Paul Benneworth *Editor*

University Engagement With Socially Excluded Communities

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To Leanne and Theodore Hendrick

Preface

This volume emerges from a symposium organised in Newcastle-upon-Tyne in the summer of 2009 with the title "Excellence in Engagement: Policies and practices for university–community engagement". This was organised as part of the UK Economic and Social Research Council-funded project "University engagement with socially excluded communities" (*cf.* "Acknowledgements" to this chapter). That day aimed to stimulate a discussion between those with an interest in universities contributing to the problems of socially excluded communities, through a series of presentations and discussions from five main constituencies, governmental policy-makers, university senior managers, university academics researching engagement, university staff working in engagement projects and community groups themselves engaging with universities.

That symposium highlighted a number of tensions and pressures which exist in seeking to stimulate university–community engagement. It was clear that that discussion could not be done justice to in a single day symposium, and so the idea was born to extend those discussions into a volume from which more clarity about the nature of university–community engagement could be gained. This volume therefore seeks to provide the space for a range of leading authors in the field of university–community engagement to explore what to them are the main tensions and dynamics in universities engaging with excluded communities, and to reflect on the potential implications this has for the evolution of the idea of a university.

This volume does not seek to give a straightforward or easy answer to the question of how universities are evolving in response to the grand challenges of the twenty first century. Rather, through the contributions, it becomes possible to move beyond current simplistic narratives, between idealists arguing that engagement is central to university missions, and opportunists who say engagement only happens in order to fulfil some other responsibility. The idea of the engaged university is being constructed in different places in different ways depending to some extent on the external environment, and also on the enthusiasm and commitment of the particular institutions involved to the ideals of engagement.

In a sense, that balancing act should not be surprising, because one of the reasons for the longevity of the institution of university has been that it is a means to balance between tensions, between the need for practical and vocational skills, between the

need for particular and universal knowledge, between the need for disinterest and commitment in knowledge creation, a theme raised at more length by Powell and Drayson in Chap. 8. The structure behind the book is to take five main debates framing university–community engagement. By presenting a series of perspectives on those debates and valuations, clarity concerning how engagement is balanced within the wider pressures confronting contemporary universities.

Not all the chapters presented in this volume were presented within the original symposium, and likewise not all those participating in the symposium were able to contribute chapters to the volume. The four areas chosen for this volume loosely correspond to the organisation of the day, but were amended in response to the presentations and discussions on the day, as well as to the comments of the reviewers of the proposal and manuscript, and also the editorial team of our publishers at Springer.

I would like to thank many people associated with the production of this volume. Firstly, to Yoka Janssen, my publisher at Springer, for her support and patience with what has been an inadvertently long process. Secondly, to all the authors and co-authors in this volume, for helping with the development of the ideas in this book and the wider intellectual project. Thirdly, to CHEPS, for making time available for me to successfully complete the research and the manuscript. Fourthly, to a set of referees for their supportive ideas and comments which I hope they see reflected in this final product. Finally, to my wife Leanne, who had to live with me writing the book, and my son Theo, who came to life during me writing this book, I could not have done this without you both, and for that reason, I dedicate this volume to you.

Enschede, The Netherlands/Tynemouth, The UK   Paul Benneworth
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Part I
University Engagement with Socially Excluded Communities

Chapter 1
University Engagement with Socially Excluded Communities

Towards the Idea of 'The Engaged University'

Paul Benneworth

1.1 Introduction: Towards the Idea of 'The Engaged University'

There appears to be an almost overwhelming consensus that an increasingly important element of the role of universities in contemporary society is to provide useful knowledge and contribute to emerging societal problems. However, the scale of the academic analysis to date has been surprising in its limitations, focusing on individual universities rather than universities as *institutions* within social systems. This results in slippery rhetorics where universities promote their activities rather than focusing on delivering socially useful knowledge (cf. Chap. 8).

This volume seeks to contribute by considering universities' societal contributions not only in terms of the activities, but also universities' internal structures, wider 'ideas of universities', and societal pressures on universities. Considering how university societal engagement has been transformed in these three domains helps understand how universities are evolving as institutions, and how far societal engagement is becoming a new university mission.

