/</i>	Established in South Africa in 1999 to support the development of programmes that explore the potential of community engagement as an integral part of the core academic functions of HEIs; to monitor and evaluate programmes, and to use the data generated through this process to inform higher education policy and practice at a national, institutional and programmatic level.
Metropolitan Universities <i>http://www.cumuonline.org/</i>	Established in the US in 1990 in recognition of the shared mission of Urban and Metropolitan Universities to use the power of their campuses in education, research, and service to enhance the communities in which they are located.
<b>REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL NETWORKS</b>	
Asia-Pacific University-Community Engagement Network (APUCEN) <i>http://icn.usm.my/index.php/en/activities/eventsnews/community/313-asia-pacific-university-community-engagement-network-apucen.html</i>	Established in Malaysia in 2010 to promote a non-western network of engaged institutions. It is a regional network of HEIs concerned with the promoting of the culture of community-university in a proactive holistic and participatory way.

Global Alliance on Community-Engaged Research (GACER) <i>http://communityresearchcanada.ca/?action=alliance</i>	Established in Canada in 2008 as a means of global organising to support and strengthen community-engaged research as a fundamental means of mobilising and creating knowledge to human betterment.
Talloires Network <i>http://www.tufts.edu/talloiresnetwork/</i>	Established in 2005 as a global coalition of engaged higher education institutions to raise the profile of university civic engagement, strengthen the work of member institutions, and initiate collective action. All members have signed the <i>Talloires Declaration on the Civic Roles and Social Responsibilities of Higher Education</i> .

**Table 2**                      **Examples of National and International Networks Supporting Institutional Engagement**

#### 4. Indicators of Engagement

In 2001, Campus Compact, through their experiences with almost 700 colleges and universities, developed a portrait of an engaged institution (Hollander et al., 2001), using ten indicators to assess institutional activities, policies and structures: 1) pedagogy and epistemology, 2) faculty development, 3) enabling mechanisms, 4) internal resource allocation, 5) external resource allocation, 6) faculty roles and rewards (promotion and progression), 7) disciplines, departments and interdisciplinarity, 8) community voice, 9) administrative and academic leadership, and 10) mission and purpose. The more of these individual indicators that exist in a HEI, the more ‘engaged’ the institution is said to be.

How can an institution’s engagement be assessed? Table 3 can be used as an Engagement Tool to help institutional and national leaders gauge the level of and commitment to engagement.

Indicators	Questions To Ask in the Institution
<b>1. Pedagogy and epistemology</b> Gaining knowledge through experience is accepted as an academically credible method of creating meaning and understanding.	Do courses and modules have a community-based component that enhances the acquisition and creation of disciplinary or interdisciplinary knowledge (e.g. service-learning courses)? What modules are covered?
<b>2. Faculty development</b> There is administrative support for academic staff to redesign their curricula to incorporate community-based activities and reflection on those activities.	What opportunities exist for academic staff to upskill or improve their teaching methods in order to develop a reflective teaching methodology that maximises the value of integrating community-based experiences with the academic aims of a course?

Indicators	Questions To Ask in the Institution
<p><b>3. Enabling mechanisms</b> Structures and systems to support engagement are key.</p>	<p>What structures exist at the university that can assist academic staff develop community-based teaching and learning practices, and establish relationships between community-based organizations? Are there human and physical resources available? Are these support structures visible and accessible?</p>
<p><b>4. Internal resource allocation</b> Internal sources of funding are available for engagement efforts.</p>	<p>What level of institutional funding is available for establishing, enhancing, and deepening community-based work on your campus – for academics, students and programmes that involve community partners?</p>
<p><b>5. External resource allocation</b> External sources of funding are sought for engagement efforts. Resources are made available for community-building efforts.</p>	<p>What external funding (from government, philanthropy, industry, the wider community) is available to create a richer learning environment for students to work in the community and to assist those community/regional partners to access human and intellectual resources on campus?</p>
<p><b>6. Faculty roles and rewards (promotion and progression)</b> Definition of research is expanded to include engaged research.</p>	<p>Do the recruitment and promotional guidelines at the university reflect an expanded concept of research where the community engaged scholarship is viewed on par with traditional concepts of research as basic research? If, yes what are examples of these guidelines? If no, why not and are there future plans to revise guidelines?</p>
<p><b>7. Disciplines, Departments, interdisciplinarity</b> Engagement activities cross all disciplines and not just not just relegated to a few social science disciplines.</p>	<p>How is community-based education and research embedded in the arts and the humanities, bio- and medical sciences, technical disciplines, professional studies, and interdisciplinary programs?</p>
<p><b>8. Community voice</b> Community partners can help shape institutional involvement to maximise its benefits to the community.</p>	<p>How do community partners get directly involved in and help shape the focus of the university?</p>
<p><b>9. Administrative and academic leadership</b> Institutional leadership is at the forefront of institutional transformation that supports engagement.</p>	<p>How does the President/Rector, Chief Academic Officer and/or Governing Council visibly support university/community engagement in both their words and deeds? Are there regular discussions in the university about engagement and various ways in which it can be embedded across teaching and research?</p>
<p><b>10. Mission and purpose</b> The institution's mission explicitly articulates its commitment to the public purposes of higher education and higher education's civic responsibility to educate for democratic participation.</p>	<p>Does the institution's mission articulate its commitment to the public purposes of higher education? What evidence exists of substantive reality to match stated purposes, not mere rhetoric?</p>

