*Knowledge Exchange and the Generation of Civic and Community Impacts*

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Economic Consultants

**CBR**

**Knowledge Exchange and the Generation of Civic and Community Impacts**

A draft report to HEFCE by PACEC and the Centre for Business Research, University of Cambridge

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# Foreword

This is a very important report. That may not be obvious from the title 'Knowledge Exchange and the Generation of Civic and Community Impacts'. A reader - most worried about how the UK can grow out of recession and how HE can help with that - may not be very interested in HE's work with communities.

But at the heart of this document is HE's 'report card' on its relationship with society, and with the wider public that contribute substantially to the costs of universities. This is, in the words of PACEC and the Centre for Business Research (CBR), University of Cambridge, 'the dynamic process of negotiation between the academic prerogatives of HEIs as teaching and research institutions and the public's entitlement to a share in the proceeds of activities in which they are stakeholders'.

And how would I sum up at the end of the report card? Probably, engaged and trying, but some way still to go.

Again in the report's words, universities and colleges 'wish to become, and to be recognised as, active, approachable and considerate partners in community life'. This report describes the very many activities that HEIs undertake in working with communities. But there is still some way to go to enable communities themselves to have a say in how higher education defines and implements its community role and strategy. Obviously resources in universities are now under pressure, but this report does outline some simpler steps that institutions might take to making communities more welcome. Collaboration between HE institutions on community contact points and resource databases is one example. I hope that the report will then be of interest to HE institutions themselves, as well as raising more general awareness of all the roles that HE can and wishes to play in society.


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# Contents

# 1        Introduction

1.1.1    Particularly in the recent recession, there has been great emphasis on the economic contribution of Higher Education (HE), and the modes of knowledge exchange between HE and business/public services are relatively well understood (collaborative and contract research, consultancy, CPD etc).  However, most universities were founded in a civic or community tradition of some sort; they were created often by local civil society to meet the needs of those societies.  Over the 20th century, and particularly since World War Two, developed nations have focussed particularly on science research to generate national economic progress (as well as defence, health etc).  But the quiet civic and community characters of universities and HE colleges are still in place, and all HEIs give a range of gifts of their knowledge, expertise and resources to their cities, places and communities.  This paper aims to put the civic and community contribution of the 21st Century Higher Education Institution back into the spotlight; and describe how a variety of different HEIs are organising themselves to deliver social benefits back into the communities in which they are located. Within this broad aim, there are four key research questions:

- What is the nature and scale of public engagement by HEIs in England?
- What strategic importance do HEIs place on civic and community interactions?
- How are civic and community interactions organised and co-ordinated?
- What future does public engagement have in the English HE sector?

**Figure 1.1        The dimensions of delivering positive and negative public and community impact**
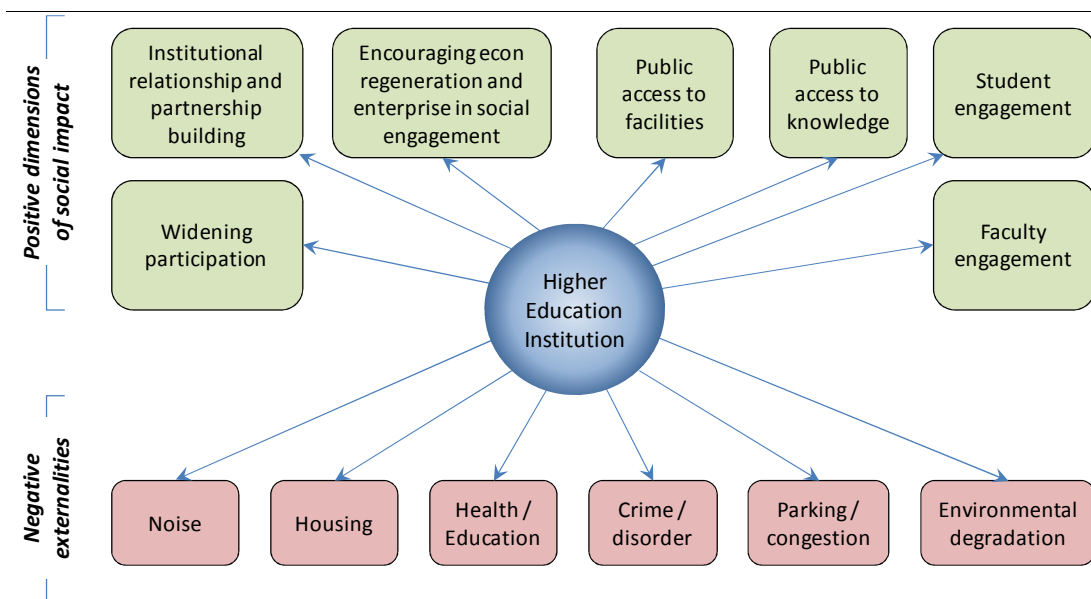


Sources: Adapted from Hart et al. (2009), internal PACEC analysis

1.1.2    HEIs can deliver civic and community impacts through a wide variety of mechanisms. These can be directly through direct contact with the community, or indirectly through the research, teaching and other knowledge exchange activities of HEIs.  HEIs have

the potential to deliver significant positive impacts through the transmission of knowledge into society through these mechanisms. The different knowledge exchange-based dimensions are summarised in Figure 1.1 (Hart et al., 2009). However, the presence of HEIs can also create negative social impacts. These dimensions are shown in the lower half of this figure. This working paper focuses on the former, exploring the many ways through which knowledge exchange can generate positive civic and community impacts.

## 1.2     Data Sources and Working Paper Structure

1.2.1     The working paper draws on a number of different sources of evidence. These include:

- PACEC/CBR survey of academics undertaken in 2008 for PACEC/CBR (2009), yielding 1,157 academic responses;
- Higher Education Business and Community Interaction (HEBCI) database;
- Analysis of the strategic plans of 51 English HEIs;
- Eight new case studies of HEIs:
  - University of Bristol
  - University of the West of England
  - University of Cambridge
  - Anglia Ruskin University
  - University of East Anglia
  - Durham University
  - LLU+, affiliated to the London South Bank University
  - University of the Arts, London

1.2.2     The working paper is structured as follows. The following section begins by articulating the nature and scale of academic involvement in public engagement. It provides evidence on the wide variety of methods that HEIs are linking into their communities – locally, regionally, nationally and even internationally. Section 3 then turns to the strategic level and analyses the importance that the leadership of HEIs place on this type of activity and the benefits that may be realised from interacting with the community. In addition, it looks at what academics believe is expected from them with regards to working with the local community. Section 4 focuses on the organisation and coordination of public engagement. Section 5 concludes with a view on the future of public engagement in the English HE sector.

## 2 The Civic and Community Role for Higher Education Knowledge Exchange

### 2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 This section addresses the scale and nature of civic and community engagement by academics and the types of impacts that these may generate. It builds on the data from the HEBCI survey through the PACEC/CBR survey of academics 2008 and new case study evidence. Wherever possible it links these activities to their civic and community impacts, whether direct or indirect, intended or incidental.

### 2.2 The Scale and Nature of Academic Public and Community Engagement

*The scale of academic participation with charitable and voluntary organisations*

2.2.1 The PACEC/CBR survey of academics explored the level of participation by academics through knowledge exchange with charitable and voluntary organisations. Overall, a third of academics claimed to have interacted with such organisations over the period 2005-2008 (Table 2.1). Female academics are almost twice as likely than their male counterparts to engage with charitable or voluntary organisations, while those with management responsibility are less likely to engage. Academics in the social sciences are the most likely to engage compared with other disciplines, with those in the sciences least likely.

**Table 2.1      Activities with charitable/voluntary organisations over the past three years (% academic respondents)**

| Characteristic | | No | Yes |
|---|---|---|---|
| Gender | Male | **75** | **25** |
| | Female | **53** | **47** |
| Management responsibility | No | **63** | **37** |
| | Yes | **72** | **28** |
| Discipline | Sciences | **71** | **29** |
| | Social sciences | **59** | **41** |
| | Arts and humanities | 62 | 38 |
| Total | | 67 | 33 |

Source: PACEC/CBR survey of academics 2008, PACEC/CBR analysis

2.2.2 The Higher Education Business and Community Interaction (HEBCI) survey provides data on a selected number of free and chargeable public and community related events: public lectures, performance arts, exhibitions, and museum education. Table 2.2 shows that free exhibitions attract the most attendees per HEI overall with HEIs in the top 6 research cluster attracting the greatest number. Chargeable performance arts is the second most popular type of event, with HEIs in the high research intensive cluster and the arts HEI cluster attracting the most attendees per HEI.

**Table 2.2          Number of attendees per HEI at free and chargeable events in 2007/08 by research intensity cluster**

|  |  | All HEIs | Top 6 | High | Medium | Low | Arts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Free | Public lectures | 5,202 | 19,558 | 7,721 | 4,573 | 2,185 | 3,401 |
|  | Performance arts | 3,114 | 4,064 | 3,469 | 1,749 | 1,781 | 7,744 |
|  | Exhibitions | 29,697 | 326,190 | 17,962 | 12,881 | 8,726 | 29,584 |
|  | Museum education | 2,594 | 41,622 | 1,154 | 519 | 231 | 1,136 |
| Chargeable | Public lectures | 1,001 | 3,201 | 1,482 | 914 | 654 | 340 |
|  | Performance arts | 10,747 | 5,752 | 20,178 | 2,481 | 7,443 | 17,970 |
|  | Exhibitions | 4,295 | 50,701 | 894 | 970 | 2,690 | 5,182 |
|  | Museum education | 499 | 6,661 | 600 | 9 | 11 | 185 |

Source: HEBCI survey 2007/08, PACEC/CBR analysis

2.2.3     If one now turns to the number of attendees attracted to an event for each staff day inputted into its organisations and hosting, chargeable and free exhibitions attract the most per staff day, followed chargeable performance arts and then free museum education.  Conversely, chargeable museum education appears to attract the fewest attendees per staff day.

2.2.4     However, if one looks at the breakdown by research intensity cluster, free museum education generates the highest number of attendees per staff day for both the medium research intensity cluster and the arts cluster, while HEIs in the arts cluster are able to attract a substantially higher number of attendees per staff day of input compared with all other HEIs.  HEIs in the high research intensity cluster attract the most attendees per staff day for chargeable performance arts events.

**Table 2.3          Average number of attendees per staff day of input in 2007/08 by research intensity cluster**

|  |  | All HEIs | Top 6 | High | Medium | Low | Arts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Free | Public lectures | 46 | 50 | 56 | 37 | 33 | 49 |
|  | Performance arts | 43 | 23 | 95 | 58 | 59 | 32 |
|  | Exhibitions | 139 | 157 | 122 | 122 | 158 | 104 |
|  | Museum education | 67 | 61 | 64 | 133 | 112 | 208 |
| Chargeable | Public lectures | 34 | 26 | 40 | 32 | 34 | 42 |
|  | Performance arts | 80 | 54 | 324 | 25 | 134 | 59 |
|  | Exhibitions | 157 | 184 | 97 | 33 | 177 | 2332 |
|  | Museum education | 27 | 22 | 35 | 22 | 131 | 209 |

Note: HEIs where data existed for attendees but not the number of staff days were excluded from the analysis.
Source: HEBCI survey 2007/08, PACEC/CBR analysis

*The overall nature of HEI public and community engagement*

2.2.5     Previous working papers in this series have emphasized the many diverse ways in which HEIs link into the economy and society, well beyond the traditionally emphasised modes of contract research, consultancy, spin-outs and licensing.  The methods through which HEIs interact with society to generate civic and community

impacts are similarly diverse, extending well beyond the much emphasised volunteering of students and staff.