This chapter is both a volume overview as well as introduction to Part I. Section 1.1 places two notions: socially useful knowledge and the 'engaged university' within a long-term historical context. Section 1.2 considers a number of recent societal transformations influencing the nature of the university, including the emergence of the knowledge society, and the higher education (HE)-wide 'modernisation project'. Section 1.3 provides more detail on university engagement with excluded communities and rationalises the choice of focus. Section 1.4 provides a framework for understanding university–community engagement, and a conceptual framework for determining the social utility of particular engagement.

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1.2   Towards a Systematic Framework for Understanding University Engagement in Late Modernity

1.2.1   University Engagement with Excluded Communities: An Introduction to the Volume

A challenge across social sciences is to understand how established institutions which shape our societies are evolving and ground these 'big' narratives of change in much more specific institutional analysis. This volume focuses on how changes in the knowledge society are affecting the institution of university, in which it has a special role, namely the creation, circulation, transmission and adaptation of knowledge. The institution of 'university' dates back at least eight centuries, making it older than two other key societal institutions, namely the joint stock company (1600) and the nation state (1648). The idea of a university has always evolved reflecting changing societal dynamics, providing strong conceptual and practical reasons to believe that the emergence of the knowledge society might be creating a new institutional form, the 'engaged university'.

Barnett (2000, 2003) invokes the idea of an implicit social compact between universities and their societies. Our contention is that new forms of university always emerged through attempts to renew the compact in light of social change. Universities thereby seek to better align themselves to societal needs: Studying change in universities therefore allows reflection on wider social changes. However, the idea of an 'engaged university' is highly contested. Almost all commentators agree that it is desirable for universities to serve societal goals, yet parallel changes—the rise of 'new public management'—has weakened universities' explicit social functions (cf. Sect. 1.3.3).

Universities have been encouraged to deliver what can easily be measured, whilst universities' societal contributions are diffuse and specific to their particular institutional profiles. This has meant that outside certain extremely limited areas such as commercialisation, it has been impossible to effectively measure this engagement (cf. Watson 2007). This risks side-lining engagement even where universities and policy-makers are enthusiastic about the idea. This in turn risks reducing engagement to 'detached benevolence', where the university offers something potentially useful without considering its applicability to community needs.

To concretely explore this conundrum, this volume takes two distinctive approaches. Firstly, all contributors have focused on engagement with excluded communities, which provides an extreme example, with a group whose problems are societally urgent and who traditionally rarely interact with universities. Secondly, all explore how the value of engagement as a university mission is articulated, discussed, debated and contested across a range of stakeholder groups including universities, governments and societal partners such as unions and businesses.

The four parts of this volume follow this argument, covering four lead groups, namely scholars involved in engagement, in university management and organisational structures, the epistemic community defining the norms and practices of

university behaviour, and universities' social and policy contexts. Each part contains a mix of conceptual and empirical contributions exploring how university engagement is emerging against a broad transformation in these domains. All begin with an overview chapter seeking to clarify the main debates and practical issues. Following empirical contributions tease out particular wicked issues in these domain areas, for example illustrating the breadth of particular engagement activities, or highlighting different ways in which engagement ideas are taken up by the epistemic communities around universities.

The volume structure follows this conceptual division: Part I provides an introduction to university engagement and university–community engagement, presenting a number of concrete examples of university–community engagement in practice, to better highlight the contours of the field. Part II explores how universities are evolving as organisational structures in response to both a wider set of transformational pressures including changing needs to engage with societal groups. Part III explores how universities are evolving as an epistemic community in terms of the way the 'idea of a university' is evolving to encompass increased emphasis of societal engagement. Part IV explores how universities are evolving as societal institution in terms of the ways in which they are becoming sensitive to societal pressures mediated through policy instruments, accountability measures and transparency tools.

1.2.2   The Key Messages Emerging from this Volume

This volume puts forth the idea of university engagement as one competing mission amongst many and the tensions this creates in practice for a mission which no one could generally oppose. Our central argument is that engagement is influenced by what scholars do, but particularly by transformations in three key constituencies around universities. This volume concludes with a number of messages relating to how engagement discloses tensions facing universities. The conclusion draws them together to reflect more generally on wider changes in systems of governance and administration within which higher education policy is embedded.

Our central finding reemphasizes the idea of universities as complex entities, undertaking many activities and pulled simultaneously by many different drivers at different levels. Engagement reveals these in being both difficult to achieve, but reaffirming a sense in these constituencies that engagement is worthwhile. Universities are not just actors which relate to governments and customers, but institutions enmeshed in complex relationship systems with societal partners with their own goals, intentions, cultures and norms. This is visible in the systematic barriers restricting community engagement. These barriers emerge from shifting accountability and authority relations in public administration more generally.