**Table 3 Engagement Tool** (Source: Adapted from Hollander et al., 2001)

### Assessing and Benchmarking Engagement

Campus Compact's *Indicators of Engagement* led to the creation, in 2006, of the Elective Classification for Community Engagement by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching; the latter is best known for the Carnegie Classification which has been the leading framework for recognising and describing institutional diversity in the US since 1970. To reflect the expansion and increasing complexity of higher education systems and institutions, the Classification was substantially revised in 2005. It allowed special-purpose categories, the first of which is for those HEIs with special commitments in the area of community engagement according to: 1) institutional identity and culture, 2) institutional commitment to community engagement, 3) curricular engagement, and 4) outreach and partnerships. In 2010, 115 institutions were successfully classified. The institutions classified have important engaged projects in the community, region and nationally. They also show significant institutional commitment to engagement through the allocation of funding, academic and staff resources, training and development and the provision of incentives and reward for engagement through staff promotion policies.

At **Michigan State University** (MSU) the ways to engage are “virtually unlimited”. MSU demonstrates its commitment to engagement through many programmes across multiple disciplines including the Michigan Agricultural Electric Council (MAEC). The goal of MAEC is to work cooperatively with the farmers of Michigan and agriculturally related industries to provide electrical information for the benefit of all. Examples of programmes include: partnering with MSU outreach on courses for Neutral-to-Earth Voltage Investigators; partnering with the Michigan Department of Agriculture milk inspectors who are now making electrical safety checks a regular part of their dairy inspections; developing and presenting programs for electricians/contractors for use by power suppliers in conjunction with the MAEC and MSU Extension on electrical grounding. The African Studies Center is a multi-disciplinary academic unit that develops and disseminates knowledge relevant to understanding the African continent. Outreach services offered include a web curriculum for secondary teachers and students, internet resources, publication, events, conferences, seminars, technical assistance, and material developed for educational use.

<http://www.msu.edu/engagement/index.html>

**Elon University** is a selective private liberal arts university in the US renowned for engaged and experiential learning. Elon is a national leader in civic engagement, serving as one of the model campuses of for the Classification. Elon's civic engagement programs include the Kernodle Center for Service Learning and Community Engagement, Periclean Scholars, Civic Engagement Scholars, the Center for Leadership, and the National Campaign for Student Political and Civic En-



agement. Students who become part of the Periclean Scholars program are committed to raising the civic engagement and social responsibility of the entire university community. Students take a series of courses culminating in a class project of global social change. Through the National Campaign for Political and Civic Engagement the university returns to local primary and secondary schools to work with students on civic education projects.

[http://www.elon.edu/e-web/students/civic\\_engagement/](http://www.elon.edu/e-web/students/civic_engagement/)

#### **Handout 4                      Examples of Engagement at Carnegie Community Engaged Classified Institutions**

The EU has adapted aspects of the Carnegie Classification to reflect the diversity of European higher education, including the extent to which HEIs are regionally engaged which is a key policy objective. U-MAP<sup>3</sup> is a profiling tool which aims to display the complexity of higher education activity across the dimensions of teaching and learning, student, research, knowledge exchange, international orientation, and regional engagement – albeit the range of indicators for engagement is still relatively narrow. For example, it highlights the number of students from and graduates employed in the immediate vicinity or region, the importance of local/regional income sources, the level of cultural activities, and income from “knowledge exchange” activities (e.g. licences, continuing professional development and start-up companies. This same methodology carries forward to U-Multirank<sup>4</sup>, which was originally conceived to directly challenge the dominance of global rankings. The E3M Project<sup>5</sup> developed a wide range of indicators of University Third Mission activities across continuing education, technology transfer and innovation, and social engagement. By validating basic indicators, the objective is “to create a ranking methodology to benchmark European Third Mission Services providers of HEI” to “allow funding bodies and industry to better understand the Third Mission and assess institutions based on performance” (E3M, 2011). Table 4 provides an overview of the indicators used.

