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MAKING OF A CITY REGION

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TRANSFORM

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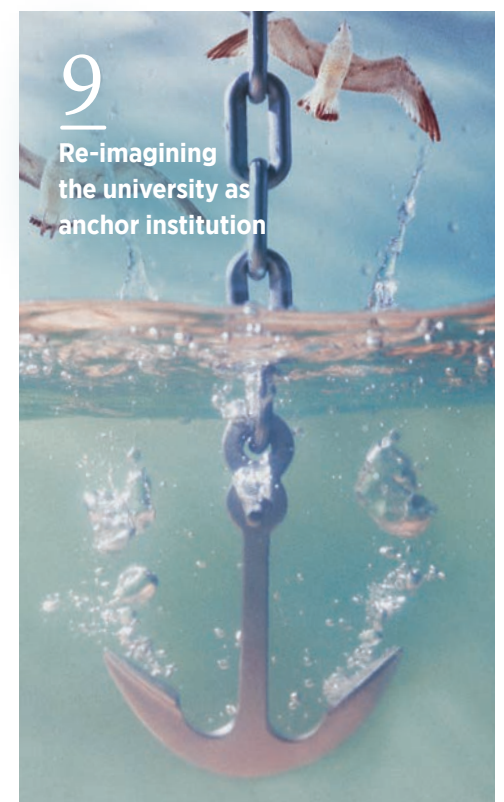
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| EDITORIAL

THE UNIVERSITY'S SOCIAL AND CIVIC ROLE: A WAY FORWARD FOR AN ENGAGED UNIVERSITY?

PROFESSOR JIM NYLAND – EDITOR



The range, scope and reach of this edition is remarkable and the journal is hopefully evolving into a compendium and rich resource

for those whose concerns lie in the burgeoning field of 'university engagement.' We are laying down markers here for contemporary workers in the fields of learning, teaching and research and creating an intellectual resource for all of those who want to take forward the critical examination of higher

learning and scholarship in a world in which knowledge is exploding into availability. We are also making a mark for the future as we are forced to examine the deeply embedded assumptions and values of universities.

The range of themes in this issue has an incipient focus and underlying thread of argument. It concerns the emerging global world in which universities are expected to understand the role of culture in civic and democratic life and to extend this to all those who seek to benefit from it. As Bell points out in this, her third article in a triptych for Transform, in re-shaping the university as an 'anchor' institution, we both reflect and create our culture under conditions of conflict and contestation. Global demands mean managing the interaction and relations between industry, governments and learning institutions themselves - in a competitive economy that no single person or institution controls. If universities are the industry of today they are still contested places and spaces. In themselves as it were, sui-generis, universities are not solutions. Bell highlights the importance of 'place' as universities play an increasingly crucial role in shaping cities and regions in a climate of 'toxicity'. Of course geography and location can play a decisive and formative role in just how civic a university can be and universities have come to be decisive shapers of local, regional and national cultures and economies and have developed a responsive diversity in many cases.

Calma reminds us that after 169 years of the birth of Australia's higher education sector, there is still unfinished business for universities to 'decolonise' our education



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system and create a sense of place and space that truly reflects our nation's First Peoples historical and cultural perspectives. He challenges us to re-imagine a world where every Australian university student benefits from the expertise and ingenuity of the world's oldest living cultures. Similarly, Ewen's piece asserts how we must reframe our understanding of civic engagement between universities and Indigenous peoples if we are to 'learn all they have to teach us,' describing the University of Melbourne's 'adapting academy' as a useful case study that reflects the rich mix of tradition and a resilient and vibrant living culture. There are many ways for universities to respond to this challenge for future civic and democratic engagement and our next edition, themed *Australia's First Peoples*, will address the need to place First People's homeland, language and culture centrally at the heart of the educational experience.

Some of the related problems and contested arenas are indicated in the article by Harkavy and Bergan who explain in detail the democratic mission of universities and assert that democracy requires the participation of its citizens. They argue for the relevance of 'multi-perspectivity' and for tolerance in which universities are practitioners of engagement and freedom as well as just espousing their virtues and values. Without action and agency it seems clear that intended outcomes can be at risk especially in an era where national populism stalks the corridors of power in democratic parliaments. The practice of democracy must start at the level of the individual who is a 'self', with consciousness and agency, no-matter how constraining the social conditions in which we live. It is one of the functions of a university in a democratic society to uphold such a stance as a foundation stone of social justice.

Professor Richard Teare appears in the journal to argue the case for his vision of a Global University for Lifelong Learning for those who truly need access to higher learning. The poor, the dispossessed and the excluded have been the focus of his globally focused yet locally delivered outreach. In such a pioneering and inspirational approach we can see the lineaments of learning and education as a lived form of social justice. And it is a model which brings into concordance the building of viable communities and the power of the internet to deliver access to knowledge and information. Perhaps it is a model for us all to consider as we seek to translate our thinking into practical outcomes? If it shows us what is possible on a slim resource base, how might the mighty global university knowledge factories deliver a truly democratic outcome to transform lives amongst the most needy?

Engaging with democracy is the next big idea for modern civic universities and the cornerstone for the making of city regions. Two major developments that seek to address this engagement agenda through internationally accepted metrics are reported on in this issue. Professor Mathew Johnson, Executive Director of the Swearer Center from Brown University based in Providence, Rhode Island, recently visited Australia to meet with the 10 universities participating in the Australian pilot of the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement. Johnson provides background to this major global project that is currently underway in his article focusing on the internationalisation of the Carnegie Community Classification system and Firth updates us on Australia's progress on this pilot program.

The second major project taking place concerns the development of global rankings for engagement. Wells reports on

the global engagement rankings project that is underway and is being led by three universities across three continents – King's College London, University of Chicago and University of Melbourne. Their work addresses how change could be supported across the global sector to begin to communicate a new story about university value - based on new and critical measures of civic engagement in global rankings.

If the university's role in civic society is one of critique and renewal through engagement then it must be engaged in the current issues and disputations of the day. Our civic culture is increasingly based on communication and information and this new world of informational and surveillance existence requires diversity and consensus and vigilance; it requires a culture of change which is moderated and understood by those who benefit and those who suffer because of it. Currently there is much evidence to show the obverse of this. Harkavy and Bergan argue that we are living in times when democracy is flawed and weakened by the collapse of trust in our political processes and institutions. Many people no longer believe they can influence the social and political decisions made on their behalf; many are becoming less supportive of governance. The lack of trust and faith in civic institutions and life is rooted not only in those who have suffered marginalisation from the mainstream such as the First Peoples as highlighted by Calma and Ewen. We cannot, for example, afford to ignore the disputatious argument that rising ethnic diversity may in the long run reduce trust and solidarity amongst a majority of citizens if it is not addressed and confronted in ways which win consent. We cannot assume that multi-culturalism can unproblematically and automatically win the support of all the people in a community. We must take seriously the

point that people who live in more diverse neighbourhoods or who lack interaction with different social and ethnic/cultural groups may withdraw from civic life and become less trusting of others. This would of course weaken further the civic culture we are seeking to enhance.

Our view is that there are key themes and issues that need the academy to be a genuine forum for debate and dispute and to engage with the wider world. Universities must therefore incorporate an active dimension to their missions and strategies. The elements of this approach are we suggest: the re-shaping of the role of public educator so that public knowledge fits the emerging concerns as part of the mainstream university curriculum; the adoption of critical thinking strategies and programs for all learners so that genuine knowledge can be created in

practice; knowledge skills and what counts as knowledge itself needs to be revised especially in respect of marginalised and alienated communities; attentionality, reflection and awareness need to be placed more centrally in the learning experience of students and applied to the changing and threatening world of digital and surveillance capitalism; and we need to 'do' critical thinking and dialogue which transforms both what we study and the way we study. The object of learning which is the world out there as well as the internal and imaginative life of individuals and groups, and the learner as a thinking subject need to be brought into conjunction. It is in the relation of both object and subject of study that our claim to critical thinking and understanding lies. The university as an open forum for debate and discourse has always to be re-constructed. Knowing the

world is an achievement but changing it and demonstrating a capacity to engage is the real question to be asked. Knowing the real world cannot be done entirely within the university and neither should it. It has to be done by engagement.

Though this edition has a wide ranging thematic focus, it is by no means fully comprehensive. Our future editions will, we anticipate, explore the great challenges of change alluded to in this edition but which still await fuller and detailed treatment.

Social justice, race and ethnicity, the impending crisis of planetary climate change and the role of universities in respect of the Australian Indigenous people and the evolving national culture are all thematically relevant to our key purposes - the use of learning for an improved and democratic result and for a fully engaged university.



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| LEAD ARTICLE

RE-IMAGINING THE UNIVERSITY AS ANCHOR INSTITUTION

PROFESSOR SHARON BELL



This article is the third in a triptych for Transform exploring the nature of

university engagement in our times – times when we can no longer take for granted our communities' continuing trust, or assume public confidence and unquestioning acceptance

of the role of universities in the search for truth and transfer of knowledge.

The first article in the series explored the impact of the stratification and commodification of higher education and the ramifications of our intertwining with, and mirroring of, an economic system. The second contribution explored the challenge of whether, when we are increasingly aligned with the generation of economic capital, we can continue to aspire to be aligned with the generation of cultural and social capital as an engaged and sustainable sector with a critical civic role. The analysis highlighted the imperative to generate our own authentic narratives of the university of the future emphasising the evidence of our adaptive organisational capacity.

The focus of this third article is on place – specifically the city-region contexts in which universities play an increasingly important role as they actively shape the urban landscape and environment. At a time when the city has become a unique and beneficial environment for higher education, as 'anchor' institutions, our role arguably extends beyond the traditional role of anchor institutions, that of 'mooring' individuals and communities. Focus on place also serves to remind us that our narratives are not just articulated through the words, or increasingly tag lines, we employ to describe ourselves, but through the ways in which we occupy, design and refashion space and how we engage in dynamic relationship with our communities.

The triptych began with the observation that Oxford Dictionaries had declared

‘post-truth’ to be its 2016 word of the year, as did the *Gesellschaft für deutsche Sprache*¹. Two years later the 2018 word of the year is ‘toxic’. Oxford Dictionaries data shows that, along with a 45 per cent rise in the number of times ‘toxic’ has been looked up on oxforddictionaries.com, over 2018 this word was used in a wide array of contexts, with the scope of its application underpinning its current prominence in the English lexicon. If we accept that the Oxford Word of the Year reflects the ‘ethos, mood, or preoccupations of the passing year, and has lasting potential as a term of cultural significance’ for the English-speaking world, ‘toxic’ should cause us as educators and researchers to pause and reflect. It was previously proposed that we need to re-imagine university engagement in a post-truth world. Do we now need to re-imagine the role of universities in a ‘toxic’ world?

To focus this challenge, the top ‘toxic’ collocates for the year, words that are habitually used with ‘toxic’, provide a clear indication of what really matters. In this case the evidence is that our pre-occupation is with the environment (chemical, substance, gas, waste, algae, air)². Reinforcing the prominence of the environment in our collective experience and psyche *Gesellschaft für deutsche Sprache Wort Des Jahres 2018* was ‘*Heißzeit*’ literally ‘hot-time or heat-age’, phonologically analogous to ‘Eiszeit’ (ice age), evocative of an epoch of climate change³ Latour’s (2017) New Climatic Regime.

As Birch et al observe (2013:7-9), urbanism of the 21st century has become species defining, with more people now living in urban rather than rural settlements.

These expansive urban settlements⁴ are dramatically changing the environment in which the majority of the human species live and the nature of the institutions that define their communities:

Although market institutions and the corporate and productive capacities they offer are certainly central to the modern development of place, non-market, place based institutions are also key “anchors” of place for by their practices, they “root” or otherwise “moor” the people of the urban in place (2013:8).

Goddard (2018:356) observes that ‘anchor’ institutions might be characterised as not just *in* the place but *of* the place’ [emphasis added]. He deploys the U.K Work Foundation definition of ‘anchor’ institutions which importantly distinguishes such institutions from government, or agencies of government:

...large, locally embedded institutions, typically non-governmental public sector, cultural or other civic institutions that are of significant importance to the economy and the wider community life of the cities in which they are based. They generate positive externalities and

¹ Bell, S (2017) “University Engagement in a Post-Truth World”, Transform: The Journal of Engaged Scholarship, Vol1. No1, <http://www.engagementaustralia.org.au/transform.html>

² <https://languages.oup.com/word-of-the-year/word-of-the-year-2018>

³ <https://gfds.de/wort-des-jahres-2018/>

⁴ Critical urban researchers have shifted their gaze to outside the global core zones of capitalism to rapidly growing metropolitan centres based on new forms of industrialization (Calthorpe, 2011).





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relationships that can support or “anchor” wider economic activity in the locality. Anchor institutions do not have a democratic mandate and their primary missions do not involve regeneration or local economic development. Nonetheless their scale, local rootedness and community links are such that they can play a key role in local development and economic growth representing the ‘sticky capital’ around which economic growth strategies can be built. (The Work Foundation, 2010:3)

The pre-dominance of the urban setting is reflected in the purposive practices of universities as ‘anchor’ institutions: institutions that are spatially and philosophically embedded in place i.e. of place⁵; characterised by a high degree of stability and longevity, scale and influence; yet fluid and dynamic; and simultaneously globally networked. Universities as ‘anchors’ epitomise the spatial logic of distinguished urbanist Castells (1996) – the ‘space of places’ and the ‘space of flows’.

In a variation on this theme, Sharon Haar (2010: xxx) in her analysis of Chicago ‘city as campus’⁶ argues that urban campuses cannot be understood as entities separate from their host cities, and the city, once anathema to the American ideal of higher education, is now acknowledged to be an extraordinarily beneficial environment for contemporary higher education:

The conditions of the late-nineteenth-century industrialization established the ground for the urban university. This is not to say

that universities (although they were typically colleges at that time) did not previously exist in cities. But in the late nineteenth century what we have come to know as American higher education and the American city began to solidify around progressive ideas of citizenship, the need to educate a growing and urbanizing population in an industrializing nation, the need to train professionals and managers for the industrial economy, and the need to build institutions around modern scientific and scholarly research (2010: xiv-xv).

It is important to note that the Brookings Institution, particularly post the global financial crisis, has been very influential in framing the urban focus of this agenda. In addition to a raft of previous urban research⁷ in 2008 Brookings launched a metropolitan-centric view of prosperity *Unleashing the Potential of a Metropolitan Nation*, an ambitious, multi-year initiative to build long-term US prosperity by reinvigorating the federal role in promoting the health and vitality of America's metropolitan areas. This, together with the long-standing coupling of higher education with civic purpose and participatory democracy in the United States, is undoubtedly one factor in the apparent American dominance of the recent literature on the city-region and higher education. Working from a different axis of knowledge, Heffernan et al (2018: 1-2) note that the earliest geographical research on universities was contemporaneous with the 1950s and 60s expansion of higher education across the globe, with significant contributions by European as well as American scholars, and analysis that

extended beyond the Western world.