2.2.6    The NCCPE identifies seven key dimensions through which HEIs can form direct linkages with society in order to foster the exchange of knowledge between the institution and the community (Figure 2.1, adapted from Hart et al., 2009):

1    Public access to facilities
2    Public access to knowledge
3    Student engagement
4    Faculty engagement
5    Widening participation (equalities and diversity)
6    Encouraging economic regeneration and enterprise in social engagement
7    Institutional relationship and partnership building

2.2.7    Specific examples under each of these dimensions are given in Figure 2.1.

**Figure 2.1        Nature of public and community engagement**

| | |
|---|---|
| ***Institutional relationship and partnership building*** | ***Encouraging economic regeneration and enterprise in social engagement*** |
| • University division / office for community engagement<br>• Collaborative community based research programmes responsive to community needs<br>• Community-university networks for learning / dissemination / knowledge exchange<br>• Community members on Board of Governance<br>• Public ceremonies, awards, competitions, events<br>• Website dedicated to community engagement<br>• Conferences with public access / public concerns<br>• Corporate social responsibility | • Research collaboration and technology transfer<br>• Meeting regional skills needs of SMEs<br>• Business advisory services offering support for social enterprise<br>• Prizes for entrepreneurial projects<br>• Collaborative community based research programmes reflecting community needs<br>• Community based networks for learning / dissemination / knowledge exchange |
| | ***Widening participation***<br>• Improving recruitment and success rate of students from non-traditional backgrounds through innovative initiatives e.g. access courses, financial assistance, peer monitoring<br>• Publicly available strategy for encouraging access by students with disabillities |
| ***Public access to facilities*** | ***Public access to knowledge*** |
| • Access to libraries<br>• Access to university buildings and facilities e.g. for conferences, events etc.<br>• Shared facilities e.g. museums, galleries<br>• Access to sports facilities<br>• Summer sports schools | • Access to established university curricula<br>• Public engagement events e.g. science fairs<br>• Publicly accessible database of university expertise<br>• Public involvement in research |
| ***Student engagement*** | ***Faculty engagement*** |
| • Student volunteering<br>• Experiential learning e.g. practice placements; collaborative research projects<br>• Curricula engagement<br>• Student-led activities e.g. arts, environment etc. | • Research centres draw on community advisers for support/direction<br>• Research centres engage with community 'advisers' for strategy/direction<br>• Volunteering outside normal work<br>• Social/community engagement part of job<br>• Promotion policies that reward social engagement<br>• Public lectures<br>• Alumni services |

Source: Adapted from the Hart, A., Northmore, S. and Gerhardt, C. (2009) *Briefing Paper: Auditing, Benchmarking, and Evaluating Public Engagement,* National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE) Research Synthesis No. 1

*Indirect civic and community impacts through research*

2.2.8     A great many positive civil and community impacts are generated through HE knowledge exchange due to the nature of core research activities. For example, in many cases, the primary purpose of research to improve some aspect of the quality of life of the nation through such means as improved healthcare and medicine, the reduction of poverty, environmental breakthrough, the provision of food, and new engineering or technological solutions. While this type of research most often involves collaboration of a commercial nature, it does not usually impact directly on the social sphere through specific external interaction with the community during the research process, although it may involve periods of consultation and testing. Thus, although

the social nature of these impacts is ultimately widely apparent, they can be difficult to measure accurately especially because they are the product of long-term and complex activity. Also, it is extremely challenging to demonstrate causal links between (a) the intention of researchers to generate impacts and the eventual impacts generated and (b) the rate of success with which intended indirect impacts are generated.

2.2.9    Indirect impacts generated though research activity are manifold, but current examples include:

- University of Warwick HRI researchers are developing approaches to reducing energy usage in protected crop production, the generation of crop varieties suited to reduced water inputs and, more generally, environmental sustainability through the minimisation of pesticide and fertilizer usage. An emerging theme is the impact of climate change on indicators of sustainable land use such as soil health and biodiversity. This research aims to have a positive impact on society by meeting the sustainability and environmental demands of a growing population in the face of climate change, ultimately reducing poverty, hunger and mitigating the negative environmental effects of climate change.

- A team of geo microbiologists from the University of Manchester have been working on the production of nanometer-size magnets, used in mobile phones and recording devices which can be made without traditional harmful chemical and energy intensive methods. Researchers have found that iron-reducing bacteria occurring naturally in soils and sediments can be used to create iron oxide nano particles with magnetic properties similar to those created through complex chemical processes. Working with colleagues in Birmingham and Cardiff, the Manchester researchers also found a way of exercising precise control over the size and magnetic strength of nanomagnets produced. This research impacts indirectly on society through its application to technological consumer goods and the reduction of production costs, in terms of money and resources.

- In February 2010, a major trial carried out at the UCL Institute of Neurology, funded by the Medical Research Council and The Stroke Association found that those at high risk of stroke are half as likely to have a stroke or die following surgery to repair damage to an artery in the neck, than following 'stenting' treatment. The results of the study showed that the rate of stroke or death within 30 days of treatment for patients was 7.4% in those treated by stenting, compared with 3.4% in those treated by surgery. Until this point there had not been any conclusive proof over which method was safer and offered the lower risk of complications. This research aims to impact on the treatment methods of healthcare professionals in cases of stroke, reducing injury and death.

- The School of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Cambridge has conducted research into the psychological, physical and sexual health of young women and girls. Headed by Dr Terri Apter and in conjunction with Channel 4, the study investigated the attitudes and body image expressed by girls aged 6-12. The long term social aims of this research were to impact on the 80% increase of eating disorders in girls over the past decade, through mid-term aims to increase professional understanding and public awareness of causes, symptoms and social contextualisation.

2.2.10   The ability to generate civic and community impacts from the research activities of academics will ultimately depend on the ability of the institution to successfully

disseminate the knowledge into the economy and society, and for it to be absorbed by the relevant user (in the private, public or third sectors).

### Indirect civic and community impacts of teaching

2.2.11    The education role of HEIs has the potential to benefit individuals over the course of their lifetime above and beyond the increased earnings potential that arises.  Higher education levels are typically associated with better nutrition, better living conditions, better access to health services; in general a longer and healthier life.  In addition, it is also believed that better educated graduates are able to confront the challenges facing society more effectively, helping to create innovative solutions that benefit the wider community.

### Student and staff volunteering

2.2.12    Student and staff volunteering activities include charity work and fundraising, mentoring and support for community groups such as children, the ill or disabled, the elderly, those with behavioural disorders or addictions, the homeless and offenders. These activities may overlap with and involve aspects of access to learning and outreach programmes but this category consists mainly of assistance given by HEI groups and individuals (students and staff) to help with the regular provision and demands of social welfare and support activity within the community.

2.2.13    Much of this type of activity is informal – organised by individuals and groups in an ad-hoc fashion.  It often goes undocumented and uncoordinated, and is often the result of personal motivations and independent initiative on the part of the volunteer. It was clear from the case studies that HEIs do not yet have a full understanding or ownership of these activities, nor whether the latter would even be an improvement to the status quo.  However, there is also much activity that is facilitated by existing relationships between the HEI and its groups and community beneficiaries and case study evidence suggests that HEIs are increasingly putting into place structures to help organise and facilitate the volunteering process.

2.2.14    It is difficult to assess and monitor the scale of volunteering by students and staff in UK HEIs, particularly because this often constitutes individually motivated and informally organised activities. However, HEIs are beginning to take steps to understand the extent of volunteering and charity activities among their members. As a national indication, Universities UK found that in 2003 24,000 students across the UK gave 3,459,653 hours of charitable service to the community.[1] Volunteering England's report *Student Volunteers: A National Profile* 2010 surveyed full-time undergraduate students nationally. The findings concluded that:

   - 15.3% of undergraduates reported that they volunteered with a charity in their first year of studies;
   - Volunteering rates were highest among students studying medicine/dentistry and social sciences;

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[1] Universities UK, 'Universities: engaging with the local community 2007'.

- Students at higher ranking HEIs (ranked by entry tariff points) reported the highest volunteering rates;

- Volunteering rates were higher among some minority groups, including most ethnic minority students, students with a disability and those with caring responsibilities;

- Students who volunteer were more likely to take part in other extracurricular activities (both on and off campus);

- The most common reason given for volunteering was to help an individual or the community.

2.2.15    The civil and community impacts and aims of charitable and volunteering activity include:

- assistance in the care of and provision for vulnerable or disadvantaged members or groups within the community;

- improvement in the quality of life and welfare of the vulnerable or disadvantaged, and/or in the reduction of anti-social and criminal behaviour;

- the furthered understanding and acceptance of disadvantaged community groups and the causes of social problems, leading to improved social cohesion;

- the furthered understanding and experience of volunteers who have, or will in the future have, high levels of education, earning potential, status and influence and may therefore benefit society further through individual and/or political activity.

## *Provision of leisure activities*

2.2.16    HEIs, both through deliberate public engagement activities and as a bi-product of the provision and promotion of extra-curricular leisure activities, impact on their communities. This activity includes sports, performing arts, visual art and cultural exhibitions in which the public are welcome to participate either actively or as audiences, visitors and spectators.

**Table 2.4        Provision of community based performance arts by research cluster**

|  | Percentage of all respondents (by Research Intensity Cluster) | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | Total | Top 6 | High | Medium | Low | Arts |
| Never | 91 | 92 | 94 | 94 | **85** | **72** |
| Infrequent (1-2) | 4 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 6 | 9 |
| Frequent (3-6) | 2 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 10 |
| Very frequent (>6) | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | **7** | 9 |
| Number of respondents | 996 | 190 | 369 | 257 | 160 | 20 |
| *Effective Sample Size* | *612* | *160* | *282* | *111* | *83* | *27* |

A number is shown in bold where, taking into account the margin of error due to sampling, we are 95% certain that it is different from the number in the left hand total column (using a Chi-Squared statistical test)
Source: PACEC/CBR Survey of Academics 2008

**Table 2.5        Provision of community based sports by research cluster**

|  | Percentage of all respondents (by Research Intensity Cluster) | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | Total | Top 6 | High | Medium | Low | Arts |
| Never | 97 | 97 | 97 | 96 | 95 | 100 |
| Infrequent (1-2) | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 0 |
| Frequent (3-6) | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| Very frequent (>6) | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Number of respondents | 979 | 188 | 367 | 247 | 156 | 20 |
| *Effective Sample Size* | *612* | *160* | *282* | *111* | *83* | *27* |
| Source: PACEC/CBR Survey of Academics 2008 | | | | | | |

2.2.17    Table 2.4 and Table 2.5 show that academic involvement in community based provision of performing arts and sports is low, across all types of HEIs. HEIs in the low research intensity and arts clusters are considerably more likely to have been involved in provision of community based arts.

2.2.18    The civil and community impacts and aims of the provision of leisure activities include:

- the enhancement of quality of life of members of the community and an opportunity to improve cultural knowledge;
- improved health and health awareness;
- resources and skills generated within the HEI are shared with the community;
- improved understanding and communication between 'town' and 'gown';
- a social and informal method of identifying further engagement opportunities.

*Access to physical facilities*

2.2.19    HEIs own and manage significant physical facilities and infrastructure for the use of their members, some of which are open to the public on a constant, regular or occasional basis. These facilities include theatres, libraries, archives and lecture halls, exhibition spaces, indoor and outdoor sports facilities, open spaces and historically and/or architecturally significant buildings.

2.2.20    The provision of physical facilities and of leisure activities are likely to be connected, facilities meeting need and enabling and stimulating activity. Case study evidence suggests that the majority of HEI-related sporting, arts and cultural activities take place within HEI campuses and buildings, showing that, where these activities include community members, they involve a level of physical availability to the public. However, it is apparent that HEIs, while eager to welcome the public as audiences, visitors and spectators, are much less likely to promote the availability of their facilities for community-organised activities, although sports facilities have been demonstrated by case studies to be more available than other types. HEI libraries are generally available to public, either freely or on request. When the availability of other facilities is demonstrable it is most often driven by the generation of revenue streams

for HEIs, Colleges and Faculties and thus taken up by commercial activity and business conferences. Some leading examples of shared facilities are listed below:

- The University of Bath offers a £30million collection of sports facilities including the Sports Training Village. Their campus is used as a training base by Olympic and world-level athletes as well as providing facilities and services to local, regional and national sports groups, squads and individual members of the public. This provision includes coaching and sports development, fitness training and health lifestyle information, access to sports qualifications and children's activities.

- The University of Birmingham offers the public open access to its library resources. These facilities include ten site libraries and resource centres, with over two and a half million books and three million archives and manuscripts. Members of the public are entitled to ten visits in a twelve month period, after which they may subscribe for external membership, either for borrowing or reading rights.

- Open Cambridge is an annual weekend run by the University of Cambridge consisting of tours, talks and open access in which University and College buildings and collections are show for families, local residents and community groups. Tours cover topics such as the history, architecture, art and gardens of College and University buildings.

- The University of Worcester's Digital Arts Centre provides state-of-the-art facilities, including a digital video studio with lighting rig, blue screen technology and mixing desks, digital video editing, a recording studio with a digital sound and music editing studio, computer suites with industry-standard software that covers animation, image creation and video editing, multimedia and graphic and web design These facilities are available for the use of 'students, industry and the community', and can be hired for industry short courses, and media events and offer content development for industry and partners and consultancy services.