Currently, universities in public administration discourses are considered as simple suppliers of services to individuals rather than as formational societal institutions (cf. Sect. 9.3.3). Where engagement has succeeded, 'smart accountability' has allowed universities the autonomy to undertake wider societal missions. Qualitatively

improving the nature of universities' societal contributions must allow coordinated action to deal with the grand challenges of the twenty-first century. There must be a shift from managing universities to deliver particular outcomes, restoring their powers of initiative to participate in wider coordinated social modernisation projects as seen historically in the development of national hydro- and nuclear-power infrastructure.

More speculatively, the conclusions also reflect on the wider implications of this shift. Current trends towards individualisation in public administration create strong tendencies undermining collective action necessary. This chapter reflects on whether the demands of the grand challenges might necessitate new, more *dirigiste*, forms of governance and how that might impact on our ideas of universities and the appropriate policy frames for universities and higher education into the future.

The conclusions finish with a brief reflection on demands for new research in higher education management, identifying the three most urgent. Firstly is generating better understandings of universities as nested systems of interdependent actors with multiple stakeholders, in networks with relationships also influenced by external environmental factors. Second is de-essentialising the idea of a university to thinking through the dynamics and development of university systems responsive to multiple drivers. Finally is the notion of 'smart modernisation', recognising universities as complex entities embedded in relational systems that do not instrumentally respond to policy-makers. The volume underscores the point that the future university is likely to have more consideration for its collective rather than individual benefits and beneficiaries, as societies find new ways of collective coordination creating resilience.

1.3 Diversity in University–Community Engagement

1.3.1 Introduction to Part I

This volume argues that contemporary pressures on universities to be more 'useful' must be understood in terms of a wider set of debates, from exploring how wider societal transformations affect universities as an institutional form, national debates about universities' social purposes, and universities' territorial relationships. Both scholars and policy-makers have invested heavily in understanding this relationship around many focus points, including university relationships with businesses, regions, policy-makers and economic clusters.

Scholars of this 'third mission' increasingly recognise the complexity of university engagement has date often been analysed in simplistic, reductive ways (cf. Pinheiro et al. 2012). That may be unsurprising, given the complexity of studying both societies but also universities, but this is also a result of scholars' and policy-makers' distinctions becoming reified into conceptual divisions (OECD 2007). Scholars make disciplinary distinctions focusing on particular interesting processes, such as contributions to technology-based growth or to territorial innovation dynamics.

These disciplinary analyses are the basis for policy development and become embedded into particular normative prescriptions thereby losing their original nuances, assumptions and limitations.

Policy-makers' simplified models of university societal impacts have influenced their attempts to manage engagement policies. Goddard (2005a, b) highlights how a number of different ministries within a higher education system have responsibilities impinging on university societal engagement, including science and education, health, infrastructure, industry and housing (Arbo and Benneworth 2007). Each policy domain frames university involvement in distinct ways which obscure other not immediately pertinent contributions: Health departments may focus on universities as hosts to university hospitals and regard societal impact as public health benefits.

This volume seeks to return some of the complexity to understanding the university societal relationships, and highlight interrelations between various university–society sub-systems. This systematic dimension has hitherto been largely ignored but it is vital to talk meaningfully concerning university social missions without reproducing self-serving or neo-paternalistic views of how universities create societal benefits.

The first step is to examine dominant perspectives on the realities and practicalities of university–community engagement. This is the focus of Part I of this volume. This chapter argues that university–community engagement is embedded within three sub-systems, namely university international organisations, wider university epistemic communities and societal demands on those universities. The remaining three chapters then highlight the realities of university–community engagement. Universities commonly talk about engagement in a rather dissonant way, invoking high principles and worthy beneficence whilst referring to rather more functional and even opportunistic behaviours.

These three chapters highlight the conditions which distinguish meaningful university–community engagement activity from opportunistic. Firstly, the interests of the excluded community are represented and shape the activity rather than being passively in receipt of supposedly useful interventions. Secondly, there are clear structural community benefits through improving their positionality in societal allocation mechanisms which restrain them (cf. Sect. 1.4). Thirdly, universities have a dependence on the activities to achieve their missions, making them important in the institutional identity and/or organisation.