Glyn Davis asserts that the professionally focused, metropolitan environment shaped the formation of the Australian university in the mid-19th century, with a focus on professional education to meet the needs of the time:

This is a *metropolitan* model of a university, an institution of the city rather than a separate residential community. Metropolitan implies an urban setting, as opposed to a small and self-enclosed community set apart from the world. Like a city office block, a metropolitan university is a place people inhabit during the day, not a dwelling or a metaphysical ideal. It is a pragmatic and utilitarian understanding, fitting for a nation of practical people (2017:10).

Den Heijer and Curvelo Magdaniel (2018) see innovation, and the concomitant attraction of talented students and highly skilled workers, as a defining factor in city-university partnerships, and a common goal of municipalities and universities in the knowledge economy:

However, the simple presence of universities and their human capital is not enough to stimulate innovation and create wealth in cities. There are challenges for cities in exploiting and managing the provision of human capital as economic assets. Accordingly, managing the interaction between universities, industry and governments is considered the essence of remaining competitive in the knowledge economy (2018: 440).

Not least of these challenges might be that students and staff of universities

do not see themselves as 'economic assets' to be exploited, nor their role within their city as primarily that of wealth creation.

Echoing the late Sir David Watson, who reminded us that the modern university is expected to be many contradictory things simultaneously (2007: 362-63), Haar emphasises that universities are predicated on the intersection of the past and the future as 'symbols of future overcoming, of knowledge facing the unknown' (2010: xxiv). The attendant responsibility for universities is to enact complex and contradictory roles for multiple constituencies, including institutional funders and founders, past, present and future students and their parents, all the while embracing the imperative to accommodate changing cultural, disciplinary and intellectual discourses (2010: xvii).

These emergent discourses are unlikely to align with the values and expectations of all constituencies, and may position students in particular in contested spaces with family members and their communities, and university representatives and leaders in contested spaces with community priorities and local leaders. The campus, the urban space, the university and its diverse communities are thus in constant negotiation – the strenuous, thoughtful and argumentative interaction identified by the Association of Commonwealth Universities as defining university engagement at the turn of the century (Bjarnason & Coldstream 2003: i).

THE CITY AS CAMPUS

Although the relationship between the city and the university can be traced

to the 19th century, with antecedents in medieval institutions (Bender 1988), the role of the university in the city-region has arguably undergone dramatic transformation with the growth of the knowledge economy. Urban universities are now playing critical roles in shaping their context and social relations, not as discrete scholarly communities but as cosmopolitan communities activating new city centres and new forms of engagement in physical and virtual space (Haaretz, 2010). In parallel, the concept of a co-production model of innovation in which ‘... government, industry, academia and civil participants work together to co-create the future and drive structural changes far beyond the scope of what any one organization or person could do alone’⁸ fundamentally redefines understanding of the innovation process and universities’ role within this.

Large projects involving campus expansion and the development of specialist health and medical research precincts⁹ are designed to meet university needs, but are also contiguous with city planning, the needs of communities, the growth patterns of urban neighbourhoods, transport infrastructure and public amenity. Campuses are increasingly porous, with opportunities for co-location of commercial, public sector and not-for-profit partners factored in from the design stage. Collaboration with a range of service providers is no longer an afterthought in campus and precinct design but an integral component of realising the dynamics of new forms of interaction, exchange and innovation. Metropolitan universities help define and sustain the economies of their city-regions and, importantly, they are seen as enduring institutions.

This is arguably a long way from the established manifesto of universities engaged in urban revitalisation and social transformation, such as that historically championed by the Centre for Community Partnerships at the University of Pennsylvania and more recently articulated in the 2007 manifesto *Dewey’s Dream*¹⁰.

As others have noted¹¹, the very nature of the knowledge economy demands new forms of engagement on the part of universities. City-regions now have a symbiotic relationship with universities, who are not only knowledge brokers but also produce ‘knowledge workers’, as observed in a pointed, if crudely instrumentalist fashion, by Robert Campbell and echoed earlier in this paper:

In a way, universities are the industries of today. They’ve replaced the manufacturing that has almost disappeared from US cities. A university imports raw material in the form of 18-year-old minds and bodies, processes that material, and four years later ejects a finished product that is ready for the market. Education is today’s equivalent of the production line. It’s an economic boon to any city (cited Haar, 2010: 149).

As Haar observes, cities are willing to take the risk of the expansion and expanding influence of universities to capitalise on their potential to realise urban development and economic growth (2010: 150).

When Michael Gibbons outlined how he saw university engagement evolving in the knowledge economy of the 21st century he noted that such engagement in the ‘agora’ will not be without tension (Gibbons 1997). The central role of

universities in the knowledge economy and broader participation of universities in the creation of new, or renewed metropolitan environments and city-regions, often involving the expansion of campuses or creation of new campuses and precincts, is indeed not without the potential for conflict. Haar astutely observes that the potential for conflict is not confined to the well-documented cases (Cantor and Englot, 2016) of physical campus expansion and neighbourhood ‘revitalisation’:

The expansion of these relationships leads to an intersection of the needs and the goals of both the city and

⁵ A relationship often mandated through their foundation legislation.

⁶ A theme recently explored in the Chronicle of Higher Education summary report (2019) *The Campus as City*.

⁷ <https://www.brookings.edu/topic/cities-regions/>

⁸ The European Commission’s rubric of the ‘Quadruple Helix Model’ (European Commission, 2015) which extends the ‘triple helix’ model inclusive of civil society.

⁹ Harkavy and Zuckerman’s ‘eds and meds’ (1999).

¹⁰ The ‘manifesto’ that the University of Pennsylvania collaborators Puckett, Harkavy and Benson propose is essentially that, following John Dewey (1859-1952) community schools through their capacity to generate cohesive ‘organic communities’, are the most appropriate and powerful organisations to realise participatory democracy (2007:44). Their project, based on Dewey’s early seminal work on education and pedagogy, extends his paradigm through the ‘third’ educational revolution – community school partnerships with higher education institutions to realise the civic, democratising role of the university (2007:79).

¹¹ Kezar and Lester (2009); Pinheiro et al (2015); Holley and Harris (2016); Harris (2019).

the academy “on the ground” (in neighbourhoods and communities) and within a “global network” (the space of exchange of goods, services, knowledge, information, an international elite and large migrating groups). As with all intersections some result in expanded opportunities for all involved, and others lead to further conflict (Haar:151).

Universities may well define their role as in the vanguard of the knowledge economy, sometimes with what may be interpreted as smug confidence, whilst failing to exercise mindfulness and consideration of the displacement of those without formal education or the habit, and capacity to engage in the continuous learning that economy demands (Drucker, 1994:6). This is especially pertinent in large urban conurbations and their peri-urban regions where deep pockets of historic, intergenerational educational and economic disadvantage are characteristic.

As Goddard (2018: 358) observes, universities cannot avoid the inequalities present in most large cities where they are located, not least because of the element of self-interest – the likely impact of inequality on attracting students and staff from elsewhere, but also due to the overriding imperative of the public good institution to contribute to social well-being. He notes that the local dimension of institutions that frame their missions as ‘public good’, is particularly important when such institutions are publicly funded and governments are accountable to their electorates. Universities are internationally networked institutions but people’s experience and their perspectives are strongly framed by the local, in

both territorial and cultural terms. As cosmopolitan institutions, universities in urban locations often reflect, or aim to reflect¹², the cosmopolitan nature of their locality.

The intersections of the global-local knowledge and political economies mean that the role of place and that of dynamic, place based institutions, such as universities, takes on new importance in defining urban development and change in city-regions, but may also generate significant competing imperatives, and confusion regarding the role of the university. Michael Harris (2019), in a case study of a downtown American university aspiring to research excellence, examines how the university’s research activities are perceived by the local community, provocatively exposing ‘the soft underbelly’ of universities as anchor institutions. The study reveals the lack of consensus in the community around the role of the university, and tensions between local relevance and global excellence:

In order for the university to thrive as an anchor, the university must not only perform within the norms and metrics of higher education, but also fulfil the expanded local responsibilities of an anchor institution. Yet, the expectations of academe and the city may well push the institution as well as individual faculty in competing if not contradictory directions...there was no countervailing narrative or culture to push faculty or administrators toward engagement and against traditional academic notions of research and productivity (2019:14).

THE ANCHOR INSTITUTION IN A TOXIC WORLD

The urban nature of the human species, not just in the central city, but in the suburbs, the hybrid landscapes of peri-urban growth corridors and in the increasingly ubiquitous city-regions, has demanded and generated change in our ‘ways of being’ as institutions of higher education and as ‘anchor’ institutions in the knowledge economy.

As the discussion above indicates, there are underlying risks to the positive, activist and often entrepreneurial role of universities in expanding city-regions: that their very success and spatial expansion displaces communities, especially disadvantaged communities and workers who may be excluded from ‘lifelong-learning’; that their complex and contradictory roles obfuscate their overarching mission – their public good role; that in the milieu of the expanding metropolis, universities see themselves as others do – an ‘asset class’¹³ of intellectual capital, human capital, resources and infrastructure to be leveraged or ‘exploited’; that their institutional wealth, relative to their surrounding communities, generates blindness or insensitivity to inequality and

¹² See for example Rutgers Newark Strategic Plan http://www.newark.rutgers.edu/sites/default/files/run_strategic_plan_-final.pdf

¹³ Or ‘value chain’ as in Ernst & Young’s Ernst & Young (2018) Can the universities of today lead learning for tomorrow?: The University of the Future

¹⁴ <https://talloiresnetwork.tufts.edu/wp-content/uploads/Talloires-Network-JHEOE.pdf>

¹⁵ <https://www.brown.edu/swearer/carnegie>

¹⁶ https://www.timeshighereducation.com/rankings/impact/2019/overall#!/page/0/length/25/sort_by/rank/sort_order/asc/cols/undefined

the responsibility to contribute to redressing disadvantage; and that, as globally networked institutions whose status is now measured and promulgated globally rather than through local knowledge and experience, sense of *place* is lost or rendered insignificant as the university transcends its geographic location.

Judging from our communities' preoccupations however, there is one overarching risk for universities as anchor institutions: that we fail to model the actions, priorities and strategies to ensure that sustainability, particularly environmental sustainability, defines our ways of being and ways of creating and re-creating the metropolis. As institutions with expansive research and scientific expertise we cannot afford to be seen to be contributing to the 'toxic' environment, literally through our development and management practices, or metaphorically through failure to

support and prosecute the importance of the relevant scientific and social research for which we are responsible. 'Public good' for universities must now be defined to include the creation, maintenance and transfer of sustainable 'ways of being'.

Cause for optimism that universities are taking this imperative seriously comes in many forms. The Talloires Network¹⁴

has recognised, since 2005, the capacity for universities to mobilise their human and intellectual resources to address community problems—combating poverty, improving public health, promoting environmental sustainability and enhancing the quality of life. The Carnegie Classification of colleges and universities, which has been in operation since 1970, now includes a classification for community engagement¹⁵ to recognise collaboration

between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity.

But perhaps the most significant incentive for purposeful engagement of universities comes in the form of the world's first university impact ranking, published by *Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings*¹⁶ based on universities' contribution to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The ranking

offers new insights on universities' work towards climate action and sustainable cities and communities, poverty and gender equality. The UN's Sustainable Development Goals were developed and agreed to by 194 nation states, providing an internationally recognised framework for achieving sustainable development. They are valuable to universities because

they enable universities to frame priorities in a way that enables their contributions to address the interlinked local and global challenges of poverty, inequality, health, resource consumption and production, and climate change and for this commitment to be formally recognised. This particular manifestation of the globally engaged anchor institution is one that may well refine our understanding of what it means to be 'anchor institutions' in a 'toxic' world.

Professor Sharon Bell is an academic leader with over 25 years of leadership experience in the Australian higher education sector. She is currently Deputy Vice Chancellor Strategy and Planning at Western Sydney University and an Honorary Professor at the Australian National University. She is also an Emeritus Professor at the University of Wollongong.

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| VIEWPOINT

SHIFTING PERSPECTIVES IN OUR UNIVERSITIES

PROFESSOR TOM CALMA AO



When Malera/Bandjalung woman Margaret Williams-Weir walked into the sandstone quadrangle of Queensland University in 1957, she made history as the first

Aboriginal person to be accepted into an Australian institution of higher education. Imagine that. It had taken more than a century from the time Australia's first university, the University of

Sydney, had opened its doors in 1850 for a First Nations person to be permitted to take advantage of the opportunities afforded by tertiary qualifications.

It was also an important first step on the transition to an Australian education system that honours and benefits from the unique expertise of Australia's First Nations peoples.

The late Dr Williams-Weir ultimately completed a doctorate entitled *Indigenous Australians and Universities: A Study of Postgraduate Students' Experiences in Learning Research* at the University of New England. Today, First Nations people are found in every professional cohort in Australia.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander astrophysicists, health researchers, doctors, dentists, hydrologists, politicians, teachers, engineers, architects and lawyers are living proof of our capacity for hard work and intellectual rigour needed to excel at university. They are all enhancing their field with the unique perspectives of their peoples and cultures.

Like other Australian institutions, our universities have historically been unwelcoming and even hostile to First Nations peoples' higher education aspirations.

The 'colour-bar' which kept Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students out of university has now been replaced with an enthusiastic adoption of reconciliation by most Australian higher education institutions. Today, our universities are actively engaged in recruiting more First Nations students and improving their

experiences when they enrol.

Australian universities have strongly increased Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments in recent years with 70 per cent more enrolled today than in 2008. However, there is still work to be done. While Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people comprise 2.7 per cent of Australia's working age population, they make up just 1.6 per cent of university domestic student enrolments – up from 1.2 per cent a decade ago.

The ongoing challenge for universities can also be seen in the low percentage rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who complete their bachelor degree; in 2006 this stood at only 47.3 per cent compared to 73.9 per cent for other students. While many First Nations students have flourished at university, racism, homesickness, poor secondary educational opportunities, low expectations and financial constraints have all contributed to others either not enrolling or failing to complete their degree.

Individual universities have responded to this challenge with varying degrees of success by implementing internal policies, plans and programs to lift participation and attainment by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. In other words, making the university environment a welcoming one.

As part of their efforts, many have developed Reconciliation Action Plans (RAPs) in conjunction with Reconciliation Australia. University RAPs support universities to create culturally safe and responsive environments to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolment and retention rates. RAPs also aim to increase the knowledge and pride for First Nations cultures and achievements

among all staff and students.