2.2.21    The civil and community impacts and aims of the provision of physical facilities include:

- the enhancement of the quality of life of members of the community and opportunities to improve cultural knowledge;

- resources and facilities maintained by the HEI are shared with the community and thus enable community activity and engagement activity;

- improved understanding and communication between 'town' and 'gown';

- a social and informal method of identifying further engagement opportunities.

### Consultancy and support services

2.2.22    HEIs increasingly provide consultancy and support services to external organizations. This form of knowledge exchange for the community depends to a large degree on the subject and type or research activity. However, while much of this type of activity is intended to generate economic impact, some activity of a community-specific nature can be identified.   Indeed, much activity which is intended to generate economic impacts also generates civic and community impacts, although these may be much harder to assess and document. Consultancy and support services include, for example, work with government or community groups and also student work experience placements.

2.2.23    The civil and community impacts and aims of consultancy, support services and student work experience include:

- improved communication and understanding between HEIs and business;

- improved communication and understanding between HEIs and policy makers, leading to the creation of mutually beneficial guidelines and frameworks;

- raised skills and experience within the workforce;

- a source of labour through work experience, leading to the attraction and retention of graduates as employees;

- a number of secondary social impacts arising from the direct economic impacts of commercial activity such as raised employment and productivity.

## *Widening participation and schools liaison*

2.2.24    HEIs have a strong heritage of engagement with schools, both as part of their recruitment process and in order to raise the education and skills level of young people in the UK, to promote their continued interest in education, whether formal or informal, and to inform them of the educational options available to them. HEIs have for some time made efforts to encourage continued educational activity and/or applications from all demographic groups, with specific emphasis on the inclusion of students from traditionally hard-to-reach backgrounds and other under represented groups.

**Table 2.6    Academic involvement with schools projects by research intensity cluster**

|  | Percentage of all respondents (by Research Intensity Cluster) | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | Total | Top 6 | High | Medium | Low | Arts |
| Never | 54 | 51 | 56 | 49 | **65** | **30** |
| Infrequent (1-2) | 32 | 36 | 31 | 37 | **20** | **56** |
| Frequent (3-6) | 9 | 12 | 10 | 6 | 10 | 8 |
| Very frequent (>6) | 4 | **1** | 4 | **8** | 5 | 6 |
| Number of respondents | 1,031 | 197 | 375 | 273 | 164 | 21 |
| *Effective Sample Size* | *612* | *160* | *282* | *111* | *83* | *27* |

A number is shown in bold where, taking into account the margin of error due to sampling, we are 95% certain that it is different from the number in the left hand total column (using a Chi-Squared statistical test)
Source: PACEC/CBR Survey of Academics 2008

2.2.25    Table 2.6 shows that slightly less than half of all academics who responded had some involvement with schools projects over the past three years. Academics at Arts HEIs were the most likely to participate (70%) and those at low research intensity HEIs least likely to (35%).

2.2.26    The civil and community impacts and aims of widening participation include:

- to fairly share the opportunities of further education to all, regardless of social or economic background, gender, race or age;

- to promote interest and applications from underrepresented groups;

- to improve the quality of education and to raise the necessary skills of underrepresented groups, and their understanding of HEI application processes and of student experiences;
- to educate underrepresented groups in the long-term benefits of continued education;
- to create increasingly representative student bodies, leading to increased social cohesion and tolerance and to a shift in perception regarding higher education learning opportunities.

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**CASE STUDY ONE: THE UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS LONDON**

The University of the Arts London has highly prioritised its widening participation activities. It is one of nine major objectives, and is the University's strongest engagement activity. The three strategic objectives are:

- To further increase the proportion of the Home student population from working class backgrounds in all parts of the University;
- To ensure that Home students from working class backgrounds are retained, achieve, and progress to successful careers, at the very least, at the same rates as students from other social classes;
- To further develop our regional, national and international leadership role in promoting Widening Participation in arts higher education.[2]

Due to its collegiate nature, the University is ideally placed to participate with schools and colleges across London and the University has built a number of long-term partnerships with targeted schools in areas of social deprivation with low progression to Higher Education. Partners include the Institute of Contemporary Arts, The Stephen Lawrence Charitable Trust, the Harris Academy at Peckham, Dagenham Park Community School, Richmond upon Thames College, Hackney Community College and Brooke House Sixth Form College. Partnerships are intended to encourage artistic talent within schools, to increase applications and to raise skills and understanding the necessary level for those applications to be competitive. For the London Gold Arts Awards Project 2009 in conjunction with Arts Council England, the University partnered 75 young people in order to help them achieve formal arts qualifications. The participants were offered flexible learning and support and an alternative route into higher education. Two thirds of the awardees were Not in Education, Employment or Training at the outset of the project. Following the project, three quarters have returned to education.

Interview evidence indicates that, although it is difficult to measure the impact of multiple HEI's widening participation programmes, the vast majority of those involved in schools programmes with the University of the Arts go on to make applications to higher education. In 2009 approximately 78% of applicants to the University from the programme were successful. For the academic year 2008/09 the number of applicants from social cluster 4-7 went up by three UCAS points, to 33%, with applicants from black and minority groups rising to 30%.

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[2] University of the Arts London, 'Widening Participation Strategic Assessment 2009–2012'.

*Continued access to learning*

2.2.27    The category of engagement activity encompasses the formal educational provision which HEIs make for adults at a level beneath National Curriculum Key Stage 6.

2.2.28    The civil and community impacts and aims of continued access to learning include:
- raising adult literacy, learning, skills and experience ;
- raising quality of life;
- improving employment prospects;
- improving primary and pre-school development and second-generation inclusion through engagement with parents who lack positive past experiences of formal education;
- making 'privileged' higher education resources available to the most educationally disadvantaged adult members of the community.

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**CASE STUDY TWO: LLLU+ AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LONDON SOUTH BANK**

LLU+ is a an affiliated part of the University of London South Bank, offering lifelong learning opportunities to educationally disadvantaged adults, in particular parents. The unit offers informal but educationally structured learning activities which raise the literacy and numeracy of adults. These activities often simultaneously reinforce positive educational parenting messages, for instance providing classes in which parents learn though designing and making educational resources for their own children. LLU+ at ULSB recruits adult learners from the schools in economically deprived areas of London such as Southwark Borough and Lambeth, which have high levels of learning difficulties and teenage pregnancy and relatively transitory populations. During school holidays the unit runs open educational family activities. Interview evidence from LLU+ demonstrates that the organisation has a good uptake and success rate with parents who have English as a second language. The vast majority of adult learners are women, although the Unit does reach out to specifically male target groups through its educational work in the Pentonville and Holloway prisons. LLU+ also offers community teacher training opportunities in order to create a virtuous circle of improved education and family learning. The unit's activities dovetail with the widening participation and outreach mission of ULSB, 60% of whose students are over 25, which encourages students to return to formal education though non-traditional routes.

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*Dissemination of research*

2.2.29    The dissemination of research and learning to the wider community includes public lectures, community open days, research festivals and also engagement with the media and press to increase awareness of core research activity.

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**Table 2.7     Provision of public lectures for the community by research intensity cluster**

| | Percentage of all respondents (by Research Intensity Cluster) | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | Total | Top 6 | High | Medium | Low | Arts |
| Never | 50 | **35** | 53 | 52 | 58 | 54 |
| Infrequent (1-2) | 32 | 37 | 30 | 32 | 31 | 41 |
| Frequent (3-6) | 13 | **23** | 12 | 12 | 7 | 4 |
| Very frequent (>6) | 5 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 0 |
| Number of respondents | 1,026 | 194 | 383 | 268 | 160 | 20 |
| *Effective Sample Size* | *612* | *160* | *282* | *111* | *83* | *27* |

A number is shown in bold where, taking into account the margin of error due to sampling, we are 95% certain that it is different from the number in the left hand total column (using a Chi-Squared statistical test)
Source: PACEC/CBR Survey of Academics 2008

**Table 2.8     Provision of public exhibitions for the community by research intensity cluster**

| | Percentage of all respondents (by Research Intensity Cluster) | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | Total | Top 6 | High | Medium | Low | Arts |
| Never | 79 | 78 | 83 | 79 | 80 | **18** |
| Infrequent (1-2) | 15 | 19 | 13 | 17 | 11 | **34** |
| Frequent (3-6) | 3 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 3 | **25** |
| Very frequent (>6) | 2 | **0** | **0** | 3 | **6** | 23 |
| Number of respondents | 1,004 | 191 | 372 | 262 | 158 | 21 |
| *Effective Sample Size* | *612* | *160* | *282* | *111* | *83* | *27* |

A number is shown in bold where, taking into account the margin of error due to sampling, we are 95% certain that it is different from the number in the left hand total column (using a Chi-Squared statistical test)
Source: PACEC/CBR Survey of Academics 2008

2.2.30    In the case of public lectures, 65% of academics from the Top 6 research group have provided public lectures at some point over the past three years compared with the average of 50% for all academics (Table 2.7). The provision of public lectures tends to decline with research intensity, with high and medium research intensity institutions giving very similar data. Top 6 research HEIs' academics were also much more likely (23% compared to 13%) to contribute 'frequently' when compared with the average. The provision of public exhibitions is comparatively infrequent, with the exception of academics at Arts HEIs (Table 2.8), however one should be cautious due to the small sample here.

2.2.31    The civic and community impacts and aims of the dissemination of research include:

- informs and imparts knowledge to non-specialists;
- increases awareness and understanding of HE research within the wider community;
- stimulates interest in and support for HEIs and their core activities though the demonstration of relevance;
- improved understanding and communication between 'town' and 'gown';

● provides a social forum for public opinion and for the identification of further engagement activity.

## *Role of HEIs in community regeneration*

2.2.32    HEIs can also play an important role in community regeneration.  Over a third of HEIs in England claim to play an "[a]ctive and creative engagement with community programmes, with the HEI taking a leadership position and applying a wide variety of resources... [c]ommunity regeneration [for these HEIs is] seen as a mainstream activity with role for access policy, link to student community action and staff involvement as part of staff development", while a further 12.4% have some representation on local partnerships at senior management level, albeit with limited implementation capability.  The main focus of these HEIs is providing a research role and possible property development role.   Many HEIs (44.2%) fall somewhere between these two positions, while only 5.4% have no engagement with community regeneration schemes (Table 2.9).

**Table 2.9        Level of engagement of HEIs in community regeneration through partnership with local and regional bodies in 2007/08 (% of HEIs)**

|  | All HEIs | Cluster | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | Top 6 | High | Medium | Low | Arts |
| 1.  No engagement with community regeneration schemes, apart from individual efforts. | 5.4 | 0.0 | 5.9 | 3.0 | 0.0 | 16.7 |
| 2.  Between 1 and 3 | 3.1 | 16.7 | 2.9 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 11.1 |
| 3.  Some representation of the HEI on local partnerships at senior management level, but with limited implementation capability. Main focus is on research role and possible property development role. | 12.4 | 33.3 | 14.7 | 3.0 | 8.6 | 27.8 |
| 4.  Between 3 and 5 | 44.2 | 33.3 | 50.0 | 48.5 | 42.9 | 27.8 |
| 5.  Active and creative engagement with community programmes, with the HEI taking a leadership position and applying a wide variety of resources.  Community regeneration seen as a mainstream activity with role for access policy, link to student community action and staff involvement as part of staff development. | 34.9 | 16.7 | 26.5 | 45.5 | 48.6 | 16.7 |
| Average Ranking | 4.0 | 3.5 | 3.9 | 4.3 | 4.4 | 3.2 |
| Number of HEIs | 129 | 6 | 34 | 33 | 35 | 18 |

Source: HEBCI, PACEC/CBR analysis

2.2.33    It is also apparent from Table 2.9 that the level and depth of interaction with community regeneration schemes increases as the research intensity of the HEI decreases.  Just 16.7% of HEIs in the top 6, and 26.5% in the high research intensity cluster claim to provide the most active and creative engagement with community regeneration scheme (the top rank, 5, on the scale).  This compares to 45.5% and 48.6% of HEIs in the medium and low research intensity clusters respectively.

2.2.34    HEIs also utilize regeneration funding in different ways. Table 2.10 shows that approximately half of HEIs use this type of funding for building strategic links with local industry, while 44.2% deploy it to fulfil the regional mission through new services to local industry. Approximately a quarter of HEIs see this type of funding as important for facilitating community development. This increases to a third of those in the top 6 and medium research intensity clusters.