In Chap. 2, Ros Derrett presents an empirical example from Australia which provides an inspiring example of how the challenge of aligning institutional culture, structures and behaviours towards effective community engagement can be addressed. In Chap. 3, Angie Hart and Kim Aumann present an example drawing on their own efforts to create a public engagement project and infrastructure within their own university, reflecting on emerging problems and difficulties even within a strongly supportive strategic environment. Finally, in Chap. 4, Ruth Williams and Alan Cochrane offer an objective framework for how universities interact with excluded communities and offer a taxonomy covering both the positive and negative characteristics of relationships between universities and these communities.

1.3.2   The Complexity of University–Society Relationships: An Introduction to the Chapter

Many volumes and articles explore the 'third mission' for universities, which we here take as a short-hand for a series of transformations necessitating universities be visibly useful to their host societies. This chapter provides a context for understanding these transformations by highlighting the various domains besides that of the university–societal compact that have been transformed. This chapter also outlines one particular domain of university–societal interaction, the material focus for this volume, which is university–community engagement.

We firstly provide insights into the wider transformations increasing demands and pressures on universities to be more societally engaged, distinguishing *immediate short-term political pressures*, including the global financial crisis and subsequent fiscal austerity, and much *longer term structural pressures* to put knowledge to productive use in adjusting to deep-seated and intractable problems, the so-called grand challenges of the twenty-first century. We argue that there is a clear expectation that universities will now deliver better against societal needs, and implicitly to deliver against these grand challenges. At the same time, there are many other pressures on universities from other directions: greater pressure on universities to be useful is not the only driver of change in universities. These pressures are derived from a series of domains influencing university decision-making processes including:

- Internal communities within particular universities,
- The epistemic communities which define contemporary 'ideas of universities', and
- External stakeholders who are in some way significant to the universities.

Each domain is undergoing its own fundamental transformation. Universities' organisational structures have been comprehensively overhauled and functionalised around a modernisation agenda, making universities more steerable by policy-makers and managers. The 'idea' of a university has both embraced the idea of increasing societal utility as well as a very particular kind of Anglo-American, research-intensive elite university-derived notion of excellence. Universities experience societal demands primarily through policy-makers' demands, accountability measures and transparency tools which embody particular notions of societal demand rather than representing direct expressed social needs.

To understand how these transformations affect universities' societal orientation, we focus on one particular form of engagement, with socially excluded communities, chosen because nowhere is the distinction between meaningful contributions and opportunistic functionalism more evident than where the potential beneficiaries do not directly reward universities for their involvement. In Sect. 1.5, we explore excluded communities in more length, to understand them in their own terms, as communities with agency and interests rather than purely as potential beneficiaries of universities' services.

This volume does have two main limitations in its scope. Firstly, it is focused on the university side of university–community engagement, and secondly it draws its examples from a narrow pool of national examples, dominated by the United Kingdom, with other examples from Australia, Canada and North America. Sections 1.5 and 1.6 provide more detail on social exclusion and criteria for university engagement to be meaningfully useful to these communities.

The UK bias of the book means that the generalisability of the lessons is contingent on the situation to which one would transfer them. However, the United Kingdom has in the last 15 years been in the vanguard of transformations in higher education that have become normalised across wider higher education systems, and so the generalisability relates to the permeability of particular systems to new ideas. In particular, the Germanic system has been resistant to change, although Germany's government is now trying to push through new accountability and steering measures in pursuit of system optimisation. Nevertheless one can expect the issue of societal and community engagement to become more important across an increasing number of jurisdictions in the medium term.

Nevertheless, mindful of these limitations, the book's contribution comes in arguing that there is a need to understand university–societal engagement via various systemic elements' inter-relation. A number of subsystems are charted, including formal engagement activities, the academic communities, the epistemic communities and the policy environment. There is a clear policy implication that policy should understand and manage higher education as a system rather than as competing elements and use system-guiding tools to deliver socially useful outcomes.

1.4 Universities, the 'Social Compact' and Institutional Change

1.4.1 Universities as Societal Institutions

Universities as institutions have always been interrelated with societal needs. Baumunt (1997) characterises the value of the university in its capacity to produce knowledge both sufficiently abstract for understanding increasingly organised societies, but sufficiently practical to be directly valuable to sponsors and clients. This makes the persistence of the imagery of the university as an ivory-tower (cf. Bok 1984) particularly incomprehensible. Certainly, its implication that universities have traditionally been remote from their host societies is certainly wide of the mark (Bender 1988; Rüegg 1992). Universities have long ensured their survival by meeting societal needs through reflective learning.