What has been missing until fairly recently is a coherent sector-wide initiative that binds all universities together with common goals.

A strategy launched by the universities' peak body, Universities Australia, is designed to fill that gap. Universities Australia's Indigenous Strategy 2017-2020 intends to 'lift participation and extend our institutional insight and responsiveness'.

The Universities Australia initiatives and Reconciliation Australia's RAPs fit neatly together, one supporting the other.

RAPs challenge universities to acknowledge the fact that too often they preference colonial-based knowledge and pedagogies and ignore Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' perspectives. This is despite ample evidence that inclusion of First Nations' perspectives increases the engagement, and retention, of our students and improves overall educational outcomes.

Such perspectives will also provide non-Indigenous staff and students with a more rounded, comprehensive and truthful curriculum and learning environment. For example, Aboriginal knowledge of ecology and astronomy would greatly enhance these two disciplines if applied.

Our people have been calling for more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander historical and cultural perspectives to be included in the educational curriculum but, 169 years after the birth of Australia's higher education sector, there has been a very slow uptake of 'decolonising' our education system.

Despite this slow start, RAPs and the Universities Australia strategy are having positive impacts on the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

students in the tertiary sector.

Western Australia's Curtin University is a case in point, beginning its 'formal' reconciliation journey in 1998 with the signing of a Statement of Reconciliation and Commitment. Ten years on, it's the first Australian teaching and research institution to develop and implement its own RAP.

The University's latest Elevate RAP contains a raft of initiatives including on-Country visits for staff and students as part of the Indigenous Cultural Capabilities Framework; a Student Internship Program that provides employment at Curtin for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students; and a partnership with the Nowanup community to progress a proposed Nowanup Bush Campus.

The Curtin RAP formalises the embedding of First Nations knowledge and perspectives into its governance structures and teaching and learning activities. The RAP supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers to further develop their capability and impact.

Opportunities for First Nations students in higher education are not just limited to Australia. The Charles Perkins Trust and the Roberta Sykes Foundation both offer scholarships to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to attend the world's most prestigious universities including Oxford, Cambridge and Harvard. Since 2010, the Charlie Perkins Scholarship Trust has supported 19 scholars, on 22 scholarships to Cambridge and Oxford.

The work of these Foundations and of Reconciliation Australia, Universities Australia and individual universities are making a difference – ensuring that the historical exclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander scholars from higher

education is consigned to the past and the full potential of our peoples can be realised.

Imagine a world where all Australian children are respected and offered the absolute best choices in education and future employment; imagine an Australia where every Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child has the right and opportunity to realise her or his dream of excellence.

And imagine every Australian university student benefiting from the expertise and ingenuity of the world's oldest living cultures.

These aspirations are at the heart of the reconciliation process and Australian universities must work harder to meet the targets set by Universities Australia and their individual RAPs.

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| ARTICLE

INTERNATIONALISING THE CARNEGIE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CLASSIFICATION

PROFESSOR MATHEW JOHNSON



DEFINING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The development of university community engagement has

been challenged by overlapping terminology in the US: service learning, community engagement, community based

learning and research, engaged scholarship, etc. Over the last decade, the concept of the “engaged university” has become more common in the US and around the world. Traditional academic approaches to studying social issues do not meet the standard of what defines engagement with communities (Bingle, Hatcher, & Clayton, 2017; Kellogg Commission, 1999; Saltmarsh, Giles, Ward, & Buglione, 2009; Sandmann, 2008; Vogelgesang, Denson, & Jayakumar, 2010).

Since 2006, a clear marker of growing consensus in the US, the Elective Carnegie Community Engagement Classification (CE Classification) of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, has focused on a definition for community engagement that guides many campuses:

“[T]he collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/ state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity... to enrich scholarship, research, and creative activity; enhance curriculum, teaching and learning; prepare educated, engaged citizens; strengthen democratic values and civic responsibility; address critical societal issues; and contribute to the public good.”

This definition reflects the purpose and process of engagement. First the purpose of engagement is to “mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources... to enrich scholarship...curriculum, teaching and learning...prepare citizens...address critical societal issues...” The emphasis here is on a process of exchange that understand both parties to have resources for the joint collaboration rather than one with knowledge and the other with need. Furthermore, as Carnegie is chiefly concerned with improving the core mission of universities, the emphasis is also on research and teaching, knowledge creation and dissemination. Thus, knowledge creation and dissemination are recast as a joint venture between academics and community partners.

Second, community engagement is characterised by norms of “partnership and reciprocity”. The community must be a collaborative partner, at the table defining joint projects, research questions and opportunities, and dissemination strategies (Bingle, Hatcher, & Clayton, 2017; Mitchell, 2013; Saltmarsh, Giles, Ward, & Buglione, 2009; Sandman, 2008; Vogelgesang, Denson, & Jayakumar, 2010). This emphasis is a clear demarcation from more typical forms of scholarship and dissemination that frame the community as laboratory and/or knowledge consumer only. There is a growing recognition of communities as critical partners for knowledge generation and dissemination rather than possessing problems for the academy to solve (Hoy & Johnson, 2013; Peterson, 2009; Saltmarsh, Giles, Ward, Buglione, 2009). Globally, similar challenges around terminology and definitions for community engagement have developed.

THE CLASSIFICATION

The Carnegie Foundation has been committed to the improvement of undergraduate education in the US across its history. Among other contributions, the Foundation developed the Carnegie Classification (Basic Classification) for all two and four-year accredited degree granting institutions to distinguish mission differentiation, degree level, and specialisation. In the early 2000s, the Foundation designed a new “elective” classification for community engagement that gathers data provided by the campus through a process of self-assessment, similar to those done for accreditation. This elective classification process results in a national review of each application, encouraging institutions to improve educational effectiveness. Following a pilot in 2005, the first cycle of classification occurred in 2006, followed by a second round in 2008, then 2010, 2015, and 2020 respectively. To date, 361 US institutions have successfully achieved classification.

The CE Classification is designed to respect the diversity of institutions and to encourage institutions to undertake a process of inquiry, reflection, and self-assessment (Driscoll, 2008). The CE Classification is not a ranking tool. It is a distinction that indicates, for institutions that succeed in being classified, an institution has achieved a high standard of practice in community engagement. To be evaluated for classification, universities undergo a structured process of institutional self-assessment and self-study resulting in an external review by experts in the field. Putting together an application, gathering evidence and reflecting on it, and understanding the areas of strength

and weakness of institutional engagement is a way of improving institutional practice and the benefit most cited by universities. Campuses also seek the CE classification as a way to demonstrate accountability, that the institution is fulfilling its mission to serve the public good.

THE APPLICATION

The application asks for evidence of community engagement practices from across the institution. To set the context for the National Review Panel, campuses

provide a narrative describing both the campus and community context for community engagement. Applicants then gather and report evidence supporting *Foundational Indicators of community engagement, Categories of Community Engagement, Community Engagement and other Institutional Initiatives, Professional Activity and Scholarship, and Outreach and Partnerships.*

Foundational Indicators, are “foundational” to institutional community engagement and include institutional identity and

culture, mission and vision, recognition, institutional level assessment and data, marketing materials, and community engagement as a leadership priority. *Categories of Community Engagement includes both Curricular Engagement and Co-Curricular Engagement. Curricular Engagement is:* “the teaching, learning and scholarship that engages faculty, students and community in mutually beneficial and respectful collaboration. Their interactions address community identified needs, deepen students’ civic and academic



The community must be a collaborative partner, at the table defining joint projects, research questions and opportunities, and dissemination strategies.



learning, enhance community well-being, and enrich the scholarship of the institution.” *Co-Curricular Engagement* is “structured learning that happens outside the formal academic curriculum through trainings, workshops and experiential learning opportunities. Co-Curricular Engagement requires structured reflection and connection to academic knowledge in the context of reciprocal, asset-based community partnerships.”

Professional Activity and Scholarship asks for evidence of faculty scholarship as it pertains to scholarship about their community engaged teaching, and collaborative, co-created - with community partners - research. *Community Engagement and other Institutional Initiatives* asks for evidence of community engagement as an integrated strategy for other institutional goals, programs, and priorities like diversity and inclusion goals and student retention and success.

Outreach and Partnerships asks for evidence of both consistent with the classification definition of community engagement. Some community engaged institutions have been intentional about reframing their outreach programs and functions into a community engagement framework. Institutions can report evidence of outreach they had shifted into the community engagement framework. Campuses are asked to provide partnership examples that are representative of the range of forms and topical foci of partnerships across a sampling of disciplines and units.

The goal of the CE Classification is to encourage change on campuses that would improve teaching and learning, and advance mission fulfillment of the public

purpose of higher education (McCormick & Zhao, 52). The CE Classification allows campuses to claim an institutional identity as community engaged through a classification that is based on “the best practices that have been identified nationally” (Driscoll, 40). Creating a community engaged institutional identity can create change in campus culture, structures, and practices across an institution.

INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

Eckel, Hill, and Green’s (1998) study of 26 diverse colleges and universities focused on “transformational change” (3). “Transformation” assumed “that college and university administrators and faculty will alter the way they think about and perform their basic functions of teaching, research, and service, but they will do so in ways that allow them to remain true to the values and historic aims of the academy...they will change in ways that are congruent with their intellectual purposes and their missions” (3). They found evidence of transformational change in three areas: “putting learning first” (7); “making higher education more cost-effective and affordable” (8); and a third was “connecting institutions to their communities” (7). “Because higher education is a public good and fulfills a public function, institutions form intentional linkages with their communities. The activities of the academy address a range of public needs, including the needs of students, the tuition-paying public, the employers of future graduates, the beneficiaries of research, scholarship, and service, and society as a whole. Communities may be local, national or international, and most institutions

interact with multiple communities. These connections can contribute to the reshaping of institutional practices and purposes” (7). Engaged universities can therefore be transformed.

“Transformation,” Eckel, Hill and Green explained, “changes institutional culture... [it] touches the core of the institution... requires major shifts in an institution’s culture — the common set of beliefs and values that creates a shared interpretation and understanding of events and actions. Institution-wide patterns of perceiving, thinking and feeling; shared understandings; collective assumptions; and common interpretive frameworks” (3). Transformation “a) alters the culture of the institution by changing select underlying assumptions and institutional behaviors, processes, and products; b) is deep and pervasive, affecting the whole institution; c) is intentional; and d) occurs over time” (3). The CE Classification reflects all four aspects of transformational change.

Campuses that make serious, dedicated commitments to community engagement change the core culture of their institutions. This is a process that is intentional, strategic, with long-term commitments and formal obligations. It shapes and clarifies the campus identity. For campuses making these kinds of commitments, the CE Classification provides an opportunity for rigorous self-assessment and public recognition.

SECTORAL CHANGE

The CE Classification emerged at a time of high activity in the community engagement field in the US. Because the CE Classification did not depend

on a membership - like the 1000 campus members of Campus Compact - the emergent community engagement organisations in the US like the Compact, Imagining America, the Consortium on Urban and Metropolitan Universities, and others, saw in the CE Classification a framework that shaped many of their conference offerings. The CE Classification definition of community engagement became a touchstone. The CE Classification has become a framing document for a maturing field in US higher education. The non-competitive and intentionally not ranking nature of the CE Classification encourages local, regional and national collective learning communities across institutions focused on achieving the CE Classification.

As each cycle is completed, changes in the field are identified, and revisions to the application framework are made thus continuously raising the bar. Continuous development of the field informs the framework and the revised application continues to push innovation in the field. In the most recent cycle, areas of improvement in the application included requests for evidence of co-curricular engagement, differentiation of evidence by faculty employment status, and new

approaches to soliciting evidence from partner organisations.

The CE Classification thus has become an important aggregator and conduit for best practices in the field. Changes emerge from the field through conferences and consultations with national community engagement organisations, outreach

to academic and community experts, and review of new literature. In this way, the CE Classification is 'owned' by the field as much as by the Carnegie Foundation. Independent of membership or ranking constraints and open to every institution - the CE Classification had unified the field around a set of concepts, a definition, and a set of institutional best practices, contributing to the creation of a field consciousness.

university ranking systems to "take civic engagement seriously." The report suggested that a "gather[ing of] a group of universities [to] tell the rankings that [they] will collectively withdraw if they don't take civic engagement in the future." In the following year, Anthony Monaco, President of Tufts University in the US and founding member of the Network, along with Cheryl De La Rey, then Provost of the University of Pretoria in South Africa, published a blog post that received wide distribution and attention entitled *World University Rankings Blog: should global league tables consider community engagement?* In the post they argue that "...in addition to improving the rankings, we should develop an international civic engagement classification system. In the United States, the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification has been highly successful, setting a high standard for engagement and determining which institutions meet it."

A 2015 pilot project was conducted in Ireland, the first time the CE Classification was tested in a non-US context through a collaboration with the Talloires Network. Nine Irish institutions conducted the self-study and used the US CE Classification application framework. The project assisted campuses with institutional assessment of community engagement and explored the applicability of the CE Classification outside the US. All sectors of Irish higher education were represented in this project including: University College Cork, University of Limerick, Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology, Athlone Institute of Technology, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, TU4Dublin Alliance, Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin, NUI



The report suggested that a "gather[ing of] a group of universities [to] tell the rankings that [they] will collectively withdraw if they don't take civic engagement in the future."

INTERNATIONALISATION

The CE Classification has run in the US for five cycles and in each cycle surfaced international interest. Individual institutions outside the US had requested to apply for the Classification and a *2014 Talloires Network Convening in Cape Town, South Africa, Final Report* called for global

Galway, and the Institute of Technology - Tralee. The lessons learned through this project informed the US classification, and the current International Carnegie Research Project.

INTERNATIONAL CARNEGIE: EARLY LEARNINGS FROM AUSTRALIA AND CANADA

The chief insight from the Irish pilot was that for the CE Classification to be effective in non-US contexts, locally relevant versions of the application framework and a “field” must be nurtured in that context. To create the space for this to happen, and remain consistent with the internal philosophy of the CE Classification – valuing expertise of others, working against colonial knowledge regimes, and mindfully building towards increased epistemic justice – we selected a cohort of universities in Australia and Canada that represents the wide array of the sector in both geographies. Both national cohorts include a diversity of institution type, geography, and size in each national context. Sixteen institutions in Canada and 10 institutions in Australia have joined the project. More recently 10 additional Australian institutions have joined with an “observer” status. This represents about one-quarter of the university sector in Australia and one-sixth of the university sector in Canada. In partnership with Simon Fraser University and the McConnell Foundation, a Canadian cohort is exploring the CE Classification and considering how it might support community engagement in the Canadian context. In partnership with Charles Sturt University and University of Technology Sydney, an Australian cohort is doing the same.