**Table 2.10        Role of regeneration funding for HEIs in 2007/08 (% HEIs)**

|  | All HEIs | Cluster | | | | |
|  |  | Top 6 | High | Medium | Low | Arts |
| Building strategic links with local industry | 48.1 | 16.7 | 52.9 | 57.6 | 42.9 | 44.4 |
| Fulfilling regional mission through new services to industry | 44.2 | 16.7 | 47.1 | 51.5 | 54.3 | 16.7 |
| Facilitating Partnerships | 41.1 | 33.3 | 35.3 | 39.4 | 51.4 | 38.9 |
| Enabling capital projects - new building/accommodation | 34.1 | 33.3 | 47.1 | 30.3 | 31.4 | 27.8 |
| Additional funds for teaching, training | 28.7 | 33.3 | 26.5 | 24.2 | 31.4 | 33.3 |
| Facilitating community development | 24.8 | 33.3 | 8.8 | 33.3 | 28.6 | 27.8 |
| Additional funds for research | 15.5 | 0 | 23.5 | 15.2 | 17.1 | 5.6 |
| Enhancing knowledge of labour market | 10.1 | 0 | 2.9 | 12.1 | 8.6 | 27.8 |
| Acquiring research equipment (used also by industry) | 6.2 | 0 | 14.7 | 3 | 2.9 | 5.6 |
| Enhancing redesign of curriculum | 6.2 | 0 | 0 | 6.1 | 11.4 | 5.6 |
| Number of HEIs | 129 | 6 | 34 | 33 | 35 | 18 |

Note: HEIs were permitted to select the top three roles for regeneration funding
Source: HEBCI, PACEC/CBR analysis

# 3    The Strategic Importance of Civic and Community Interactions for HEIs

## 3.1    Introduction

3.1.1    This section considers the importance of civic and community interactions to the Higher Education sector, including:

- The perceived role of HEIs as generators of civic and community impacts;
- The aims and objectives of HEIs in generating these impacts;
- The formalisation and co-ordination of engagement activity by HEI leadership;
- The factors which influence HEIs when positioning themselves with regard to society and the community;
- The justifications for and benefits of engagement identified by HEIs
- The internal mechanisms through which engagement is promoted and incentivised within HEIs.

3.1.2    There are a number of inter-HEI networks, groups and organisations which offer guidance and information on methods of Knowledge Exchange and on public and/or community engagement activities. The information presented by these organisations is representative of their constituent HEIs, and demonstrates collaborative and co-ordinating approaches to the generation of civic and community impacts. These include Universities UK, the Russell Group, the Beacons for Public Engagement, the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement, and regional groups such as the Association of Universities in the East of England.

## 3.2    Exploring the Civic and Community Aims and Objectives of HEIs

3.2.1    There are a great variety of interrelated definitions within the literature on Higher Education knowledge exchange, for knowledge exchange itself, for civic and community impacts, and for the related concepts of 'public engagement', 'community engagement' and 'widening participation'. It is therefore unsurprising that HEIs have developed individual, although often mutually informed, definitions of these concepts when determining their role within society, in response to a growing recognition of the opportunities presented by their interaction with society on a civic and community level.

3.2.2    The desire to reach mutually accepted terms and frames of reference is reflected in the consultation process of the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE) in reaching a working definition of 'public engagement'. The current draft definition indicates that HEIs seek through public engagement to *bring research and higher education institutions together with the public. It generates mutual benefit – with all parties learning from each other through sharing knowledge, expertise and*

*skills. Done well, it builds trust, understanding and collaboration, and increases the institution's relevance to, and impact on, civil society.*'[3]

3.2.3    Similarly, several Russell Group Universities in collaboration with the Corporate Citizenship Company determined as part of the Higher Education Community Engagement Model that while, '*there is no consensus on what this type of activity should be called, and what exactly terms such as 'community engagement', 'public engagement' or 'outreach' encompass*', these activities should '*complement universities' primary contribution to society – their teaching and research.*'[4]

3.2.4    Research Councils UK embraces public engagement as one of four main activities – alongside research, training and knowledge transfer – stipulating that '*any good engagement activity should involve two-way aspects of listening and interaction* ', in order to make '*decisions and research more responsive to the needs of society; for society to share in the benefits; and to improve the supply of skilled people to the research base and the UK economy*'.[5]

3.2.5    Universities UK considers that '*it is one of the core aims of UK higher education to meet the needs of the wider community and the expansion of higher education has an increasing impact on the community*'.[6]

3.2.6    There is, then, some consensus that these activities should be;

    a    accepted as part of the responsibilities and role of HEIs as large and influential public institutions; and

    b    a mutually beneficial form of interaction between HEIs and the wider community or society; while essentially

    c    a secondary component of the role and purpose of Higher Education, demanding that the feedback links and complementarity of the activities to teaching and research be emphasised.

## 3.3    The Recognition of the Civic and Community Role of Higher Education Institutions by HEI Leadership

3.3.1    The strategies of most HEIs studied recognise and respond explicitly to HEFCE guidance on public engagement as '…the involvement of specialists in higher education listening to, developing their understanding of and interacting with non-specialists.'[7] A variety of significant 'civic and community impacts' are desired by HEIs as a result of this engagement, most often connected to the growth of mutual understanding between the HE sector and the public, to the increased relevance of HEIs and their research to society and to the increased public recognition of this relevance.

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[3] National Co-ordination Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE), 'The Draft Framework: What is Public Engagement', 26/02/2010.
[4]'Higher Education Community Engagement Model', 2003.
[5] Research Councils UK, 'What Is Community Engagement', 2008.
[6] Universities UK, 'Universities: Engaging with Local Communities', 2007.
[7] Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), Strategic Plan 2006–11 (2009/21), p. 5.

3.3.2    Most of the HEIs included as case studies for this paper consider their purpose to include services to society, reflected as a traditional aspect of their role as civic institutions and included in their missions, plans and strategies for the future. HEIs have a heritage of public engagement, including providing access to sports and cultural facilities and events; charitable volunteering and fundraising by staff and students and access to learning. There is a trend towards the further formalisation of these activities, leading to the increased understanding and co-ordination of them. For instance, the Beacons for Public Engagement collectively provide '…*a co-ordinated way of recognising, rewarding and building capacity for public engagement activity*'.[8] Much of this co-ordination relies upon the internal identification and recognition of the activities already established, in order to harness their potential as generators of civil and community impacts, in particular the enhanced reputation of HEIs as socially engaged and relevant institutions.

3.3.3    There is increasingly an accepted place for the promotion of public and community engagement within HEIs' strategic plans (Table 3.1). The National Co-ordination Centre for Public Engagement identifies '*Institutional commitment*' as a key dimension in which measurement tools exist, leading to a desired result of the '*more effective strategic investment of resources and community partnerships*', reflecting a drive to formalise and prioritise the civil and community impacts of HEIs within internal strategies and frameworks. [9]

**Table 3.1      Inclusion of public and community engagement in the strategies of HEIs in 2007/08, by research cluster (% HEIs)**

|  | All HEIs | Cluster | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | Top 6 | High | Medium | Low | Arts |
| 1. No strategic plan in place. Ad hoc approach to public and community engagement | 5 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 6 | 6 |
| 2. Between 1 and 3 | 21 | 17 | 24 | 18 | 26 | 17 |
| 3. Strategic plan developed and only partially implemented, or restricted to certain departments or central functions only. | 19 | 17 | 21 | 33 | 11 | 11 |
| 4. Between 3 and 5 | 40 | 17 | 41 | 27 | 46 | 39 |
| 5. Strategic plan developed as a result of an inclusive process across the whole HEI.  Accepted across almost all units and recommendations implemented.  Use of plan to set targets and monitor achievement. | 16 | 0 | 12 | 21 | 11 | 28 |
| Number of HEIs | 129 | 6 | 34 | 33 | 35 | 18 |

Source: HEBCI survey, PACEC analysis

3.3.4    Table 3.1 shows that 95% of all HEIs responding had taken account of community and public engagement as part of their strategies on some level (options 2-5). The extent to which strategies were developed and universal, and efforts to implement them and assess impact varied considerably, whether measured by all HEIs or by research cluster. Overall, the greatest number of HEIs selected option 4, and the majority of all HEIs (55%) selected within the top two options. More than half also chose within options 4-5 in each research cluster. This demonstrates that, while HEIs

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[8] HEFCE, 2006/49.
[9] NCCPE, 'Briefing Paper: Auditing, Benchmarking and Evaluating Public Engagement', 2008.

are adopting a variety of approaches towards the inclusion of public and community engagement within their strategies, and while are at different stages in this process, nearly all are formally acknowledging their civil and community impacts and taking action to understand and manage them more fully.

3.3.5     The inclusion of mission or value statements relating to the promotion, formalisation and co-ordination of civic and community impacts in strategic plans provides evidence that HEIs are embracing these impacts as an important part of their KE activities. Such statements provide important internal guidance for academics in terms of what is expected by the leadership. They provide an emphasis of specific areas of interest and a framework for increased levels of accountability and performance measurement. However, whether the strategies are effective will depend critically on the ability of the leadership to communicate their intentions to the academic body, and implement the necessary actions.

3.3.6     The University of Bristol, calling itself the 'engaged University', has been a pioneer of public engagement through its Centre for Public Engagement. The University's 'Vision and Strategy 2009–16' gives the mission as '*to pursue and share knowledge and understanding, both for their own sake and to help individuals and society fulfil their potential*', embedding Knowledge Exchange and its social impacts into the institution's primary purpose and cultural message. The concept of the 'engaged University' and mechanisms for its measurement is set out in detail in Bristol's strategy, summarised below:

> *Our strategy involves supporting, rewarding and celebrating the engagement that currently takes place at departmental, faculty and institutional level and developing new engagement initiatives.*
> - *Play a leading role in setting the national agenda on public engagement in higher education.*
> - *Respond positively to community needs.*
> - *Play a positive role in the affairs of the city, region and nation.*
> - *Nurture relationships with alumni and other friends of the University.*
> - *Behave responsibly as an institution.*
>
> University of Bristol, 'Vision and Strategy 2009–16'.

3.3.7     The University of Leeds provides another very good example of an HEI that has a clearly thought out strategy incorporating the importance of interdependent, interlinked values supporting the overall goal of research excellence (Figure 3.1). '*The values are represented as a group, depicting their equal importance and interdependency. Our values of professionalism, inclusiveness, integrity and community surround and support the core value of academic excellence, which is at the heart of everything we do at the University*'[10]. The strategy then goes on to articulate the University's aim '*to contribute to the enrichment of society on a local to global scale*' (p. 11).

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[10] University of Leeds Strategic Plan 2006, p. 5.