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<sup>3</sup> UMAP is a European Higher Education Classification – an instrument for mapping the European higher education landscape which enables various groups of stakeholders to comprehend the diverse institutional missions and profiles of European higher education institutions. <http://www.u-map.eu/>.

<sup>4</sup> U-Multirank is an international transparency ranking tool which is multi-dimensional, multi-level and user-driven. <http://www.u-multirank.eu/>.

<sup>5</sup> The E3M Project is a European Commission funded project involving eight countries, the aim of which is to generate a comprehensive instrument to identify, measure, and compare Third Mission activities of HEIs. <http://www.e3mproject.eu/index.html>.

Continuing Education	Technology Transfer & Innovation	Social Engagement (SE)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CE included in HEI policy/strategy</li> <li>• Existence of CE institutional plan</li> <li>• Existence of quality assurance procedure for CE activities</li> <li>• Total Number of CE programmes active in year for implementation</li> <li>• Number of CE programmes delivered which have a major award under higher education system</li> <li>• Number of partnership with public/private business CE programmes delivered in year</li> <li>• Percentage international CE programmes delivered in year</li> <li>• Percentage funded CE training projects delivered in year</li> <li>• Total Number of ECTS credits of delivered CE programmes</li> <li>• Number of ECTS credits enrolled</li> <li>• Number of registrations in CE programmes in year</li> <li>• Percentage CE ECTS enrolled referred to the total ECTS enrolled</li> <li>• Percentage qualifications issued referred to total CE registrations</li> <li>• Students satisfaction</li> <li>• Key stakeholder satisfaction</li> <li>• Completion rate for all programmes (in average)</li> <li>• Percentage CE programmes with external accreditations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TTI included in HEI policy/strategy</li> <li>• Existence of TTI institutional action plan</li> <li>• Number of licences, options &amp; assignments (active &amp; executed, exclusive &amp; non-exclusive) to start-ups or spin-offs &amp; existing companies</li> <li>• Total budget coming from commercialisation revenues</li> <li>• Number of start-ups/spin-offs</li> <li>• Number of creative commons &amp; social innovation projects HEI employees involved in</li> <li>• Number of R&amp;D sponsored agreements, contracts &amp; collaborative projects with non-academic partners</li> <li>• Percentage HEI budget from income of R&amp;D sponsored contracts &amp; collaborative projects with non-academic partners</li> <li>• Number of consultancy contracts</li> <li>• Percentage postgraduate students &amp; postdoctoral researchers directly funded or co-funded by public &amp; private businesses</li> <li>• Number of created (co-funded) or shared laboratories &amp; buildings</li> <li>• Number of companies participating in CPD courses</li> <li>• Number of HEI employees with temporary positions outside of academia</li> <li>• Number of non-academic employees with temporary positions</li> <li>• Number of postgraduate theses or projects with non-academic co-supervisors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SE included in HEI policy/strategy</li> <li>• Existence of SE institutional action plan</li> <li>• Budgetary assignment to SE</li> <li>• Percentage academics involved in volunteering advisory</li> <li>• Number of events open to community/public</li> <li>• Number of research initiatives with direct impact on the community</li> <li>• Number/cost of staff/student hours made available to deliver services &amp; facilities to community</li> <li>• Number of people attending/using facilities</li> <li>• Number of projects related to educational outreach</li> <li>• Number of faculty staff &amp; students involved in educational outreach activity</li> <li>• Percentage HEI budget used for educational outreach</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of joint publications with non-academic authors</li> <li>• Number of academic staff participating in professional bodies, networks, organisations &amp; boards</li> <li>• Number of external organisations or individuals participating at advisory, steering, validation, review boards to HEIs, institutes, centres or taught programmes</li> <li>• Number of prestigious innovation prizes awarded by business &amp; public sector associations or funding agencies (national &amp; international)</li> </ul>	
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**Table 4**                      **Indicators of Third Mission Activity**

Source: E3M Project – European Indicators and Ranking Methodology for University Third Mission (2011) *Final Report of Delphi Study*, unpublished.