Australian cohort members include: University of Technology Sydney (UTS); Charles Sturt University; Australian Catholic University; Central Queensland University Australia; Curtin University; Flinders University; Southern Cross University; University of the Sunshine Coast; La Trobe University; and Western Sydney University. Australian observer campuses include University of Tasmania; University of Western Australia; Deakin University; University of Sydney; James Cook University Australia; Swinburne University of Technology; and Federation University Australia.

Canadian cohort members include: Assiniboine Community College; Carleton University; Kwantlen Polytechnic University; McMaster University; Mount Allison University; The Nova Scotia College of Art and Design; The Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies; Simon Fraser University; The Université du Québec; The University of Alberta; The University of British Columbia; The University of Calgary; The University of Ottawa; The University of Windsor; York University; and Yukon College.

These two national cohorts sent institutional teams to a two-day start-up retreat where the teams could learn about the CE Classification. These retreats were also designed to begin knitting the cohorts together as a national learning community. A variety of follow-up video conference meetings, a mid-project retreat, and a closing retreat, and drafting of a nationally specific version of the CE Classification based on this two-year project is now underway. Across this project, each campus will complete a self-study and submit a completed application, facilitate a site visit

with National Review Panel members and members from other university teams in their country, and receive feedback on their application. Cohorts will also draft the Australian and Canadian CE Classification framework respectively.

“Indigenisation” of the university sector, which will have significant impact on their rethinking of the framework, is a foundational issue for both national cohorts. This focus promises interesting iteration on the US CE Classification. Discussions of the values that animate institutional commitment to community engagement lead to discussions about sector development and development of a more robust national learning community as desired outcome of the project. Both cohorts have articulated social justice as a core value of community engagement in their respective national contexts, and most participants feel an impending pressure from national or provincial governments to demonstrate their public value. Unfortunately “public value” is often being articulated by government as commercial and utilitarian or focused to heavily on ranking research metrics. Most of the participating universities hope that the CE Classification might serve as a proxy or an additional measure used to demonstrate impact.

“While both Canada and Australia, like the US, are white settler - former British - colonies, their unique histories with regard to race, class and access to university education will demand attention in the revision of the framework for local relevance. There will be many opportunities for learning across national contexts as our community engagement seeks to be more racially conscious and critically oriented.” (Johnson, Forthcoming).

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| ARTICLE

ACADEMIC FREEDOM, INSTITUTIONAL AUTONOMY, AND THE ENGAGED UNIVERSITY

PROFESSOR IRA HARKAVY AND SJUR BERGAN



THE ENGAGED UNIVERSITY

The popular belief that the University is an ivory tower has never been very convincing. Had that belief been true, the

University would not have survived for centuries, longer than any current institution except Parliament and the Church. Nevertheless, the

popular belief does point to an institution that stands aloof from its surrounding society, and that idea cannot be entirely discounted.

An ability to reflect and have a bit of distance are necessary for the University to fulfill its role as a venue to understand and help solve the larger problems that face humanity. Addressing burning issues such as climate change, sustainable development, migration, societal divides, rising extremism and a democratic deficit requires that higher education institutions, faculty and students have the freedom and the will to consider issues both in the short term and in a broader and longer-term perspective.

But the ability to reflect and take a step back does not mean stepping out. Universities and academics must be present in public debate and contribute to solving our most significant problems through research, teaching and informed engagement. In many cases, the contribution of the academic community will be one nobody else could make, providing an essential input and working along with others to improve the quality of life.

The engaged university, therefore, is an institution that fulfills its broader societal role as an independent institution, drawing on its research, teaching and institutional resources. It is neutral in the sense of being non-partisan, but it is far from neutral in the sense of being devoid of values or convictions. It is committed to the public good, to democracy and human rights, and to basing policies and decisions on facts established through study, research, and critical reflection – as well as to

challenging received wisdom based on new discoveries. Luckily, the academic community is increasingly embracing the idea of engagement as a moral and intellectual imperative and as a part of its academic and institutional identity (Benson, Harkavy, Puckett, et al., 2017; Brink 2018).

THE DEMOCRATIC MISSION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

The engaged university, then, seeks to fulfill the democratic mission of higher education. An important component of the democratic mission of higher education is to motivate young people to exercise their voting rights and to do so on the basis of a considered and coherent view of how they want society to develop. Part of the democratic mission is to provide young people with the competences to do so – what the Council of Europe has come to call competences for a culture of democracy (Council of Europe 2018). The Council of Europe model comprises 20 competences centered around four clusters:

- values,
- attitudes,
- skills,
- knowledge and critical understanding.

Nevertheless, seeing democracy as an issue uniquely of electoral participation is insufficient. Democracy requires free and fair elections but also participation by citizens¹ in the life of societies and communities between and beyond elections. At a time when people seem to focus largely on their own interests and private space, a major part of the democratic mission of higher education is

to stimulate commitment in their students, graduates, faculty and staff to public space and the public good.

Voting and participation require deliberation (Gutmann and Thompson 2004). The ability to develop one's own views and arguments and the will and ability to seriously

consider those of others are part and parcel of the competences required for a culture of democracy. They are also part and parcel of the competences higher education should develop in its students. The Council of Europe has developed the notion of multiperspectivity, originally within its history education program (Council of Europe 2001). In this context, multiperspectivity implies recognising that my history is not only mine but also that of my neighbours and that they may legitimately have a different view.

More broadly, multiperspectivity implies that we need to seek to see issues from several points of view and to understand why others may hold very different views from our own. Multiperspectivity, however, does not mean that all views are equally

valid. We are not obliged to give up our own view unless we are convinced by the arguments of others, or by the recognition that there are views that will always be unacceptable. Slavery and genocide are two examples of phenomena that cannot be legitimised regardless of how often they may have occurred in history. These

examples also show the need to distinguish between *understanding* any given phenomenon and *accepting* it as legitimate. If we cannot understand the factors that led to slavery or genocide, we will also be unable to prevent them in the future. A culture of democracy must encourage confronting, even challenging, unacceptable views with arguments.

The democratic mission of higher education is developed *within* institutions – on campus – as well as *outside* of institutions – in society at large.

Within institutions, the democratic mission is furthered through research, teaching, learning and engagement. Students acquire the



It is neutral in the sense of being non-partisan, but it is far from neutral in the sense of being devoid of values or convictions. It is committed to the public good, to democracy and human rights, and to basing policies and decisions on facts.

¹ In the sense of members of a given community, not just as holders of a given nationality or passport. In many countries, non-citizens have voting right in local and regional elections, subject to residence requirements, and resident non-citizens participate in civil society associations.

competences required to be active, reflecting citizens. Competences for democratic culture comprise a set of attitudes and behaviours that seeks resolution of conflicts through dialogue; that accepts that while majorities decide, minorities have certain inalienable rights; and that sees diversities of background and opinion as a strength rather than as a threat. These competences are developed through study programs, in the classroom, but also by engaging in community work and with associations, which may or may not be part of a study program.

The democratic mission of higher education is also developed through institutional culture: institutions cannot credibly teach democracy without practicing it. Democratic practice comprises student, faculty and staff participation in the governance of the institution and its faculties and departments as well as participation in student associations. This approach, reminiscent of the Kantian imperative to “act in such a way that each one of your actions can be the basis for a law”, is also known as a whole institution approach.

Higher education institutions must be “whole institutions” – they cannot preach without practicing. It may be worth underlining that the injunction to be “whole institutions” in no way diminishes or relativises the need for facts, knowledge and understanding. Rather, a whole institution approach reinforces this need, since the institution and its academic community cannot argue their importance in some contexts and dispense with them in others. Outside of the institution, the democratic mission is pursued through community engagement as well as by

institutions and the academic community playing a broader societal role. The University of Pennsylvania (Weeks 2019) and Queen’s University Belfast (Gallagher 2019, Gallagher and Harrison 2015) are both examples of universities with high ambitions and standing in research and teaching that also play important roles in disadvantaged parts of their local communities. Penn and Queen’s are but two examples among many community-engaged higher education institutions in the US and Europe, even if our impression is still that US institutions generally give higher priority to community engagement than many European institutions do.

More broadly, members of the academic community provide knowledge and expertise on many issues of societal importance, from poverty through climate change to urban planning. It is an important reason why broader society should finance higher education and research. Just as democracy cannot be built on ignorance, sustainable solutions to our societal challenges cannot be found except on the basis of the most advanced knowledge available, which universities, often working with partners in

government, business, and the community, provide. This does not preclude what is accepted knowledge today from being challenged by new research tomorrow.

A TRANS-ATLANTIC COOPERATION

Since 1999, the Council of Europe and the International Consortium for Higher Education, Civic Responsibility and Democracy have been working together to advance the democratic mission of higher education. The first part of the cooperation was a project on the University as Sites of Citizenship, and since 2006 the action has focused on a Global Forum every 2–3 years, always followed by a book in the Council of Europe Higher Education Series²:

- The Responsibility of Higher Education for a Democratic Culture (Council of Europe Headquarters, Strasbourg, June 2006)³
- Converging Competences: Diversity, Higher Education, and Sustainable Democracy (Council of Europe Headquarters, Strasbourg, October 2008)⁴
- Reimagining Democratic Societies: A New Era of Personal and Social



Significant violations of academic freedom and institutional autonomy threaten democracy. Sadly, their frequency is on the rise. Public authorities and the academic community alike must be vigilant in addressing and challenging such violations.

Responsibility? (University of Oslo, June 2011)⁵

- Higher Education for Democratic Innovation (Queen's University Belfast, June 2014)⁶
- Higher Education for Diversity, Social Inclusion, and Community: A Democratic Imperative (LUMSA University, Rome, June 2017)⁷
- Academic Freedom, Institutional Autonomy, and the Future of Democracy (Council of Europe Headquarters, Strasbourg, June 2019)⁸, to which we will return shortly.

Each Global Forum has gathered higher education leaders from Europe and North America, and increasingly also from other parts of the world; and in 2018 the Organization of American States joined the cooperation.

The trans-Atlantic cooperation has recently been extended to comprise the local mission of higher education (Bergan, Harkavy and Munck 2019), in cooperation with the Anchor Institutions Task Force⁹. Engagement in and with the local community is a core part of the democratic mission of higher education. It would be inconsistent, indeed problematic, to work for democracy at national, continental or global scale but neglect one's immediate environment. To use the analogy of the whole institution approach, the democratic mission of higher education must be a "whole community" approach, with the community comprising local, regional, national, continental and global dimensions. We are therefore exploring how an organised European platform for cooperation on the local mission of higher education could best be established based

on the three thematic conferences held so far, in Rome in 2017, in Dublin in 2018, and in Strasbourg in 2019. The next step will be to establish a small task force to consider possibilities for organising a platform that would combine advocacy and exchange of experience.

FREEDOM AND AUTONOMY TO ENGAGE

Democracy cannot exist in the absence of freedom of thought and expression, without an independent judiciary, and unless the authorities organising and overseeing elections have the will and ability to ensure that these are free and fair. Democracy also will not become a reality without engaged and committed citizens willing to work for the common good and with the competences to do so.

Higher education relies on these and other core components of democracy. Additionally, there are two values specific to the academic world, academic freedom and institutional autonomy that undergird higher education's role in democratic society. These, and their importance to the future of democracy, were the focus of the 2019 Global Forum referred to above, held at Council of Europe Headquarters in Strasbourg on June 20–21. The following section of our article will in particular draw on the declaration adopted by the Forum (Global Forum 2019), the context that prompted this declaration at this time, as well as the debates at the Forum.

There are several reasons why the 2019 Global Forum focused on academic freedom and institutional autonomy. The immediate background is the increasing concern that the values we have come to take for granted are now under threat

in ways Europe and North America have not seen for at least three decades, since the fall of the Berlin Wall. This event symbolises the political changes that extended democracy in principle to all of Europe, at least in terms of discourse and in most countries in terms of action, albeit at different levels of success. The Global Forum recognised this challenge by stating: "Significant violations of academic freedom and institutional autonomy threaten democracy. Sadly, their frequency is on the rise. Public authorities and the academic community alike must be vigilant in addressing and challenging such violations, and the responsibility for doing so does not stop at institutional or national borders. An attack on the freedom of one

² <https://www.coe.int/en/web/higher-education-and-research/publications>, accessed July 18, 2019.

³ <https://www.coe.int/en/web/higher-education-and-research/forum-the-responsibility-of-higher-education-for-a-democratic-culture-2006->, accessed July 18, 2019.

⁴ <https://www.coe.int/en/web/higher-education-and-research/invitational-forum-on-converging-competences-diversity-higher-education-and-sustainable-democracy-2008->, accessed July 18, 2019.

⁵ <https://www.coe.int/en/web/higher-education-and-research/conference-reimagining-democratic-societies-a-new-era-of-personal-and-social-responsibility->, accessed July 18, 2019.

⁶ <https://www.coe.int/en/web/higher-education-and-research/conference-higher-education-for-democratic-innovation->, accessed July 18, 2019.

⁷ <https://www.coe.int/en/web/higher-education-and-research/conference-higher-education-for-diversity-social-inclusion-and-community-a-democratic-imperative->, accessed July 18, 2019.

⁸ <https://www.coe.int/en/web/higher-education-and-research/-/global-forum-on-academic-freedom-institutional-autonomy-and-the-future-of-democracy>, accessed July 18, 2019.

⁹ <https://www.margainc.com/>, accessed July 18, 2019.



member of the academic community or the autonomy of one institution is an attack on the fundamental values of our democracies, regardless of where it takes place” (Global Forum 2019: paragraph 9).

While democracy has never been without potential for improvement, its basic premises are now questioned in Europe through nationalism, populism – mainly of the right but also of the left – and attempts to make “illiberal democracy” the New Speak equivalent of the real thing. Analogous developments are occurring in the United States. The declaration adopted by the Global Forum unequivocally states that “Higher education can only fulfil its mission if faculty, staff and students enjoy academic freedom and institutions are autonomous; principles laid out in the Magna Charta Universitatum as well as the UNESCO Recommendation on the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel”

(Global Forum 2019: paragraph 2).

As part of these developments, the freedom of academics to conduct research and publish research results unbound by political, economic and other external considerations, as well as the autonomy of institutions are coming under increasing pressure in many countries, with the Central European University in Budapest but one example – cited here because the Provost of this university provided the keynote address at the Global Forum.

Academic freedom and institutional autonomy are not independent from academic and institutional responsibility to democracy and the common good. Among other things, that responsibility entails higher education demonstrating “openness, transparency, responsiveness and accountability as well as the will and ability to work with and contribute to

the communities in which colleges and universities reside” (Global Forum 2019: paragraph 2).

The global scope of this Forum is important because, while concern about the state of academic freedom and institutional autonomy is near universal, the most salient issues vary between countries and continents.