**Figure 3.1          Interlinked values of the University of Leeds**
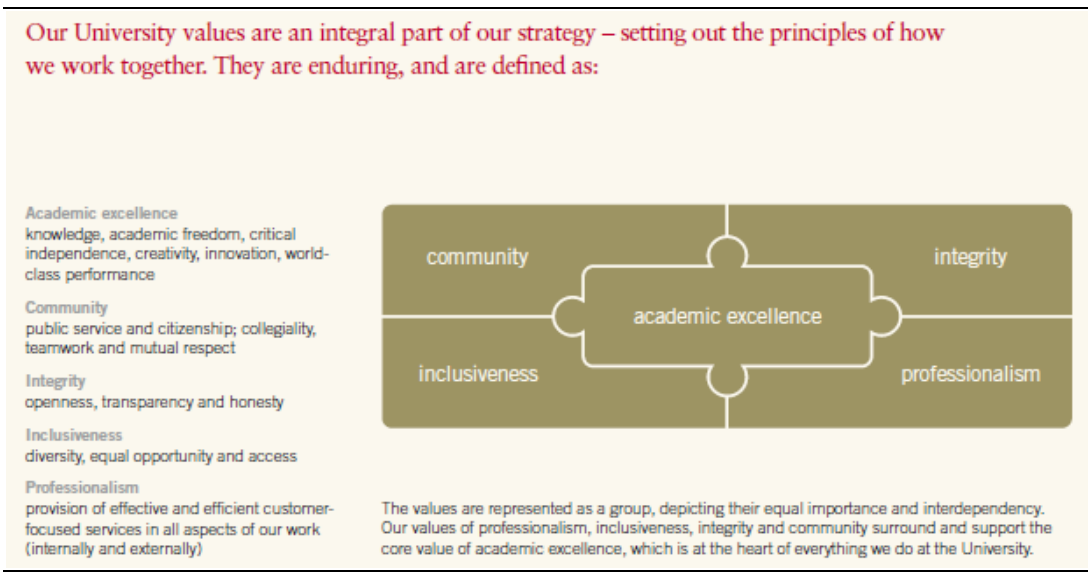


Source: University of Leeds (2006) *Strategic Plan*, p. 6

3.3.8      The majority of other HEIs studied have explicitly recognised civic and community impacts as part of their integral and desired position in UK society. A representative selection of quotations from these are given below:

> *Aim: To enhance our contribution to the economic, social, cultural and educational life of the North East through our position as an international research institution. As a leading research University, our activities impact positively on the local region. Our strategy is to ensure that our positive impact is maximised through a conscious and targeted programme of outreach and regional engagement. This has three aspects:*
>
> - *Supporting the knowledge-based economy. We will support the development of the knowledge-based economy in the North East of England through our internationally recognised research, in partnership with regional stakeholders. We will develop our relationships with research-based industries, and look to strengthen our research at Queen's campus.*
> - *Social engagement and enhancing quality of life. We will contribute to the quality of our local environment through a sensitive approach to developing our estate. We will continue to offer opportunities for both education and entertainment, through careful management of our buildings, facilities, cultural assets and events. Our work in outreach, volunteering and community engagement will continue.*
> - *Stakeholder engagement and communication. We will support our strategy with a targeted approach for regional stakeholder engagement and communication aimed at opinion formers and decision makers, the media, stakeholders and regional communities.*
>
> *Durham University, 'Strategic Plan to 2010'.*

> *The University of Hertfordshire will maximise the use of our physical resources by opening them up for community use…will work proactively with*

*community leaders in areas of deprivation to raise career and educational aspirations from primary age onwards.*

University of Hertfordshire, 'Strategic Plan 2007–12'.

*The moral responsibility of all staff and students to contribute as educated, informed, tolerant citizens to the enrichment of social and cultural life and to the advancement of human wellbeing in their own communities and around the world.*

University of Manchester, 'Strategic Plan – Towards Manchester 2015'.

## 3.4      How HEIs Strategically Determine Their Civic and Community Role

*Assessing civic and community need*

3.4.1      Contained within HEIs' statements of intent with regard to public engagement, including the public relevance of research, access to learning, and community advancement, are some tacit assumptions about HEI's need to keep in touch with the requirements and perceptions of their communities and society. This is a key stage in the dynamic process of negotiation between the academic prerogatives of HEIs as teaching and research institutions and the public's entitlement to a share in the proceeds of activities in which they are stakeholders.

3.4.2      The HEIs studied indicated that there is an increasing collective culture of openness and accessibility; they wish to become, and to be recognised as, active, approachable and considerate partners in community life. This is often expressed though statements that an HEI should, for instance, be an 'active citizen', 'advocate moral responsibility' and work to shape a 'democratic, civilised and inclusive society'. This demonstrates a concerted effort to move away from the traditional perception of HEIs as elitist and insular, albeit benevolent, institutions.

3.4.3      In some HEIs this culture is supported and implemented through a practical administrative structure which reaches out to the community, and encourages individuals, businesses and community and stakeholder groups to approach the institution themselves with ideas, questions and comments. For example, the University of Cambridge, through its Office of External Affairs and Community Engagement, provides a point of contact and referral for external and internal interest and enquiries, in order to identify and co-ordinate public engagement opportunities. It also provides the publicly accessible Cambridge in the Community Database intended to help members of the public, schools/colleges, and voluntary and community organisations find out more about activities run by the University in which they might become involved.[11] The University of Exeter collates and presents its activities via its website for The University in the Community in a method which is

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[11] http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/communications/community/engagement/

informative, accessible and inviting.[12] Exeter also holds regular resident liaison meetings, and publishes a newsletter detailing and promoting the University's community engagement activities.

3.4.4    HEIs assess and respond to community and social needs on an institutional level largely through the maintenance and promotion of traditional relationships and collaborations with charitable and publicly funded social and political organisations. These include, for example:

- Regional Development Agencies and offshoot organisations;
- Civic councils;
- Arts Council England;
- Charitable foundations, such as the Wellcome Trust; and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation;
- Primary and secondary schools, colleges and academies;
- Community centres.

3.4.5    However, from the research undertaken for this report, it is apparent that many HEIs do not often have a clear channel through which smaller and hard-to-reach community and society groups can contribute to the public engagement debate, to institutions' understanding of its own position within the community, and to individual opportunities for collaboration and shared resources. This typically results from the lack of an approachable and well-advertised point of contact for public enquiries regarding engagement, itself indicative of a civic and community engagement strategy internally obscured and subsumed by the related economic engagement agenda. That said, the case study evidence shows that despite this, these institutions are generating potentially significant civic and community impacts, although typically of a spontaneous and undocumented nature.

*Matching need to the strengths, resources and strategic aims of HEIs*

3.4.6    The case studies show that HEIs are concerned with the sustainability and suitability of activities which generate civic and community impacts. Many senior academics and HEI staff interviewed emphasised that the generation of these impacts will be mutually rewarding and reinforcing if HEIs ensure that their activities are based on:

- sound expertise, resources and long-term commitment;
- the overall mission of the HEI, its core values and future direction;
- the rewarding and incentivising feedback of engagement activities into teaching and research.

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**CASE STUDY THREE: DURHAM UNIVERSITY AND REGENERATION**

Durham University has specifically positioned itself as a driver of social and economic regeneration in the North East of England, as a direct result of its recognition of moral and civic responsibilities as an influential institution in an area of deprivation. The way in which Durham University determines its unique civic and community role can be explored in three stages.

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[12] http://www.exeter.ac.uk/businessandcommunity/university/

The identification of need: Durham University perceives that the desired civic and community impacts of its Knowledge Exchange activities are dependent on a number of external, challenging and region-specific economic factors, and that social need is bound up in the continued economic decline of the North East. In interview it was established that the University leadership considers the socio-economic challenge of the region to be two-fold. Firstly, the region suffers from a lack of output and productivity, and a lack of demand. Secondly, in response to this, the region is lacking people with the skills and employability to provide a potential workforce and to promote demand. The University therefore has identified its civic and community aims to include raising standards across secondary schools in the county, providing learning opportunities for NEETs, promoting the charitable activities of University staff and students, promoting business and technological innovation and attracting investors to the region, and enhancing the quality of individual and community life by sharing the cultural privileges and resources of the university with the wider community.

Utilising the University's existing strengths: Durham University has a strong record in sports, in staff and student engagement activities, particularly volunteering and fundraising, and in engagement with schools. These traditional areas of strengths are central to the University's identification of programmes and mechanisms through which positive civic and community impacts can be realised. The community engagement activities of the University include:[13]

- **The Phoenix Programme**, co-funded by ONE NorthEast, the regional development agency. As the employer of 3,500 staff, Durham Universitiy is the third largest employer in the area. The Phoenix Programme aims to capitalise in what staff are already doing to enhance the quality of life in the region, and offer new opportunities for engagement. It is open to support and ancillary staff as well as academics, from both the Durham City and Queens Campuses. There are four main strands:

    - Phoenix Volunteers: developing the opportunities for staff volunteering work in the region;
    - Phoenix Challenge: working on joint development and research projects with key organisations and groups, many of them in the voluntary and community sector;
    - Phoenix Places: establishing community engagement opportunities in specific areas within County Durham and the Tees Valley
    - Phoenix Sport: building in the work of Durham's sport in the community programme.

- **The Newcastle-Durham Beacon** aims to achieve a more joined up and strategic approach to getting people involved in research. The Beacon will enable more effective two-way knowledge exchange between researchers and wider society. It also aims to transform the culture within the HEIs such that participatory practices become central to their strategy.

- **DEEP Academies**. Following a rigorous assessment by the County Council and the national government's Department of Children, Schools and Families, DEEP (Durham Excellence in Education Partnership) led by Durham University has been selected as the sponsor of two proposed Academies: one in Consett and one in Durham City.

- **Fundraising**. Durham University's Charity Kommittee (DUCK) is Durham University's equivalent of Rag week. DUCK raises money for local, national and international charities in fun ways throughout the year, culminating in a week-long intensive effort. In 2006/07 DUCK raised £320,000, helping the work of more than 250 charities.

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[13] Professor Ray Hudson, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Regional Strategy), Durham University, 'Engaging with the Region: Durham University's Evolving Role in the North East of England', 2009. http://www.dur.ac.uk/about/community/

- **Student Community Action** at Durham is one of the biggest SCA groups in the country. Around 800 student volunteers are involved in over 40 projects within the local community including music, drama and cookery clubs, after-school tutoring, sports coaching, hospital visiting, litter picking and help with gardening and decorating for the elderly.
- **Team Durham Community Outreach**. Clients from disadvantaged backgrounds offered essential support through regular opportunities to play sport, and struggling school children are made to feel and their confidence boosted. Young people, gifted in sport, are provided with the platform to professionally develop their skills, and University students are given the opportunity to gain challenging voluntary experience and complete coaching courses crucial for their careers. Fitness programmes are also available to improve the physical health and well being of the regional population.

The approach to generating impacts: Durham University has clearly set out its perimeters for the achievement of civic and community impacts, which emphasise the importance of embedded, complementary third stream activities alongside a culture of participatory and informed partnership, leading to committed, sustainable outcomes:

> The greatest asset we bring to the region is the quality of our work and our position as a leading research-led University, and a node in global networks attracting international thinkers and innovative idea to the region. Potentially all the work in the University could have relevance to people in the county and region. The key to realising this potential is to find areas of shared interest and establish links and partnerships, to work with others. We are not seeking to impose 'our' view of problems and solutions on local people –we need to work with them to build relationships so that they trust us…We seek to embed engagement, where relevant, across all our activities – no longer a semi-detached 'third leg' but rather engagement as part of 'business as usual' across the piece. But what we don't and won't do is bend the longer-term agenda of excellence in teaching, research and scholarship, to address externally defined short –term problems – the key is to find synergies between our work and problems and issues confronting local people and organisations as they see them. This has one very important implication – we need to be clear as to what we can't do, as well as what we can, so as not to raise expectations and then dash them.
>
> *'Engaging with the Region: Durham University's Evolving Role in the North East of England', 2009*

*Relative strategic importance of public engagement*

3.4.7      There is evidence to suggest that, while HEIs seek to embed and integrate KE activities, these are not amongst the top priorities of HEIs in a general sense. The case studies and interviews demonstrate that attitudes towards third stream activities, in particular those community – rather than economically-driven – span from being seeing as highly desirable, complementary, integrated and sometimes essential to teaching and research to seeing it as an ideal but non-essential and secondary (and naturally occurring) part of the HE role.

**Table 3.2          Areas of activity contributing most to economic development, 2007/08**

| Area where HEI contributes greatest to economic development | All HEIs | Cluster | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Top 6 | High | Medium | Low | Arts |
| Access to education | 53 | 33 | 44 | 58 | 71 | 33 |
| Research collaboration with industry | 40 | 100 | 85 | 42 | 0 | 17 |
| Supporting SMEs | 36 | 0 | 12 | 42 | 57 | 44 |
| Meeting regional skills needs | 35 | 0 | 15 | 45 | 63 | 17 |
| Technology transfer | 33 | 83 | 59 | 36 | 14 | 6 |
| Meeting national skills needs | 26 | 67 | 32 | 9 | 6 | 67 |
| Developing local partnerships | 21 | 0 | 9 | 18 | 43 | 11 |
| Graduate retention in local region | 16 | 0 | 0 | 30 | 14 | 28 |
| Attracting non-local students to the region | 16 | 0 | 24 | 6 | 6 | 39 |
| Support for community development | 13 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 23 | 28 |
| Management development | 5 | 0 | 9 | 3 | 3 | 0 |
| Attracting inward investment to region | 4 | 17 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 6 |
| Spin-off activity | 2 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 6 |
| Strategic analysis of regional economy | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Number of HEIs | 129 | 6 | 34 | 33 | 35 | 18 |

Source: HEBCI survey, PACEC analysis

3.4.8     For Table 3.2, HEIs were asked to select the three areas which contributed most to economic development. 'Support for community development' was a relatively uncommon choice (13% overall), and was not identified at all by any HEIs in the Top 6 or High research clusters. It must be borne in mind, however, that this question judges community development only as a generator of economic development; while these impacts are closely related, the data does not account for the significance of those community activities which do not generate economic impacts. -

3.4.9     Table 3.2 shows that the choice of community development as a top-three HE priority increases substantially for those HEIs for whom teaching rather than research is the primary activity, which is only chosen by those in the medium research cluster (9%) and in low research cluster (23%). The same is true of Arts HEIs (28%). This is also borne out by the comparative evidence of the case studies, suggesting as a cause that the creation and aims of teaching and Arts HEIs (which are more often post-1992 than research institutions are) have more commonly grown out of a local and/or regional community need for the increased access and flexibility of education and skills. In the case of research-focused HEIs, the promotion of community activities is designed to further the relevance and impact of academic research, and is often regarded as the 'sharing' or showcasing of research knowledge with the wider community.