In a world obsessed by reputation, it is not surprising that rankings have become an indicator of institutional engagement and that engagement has become an important indicator. But even more significant than this, is that engagement itself has become a yardstick upon which to build new rankings using third mission appropriate indicators. U-Multirank has already been mentioned as an example of this. Similarly, the *Washington Monthly College Guide* has developed an alternative to those rankings which concentrate narrowly on indicators that equate with wealth and research. It believes universities should be measured according to the extent they are engines of social mobility, produce the academic minds and scientific research that advance knowledge and drive economic growth, and inculcate and encourage an ethic of service:

*In our eyes, America’s best colleges are those that work hardest to help economically disadvantaged students earn the credentials that the job market demands. They’re the institutions that contribute new scientific discoveries and highly trained PhDs. They’re the colleges that emphasise the obligations students have to serve their communities and the nation at large.*

Editors WM, 2009

Another example is the *Saviors of Our Cities* ranking which measures ‘the positive economic, social, and cultural impact that institutions of higher education have upon the cities in which they reside’ (Dobelle,

2009). *Metroversity* also measures the contribution that colleges and universities make within a metropolitan area as the major economic engine of their community (Dobelle, 2012).

## 5. Summary and Recommendations

*The expectation for higher education today is that the sector will begin to look more seriously at local, regional and national development concerns and adjust research and teaching accordingly. This has necessitated the adoption of partnership strategies to build internal structures, policies and programs to respond to various social needs. These strategies often integrate service and extension with teaching and research in innovative ways.*

Waston et al., 2011, p. 26

The realisation that complex societal problems require a holistic approach has helped transform higher education and democratize knowledge – making more people aware of the issues and encouraging them to be social actors in the co-production and use of knowledge. This emphasis on higher education’s civic and community responsibilities represents a rediscovery of the purpose and mission of higher education. University-community engagement is a growing phenomenon across globe, yet successful institutional engagement requires vision, commitment, and leadership. To ensure that engagement is embedded and sustainable in the institution or in the country, the following recommendations are proposed:

### Recommendation 1

*Draw on existing policy documents from other institutions and countries to help frame the policy conversation in your country or region. Ensure alignment of institutional mission and purpose. Articulate a commitment to engagement in your institution’s mission. Communicate and promote that mission widely.*

There is a wide variety of terminology which represents engagement at varying levels of complexity and impact. Terminology needs to be contextualised to particular institutional contexts, community and regional needs.

### Recommendation 2

*Clarify the meaning of engagement at particular institution and communicate this shared understanding throughout the university, and embed it in activities across all departments and disciplines, and the administration.*

The role of institutional leadership is critical in the success of engagement at any institution. It is vital that university leaders introduce an institution-wide strategy for civic engagement, a strategy that reaches across teaching and research rather than being boxed off as simply a third stream of activity (Goddard, 2009, 4). The integration of engagement across the institution is key to its success.

### **Recommendation 3**

*Embed engagement in your institutional strategic plan and involve students, academic and other staff and community stakeholders in planning and carrying out your engagement efforts.*

To sustain the work of engagement, it must be moved from the margins of academic work, e.g. from student and staff volunteerism to the core of academic work of research and teaching. This is achieved through shifts in pedagogical and research practices, and to changes in institutional and academic culture.

### **Recommendation 4**

*Expand institutional definitions of research to include and reward community engaged and public research. Ensure such expanded definitions are clearly articulated in institutional and departmental recruitment and promotion guidelines.*

Involvement of students and staff in engagement is critical to sustaining and growing engagement at an institution. Staff and students require their own indicators of the importance of their work in the community, city or region. Acknowledging their input and effort requires the institution to have mechanisms in place for rewarding their work in meaningful ways.

### **Recommendation 5**

*Provide incentives for faculty – awards, fellowships – and for students – academic credit – for their community engagement.*

The cultivation of community partnerships requires sustained effort over time, trust building and valuing of the knowledge, skills, and expertise that pre-exists in the community. The purpose and process of engagement should reflect democratic values of inclusiveness, participation, and reciprocity in public problem solving.

### **Recommendation 6.**

*Create systems and structures that open the university up to the community and include community stakeholders equally in the research and knowledge production process.*

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