For example, the focus in the United States is largely on academic freedom and its relationship to the right to free speech on campus, most recently prompted by the alt right movement. Are these rights without limits or can universities legitimately refrain from giving a pulpit to those who would use the values of democracy to destroy its very soul by propagating hate speech? Does my freedom of speech extend to a right to question your basic humanity?



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Academic freedom is essential to both democracy and the quality of teaching and research and should therefore suffer as few restrictions as possible. The Global Forum declaration states: “Campuses must be fora of vigorous debate and honest pursuit of truth, guided by the desire to help all human beings. Any limits on freedom of expression must be based on protection of the specific rights of others (e.g., to protect against discrimination or defamation) rather than on expediency or to advance a single political ideology” (Global Forum 2019, paragraph 6).

In Europe, the focus is largely on institutional autonomy. The European and US views of the proper role of public authorities in higher education diverge significantly, which makes a trans-Atlantic dialogue important in itself, but the dialogue is also important to develop our considerations beyond the traditional

European emphasis on institutional autonomy primarily as an issue of the legal relationship between public authorities and higher education institutions.

Laws are of course important, and neither academic freedom nor institutional autonomy can exist unless a country’s legal framework allows them to exist. If public authorities are able to ban or refuse to accredit specific study programs or disciplines on ideological grounds, as recently happened with gender studies in Hungary,¹¹ or to impose or ban specific schools of thought, as with Marxist philosophy in countries under Soviet influence for much of the post-World War II period up to the fall of the Berlin Wall, the need for effective legal protection of institutional autonomy has clearly not been met in the country in question.

At the time of writing, a draft law is under

consideration in the Albanian Parliament that would limit the study of the crimes of Communism during World War II, arguing that “the Communist regime cannot be linked with the Anti-Fascist and National Liberation War [WWII]” because the “elimination of political enemies only started after the war”¹². In the United Kingdom, a senior Member of Parliament – thus, a lawmaker – elicited strong rebuke from both the academic community and many political actors when he asked universities for an overview of “faculty

¹¹ <https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20181020111651678>, accessed July 18, 2019.

¹² <https://balkaninsight.com/2019/07/16/albania-to-ban-the-study-of-wwii-as-part-of-communist-period/>, accessed July 18, 2019.

¹³ <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2017/oct/24/universities-mccarthyism-mp-demands-list-brexit-chris-heaton-harris>, accessed July 18, 2019.

teaching European affairs, with special reference to Brexit” as well as “copies of the syllabus and links to the online lectures which relate to this area”¹³.

However, laws alone cannot guarantee that rights are effectively enjoyed, and many issues related to academic freedom and institutional autonomy rely not only on a legal framework but on practice and attitudes as well as on an understanding of principles and nuances.

Neither academic freedom nor institutional autonomy is absolute, and the academic community does not exist independent of society. Few if any would argue that higher education institutions should be exempt from general laws regulating the safety of laboratories, financial accountability or the obligation to ensure fair and non-discriminatory practices for employment and access to study programs. In democratic societies, higher education institutions are in general not free to limit or deny access to members of certain groups.

Not being exempt from such general laws is not a question of whether the higher education institutions are public or private, for, in either case, they are part of an education system for which public authorities are responsible, and both public and private institutions carry out a public mandate to provide higher education.

Considering institutional autonomy also implies assessing the proper role of public authorities. At least in Europe, public authorities have a clear responsibility for the education – including higher education – system, and the attachment to public funding of higher education is strong. The Ministers of the European Higher

Education Area have twice stated that higher education is a public good and a public responsibility (Bologna Process 2001, 2003), and in 2012 they referred to the importance of public funding: “...we commit to securing the highest possible level of public funding for higher education and drawing on other appropriate sources, as an investment in our future” (Bologna Process 2012: 4). In Europe, it would generally be seen as legitimate for public authorities to ensure higher education provision in all parts of the country or provision in academic areas considered of particular importance. Hence, public authorities would be seen as acting within their mandate if they establish an institution in an underserved part of the country or finance study programs in e.g. minority languages or areas of particular strategic or economic importance, such as programs in artificial intelligence. It would, however, not be seen as proper for public authorities to give instructions on the details of study programs or curricula.

The Global Forum declaration referred to these challenges: “Administrative regulations, public and private indifference, considerations of immediate return on investment, a limited view of utility, and seeing higher education only through the lens of a narrow economic agenda also threaten academic freedom and institutional autonomy. Financial regulations and arrangements should be used to further rather than to limit institutional autonomy. More broadly, academic freedom and institutional autonomy are threatened by the absence of a vision that connects the purposes of higher education to democratic purpose” (Global Forum 2019, paragraph 11).

The financing of higher education also has an impact on both academic freedom and institutional autonomy. There are at least two issues at stake. On the one hand, if a single source finances a high proportion of the overall budget, whether of the institution as a whole or of a given study program or research project, this puts the funder in a position where it could exercise considerable influence. However, the second factor is also important: funding may also be given with strictly specified conditions that may even extend to limiting the right to make research results public or influence the content of study or hiring of faculty. For example, the US-based Center for Public Integrity in 2014 accused the Koch brothers of giving a large gift to Florida State University that stipulated both curriculum and hiring decisions¹⁴.

The Global Forum declaration recognised issues related to funding models and conditions by stating: “Academic freedom and institutional autonomy are also threatened when financial support from individuals, private corporations, or institutional donors predominantly determines the focus of research and teaching and diminishes the public and democratic purposes of higher education. In general, public funding is fundamental, but financial support from multiple sources and financing not narrowly earmarked can strengthen academic freedom and

¹⁴ <https://publicintegrity.org/federal-politics/koch-foundation-proposal-to-college-teach-our-curriculum-get-millions/>, accessed July 18, 2019. In the United States, the Koch brothers are powerful economic actors with a record of large donations to organisations and causes with a specific ideological agenda.

institutional autonomy without diminishing the crucial societal role of higher education” (Global Forum 2019: paragraph 10).

A CALL FOR ACTION

Paradoxically, to some extent academic freedom and institutional autonomy depends on public authorities refraining from taking certain kinds of action. As discussed above, public authorities can limit or impede the exercise of academic freedom and institutional autonomy through legislation, policies at system level, funding decisions, or – in some cases – by creating an atmosphere of insecurity in society at large.

However, academic freedom and institutional autonomy are not just a question of non-action. To the contrary, public authorities, the academic community, higher education institutions, and others should take positive action to safeguard and further these fundamental values of higher education. It is worth quoting the declaration adopted by the Global Forum at some length on this issue: “The participants in the Global Forum therefore call on

Members of the academic community and their organizations

- to orient their research, learning, and teaching toward developing knowledge and understanding based on facts and science and interpreting these in a spirit of open mindedness and respect for differences of views, backgrounds, and traditions;
- to provide broader society with factually based knowledge and to base their own participation in public

debate on the same standards of truthfulness, open mindedness and respect that should be at the base of their academic work;

- to refrain from any actions that could contribute to – or legitimize – the spread of false or misleading information, including spurious claims of “fake news” and
- “alternative facts”, or willful distortion of the results of their own research or that of others.

Higher education institutions and their leaders

- to raise awareness among members of the academic community of the importance of academic freedom and institutional autonomy as well as the crucial role of higher education to democracy;
- to commit to maintaining, developing, and sustaining the public purpose and social responsibility of higher education;
- to explore the role and meaning of academic freedom and institutional autonomy within their respective institutions and systems, and the steps needed to protect these in an increasingly polarized and divided public sphere;
- to commit to – or maintain their commitment to, as the case may be – the Magna Charta Universitatum.

Higher education leaders and their organizations as well as public authorities at all levels

- to create and maintain the conditions for the academic community to enjoy freedom of research, learning, and

teaching as well as the freedom to engage in public debate based on their academic work;

- to create and maintain an atmosphere of vigorous and respectful debate within their institutions and higher education systems;
- to ensure faculty, staff and students the freedom to teach, learn and research without the fear of disciplinary action, dismissal or any other form of retribution.
- to give due regard to academic freedom and institutional autonomy in setting higher education priorities, developing policies, and assessing funding options.
- to provide sufficiently secure employment conditions for faculty/academic staff to exercise academic freedom.

Public authorities

- to set the framework for academic freedom and institutional autonomy and continuously monitor the implementation of those fundamental rights, while encouraging the adoption of sustainable long-term strategies for higher education;
- to take due account of the principles of academic freedom and institutional autonomy in developing regulations and policies in other areas of public responsibility;
- to balance the need for general rules and regulations ensuring the protection of individuals and guaranteeing sound public administration with respect for the principles of academic freedom and institutional autonomy;

- to provide strong public funding as a basic requirement for autonomy and academic freedom.

The Council of Europe, the Organization of American States, and other international institutions and organizations

- to make academic freedom and institutional autonomy key elements of their work to further democracy, human rights, and the rule of law, through normative standards as well as policy;
- to address violations of academic freedom and institutional autonomy within their member States at a political level as well as through their Education programmes and projects.

The Ministers of the European Higher Education Area, who will meet in Rome in June 2020

- to recommit to upholding academic freedom and institutional autonomy as part of the foundation on which the European Higher Education Area is built;
- to include the gathering of information on the respect for academic freedom and institutional autonomy in the Bologna Process Implementation Reports and to provide and facilitate the gathering of such information within their own countries and systems;
- to address violations of academic freedom and institutional autonomy at political level within the European Higher Education Area, in view of their collective political responsibility for the EHEA.

The Council of Europe, the International Consortium for Higher Education, Civic

Responsibility and Democracy, the Organization of American States, and other partners in our cooperation on the democratic mission of higher education

- to continue their work to strengthen the role of higher education in developing, maintaining, and sustaining democratic societies;
- to continue to highlight the importance of academic freedom and institutional autonomy in furthering higher education’s democratic mission as well as to develop policy proposals and engage in public advocacy to more fully achieve that mission” (Global Forum 2019).

CONCLUSION

We hope to have demonstrated the importance not only of higher education institutions and of the academic community engaging with the significant burning issues we face as societies, but that this should be at the heart of the mission of higher education. It should be a part of higher education’s DNA. Our societies cannot prosper or even survive without the engagement and contribution of higher education.

In our view, higher education cannot fully play this role except in democratic societies. Democracy is vital to enabling higher education to play its societal role, but higher education is equally vital in safeguarding and developing democracy.

The democratic mission of higher education, which is the foundation for the engaged university, is, then largely an issue of how higher education works with its local community, the broader society, and the world. However, higher education cannot play its proper role

in furthering democracy – as well as in furthering the quality of research, teaching and learning – unless it enjoys academic freedom and institutional autonomy. This is not a privilege but a condition for higher education to make its full contribution to the society of which it is a part.

On the face of it, this is a straightforward statement with which it would seem difficult to disagree on grounds of principle. Nevertheless, translating the basic principle into available legislation, policy and practice is far from straightforward. We hope to have explored some of the complexity of the issue, which is a considerable challenge to the academic community as well as to those in broader society who wish to further democracy.

Our task as educators and policy makers is to continue to explore the many issues of academic freedom and institutional autonomy, to strengthen higher education and to strengthen democracy. Few sectors of society are better placed than higher education to develop the competences required for voting, participation, respectful deliberation and democratic problem solving. Rarely has this task been as urgent as it is now. Higher education must engage today to help develop and maintain the kind of society in which we would like to live tomorrow.

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Sjur Bergan specialises in higher education policy, including qualifications frameworks and the broader role and purpose of higher education in society. He is currently Head of the Education Department of the Council of Europe, leading the Council's projects on Competencies for Democratic Culture and the European Qualifications Passport for Refugees. He is also editor of the Council's Higher Education Series.

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| INTERVIEW

TOWARDS A 21ST CENTURY APPROACH TO CIVIC ENGAGEMENT LOCALLY AND GLOBALLY

A CONVERSATION WITH PROFESSOR RICHARD TEARE



Why is it that in the 21st century the place where a person is born still determines their life chance? The purpose of the Global University for Lifelong Learning (GULL) is to facilitate self-directed lifelong learning and as one response, Richard's recent book *Lifelong action learning: A journey of discovery and celebration at work and in the community* (2018) outlines how a systematic approach can be provided to those who are traditionally excluded - the low paid, the marginalised and the millions of people who are living in poverty.

In this interview for Transform, Richard Teare, co-founder and President of the Global University for Lifelong Learning talks about GULL's non-profit network movement that aims to facilitate self-help and its role in a research project that aims to develop an inclusive framework for self-directed lifelong learning led by a group of South African public universities.

Q: Why did you establish GULL?

A: During the years when I worked in universities I rarely reflected on the fact that they were privileged places and that many of our students came from families where one or more parents had been to university. Naturally then, they encourage their children to follow this route for better career prospects after graduation. I began thinking more deeply about the concept of inclusion during the late 1990s when I first saw for myself the myriad difficulties faced by a high proportion of the world's population in developing countries and in particular, the limited educational provision available to them. The experience gained as a professor at four UK universities gave me the confidence to set-up the Global University for Lifelong Learning – a very different kind of institution that draws on local and traditional knowledge to encourage community participants to find solutions to their own problems.

Q: Why does GULL focus on self-help?

A: As the poorest say that they can only dream about further and higher education because they lack qualifications, money and often educational infrastructure, a different approach was needed. This

PHOTO

The photograph taken in August 2014, is of Richard with members of a bamboo music band in a remote part of Bougainville, an autonomous region of Papua New Guinea. The men played all the tunes on different lengths of bamboo while the women performed fan dances.

began to take shape during a visit to the UK in 2004 by the newly appointed Governor-General of Papua New Guinea (PNG), Sir Paulias Matane. He had grown up in a remote subsistence community in East New Britain Province, PNG. As both his parents died when he was a young boy, he was raised by his elderly grandparents and at the age of 16, he was able to attend school for the first time. He later became a teacher, headmaster, schools inspector and then national superintendent of teacher education. After that, he served his country as a permanent secretary, an ambassador and a high commissioner (among other roles). Given his disadvantaged background, Paulias had realised early in life that he'd need to be focused, disciplined and self-directed, he became an inspirational lifelong learner and on 26 May 2004, he was elected as the Eighth Governor-General of PNG. His story is relevant to GULL's work because we try to mirror his journey from poverty by encouraging GULL participants to discover and use their human potential to the fullest – first to help themselves and their families and second, to help others. This is encapsulated in GULL's motto: 'Enabling YOU to make a difference in OUR world'.

Q: How does GULL facilitate self-help?