3.4.10    The evidence therefore suggests that HEIs determine their roles largely in terms of their teaching and research activities, and that their role within society and the community is a supporting one, and often a bi-product of HEIs' core activities.

3.4.11    Potential changes in community need are often assessed by measuring past impact and the areas of focus are determined largely by the HEI on their own terms. It should be recognised, however, that HEIs are increasingly making efforts to identify, document and measure the current activities of their members alongside co-

ordinating new engagement activity and determining its future direction. A fuller understanding of the provision already in existence will enable the further identification of new opportunities, of gaps in provision, and of the infrastructure required to deal with these.

*HEIs within the shared community*

3.4.12    A significant dimension to the identification of community need and of existing activities is the interaction of HEIs within the shared community. HEIs are establishing individual definitions and strategies, often supported and assisted through relationships formed with other HEIs who hold shared and collective values. HEIs evidently position themselves in relation to their individual communities and to other HEIs similar to themselves in emphasis, focus and ethos. The extent to which HEIs position themselves with regard to the other – perhaps very different – higher education institutions working in the same local geographical area has been less documented. Two examples of HEIs co-existing in the same location are provided by the University of Bristol and the University of the West of England (UWE), and the University of Cambridge and Anglia Ruskin University.

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**CASE STUDY FOUR: THE UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL AND THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST OF ENGLAND**

The University of Bristol and the University of the West of England both give high priority to the public and community engagement agenda, and are active participants in the discussion and co-ordination of Higher Education participation in the community and society. They exist in close proximity of one another within an urban community of approximately 421,300 people,[14] jointly contributing population figures of approximately 53,440 students and 4,050 academic staff.[15] Through a recognition of shared concerns and the opportunity for shared resources and mutual support, the University of Bristol and the University of the West of England jointly set up the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement in 2008 as part of the £9.2m Beacons for Public Engagement initiative. Its purpose is to support the activity and co-ordination of the six Beacons, to marshall their outcomes and to share these with policy makers and other HEIs. The collaboration of the two HEIs in this project has substantially increased the contact between them on their engagement agendas and activities, and has opened up and strengthened channels of communication between the HEIs' management. It also involved exploration of the missions and aims of public engagement, leading to further shared values and common understanding between the two institutions.

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[14] ONS, Mid-year 2008 Population Estimates, Bristol Unitary Authority.
[15] Student data for the academic year 2007-08, staff data for the academic year 2006-07.
[15] The categories of activity within this survey are not equivalent

**CASE STUDY FIVE: THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE AND ANGLIA RUSKIN UNIVERSITY**

The University of Cambridge and Anglia Ruskin University each generate a number of civic and community impacts, through both institutionally organised and individual/voluntary forms of activity within Cambridge and the wider Cambridge area. The population of the Cambridge urban area is approximately 139,000.[16] The number of students studying either at Anglia Ruskin University or at the University of Cambridge is approximately 41,750 and the total number of academic staff approximately 6,923.[17]

The University of Cambridge and Anglia Ruskin University have a tradition of collaboration through the Cambridge Science Festival and the Cambridge Festival of Ideas

- The Cambridge Science Festival in 2009 attracted approximately 25,000 visitors to 160 events. Its primary aims are to encourage young people to study science, technology, engineering and mathematics subjects further and to consider careers in these areas, to engage with the public of all ages on issues of scientific interest and concern and to reach at least 25,000 visitors each year, and to engage new audiences in the Festival. The Festival has run for sixteen years as a scheme of the University of Cambridge, with Anglia Ruskin University becoming an associate sponsor in 2007. The whole event is run primarily by the University of Cambridge, with the participation in and provision of events by Anglia Ruskin during the two weeks at their own venues and during the weekend part of the Festival at a central venue hired by the University of Cambridge.

- The Cambridge Festival of Ideas was piloted in 2008 as an arts, humanities and social sciences partner to the Festival of Science, and was run again in October 2009. This included 150 knowledge exchange events over one week, attracting more than 8,000 visitors, taking research and knowledge out into the community and welcoming the public into the academic sphere. The Cambridge Festival of Ideas aims to encourage members of the public to explore the arts, humanities and social sciences. It also aims to provide an opportunity for the public to enter University buildings, meet academics and students and explore the world in which they live. An outreach strand of the Festival is 'ideas in the community', in partnership with Cambridge City Council Community Development Team, which in 2009 took the festival 'on tour' to three deprived areas in Cambridge, to community centres to Ross Street, East Barnwell and Brown's Field, attracting 250 attendees. The overall planning and co-ordination of the Festival is shared between the Office of Community Affairs at the University of Cambridge, and the Community Development Office at Anglia Ruskin University, with each University taking administrative responsibility for its own events. While the scope of the Festival is determined in collaboration, the two HEIs generally do not collaborate on its individual components, with the exception of shared University venues. Funding for events is also separate, although publicity design and costs are shared, and Anglia Ruskin is also an independent sponsor of the Festival.

There is a large University staff and student presence in the city of Cambridge and the wider urban area, many of whose members, either formally or informally, generate civic and community impacts within the locality. Data is not available for staff volunteers at Anglia Ruskin but internal surveys show that between March 2009 and February 2010 50% of student volunteering activity impacted on local community groups directly, including homeless shelters, adults and children with learning difficulties or mental health problems, youth offenders and through alcohol and drug support, sports coaching, conservation and environmental activity and local radio. Approximately

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[16] ONS, Mid-year 2008 Population Estimates, South Cambridgeshire Unitary Authority.
[17] Student data for the academic year 2007-08, staff data for the academic year 2006-07.

40% of these volunteers are studying for the Public Service degree, which stipulates a placement with groups of vulnerable adults or children. 20% of all volunteers work with local schools and a further 20% with national charities, mostly within Cambridge offices. The remaining 10% constitutes time given up within academic events, at museums and galleries and for the wider dissemination of research and knowledge. The most recent complete data set for the University of Cambridge is the Community, Outreach and Widening Participation Survey 2005–06.[18] This shows that across the staff and student bodies 7,937 University of Cambridge members participated in some form of community or outreach activity, to a total of 373,950 hours. The types and distribution of voluntary activity is indicated by the University of Cambridge Community Engagement Report 2003.

**Figure 3.2      University of Cambridge community engagement activity by geographic area**
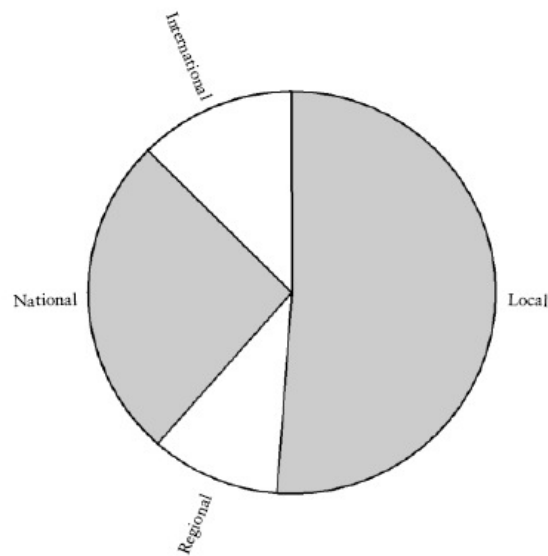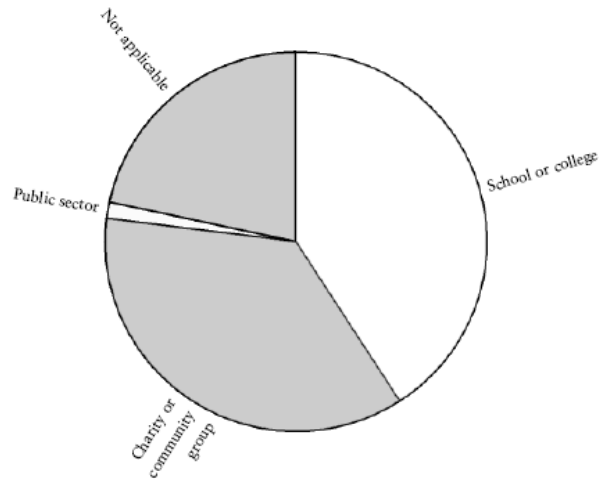


*Source: University of Cambridge Community Engagement Report 2003*

Figure 3.2 shows that the University of Cambridge's community engagement activities impact widely. While the majority of activity is local, this is a far smaller proportion that of Anglia Ruskin University. While available data is not directly comparable, interview evidence indicates this to be between 80–90%. In this sense the two HEIs appear to be operating in connected but not identical areas of impact.

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[18] The categories of activity within this survey are not equivalent to the categories of Anglia Ruskin data, and records all community and outreach activity (both University organised and incidental) and, in the case of staff, both paid and unpaid activity.
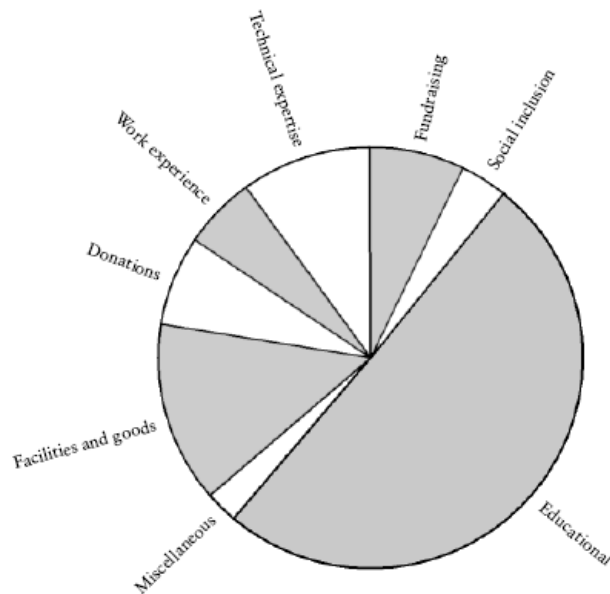
**Figure 3.3          University of Cambridge community engagement activity by type of beneficiary**



*Source: University of Cambridge Community Engagement Report 2003. 'Not applicable' accounts for those activities which do not have direct organisational beneficiaries, i.e. those which work with individuals directly*

Figure 3.3 shows that the group of beneficiaries which receives the most impact through community engagement (41%) is educational organisations. 36% of impact is generated in conjunction with a charity or community organisation.

**Figure 3.4          University of Cambridge community engagement activity by type**



*Source: University of Cambridge Community Engagement Report 2003*

Figure 3.4 shows that more than half of all community engagement activity by the University of Cambridge is of an educational nature. This supports the evidence from interviews undertaken for this research, indicating that the majority of civic and community impacts demonstrated by Top 6 or High research intensity HEIs are of an educational nature, either as schools outreach programmes or as the wider dissemination of HE generated research and knowledge into the community. The report states that majority of educational activities take place in the University itself, and are therefore local activities which involve opening the University up to the public rather than taking the University's research and teaching skills out into the community. This figure also includes data on initiatives to encourage applications to Cambridge from under-represented groups, which is an educational activity dispersed across the country.

3.4.13    Most HEIs studied strive on some level to interact with others active in the same geographical area, even if at times this interaction could be described as 'professional courtesy' rather than a deliberate and integrated collaboration. Inter-HEI engagement activity generally takes the form of specific, high-profile Knowledge Exchange programmes such as those described in the case studies above, and is rarely demonstrated by the HEIs' internal co-ordination and promotional mechanisms for delivering civic and community impacts.