It is generally accepted that the modern university emerged in Italy in the eleventh century as firstly an ecclesiastical school and later a community of highly educated scholars (Arbo and Benneworth 2007). Its emergence was tied to underlying social factors, including Europe's rising agricultural productivity, increasing trade and agricultural surplus, and growing urbanisation. Universities emerged to educate the elite demanded by increasingly urban societies, augmenting church-based education's

philosophical and classical disciplines with higher vocational knowledge necessary for professions such as law (Ernste 2007). These first universities were closely related to spiritual infrastructure such as monasteries or ecclesiastical courts *but* notably independent of them (Bender 1988; Rüegg 1992).

At least three further 'ideas' of universities came in tandem with substantive societal shifts. The emergence of the post-Westfalian nation-state saw universities used in validating claims toward nationhood (Harvie 1994). Universities of this period were significant in nation-building, acting as national academies and repositories of national culture, as well as providing a national administrative elite with a common educational experience. This is typified by Lund University in Sweden, created following the Treaty of Roskilde (1660) which ceded several formerly Danish provinces to the Swedish crown (Benneworth et al. 2009a, b).

The third university idea dates to the late eighteenth century industrialisation. In Germany, the Humboldt University in Berlin was created in 1810 to educate a technical elite to help Imperial Prussia develop economically and overtake its traditional rival, the United Kingdom (McClelland 1988; Landes 1997). This model was exported to the United States as the Land Grant University, where Federal lands were granted to the states to endow higher education institutions to accelerate the diffusion of agricultural and mechanical innovations (McDowell 2001).

The most recent change dates from the early twentieth century and the increasing societal democratisation (Delanty 2002). Universities were created in Brussels, Nova Scotia, the Netherlands and Latin America specifically to help emancipate formerly persecuted (often religious) groups (inter alia Gysels and van den Eynde 1955; Lotz and Welton 1997; Morgan 2004; Acquino Febrillet 2009; Benneworth and Hospers 2007; Cortez Ruiz 2008). In the post-war period, this evolved through the post-1968 period of societal unrest and protest (Daalder 1982). Societal engagement in this third wave involved opening up and massifying universities, removing the sense which they contributed to an unresponsive and secretive national elite.

1.4.2 *University Evolution in the Context of the Knowledge Society*

It is commonplace to rationalise the evolving relationship between universities and society as a natural consequence of the emergence of the knowledge society. In the knowledge society, 'knowledge' is a vital factor of production (Romer 1986, 1994; Solow 1994). Nations' capacities to compete increasingly depend on their capacity to accumulate and exploit 'knowledge capital' (Temple 1998). Corresponding to this, governments increasingly emphasise policies creating, stimulating and exploiting 'knowledge capital' (Milward 2003).

The knowledge economy can be conceptualised as part of a broader shift towards a post-industrial, post-Fordist system (Sabel 1994). The increasing importance of knowledge-based economic activities has profound consequences on individuals'

capacities for economic participation. Post-Fordist systems of economic organisations have involved increasing individualisation within society and an increasing emphasis on individuals themselves managing their own risks (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1996).

Peck and Jones (1995) characterise this as a shift from a Fordist Welfare State towards a Schumpeterian Workfare State, where social institutions are geared towards helping individuals maximise their benefits from the knowledge economy rather than helping to ensure that all citizens are able to participate in society. Institutions supporting individual competitiveness are favoured and thrive: those promoting social justice and addressing inequality are increasingly intrusively regulated in the name of promoting citizen choice in service provision (Peck and Tickell 2002).

This latter property, highlighting hidden social injustices in access to societal services, is useful in understanding higher education's role in the knowledge society. This gets beyond two standard narratives. One claims that universities are becoming increasingly powerful within the knowledge society for their unique knowledge-creating roles (cf. Goddard 2005a, b; OECD 2007). The other argues that the risk society necessitates individuals retraining throughout their careers, making universities focal for individual life-long learning (e.g. Fryer 1999).