A: To provide hope and opportunity we needed to create a credible system that would incentivise the excluded to begin a journey that would help them to discover their unique gifts and talents, develop them and make practical, tangible changes in their own lives and in the communities in which they live. Over several years

of discussions with Sir Paulias, we concluded that this approach could not be 'accredited' in the conventional way and so he and Sir Michael Somare, PNG's founding Prime Minister and the serving Prime Minister at the time, signed a 'statement of recognition' offered in perpetuity for GULL's professional awards – all of which require verification that pathway-specific outcomes have been attained prior to certification. Next, we sought to establish a decentralised network as a deliberate strategy to facilitate national and local ownership at the lowest possible cost. We wanted to build the network on traditional know-how and knowledge so that anyone could participate. GULL's approach is based on what we call action learning pathways. This reflects the idea that learning should be an active lifelong journey centred on the unique needs and aspirations of its participants.

It is now more than 11 years since the official launch of GULL on Friday 5 October, 2007, in the State Function Room, National Parliament House, Port Moresby, PNG. One of our guests that day from the World Bank made a memorable comment on the significance of our initiative. In his speech he said: *'We people from the third world – I'm a Kenyan – often feel like we are sinking into a swamp – we lift our hands in the air and hope that someone will come along and pull us out. GULL is different – it is like a low hanging branch – you reach up and pull yourself out'*. I quite often share this explanation because it is simple and clear and by implication, the world needs much greater provision for self-help. If the networks were in place to support this, people everywhere could contribute what they can afford (avoiding entitlement and

dependency) and begin a journey towards becoming more confident about what they are able to do and more skilled in equipping themselves and responding to life's challenges. If it were easy, it would be happening already - but a shift is needed. Personally, I think that there is still too much emphasis on training and not enough on equipping people to find their own solutions. This transition requires a system, structure and process – the very things that GULL has been refining over the years by working with social entrepreneurs, NGOs and other agencies in many communities around the world.

Q: Do you have an example that illustrates the value of self-help?

A: Yes, there are many – some of which are documented on the GULL website - a good example of the power of self-directed action learning is illustrated by a project facilitated by the international NGO World Vision with GULL in Burundi. Nationally, Burundi struggles with high child mortality due to Malaria and malnutrition. In an effort to tackle malnutrition, a World Vision facilitator working in a rural area with eight community volunteers had the idea of starting a soya milk production facility. The opportunity to participate and become a GULL student was met with much enthusiasm by community volunteers and several months on, she was working with 105 community volunteers. During a review visit to the soya milk production facility 10 months or so after scaling-up the project, community members told us that as an outcome of



their GULL project, they had eradicated child malnutrition in their commune – a claim that was independently verified by World Vision. They had secured this outcome by organising the distribution of soya milk to vulnerable children over a wide geographical area spanning 29 hills and valleys. They decided initially to distribute soya milk free of charge to the parents of sick children and when the problem of malnutrition had been addressed, the milk would then be sold to parents to prevent re-occurrence and to ensure that their project would be self-funding and sustainable. If families

did not have the funds to buy the soya milk, the community's benevolent fund covered the cost and a community team began working with the family until they were able to generate enough income to pay for the soya milk from their own resources. The soya milk production facility is now producing a cash surplus for the community and they have used their profits to increase the production capacity. After securing these valuable and tangible outcomes, the soya milk production team had earned their GULL professional certificates and many hundreds of people came to witness the certification ceremony



I'm a Kenyan – often feel like we are sinking into a swamp – we lift our hands in the air and hope that someone will come along and pull us out. GULL is different – it is like a low hanging branch – you reach up and pull yourself out.

our efforts to respond to this challenge, I wondered whether it would be possible to work with universities on a new agenda for inclusion. This is with a view to shaping a 21st century paradigm for lifelong learning that embraces both traditional notions of academic excellence and community-led holistic development. How would it be if universities were able to facilitate practical and valuable development in and amongst marginalised communities – alongside the excellent work that they are renowned for on the campus? As the GULL system is designed for the former purpose and does not compete with academic programmes, it can be customized to meet specific needs without affecting its recognised status. Further, as a non-profit initiative, it can be operationalised at low cost by universities interested in working with GULL.

Q: Has GULL's self-help approach been used in Australia?

A: Yes. In 2010, Griffith University's coordinator of community partnerships began to make use of GULL's approach to engage with and enable Samoan community leaders to experience action learning for themselves. As a means of sustaining change, project teams embedded a system for action learning using the GULL model of community engagement based on equality and inclusivity. Our primary objective was to widen access to educational opportunities for Samoan families, whose children were reported to be under-achieving at school and under-represented in higher education. This successful pilot led to the introduction of a university-sponsored program (initially for Samoan families)

that sought to widen the community's participation in higher education. In one of the periodic reviews, a community leader said: *'I'm sure that action learning is the way forward for the community – it liberates people, in the sense that at the outset, participants might have relatively low self-esteem and as they journey with this, they can move forwards and strengthen their self-image and self-worth. I also think that action learning offers the prospect of liberation from poverty because it facilitates a change in mindset. It is my belief that unless and until people are liberated from what holds them back, they will not develop and progress and I have discovered that the GULL action learning process does this'.*

Dr Richard Teare can be contacted via the GULL website – www.gullonline.org – Contact Us.

REFERENCE

Teare, R. (2018) *Lifelong action learning: A journey of discovery and celebration at work and in the community*. Retrieved from Amazon.com. Also available from Amazon.com.au (Australia); Kindle e-book AUS\$3.99; Paperback AUS\$12.65.

in a football stadium – the only venue large enough for so many curious and excited observers!

Q: Does GULL work with academic institutions?

A: Yes and I am hoping that the network of universities using GULL for community engagement and service learning will increase in the next year or so. Earlier, I outlined GULL's mission to those without access to conventional forms of further and higher education and as I reflect on the highs and lows of



| VIEWPOINT

AUSTRALIA'S UNIQUE INSIGHT FOR CIVIC UNIVERSITIES

PROFESSOR SHAUN EWEN



Late one evening in 1844, a merchant and future politician, William Westgarth, was hopelessly lost just north of Melbourne. Drawn to the light of campfires flickering along a creek, he stumbled across a group of local Wurundjeri people. While some “lay asleep, rolled up in their opossum rugs”, others were still awake and “readily pointed out the proper direction” to Melbourne for the

disorientated Westgarth. Ten years later, the foundation stone for the University of Melbourne’s Old Quad was laid near the site of those campfires. Westgarth later reasoned that replacing the ‘native encampment’ with a university was a sign of societal progress. He regarded the University — the height of ‘civilisation’ — as enlightening the ‘primitive colony’, seemingly oblivious to how he personally



benefitted from engaging with Indigenous people and their knowledge.

For too long, Australian universities have assumed a similar mindset to Westgarth, overlooking Indigenous knowledge, ideas and peoples. Margaret Williams-Weir, the University of Melbourne's (and Australia's) first recorded Indigenous graduate, graduated in 1959, an unconscionable 104 years after the University opened its doors. Excluding Indigenous Australia meant universities missed opportunities to discover and share its rich knowledge. Indigenous knowledge still exists, and we can still access it, learn from and about

it. Importantly, including Indigenous knowledge systems, and examining their interaction with other knowledge systems, will enhance universities' core purpose of knowledge creation and dissemination. However, we must reframe how we view civic engagement between universities and Indigenous peoples if we are to learn all they have to teach us.

The theme of the 2019 Engagement Australia conference, *The Role of a Civic University in Australia*, reflects the greater prominence of civic ideals in higher education thinking and practice. The recent Civic University Commission in the United Kingdom explored the growing importance of civic universities to the present and

future of their local communities. As the Commission notes, universities have "been territorially agnostic for many years", ignoring the importance of local context and place. Civic universities are responding to this historic oversight by focusing on the specific, place-based opportunities before them. As the Commission's report argues, the current climate provides an opportunity to rearticulate the role of universities, with civic engagement serving

PHOTO

Glass eel-trap installation: Maree Clarke, *Ancestral Memory 2019* (installation photograph), glass, steel. Courtesy of the artist and Vivien Anderson Gallery, Melbourne. Photograph: Christian Capurro.

a fundamental part of the established university roles of knowledge creation and dissemination.

We should apply this same spirit of understanding and connecting with context to how we consider the current framing of the civic university in Australia. The foundations of our higher education system are firmly British, an extension of the territorial agnosticism that prompted the civic university movement. However, rather than embracing the civic model as a response to these challenges, we should first understand how these civic ideals might serve the needs and opportunities of our context, and in particular, of Indigenous Australia. Universities should build enriching relationships with Indigenous communities that involve deep two-way learning, a notion that extends beyond service, anchor institutions and social accountability.

When it comes to Indigenous knowledge, the framing of a civic university presents three issues. First, the term ‘civic’ originates from Indo-European languages, reinforcing a western civilisation approach to higher education. In framing the role of the university in this way, we

unintentionally exclude other knowledge paradigms, including from Indigenous communities.

Second, as the Commission notes, “A civic university cannot serve everywhere, and that means that someone must fall on the wrong side of the boundary”. In Australia, Indigenous peoples have traditionally

been placed on the wrong side of university boundaries. Merely extending civic boundaries to ensure universities serve more Indigenous Australians could be akin to assimilation, a social process Indigenous populations know only too well.

Third, the Commission report highlights a public desire for universities to “localise their national and international responsibilities.” They feel universities have responsibilities to benefit local students, employers and communities.

The opposite is needed for engagement with Indigenous knowledge. Australian universities can internationalise local Indigenous knowledge by connecting it with established global knowledge systems, including the dynamic global dialogue surrounding Indigenous knowledge systems.

The University of Melbourne’s relationship with Indigenous knowledge thus far is

instructive. At first, our mindset towards Indigenous issues focused on undertaking research on major challenges facing Indigenous peoples and generating solutions to ‘fix’ them from afar. Another approach was to view Indigenous communities as needing our charitable help, and providing the support we determined they needed.

We only started to build enriching relations once we began viewing our relationship with Indigenous peoples as one that involves deep two-way learning. The concept of *bala lili*, from the Yolngu Matha in Arnhem land, northern Australia, beautifully encapsulates our new approach. *Bala lili* means ‘to give and take, listening and understanding’. It refers to the phenomenon where saltwater and freshwater rivers meet, mix, and flow on together. Where these waters combine, they bubble up together to create something exciting, something new.

A transformative model for this two-way learning is on-Country subjects, developed by local Elders, whereby students learn ‘on Country’ about Indigenous perspectives, issues, and ways of being. By engaging with Indigenous communities and their human libraries of knowledge, these partnerships offer bidirectional learning opportunities and create new knowledge, fulfilling the purpose of our university.

The differing context, geography and history of other nations will mean this form of civic relationship with Indigenous peoples may not be relevant to other universities. The responsibilities of a university in London, Johannesburg or Shanghai will depend on the needs, deeds and histories of their *p/ace*. However, the concept of *bala lili* is applicable to



This year, the University of Melbourne re-opened its Old Quad after years of work to restore the building to its original grandeur. The occasion blended high academic procession and a traditional smoking ceremony.



all. To build enriching relationships with their local communities, universities must view engagement as a two-way process of giving and taking, listening and understanding.

This year, the University of Melbourne re-opened its Old Quad after years of work to restore the building to its original grandeur. The occasion blended high academic procession and a traditional smoking ceremony. The ceremony continued inside the Old Quad, flanked by Maree Clarke's amazing *Ancestral Memory* exhibition. The exhibition features traditional Indigenous eel traps alongside a newly commissioned contemporary glass installation. Highly adaptive creatures that swim between freshwater and saltwater, eels can migrate from Australia to South America and back again. Demonstrating resourcefulness and resilience, they journey beneath the University through stormwater pipes

that were once natural waterways. The eels occasionally surface in ponds on campus, often following heavy rain. Their appearance is a reminder that our land has a history, and knowledge systems, that long precede this institution. The eels also show that something pushed below the surface can re-emerge under the right conditions.

With the eel traps watching on, Vice-Chancellor Duncan Maskell, bedecked in academic regalia, walked in to deliver apposite remarks on behalf of the University. Accompanying him was Professor Sandra Eades, donning the ceremonial possum skin cloak recently gifted to the University. The cloak, made by Mandy Nicholson, a Wurundjeri woman, symbolises connectedness to Country, and to the University. Etched into the cloak is swirling smoke of Wurundjeri fires, blazes that drew Westgarth to the same location 185 years before.

The ceremony concluded, re-opening an Old Quad newly enriched by Indigenous knowledge, culture and custom. Tradition mixing with a resilient and vibrant living culture. An academy adapting. The creation of something exciting, something new.

Professor Shaun Ewen is Pro Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous) and Foundation Director of the Melbourne Poche Centre for Indigenous Health at the University of Melbourne. Daniel Hanrahan is Senior Adviser, Engagement Strategy at the University of Melbourne.

PHOTO

VC Duncan Maskell and Professor Sandra Eades: Old Quad ceremonial reopening on Thursday 2 May 2019. Photo: Peter Casamento.



Declining trust in public institutions across western democracies, where evidence-based arguments can run a poor second to appeals to emotion and identity (witness Brexit and the rise of populist leaders).



| VIEWPOINT

WHAT ARE UNIVERSITIES GOOD FOR?

DR JULIE WELLS AND

PROFESSOR JONATHAN GRANT



It's hard to think of another moment when universities' performance has been so heavily scrutinised and measured, at the same time as their value is increasingly questioned.

Governments, eager to assert accountability for public funds, are collecting and publishing more data than ever. The same data is recycled by rankings agencies, which have built a global industry premised on establishing typologies of institutional greatness and ranking universities against them.

But this data does not mean much to those commentators who characterise universities as elitist, inward looking and irrelevant. Some of these criticisms may be justified, but they also reflect declining trust in public institutions across western democracies, where evidence-based arguments can run a poor second to appeals to emotion and identity (witness Brexit and the rise of populist leaders). There is genuine scepticism about the value universities deliver, and data around the amount of research we do or the number of people we educate or indeed the combined economic impact of our work simply doesn't cut through.

These challenges in our authorising environment are causing university leaders everywhere to think anew about how we create and demonstrate value. As Jeffrey Bleich, former US Ambassador to Australia, said in a speech to Universities Australia in 2017, universities themselves have an important role to play in addressing the complex problems and rising societal inequality that is eroding trust in our institutions.¹ We can do this through engaging with the concerns of communities and individuals, and collaborating to tackle the challenges, global and local, that are changing the nature of work and fuelling insecurity. However, the concept of engagement (or service, as it is described at King's College London) is open to many definitions, and outputs are difficult to measure. Consequently, the value of engagement is not always recognised inside our own institutions as mission critical.

This issue was much discussed at the Global University Engagement Summit, held in Melbourne Australia in 2017. Afterwards, three universities – King's College London, University of Chicago and University of Melbourne – came together to ask the question: could we support change within the university sector and start to tell a new story about university value if measures of engagement were included in global rankings?