3.4.14    To some extent this is a natural part of the intended complementarity of HEIs' overall roles and aims within geographic areas; when communities are shared this is nearly always between a research-based HEI recruiting and impacting on a national and international level, a teaching- and community-focused HEI meeting the local and regional demand for skills and training and/or an Arts HEI with specific emphasis on artistic and cultural growth. For instance, the PACEC/CBR survey of academics 2008 shows that academics in the top 6 research institutions are more likely to provide public lectures (24% compared to an average of 15%), whereas Arts HEIs' provision of community based performance arts is 16% compared to the average of 4%, and their provision of public exhibitions 35% (PACEC/CBR, 2009, p. 140). It is striking that this intrinsic sense of difference was expressed in every interview conducted for this study; HEIs ranked highly for research considered the primary aim of HE engagement to be the sharing of knowledge generated with the wider community and society, while teaching- and community-focused institutions considered voluntary and community work to be more important than the 'showcasing' of HEI research and facilities. While championing their institutions' own approaches, all interviewees felt that this sense of 'operating in a different space' created convenient demarcations of HEI roles which were of ultimate benefit to the shared community.

3.4.15    HEIs are working to understand and take ownership of their own activities which will lead to greater oversight, and this process will enable HEIs to compare their local impacts. It also might be usefully shared in order to build up a database of engagement activities present in particular areas. Such an approach would be more user-friendly for community groups and individuals within the locality seeking advice, resources and support from HE than a discrete and individualistic co-ordination practice by the HEIs active within that community. The generation of civic and community impacts by HEIs necessarily promotes plurality, choice and flexibility and

in this sense even overlapping, engagement activities are of some benefit to the community and HEIs, particularly in the case of fundraising and through enhanced visibility and public awareness. It is arguable, however, that HEIs' responses to community need cannot be optimised, in both terms of resources and of relevance, until a more joined up approach is adopted.

## 3.5    How Higher Education Institutions Justify Engagement with the Community

3.5.1    The case studies revealed that HEIs feel that generating civic and community impacts are an integral part of their role as public institutions, and also that the activities which generate these impacts should be of mutual benefit; be rewarding for those staff and students who are involved; and feed back into the HE activities of teaching and research.

3.5.2    Since HEIs and their staff and students have a finite amount of resources, the justification of public engagement, and internal awareness of its benefits, is paramount if the successful allocation of these resources for civil and community impact is to be achieved. The interrelated rewards of these impacts can be presented in several ways; below they are divided into benefits (a) to the community and society (b); to HEI staff and students as individuals; and (c) to HEIs and constituent Colleges, Departments and Faculties at the institutional level:

3.5.3    Benefits to the community and society:
   ● access to HEIs' physical facilities and resources such as museums, galleries, sporting and performing arts venues, libraries and open spaces;
   ● access to and involvement in leisure pursuits which are generated by HEIs' extra-curricular presence and activities;
   ● further understanding of the research activities of HEIs, leading to a feeling of relevance and inclusion and of the Higher Education sector as an openly participating and accessible beneficiary of public funding;
   ● access to learning and increased awareness of educational opportunities and their benefits;
   ● access to voluntary or paid labour, expertise, infrastructure and support and the opportunity for collaborative charitable or community programmes;
   ● increased communication channels between HEIs and the communities they serve about the civic and community impacts generated, and the efficacy and relevance of and demand for these.

3.5.4    Benefits to staff and students:
   ● personal development and enrichment opportunities;
   ● new opportunities for learning and research and an increased sense of relevance and purpose;
   ● the facilitation of interaction and integration with the wider community;
   ● enhanced reputation, experience, skills and employability.

3.5.5    Benefits to HEIs and constituent Colleges, Departments and Faculties:

- new opportunities for learning and research and an increased sense of reputation and purpose;

- enhanced reputation, recognition and awareness of teaching and research activities;

- staff and student bodies which are flexible, experienced, satisfied and enthusiastic in their work and its impact;

- increased quality and diversity of student applications;

- improved recruitment, retention and involvement of students and staff;

- the development and maintenance of good community relationships, leading to further collaboration, influence and practical benefits.

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**CASE STUDY SIX: PERCEPTIONS OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT FROM ACADEMIC STAFF AT THE UNIVERSITY OF EAST ANGLIA**

In December 2008 the University of East Anglia carried out a survey of the perceptions of its academic staff to public engagement. This was largely built up from interview evidence and was intended to explore internal attitudes and the factors affecting involvement. This report therefore provides information on the benefits of public engagement perceived by academics (to themselves, their institution and the wider community) and the justifications with which they and their organisational structures encouraged engagement activities alongside other academic tasks and expectations. 84% of academics interviewed said that they had been personally involved in mutually beneficial public engagement of some sort. Involvement consisted largely of one-way information flow activities, such as public lectures, media work or writing for non-academic audiences although range of two-way activities were also cited, such as pro-bono work, blogs, participatory research, the development of University curriculum and teaching, working with schools, activity days and dialogue events. It was found that 'In terms of subject area, demand-led public engagement was certainly stronger in some areas than others', dependent on the engagement's relevance to the research area.[19] There was unanimity amongst Heads of School interviewed that it was difficult to give priority to non core activities such as public engagement, particularly when a direct result for the School, either financially or academically, could not be identified. Thus the most successful institutional justifications for engagement were those related to direct economic and research-based benefit to the academics and Schools participating. In response to this report the University of East Anglia through CUE East, the regional Beacon for Public Engagement, has set up a Continued Professional Development training programme for staff and students in order to promote and highlight the mutual benefits of engagement activities.

The University of East Anglia report found that funding for research was increasingly dependent on its demonstrable public impact, which took account of academics' need to justify engagement in terms of demonstrable benefit to their research area or group while also encouraging them to consider the opportunities for civil and community impact generation arising from their core activities. This process suggests that the relevance of research to the non-academic world is of increasing significance to academics and forms a part of research decisions. However, no School had a dedicated funding stream for engagement activities which indicated that the various justifications for public engagement were not overcoming competing financial demands from other areas.

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[19] Lisa McDaid, 'A Qualitative Baseline Report on the Perceptions of Public Engagement in University of East Anglia Academic Staff', 2008, p. 22.

3.5.6    Although the formal core activities of academics may generate civil and community impacts, there is no evidence to suggest that these impacts *per se* are of primary consideration to HEIs and faculties on a institutional level in terms of the allocation of resources. Thus, while activities generating civil and community impacts are generally understood as fundamentally positive, the moral and social justifications for these impacts alone are not always sufficiently or relatively compelling to promote those activities. When faculties and academics are under pressure to demonstrate an activity's direct economic or academic benefit to themselves, the less measurable and more altruistic impacts are liable to compromise. This suggests that if HEIs, as a part of a 'big picture' strategy for their relationship with the community and society, wish to promote the generation of civic and community impacts, the philosophical justifications of these must be combined with clear expectations of, and structured incentives for, these activities which has relevance to the decision making processes of HEIs' constituent bodies.

## 3.6    Institutionalised Expectations of University Members for Public Engagement

3.6.1    Interview and case study evidence shows that HEIs increasingly are formalising their aims as generators of civic and community impacts in order to communicate these aims to their management and academic staff and to incentivise staff to consider and prioritise engagement activity where appropriate. The criteria perceived by academics to be important for promotions and assessments provide a good indication of what is expected of them by the leadership of the HEI.

**Table 3.3        HEI promotions criteria by research intensity cluster**

|  | Statistics of all respondents. (by Research Intensity Cluster) | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | Total | Top 6 | High | Medium | Low | Arts |
| Research / publications | 4.1 | 4.8 | 4.7 | 3.9 | 2.7 | 3.7 |
| Generating Commercial Income for the HEI | 3.3 | 3.2 | 3.2 | 3.6 | 3.2 | 3.3 |
| Faculty / departmental administration | 2.6 | 2.2 | 2.3 | 2.8 | 3.1 | 3.2 |
| Teaching ability / workload | 2.3 | 2.2 | 2.3 | 2.3 | 2.6 | 2.9 |
| Work with Business/ Industry | 2.3 | 2.4 | 2.0 | 2.4 | 2.6 | 3.3 |
| Work with the local community | 1.6 | 1.1 | 1.2 | 1.7 | 2.5 | 2.2 |
| *Number of respondents* | *918* | *162* | *335* | *242* | *161* | *19* |

Source: PACEC/CBR survey of academics 2008

**Table 3.4**     **Importance of working with the local community for promotions and assessments by research intensity cluster (% academics reporting each rank of importance 0: Low, 5: High)**

|  | Percentage of all respondents (by Research Intensity Cluster) | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | Total | Top 6 | High | Medium | Low | Arts |
| 0 (Low) | 31 | **41** | 35 | 30 | **14** | **9** |
| 1 | 26 | 25 | **31** | 25 | **17** | 22 |
| 2 | 15 | 19 | 16 | 13 | 13 | 27 |
| 3 | 17 | 12 | 15 | 15 | **29** | 32 |
| 4 | 6 | 3 | **1** | 8 | **18** | 6 |
| 5 (High) | 4 | **0** | 1 | 9 | 9 | 4 |
| Number of respondents | 919 | 163 | 334 | 242 | 161 | 20 |
| *Effective Sample Size* | *506* | *125* | *229* | *95* | *77* | *23* |

Source: PACEC/CBR survey of academics 2008, PACEC/CBR analysis

3.6.2      Academics were asked to rank the criteria they perceived to be important for promotions and assessments on a scale from 0 (low) to 5 (high). Academics in the top 6 research cluster rank local community as the least important criteria for the promotion of academic staff (average rank of 1.1) while those in the low intensity research cluster ranked "work with local community" somewhat higher at 2.5 although this was still the lowest compared to other criteria. Effectively 0% of the top 6 research cluster gave this criterion a rank of 5, while more respondents from the medium and low clusters gave a rank of 5. These tables suggest that there is a correlation of the level of prioritisation of community engagement with the research intensity of the cluster, with top 6 research HEIs placing least emphasis on community engagement and the low/medium clusters placing relatively more emphasis on this.

3.6.3      A similar analysis by gender shows that female academics are more likely to view working with the local community as important for promotions and assessments.

**Table 3.5    Importance of working with the local community for promotions and assessments by gender of academic (% academics reporting each rank of importance 0: Low, 5: High)**

|  | Percentage of all respondents (by Gender) | | |
|---|---|---|---|
|  | Total | Male | Female |
| 0 (Low) | 31 | **34** | **22** |
| 1 | 26 | 27 | 23 |
| 2 | 15 | 15 | 16 |
| 3 | 17 | 16 | 20 |
| 4 | 6 | **5** | **10** |
| 5 (High) | 4 | **3** | **8** |
| Number of respondents | 919 | 598 | 305 |
| *Effective Sample Size* | *506* | *323* | *172* |

A number is shown in bold where, taking into account the margin of error due to sampling, we are 95% certain that it is different from the number in the left hand total column (using a Chi-Squared statistical test)
Source: PACEC/CBR Survey of academics 2008

3.6.4    Overall, there is some consensus amongst HEIs about their priorities and the position of civic and community impacts as a part of individual academic's expected duties. Interview evidence shows that engagement activity is considered within the selection process always as a supplementary criterion, for instance as a 'testament to character' or an 'added extra' in a context where academic success is increasingly judged in terms of publication outputs and grant income.

3.6.5    The second important way in which HEIs can implement and institutionalise their civic and community aims is by incorporating these goals appropriately into the job descriptions and employment duties of their staff, particularly at a management level. Table 3.1 has shown that on average 16% of HEIs had a 'strategic plan developed as a result of an inclusive process across the whole HEI. Accepted across almost all units and recommendations implemented. Use of plan to set targets and monitor achievement'. Nineteen percent had 'developed and only partially implemented' a strategy, which was 'restricted to certain departments or central functions only'. The largest group, 40% positioned themselves between these two descriptions. It is still relatively unusual for HEIs to have co-ordinated yet devolved responsibility for public engagement as part of faculty duties. Although HEIs are making efforts to communicate and implement their strategies to their constituent managements. It is not unusual for the institution's public engagement activities to be occasionally reflected in individual or faculty tasks, but the degree and consistency of this across faculties varies considerably between the institutions studied, and responsibilities and performance indicators are generally determined at an individual faculty or department level.

3.6.6    The third important consideration is the extent to which academic staff are rewarded and recognised for generating civic and community impacts outside promotions criteria and job expectations. This includes awards and also recompense in terms of paid time given to the individual by the HEI in order to incentivise engagement activity. PACEC/CBR (2009) found that academics consider lack of time to be the

greatest barrier on average to their knowledge exchange activities (67%), with 'lack of rewards' listed third (28% of academic respondents). This survey data along with case study evidence suggests that one important form of incentivisation required is recognition of individual excellence. Although a lack of time indicates that academics feel stretched by a number of competing demands, it is clear that HEIs might facilitate engagement activities, and gain centralised control of them, by offering paid hours and therefore effectively ring-fencing time for them.

3.6.7     HEIs are increasingly rewarding their staff and students for exemplary public engagement activity. Examples include:

- The University of East Anglia operates an Incentive and Reward scheme in order to encourage and recognise 'key individuals who make significant contributions in this area of activity'.[20] In 2009 the Public and Community Engagement Awards were included in the University's July Congregation Ceremony.

- The University of Bristol gives the University Engagement Award to an individual or group of individuals who demonstrate exceptional and /or innovative engagement practices. In 2009/10 this award was won by the 'Engineering without Borders' project team, an international development organisation that removes barriers to development through engineering, also providing opportunities for young people to learn about technology's role in tackling poverty.

- The Santander Community Engagement Award gives sixteen annual awards of £500 to engagement projects selected from 36 participating UK HEIs. This money is part of a recognition award rather than a provision of funds for further activity.

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[20] CUE East Business Plan, UEA, 2007.

# 4      The Organisation and Co-ordination of Civic and Community Interactions

## 4.1      Introduction

4.1.1      It is clear that HEIs are making increasing efforts to understand their current and desired civic and community impacts.   This is a gradual process and varies considerably from one HEI to another. Alongside this process, HEIs are, to various extents planning, organising and co-ordinating current and future engagement activities in order to generate and gain control of their impacts in ways which match with their internally perceived objectives. This research suggests that the ability of HEIs to effectively organise and co-ordinate their civic and community interaction is dependent on a number of factors and includes the following:

- a centralised organisational unit which prioritises community engagement activity and co-ordinates and measures activity;
- increased institutional oversight of the formal and informal activities of their members and departments;
- devolved and accountable leaders for public engagement activity in Colleges, Faculties and Departments;
- good channels of communication between HEIs and their communities;
- the allocation of sufficient resources to fund the interactions.

These factors and HEIs' management of them are examined in turn.

## 4.2      The Organisational Mechanisms in Place for Civic and Community Interactions and their Efficiency

*Centralised organisational unit*

4.2.1      A number of HEIs have a dedicated office or officer in order to help prioritise and co-ordinate community and public engagement activities. This unit typically promotes public engagement and identifies opportunities, implements the HEI's engagement strategy gathers information on the extent and impacts of activities and co-ordinates them. From the case studies and interviews it is evident that HEIs that have central units for these tasks are able to demonstrate their civic and community impacts to a far greater extent than those who do not; the oversight provided by this organisational structure not only practically promotes and improves HEIs' engagement activities, but also allows HEIs to understand and assess their impacts through a more complete understanding of how their constituent parts and members engage.

4.2.2      HEIs with a central administration for community engagement activities are able to demonstrate to both internal and external stakeholders more efficiency and effectiveness in the use of their resources for the generation of civil and community impacts, in particular the identification of opportunities, the matching up of HEI and community needs and resources, and co-ordination of activity within the HEI's departments to provide support network and facilitate shared resources and

complementary activities. This unit also provides a point of contact for community groups and for academics and students requiring support, seeking or suggesting public engagement opportunities.

### *Increased institutional oversight*

4.2.3     Connected to and facilitated by central administration is the increased institutional understanding and oversight of the formal and informal activities of their HEIs' members and departments. It is of intrinsic benefit for HEIs to be able to demonstrate the extent and variety of the civic and community impacts which they generate. For example, this enables HEIs to raise their profile and reputation for relevant core activities and meaningful community engagement, and increasing public awareness of the benefits of HEIs to society. The process of achieving this oversight is both bottom-up, where HEI leadership recognises and harnesses the potential of current engagement activities, and top-down, where leadership introduces key aims, measurement guidelines and performance indicators for use across the institution.

4.2.4     HEIs are generally making efforts to roll out the formal and aligned engagement strategies, although this process is a complex and challenging one. In essence this can be summarised as the tension between two contradictory needs. First is the need for community engagement activities to be flexible, responsive and relevant to the needs of the community and of the HE partner, whether this is on an institutional, faculty, group or individual level. This demand requires that issues such as desired results, implementation methods and performance indicators are determined according to the individual activity or programme. The second need is for HEIs and communities to be able to collate, measure and compare the activity of individuals, groups and institutions in terms of type, impact, scale and effectiveness. This demand requires that there be some level of consensus on the definitions of success, performance indicators and aims.

### *Devolved and accountable leaders*

4.2.5     In order for these two conflicting demands to managed in tension with one another, it is important that effective organisational structures are in place to assist those with management positions in Colleges, Faculties and Departments. It is these managers who, besides negotiating for limited resources, are responsible for the co-ordination of devolved engagement activity, balancing the need for engagement to be relevant, flexible and tailored to specific internal or external need with the increasing pressure to demonstrate success in areas identified in the HEI strategy and in a manner which allows for HEI oversight.

### *Channels of communication*

4.2.6     In order for HEIs to responsively co-ordinate the generation of civic and community impacts, there must be open and receptive channels of communication between HEIs and their communities. This level of communication is facilitated by the implementation of a centralised administration for community engagement. As HEIs

come to further understand the scale and variety of their engagement activities and the opportunities they present, they will be increasingly able to identify specific areas in which dialogue with the wider community is of particular benefit. Interview and case study evidence has shown that HEIs do encourage feedback from the community, but that this encouragement is not always explicit enough, and community groups often do not have a natural sense of ownership or entitlement to the knowledge, rewards and privileges attached to higher education. Because they do not feel higher education to be relevant to them, they do not feel that their opinions on higher education and its community impacts would be welcomed or considered relevant by HEIs. They therefore have to work proactively in order to encourage communities to vocalise their needs and expectations and their assessment of HEIs' engagement activities and the impacts they generate.

## *Resources*

4.2.7    The organisation and co-ordination of engagement activities and the assessment of their civic and community impacts demand considerable resources. This includes staff and student time and funding for overheads in addition to that required for the activity itself.   It also frequently relies upon the less tangible human resources of goodwill and enthusiasm. Interview evidence has suggested that there are three major potential challenges perceived by academics:

- There is concern that the reduction of core funding in a time of financial hardship will (a) exacerbate constraints on the allocation of resources to public engagement and the effective administration of it; and (b) will diminish the time and goodwill available for these activities as more time and energy is required to identify and bid to increasingly competitive sources of funding.

- There is concern that as HEIs are encouraged to measure and monitor their civic and community impacts and the engagement activities which generate these, those groups and individuals who already engage with the community will be burdened with increasing administrative duties, which will detract from their engagement activities and act as a disincentive from involvement in them.

# 5      Conclusions: the Future of Public and Community Engagement

## 5.1      Introduction

5.1.1      This final section concludes by exploring the future of public engagement, drawing on the views of key stakeholders in the English Higher Education sector and the case studies undertaken for this working paper.  It looks both at where public engagement can confidently build on existing strengths and where improvements may be necessary.

## 5.2      Building on the Existing Strengths of Public Engagement

5.2.1      It is clear from the case study evidence that HEIs have substantial engagement with the communities, both local and beyond.  It is also believed that these interactions have the potential to generate a very high level of impact on their target groups. Much of this impact is thought to be closely allied to core research and teaching activities or to the provision of, for example, resources, facilities and extra-curricular activities by HEIs for their own staff and students, both of which have secondary impact on the community. The significance of these impacts should not be overlooked, even though civic and community benefits are not amongst their primary aims.

5.2.2      The area in which HEIs have demonstrated the highest levels of direct community engagement activity is through the formal dissemination of research and learning and an increased emphasis on the relevance and availability of specialist knowledge to the non-specialist.   An example of this occurring is the Beacons for Public Engagement. The majority of formal and co-ordinated community activities are educational in nature, showing that HEIs are using their primary roles and expertise as education providers to help inform and raise educational standards and to further intellectual interest and understanding amongst wider audiences. HEIs and their members are also very active in charitable engagement, and, while the extent of this collective activity is difficult to assess accurately, the individual and group engagement of students and staff directly with the community in areas of need is very significant.

5.2.3      HEIs appear to be 'playing to their strengths' when positioning themselves with the community and other HE institutions. This flexible case-by-case approach encourages engagement activity to be integrated with core activities and for HEIs to build on strong areas of previous and current engagement. This flexibility should also allow HEIs to meet the needs of their particular communities as appropriate, although evidence has shown that the types and terms of formal community engagement activity is overwhelmingly HEI-driven, which limits the potential civic and community impacts of such activity. HEIs have extended the complementarity of their individual roles into their engagement strategies and activities in order that, in a somewhat crowded field, the programmes of different HEIs enhance and support, rather than

compete with, each other. There is generally some co-ordinated interaction between HEIs, when close geographically or of the same level of research intensity, and these links provide communication channels and shared organisational systems which can be strengthened over time.

5.2.4    Interview and case study evidence shows that in HEIs with public engagement strategies, attitudes from the HEI leadership and community engagement co-ordinators are overwhelmingly positive, with regard to their past experiences, the present level of impacts generated, and the growth and increased co-ordination of these in the future. In all cases the recognised significance of community engagement was perceived to be growing, with greater emphasis being gradually placed on the co-ordination and organisation of activity. Awareness both within and outside HEIs of engagement opportunities is increasing.

5.2.5    Many HEIs are individually making attempts to gather and measure information about their civic and community impacts, which demonstrates a direct interest in their effect, and encourages accountability and the identification of key performance indicators. This process might typically involve questionnaires following talks or open days and statistical information on the numbers and demographic of community participants. Long-term impacts such as widened participation or raised education levels are common aims but causal links are difficult to show and impact is therefore often deduced from the success, in terms of attendance and feedback, of individual activities designed to have these impacts ultimately. There is not yet a consensus regarding the KPIs of civic and community impact generation, and indicators of success are often drawn up by individual departments and programme co-ordinators on a case-by-case basis. Despite this, the presence of these measures is positive overall.

## 5.3    Areas for Improving Public Engagement in the Higher Education System

5.3.1    This report has identified a number of means through which HEIs' civic and community interactions could be improved and facilitated.

5.3.2    HEIs' civic and community impacts would be more highly prioritised, and their aims regarding community engagement as a significant part of the role made internally and externally clearer, if the number of HEIs who have a well developed and inclusive strategic plan was increased from 15.5% This would ideally include the use of targets to set and monitor achievement, and the implementation of centrally agreed units and recommendations.

5.3.3    More institutions would likely benefit, as part of this prioritisation process, from identifying and empowering a central administrative unit for the co-ordination of their community engagement activity, driving the HEI's specific aims, improving the use of resources, and gathering and disseminating information on activity. This unit would

also provide a point of contact for internal or community enquiries, and therefore for the facilitation and identification of opportunities.

5.3.4    The further collaboration of HEIs would potentially lead to an increased understanding of the collective and overlapping civic and community impacts generated by different types of institutions. Collaboration would lead to shared understanding and best practice between HEIs and to more consensus regarding definitions of public engagement, its impacts and performance indicators. A shift away from the current 'organic' form of complementarity towards a more deliberate and considered collaborative and comparative approach could potentially allow for more informed and resourceful impact generation in shared communities.

5.3.5    The provision of community based leisure activities and access to facilities is indicated as very low. HEIs manage considerable physical and technical facilities for the use of their own members. Often these buildings are highly visible within the community, and inaccessibility would frequently and strongly reinforce negative perceptions of HEIs as privileged and elitist and closed off from or irrelevant to the public. It is not unusual for HEIs to provide better facilities for their members than those available to the public in the local community. The use of HEI facilities is likely to drop off substantially during vacation periods, and this might present an opportunity for spaces and resources to be made available more widely to the public.

5.3.6    This report has found that a major barrier to the generation of civic and community impacts by HEIs is low levels of formal incentivisation and reward for staff and students who participate in community engagement. It many cases it is clear that the expectations of and rewards for engagement activities are not significant enough to outweigh pressures of time and funding. Academics most regularly participate in engagement when this forms a necessary or useful part of their own core activities, or when they voluntarily wish to do so as a moral or social duty and/or a leisure activity. These groups are likely to continue to generate civic and social impacts, but participation is unlikely to increase until HEIs are able to further incentivise their staff and facilitate engagement activity.

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