Rankings are a double-edged sword. They are critiqued for methodological flaws and volatility, yet they are indisputably influential in shaping reputation and institutional behaviours. Reading the zeitgeist, some rankings agencies have already started to develop measures based on possible measures of engagement

impact (for example, the THES rankings of universities based on assessing their contribution to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals). So it seemed timely to develop a simple set of measures that were university led and tested, and focused on outcomes rather than process.

We started with an agreed definition of



Could we support change within the University sector and start to tell a new story about university value if measures of engagement were included in global rankings?

engagement as *“a holistic approach to working collaboratively with partners and communities, to create mutually-beneficial outcomes for each other and the benefit of society.”* The concept of mutual benefit is particularly important in our conceptualisation of engagement: it is not enough for collaboration to enrich teaching and research, or for universities to deliver outcomes that they think will benefit others. Genuine engagement rests on listening as well as speaking, learning from each other, and understanding where our complementary expertise and common ground lies.

Working on the premise that we should measure what we value, we discussed the positive change we would like to see from an increased focus on engagement measures. These include stronger leadership and investment in university engagement, valuing of each others' contribution by universities and communities, better communication and impact of research, curriculum enriched by engagement, and reward and recognition of staff and students.

Working with a number of partner universities, we have developed a relatively short suite of measures which hopefully could have relevance across the globe. The measures selected are clearly a proxy for the sort of activities that we are looking to recognise and incentivise through their measurement, but cover a broad remit – ranging from research impact to green energy, from curriculum content to procurement practices. The indicators are currently being piloted and the results will be published in the autumn.

The underpinning assumption is that publicly reporting engagement performance will drive these behaviour changes, and contribute to a better understanding of the work universities do with their communities and partners. The work is in itself seeding valuable conversations between universities, all of whom are thinking about these issues in different contexts and applying different approaches.

¹ Jeffrey Bleich, Keynote Address, Universities Australia Conference March 2017, accessed <https://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/media-item/higher-education-conference-keynote-address-ambassador-ret-jeff-bleich/>

We recognise that not everything that can be measured has value, and that not everything that is valuable can be measured. We know too that not everyone will agree with our pragmatic approach to engaging with global league tables. But while quantitative measures frame discussion of universities' value and resourcing decisions, it is important that we engage with them, and question not only what we are measuring but why.

Dr Julie Wells has extensive experience in the tertiary education sector as a senior administrator, lobbyist, adviser and policy analyst. She is currently Vice President, Strategy and Culture, at the University of Melbourne where she is responsible for government, civic, cultural and community engagement, as well as people, strategy and planning, policy and university governance. She has also led the development of the University's Melbourne Connect initiative and its new campus at Fishermans Bend.

Professor Jonathan Grant is the Vice President, Vice Principal (Service) and Professor of Public Policy at King's College London. His main research interests are in biomedical and health R&D policy, research impact assessment and the use of research and evidence in policy and decision making. He was previously Director of the Policy Institute at King's, President of RAND Europe and Head of Policy at the Wellcome Trust.





“The opportunity to collectively forge an Australian community engagement classification through a world-leading framework is a game changer for higher education in Australia. Enhanced ability to benchmark, reward, incentivise and achieve scaled impact will enable and drive the critical mission of universities as institutions in service of society.”

VERITY FIRTH, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
SOCIAL JUSTICE, UNIVERSITY OF
TECHNOLOGY SYDNEY.

| VIEWPOINT

PILOT TAKES OFF FOR CARNEGIE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CLASSIFICATION

UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY SYDNEY

VERITY FIRTH



As demonstrating engagement and impact of research becomes an increasing priority for Australian universities, and with a government mandate to

increase collaboration between universities, industry and end-users, 10 universities across the nation are challenging the existing definition of “engagement.”

Led by the University of Technology Sydney and Charles Sturt University with the

support of Engagement Australia, the cohort will participate in a pilot of the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification.

Considered the gold standard throughout the US, the Carnegie Classification recognises higher education’s commitment to community engagement, with a focus on the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity, rather than the transactional



focus of the current Engagement and Impact reporting framework.

Australian Catholic University, Central Queensland University, Curtin University, Flinders University, Southern Cross University, the University of the Sunshine Coast, Western Sydney University and La Trobe University have also signed on to work together in identifying needed adjustments to the existing US classification framework, to recommend solutions, and contribute to the development of an Australian-specific version of the classification.

The University of Sydney, the University of Tasmania, Deakin University, James Cook University, Swinburne University, Federations University and the University of Western Australia are keenly watching the process as observer institutions.

While the participating universities all have distinct institutional strengths and already foster engagement with their diverse communities, the pilot reflects a need

for Australian universities to implement measures to further improve community engagement practices.

The opportunity to collectively forge an Australian community engagement classification through a world-leading framework is a game changer for higher education in Australia. Enhanced ability to benchmark, reward, incentivise and achieve scaled impact will enable and drive the critical mission of universities as institutions in service of society.

Despite the pilot assessments not being due for submission until mid-2020, the cohort is already feeling the benefit of being engaged in the process. A gathering at the Charles Sturt University's Bathurst campus in June (pictured) saw representatives from all 10 universities join together to share ideas and support colleagues as a cross-institutional community of practice.

Once the formal process of data-gathering and self-assessment is complete, the



“The nature and organisation of ‘engagement’ in Australian universities is diverse and multi-faceted; the challenge is to find unity in such diversity. The Carnegie pilot project will give all members the opportunity to apply a world class evaluative and critical engagement framework, providing a coherent focus for action and development, within a distinctively Australian context.”

PROFESSOR JIM NYLAND, CHAIR OF ENGAGEMENT AUSTRALIA AND ASSOCIATE VICE-CHANCELLOR OF AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY.

universities will then host representatives from Carnegie for campus site visits to see their reported engagement activities in action. The cohort is then aiming to present outcomes at the Talloires Network 2020 conference alongside the Canadian pilot participants.



| CASE STUDY

SCHOOL-UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS: STRENGTHENING PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE RELATIONSHIPS

CHARLES STURT UNIVERSITY

LUCIE ZUNDANS-FRASER & WILL LETTS



There is only limited research available examining the relationship between a supervising teacher and the university sending its pre-service student teachers to a school to undertake their practicum.

School-university partnership approaches to professional experience are important in developing closer relationships between pre-service teachers, supervising teachers and university staff, particularly in regional institutions where positive relationships and a sense of connection are critical.



The aim was to reflect on the current school-university experience and design a partnership model that could sustain effective practice, as well as be practical and “useable”.

Indeed, there has been growing emphasis on university staff working in partnership with schools to construct professional experiences that maximise pre-service teacher engagement as part of their

professional accreditation.

To that end, Charles Sturt University set out to work with staff at a local multi-site secondary school to better understand the processes and elements that contribute to positive school-university partnerships.

A collaborative team was formed, including university and school staff, to investigate the perceptions of supervising teachers (all fully qualified, practising teachers) on the benefits, challenges and supportive factors related to school-university partnerships and the professional experience placement of pre-service teachers.

A case study approach allowed the team to focus on the unique attributes of the school and closely investigate this real-life context.

The aim was to reflect on the current school-university experience and design a partnership model that could sustain effective practice, as well as be practical and “useable”.

An initial 10-minute voluntary survey was distributed to supervising teachers via SurveyMonkey to collect demographic information such as gender, years of teaching experience and the number of pre-service teachers supervised. Staff were also given the opportunity to participate in individual or focus group follow-up interviews of approximately 45 minutes duration.

Importantly, the follow-up interviews enabled the team to further elicit the views of supervising teachers about how higher education contexts could better cater for the needs of the school and pre-service teachers. The semi-structured nature of the interviews

allowed for particular aspects to be further investigated, with question design informed by initial survey responses and the personal experiences of supervising teachers; how the higher education context responds to their needs; and future opportunities in the professional experience space.

Five themes emerged from the team’s analysis of the data:

1. University workplace learning issues and processes
2. School-university communication processes and procedures
3. Within school issues and processes
4. Persistent myths regarding professional experience
5. The need to re-envision the benefit of professional experience for both stakeholders.

These themes and the implications they have for shared practice were then used to create an action plan for the partners to use to improve planning, ensure transparent communication, and enhance the supervising teacher and pre-service teacher experience.

Processes have since been established to enhance and explicitly align practices with quality teaching professional standards to improve the supervising teacher experience and ensure a positive practicum for pre-service teachers.

This small piece of research provided useful insights into school-university partnerships regarding professional experience relationships that will ultimately serve as a potential model for scaling into other local partnerships in the future.

| CASE STUDY

BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS FOR MELBOURNE'S SOMALI COMMUNITY

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY



An initiative between La Trobe University and the Somali community in Melbourne's West Heidelberg region is serving to break down barriers for local Somali-Australian students.

Himilo Community Connect is a community-led project that exists to improve education, employment, health and social cohesion outcomes for the Somali-Australian community of West Heidelberg.

Originally conceived as a pilot project funded and aligned with the Victorian Government's 2015 Strategic Framework to Strengthen Victoria's Social Cohesion and the Resilience of its Communities, Himilo Community Connect was created through a rigorous co-design process with local community members, including elders, parents, carers and youth.

This process revealed specific needs around the culture of aspiration and

acceptance, and the need to improve education and employment outcomes for young Somali-Australians, including breaking down employer perceptions and addressing issues felt by the community when employers are not receptive to work placements or the employment of aspiring Somali-Australian students.

Underpinned by social cohesion themes of belonging, social justice, participation acceptance and worth, Himilo Community Connect fosters inclusiveness and support and – with the support of La Trobe University, which has a strong cohort of Somali-Australians – is empowering students to thrive and succeed.

La Trobe has been working with Himilo Community Connect since 2016, focusing on the establishment of bespoke industry engagement programs to help prove to employers that a diverse workforce offers the opportunity for a culture of inclusiveness and value.

Significantly, the initiative has greatly enhanced engagement with, and connections between, La Trobe University and the local Somali-Australian community.

The partnership has served to demystify higher education to an under-represented community, supported educational attainment, and sent a clear signal to the broader community that La Trobe



Significantly, the initiative has greatly enhanced engagement with, and connections between, La Trobe University and the local Somali-Australian community.

values diversity and inclusiveness and is a champion of local communities in Melbourne's north.

The collaboration has also enhanced graduate outcomes and employment for La Trobe's Somali-Australian students through facilitating:

- Himilo Future Careers Expo for secondary school students to meet and engage with employers from all sectors
- An increase in brokered work experience/internships into full-time graduate employment with businesses in Melbourne's north
- La Trobe Somali student volunteer and accredited placements at Himilo Community Connect, resulting in employment opportunities with Himilo's partner organisations
- La Trobe providing the sports venue to host 2,300 Somali participants at Somali Week in December 2018 – a major

sporting week with international and local participants

- Support for Somali Medical Mission fundraisers in 2018, which enabled a team of Somali women to travel to Somalia to support a medical team deliver life-changing aid to women living with fistula
- 2,516 student attendances plus 143 enrolled at the Himilo Homework Club between January 2018 and June 2019
- 99 learning and mentor support sessions for Somali-Australian students.

The findings of a Himilo/La Trobe University joint research project undertaken during the program – examining employment barriers to Somali-Australian graduates – will also be used to design and implement future engagement and employability programs. Importantly, it will also be shared with other universities and communities facing similar challenges.

Shortlisted in the 2019 AFR Community Engagement Awards, the Himilo Community Connect project is a wonderful example of La Trobe University's Strategic Plan commitment to being the partner

of choice for industry, education and the community through the power of education and research to transform lives.

PHOTO

Three of the young Somali-Australian women who were the main instigators behind the fundraising for the Somali Medical Mission. Sadia, Amina and Adna.





| CASE STUDY

NEW CULTURAL HUB REINFORCES CHARLES STURT'S PARTNERSHIP WITH WIRADJURI COMMUNITY

CHARLES STURT UNIVERSITY

LAURA DAN



Charles Sturt University's ongoing partnership with the Wiradjuri community has been reinforced with the opening of a cultural hub at the university's Bathurst Campus.

The new Wiradjuri Elders Cultural Hub was launched in July 2019 and provides a safe cultural space for students, staff and members of the community to learn about Wiradjuri customs and language, and ask questions, seek guidance and interact with the Elders.

Operating in a spirit of reconciliation and respect, the cultural hub is characterised by its large open-plan design, which befits the vast traditional lands of the Wiradjuri people across south-eastern Australia where Charles Sturt's inland campuses are located.

The cultural hub incorporates large and small meeting areas for visitors to interact with Wiradjuri Elders, who will invite a range of community organisations to provide services and activities including:

- Passing on local cultural knowledge through storytelling, lectures, demonstrations and workshops (for example, possum skin cloak making and traditional dance)
- Community access to a cultural library and artefacts
- Social and emotional support for students
- A sense of connection for Aboriginal students living away from country
- Education workshops for students, staff and community members.

The opening of the cultural hub extends

the University's deep engagement with Indigenous communities in line with its Yindymarra Winhanganha ethos, which means 'the wisdom of respectfully knowing how to live in a world worth living in'.



It also underpins the value the University places on the knowledge and culture of traditional land owners, which serves to strengthen its partnership with Indigenous communities to empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff, while also encouraging relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

"Many community organisations and friends and family of the Elders, including NSW Police from the Local Area Command in Bathurst and the Police Citizens Youth

Club, celebrated the opening with us, and we look forward to sharing our culture with guests in the space for a long time to come."

Charles Sturt Vice-Chancellor Professor Andrew Vann said the size of the crowd that attended the launch event shows how important the Wiradjuri people are to the local community.

"The University is very privileged to have been able to create a wonderful space for the Elders on our campus in Bathurst. This recognises their custodianship of the land on which we work and creates a place from which they can teach us and welcome us to their country," he said.

"We look forward to their continuing contribution to the Charles Sturt community through sharing their wisdom with us."

It also underpins the value the University places on the knowledge and culture of traditional land owners, which serves to strengthen its partnership with Indigenous communities to empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff, while also encouraging relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

"There were more than 250 people who attended the launch of the new Wiradjuri Elders Cultural Hub, many commenting on how comfortable and calm the space is," said Elders from Gunhigal Mayiny Wiradyuri Dyilang Enterprise.

| CASE STUDY

GROUND-BREAKING ADVANCES IN THE EARLY DETECTION OF AUTISM

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY

DR JOSEPHINE BARBARO &

PROFESSOR CHERYL DISSANAYAKE



Autism currently affects an estimated one in 70 Australians, however early diagnosis is proving to have major benefits.

The Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre at La Trobe University is leading the way with early detection of the lifelong developmental condition, which is characterised by difficulties in social interaction, communication, restricted and repetitive interests and behaviours, and sensory sensitivities.

Over the past 15 years, the Centre has developed two highly effective tools for the early detection of autism, both



leading to ground-breaking advances in reliably identifying children with autism during the second year of life.

Firstly, the Centre developed the Social Attention and Communication Surveillance (SACS) tool, which is the most accurate early autism screening tool in the world with a Positive Predictive Value (accuracy rating) of 81%, which compares to 6% PPV for the next most commonly used tool, the M-CHAT.

Significantly, the SACS tool has been

adopted worldwide and has now been translated and disseminated across 12 countries throughout the Asia-Pacific and Europe, including the monitoring of 45,000 infants and toddlers in the Victorian and Tasmanian Maternal and Child Health System, and 700,000 babies in the Chinese city of Tianjin between 2013 and 2020.

Building on the success of the SACS tool, La Trobe University then collaborated with industry partner Salesforce to



incorporate the tool into a mobile app – ASDetect – which is a free application designed for parents to monitor their infants and toddlers for early signs of autism.

Since its launch in February 2016, the ASDetect app has had over 36,000 downloads in Australia alone, and is has been translated into Mandarin and Spanish thanks to a Google Impact Challenge grant.

The evidence-based app is serving to

reduce barriers associated with access to timely screening tools for autism – thereby promoting earlier diagnosis – with preliminary data from a current study of parent usage of the app indicating an accuracy of 84% in detecting autism in 11-30-month-olds from a sample of 1,255 children to date.

Importantly, the Centre’s research is resulting in sustainable and positive change nationally and internationally for individuals and families impacted by autism, which impacts 2% of the population.

Early detection and the subsequent provision of services is showing to reduce core difficulties and secondary problems that often accompany a diagnosis of autism, thereby helping enhance children’s language, cognitive, adaptive and developmental outcomes.

An example of this social benefit is that children identified via the SACS tool and diagnosed by two years of age had lower rates of co-occurring intellectual disability (8%) compared to children diagnosed between the ages of 3-5 (24%). As a result, children diagnosed earlier are more likely to be included within mainstream school settings and require less ongoing support than children diagnosed later.

These social benefits also translate into substantial socio-economic benefits, with early intervention decreasing monetary

costs associated with autism across the lifespan.

In fact, Synergies Economic Consulting estimates the total cost of autism in Australia to be between \$8.1 billion and \$11.2 billion per annum, with early intervention saving Australian society \$1.55 million per person over the lifetime through reduced support required at school, increased likelihood of employment, and reduced reliance on supported care in adulthood.

Individuals with autism are also the largest group accessing the National Disability Insurance Scheme, currently reported at 31% of all presenting cases.

Additionally, all primary healthcare professionals are benefitting from the Centre’s research – including MCH nurses, GPs and paediatricians –

through upskilling on children’s social-communication milestones via the SACS training, empowering them to identify and refer children who are showing early signs of autism.



The evidence-based app is serving to reduce barriers associated with access to timely screening tools for autism – thereby promoting earlier diagnosis.



| CASE STUDY

CONNECTING IDEAS, DEVELOPING SOLUTIONS AND IMPROVING LIVES

FLINDERS UNIVERSITY

KELLY KNIGHT



When the Medical Device Partnering Program (MDPP) was established at Flinders University in 2008, it was designed to provide a model for engagement between researchers and industry.

More than a decade later, the MDPP is going from strength to strength as an ideas incubator, helping the nation build on its research and manufacturing capabilities to position Australia as a global leader in the growing medical devices market.

As the only program of its kind in Australia, the MDPP was originally

established by Professor Karen Reynolds at Flinders University with support from the South Australian Government, other university institutions and industry partners.

It focuses on breaking down the barriers for invention by working with industry partners to connect ideas and provide tangible outcomes such as proof of concept, prototyping, clinical evaluation and end-user trials.

“Our mission is to bring to life ideas for new medical devices and assistive technologies. And by focusing on early stage research and development, we’re able to provide the most value in a short amount of time,” said Professor Reynolds.

“The MDPP invites anyone to submit new ideas for innovations, whether they’re a serial inventor with a great idea; an end-user or clinician who identifies a problem; a company who wants to diversify their product portfolio; or an academic who has great technology sitting idle in the lab.

“The main requirement is that the technology is driven by end-user need.”

The ideas that are brought to the MDPP span a range of solutions and include therapeutic devices, diagnostics, hospital equipment, implantable technologies, surgical instruments and assistive technologies.

The MDPP team then undertakes a review of the idea, and if no other solutions are already existing and if the idea appears technologically and commercially viable, it moves to the workshop stage.

CONNECTED FOR DEVELOPMENT

The MDPP’s workshop stage is one of its

key points of difference.

The process brings together a range of experts – from engineers, clinicians, manufacturers, end-users, product development and intellectual property specialists – to analyse the idea and contribute to concept development.

This co-creation, as part of the project brainstorming and design phase, is critical. It is here that the team scopes the best use of 250 hours to ensure what is delivered has technical and commercial merit.

“The workshop process ensures that all the pieces of the puzzle are brought together to finalise the project scope and give the technology the best hope of success,” said Professor Reynolds.

“The MDPP is different because it doesn’t provide funding; it provides up to 250 hours of research and development expertise, and 30 hours of product opportunity assessment.

“Significantly, the applicant retains all IP developed during the 250-hour project, avoiding the need for long-winded agreements to expedite the process.”

FOCUSED FOR IMPACT

MDPP projects are selected based on viable technological and commercial merit – in response to industry-driven problems – and are deliberately limited to 250 hours to ensure focus and encourage future research and development.

Since the MDPP was established in 2008, it has considered over 500 ideas for new medical technologies, which has led to over 135 workshops and 90 completed projects.

A significant number of these projects



have since reached the market and are currently providing benefits to healthcare, in addition to new job opportunities and longer term research opportunities between industry and the university sector.

NATIONAL GROWTH

With support from MTPConnect and the Growth Centres Initiative, the MDPP is now expanding across Australia.

Through funding from LaunchVic

(Victoria's startup agency), the MDPP established operations in Victoria in January 2019, with Swinburne University of Technology helping bring together a number of local partners including the CSIRO, the University of Melbourne, Monash University, RMIT University, Melbourne Centre for Nanofabrication, Biomedical Research Victoria, St Vincent's Hospital, the Baker Institute and La Trobe University.

The MDPP is also currently exploring

opportunities in New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australia as it continues to develop ideas and build connections between researchers and industry to ultimately benefit the healthcare sector.

For more information visit www.mdpp.org.au.

| CASE STUDY

BUSH UNIVERSITY EMPOWERING FUTURE INDIGENOUS LEADERS

WUYAGIBA BUSH UNIVERSITY

KEVIN GUYURRYURRU ROGERS,

DR EMILIE ENS & WALANGA MURU



Australia's first bush university is encouraging young Indigenous Australians to stay in school and pursue tertiary education.

The Wuyagiba Bush University is the culmination of a partnership between Macquarie University, the Aboriginal Yugul Mangi Rangers and South-East Arnhem Land communities to provide opportunities for remote Indigenous students to access university education.

The Nature Conservancy, Origin Foundation and the Federal Government have also provided critical financial

support to help establish the University, which is located on-Country at Wuyagiba outstation in the Northern Territory.

Focusing on combining traditional knowledge and transferrable skills – including essay writing, computer skills, film making and language translation – the University is putting into practice the original vision of local Elders to develop programs that build local capacity for self-management, create future employment opportunities, and maintain cultural and environmental knowledge and practice.

In 2018, the first cohort of students graduated from a pre-university course to prepare them for tertiary study, with 11 students subsequently taking up places in Bachelor degrees at Macquarie University in Sydney this year.

Significantly, students from the program are the first from the remote Ngukurr community to undertake Bachelor degrees in more than 30 years.

Employing local Aboriginal people to run the campus and teach cultural lessons in partnership with Macquarie University staff, the Wuyagiba Bush University will offer places in its pre-university course to 20 students every year.

Importantly, students going on to study at Macquarie will foster cross-cultural sharing of knowledge and experiences with other Indigenous and non-Indigenous students from across Australia.

The Wuyagiba Bush University concept – first considered in 2008 – has stemmed from eco-cultural research and community engagement projects conducted in the region over the past



Significantly, students from the program are the first from the remote Ngukurr community to undertake Bachelor degrees in more than 30 years.

decade, with this work ultimately winning the 2017 Eureka Prize for Innovation in Citizen Science.

These projects incorporated Indigenous knowledge to emphasise connection and care for country and culture, with these same principles now continuing in the University's curriculum.

The creation of the University has also had major social benefits, including more people in Ngukurr and surrounding communities recognising the need to keep children in school so they too can go to university one day.

Acknowledged by the Australian Research Council's Engagement-Impact assessment as having a "highly significant contribution" that is "highly effective", the Wuyagiba Bush University is not only providing educational, environmental, social and community benefits, it is also facilitating significant economic and financial growth for a remote region that has traditionally had high rates of unemployment and low rates of education.



| CASE STUDY

PROTECTING THE GREAT BARRIER REEF THROUGH BEST PRACTICE PORT OPERATIONS

JAMES COOK UNIVERSITY, NORTH QUEENSLAND BULK PORTS

DR NATHAN WALTHAM, NICOLA STOKES, KEVIN KANE &

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR MICHAEL RASHEED



A collaboration between James Cook University (JCU) and North Queensland Bulk Ports

(NQBP) is helping protect the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area.

JCU has long been at the forefront of scientific knowledge of sensitive marine habitats such as seagrass and coral, as well as water quality science and

management in the Great Barrier Reef.

The University's world-leading team of researchers and specialists in marine water quality and coastal habitat ecology have long provided services to ports in Queensland, including one of the longest continuously running seagrass monitoring programs (25 years) in the world, which has been instrumental in ensuring the protection and management of seagrasses that occur within the Great Barrier Reef Marine Protection Area.

NQBP is the port authority for four major port facilities in Queensland – three (Mackay, Hay Point and Abbot Point) of which are located adjacent to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Protection Area. In fact, NQBP is the only port authority in the world to manage three priority ports located on the shores of a World Heritage Area.

Signed in 2017, the partnership between JCU and NQBP has brought together





the University's outstanding marine environmental research expertise with NQBP's environmental management team to implement, monitor and promote best practice environmental management of ports along the Great Barrier Reef.

Balancing the essential requirement for ports to facilitate economic trade with the need to preserve and protect the Great Barrier Reef, the partnership is capitalising on a highly integrated and scientifically rigorous marine water quality and sensitive marine habitat program, which builds on decades of marine and coral research and knowledge within the university's Centre for Tropical Water & Aquatic Ecosystem Research (TropWATER).

The data generated is seen as a long-term investment in assisting port operations, providing assurance for compliance reporting and strategic planning of projects, as well as expectations of

community environmental stewardship and management.

In addition to credible port management informed by rigorous academic research, the JCU/NQBP collaboration has enabled key environmental thresholds to be defined to influence regulation.

For example, data from the program has been used to set specific environmental thresholds for maintenance dredging in the port of Hay Point, which commenced in April 2019. This has helped NQBP to work more effectively with regulators to set allowable activities that are adaptively managed during the dredging campaign in real time.

The partnership has also led to major breakthroughs in understanding how coastal marine systems function, including new insights into tolerance and resilience of marine habitats, leading to the development of innovative management

tools that have been directly applied to benefit the outstanding universal values of the Great Barrier Reef.

Many undergraduate and postgraduate students have also been given opportunities through an industry placement program as part of the partnership, including working with scientists and industry leaders to help implement real world applied outcomes.

A citizen science program has also been established this year on the back of the JCU/NQBP partnership to look at marine water quality monitoring around the Whitsundays region in northern Queensland. This new program includes formal training of tourism operators in water quality data collection, and will become an important blueprint for a new wave of citizen science to continue efforts to protect the Great Barrier Reef in years to come.

| CASE STUDY

FARMING TOGETHER CULTIVATES COLLABORATION AMONG PRIMARY PRODUCERS

SOUTHERN CROSS UNIVERSITY

AMANDA SCOTT



A pilot program designed to provide farmers with knowledge, skills and materials on collaborative ideas to help boost their businesses has proved a major success for primary producers across Australia.

The two-year 'Farm Co-operatives and Collaboration Pilot Program' – more commonly known as 'Farming Together' – has successfully helped thousands of Australian farmers capitalise on opportunities, strengthen their financial position and be more attractive to investors. While the program initially set out to reach 2,000 primary producers, support

100 farming groups and fund 15 projects between 2016-2018, it eventually interacted with more than 28,500 primary producers from more than 730 groups, eventually funding 51 projects nationwide.

Delivered proportionally to farming groups within each state, the four central components of the program were:

- Expert support: facilitate independent and experienced consultants to supply tailored expert advice to farmers who retained control over the project.
- Farmer group projects: a competitive merit-based funding process for groups to complete activities.
- Knowledge exchange: delivered training resources to increase understanding of co-operative management and governance, comprising accredited training, workshops, manuals, fact sheets and videos.
- Communications: attracted participants and promoted the program's activities and success stories.

Designed and delivered by Southern Cross University, Farming Together assembled a national pool of more than 200 agri-consultants, assigning 122 of them for in-depth service provision ranging from collaborative business structures, business planning and legal services through to marketing, e-commerce and supply-chain logistics.

The program spanned a broad cross-section of farming industries in Australia, including abalone, agri-finance, bananas, beef, chestnuts, chicken, dairy, eels, fishing, forestry, garlic, grain, hemp, horticulture, IT, kangaroo, native bush foods and botanicals, macadamias, mustard, nursery, olives, oysters, pork, rice, sheep, sandalwood, tea,

timber, truffles, turf, wheat and wool.

Significantly, Farming Together worked with Australia's two leading co-op agencies to develop learning materials, while training packages were also developed and delivered to 94 co-operative directors through partnerships with the University of WA, Australian Institute of Management and the University of Newcastle.

Individual groups used the program to acquire value-add equipment, as well as to initiate and develop export sales, expand distribution networks, negotiate higher price supply deals, develop investment platforms and establish industry quality assurance benchmarks.

After completion of the program, participants were surveyed in the Final Evaluation Report (Clear Horizons, 2018), which yielded the following results:

- 73% indicated that a problem had been solved or a critical question answered.
- 65% reported that a collaborative project had substantially moved ahead.
- 54% responded that it had helped position them to access other funds.
- 54% reported they had been provided a solid foundation through strategic or business planning.
- 50% reported they had been assisted to formalise their collaborative group.
- 19% reported immediate on-farm returns as an outcome.

Ultimately, Farming Together's impact on the agricultural co-operative landscape has been significant and has served to revive interest in co-operation and collaboration among primary producer groups across Australia.

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