It has been standard to assert that these two narratives provide universities with a 'third mission' alongside teaching and research (Molas-Gallart et al. 2002). This encompasses those social, enterprising, innovation activities that universities undertake alongside teaching and research to creating additional societal benefits (Montesinos et al. 2008). The basic contours of the idea are well-understood, although sometimes in a slightly reductionist form as a preoccupation with commercialisation and profit over creating wider societal added-value (cf. Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI) 1982; Clark 1998).

This third mission has been part of an increased marketisation and commercialisation in universities. In the search for external income, universities have become enterprising and entrepreneurial, engaging in commercialisation to generate resources to secure their survival, and focusing their administrative and management structures on empowering entrepreneurialism (Clark 1998; Cornford and Pollock 2003). The downsides of this are well-understood, reducing access to universities for those groups who lack their own private resources, disadvantaging the weakest. But influenced by the individual benefit perspective, government action has focused on measures such as means-tested bursaries and grants for the poorest students rather than ensuring collective benefit.

What is omitted from this debate is the individualisation of universities' formational contributions to social development via wider community structures, national, regional and local cultures, and democratic life. Universities' contributions are not exclusively through creating graduates and providing technology to businesses: Their formational role provides individuals with democratic and cultural—as well as economic—capital. Universities in the knowledge society are not merely a source of knowledge but a means to participate. However, governance transformation is changing their capacity to deliver that vital contribution.

1.4.3 Modernisation and Managerialism in Higher Education

The changes to universities as institutions resulted not only from wider societal transformation, but also purposive effort by governments and multinational bodies including the European Commission and OECD (CHEPS et al. 2009). One major mechanism by which this has been imposed has been the 'modernisation agenda', fitting universities into new models of public management, strategically managed to pursue 'excellence' (Ferlie et al. 1996; Commission of the European Communities (CEC) 2003). This has been part of a wider shift towards new public management, where governments ensure complex social service provision by mobilising networks of providers who innovatively provide solutions (Rhodes 1997; Kickert et al. 1997). To force providers to meet real needs, governments hold providers to account by creating markets in formerly monopolistic services, endowing consumers with choice in services.

Post-war expansion of higher education paved the way for new public management of universities (Neave and van Vught 1991). Higher education systems originally provided public funding with relatively high freedom from interference (Longden 2001; Scott 2007). Increased funding for expansion reduced this freedom from interference. Governments began hypothecating funding and using increasing sector regulation to ensure that HE expansion brought the desired benefits (Maassen 1996). Universities became trapped by competing *governmental* pressures into devoting all their energies to meeting governmental demands, thereby neglecting the users whom government wanted to benefit from HE.

Higher education has been in the vanguard of the development of new public management, which one might consider as a 'canary in the mine' (Kickert 1995). Higher education provided a good laboratory for NPM as a complex policy field with very strong and traditional producers (universities). Rapidly increasing outputs were demanded but corresponding funding increases were politically unpalatable (cf. OECD 2008; CHEPS et al. 2009).

The OECD neatly summarised the outcomes of these policy experiments:

> In the governance of tertiary education, the ultimate objective of educational authorities as the guardians of public interest is to ensure that public resources are efficiently spent by [universities] to societal purposes. There is the expectation that institutions are to contribute to the economic and social goals of countries. This is a mixture of many demands, such as: quality of teaching and learning defined in new ways including greater relevance to learner and labour market needs; research and development feeding into business and community development; contributing to internationalisation and international competitiveness. (OECD 2008, p. 13)

There has been a change in university regulatory regimes from a 'freedom from …' (interference by government) towards a 'freedom to …' (allocate resources internally). Governments have tended to set broad regulatory frameworks and give universities strong incentives to respond to stakeholders' interests (Kickert 1995). There is an increasing use of contracting frameworks between governments and universities/HE sector groups to explicitly define targets (CHEPS et al. 2009).

As CHEPS (2009) shows, governmental uptake of this approach is varied, but governments are increasingly using these contracting and indirect steering methods.

On the other hand, universities as individual institutions have been granted far more autonomy, shifting towards managerial and away from collegial governance structures (Eurydice 2008). A key element has been a comprehensive shift from a resource expenditure model towards a resource investment model (Jongbloed et al. 2007), with three new approaches. 'Block grants' involve universities are allocated funds which they are free to vire internally. 'Payment by results' see that universities are paid by input (e.g. students recruited) or output (e.g. numbers of graduations) delivered. 'Co-funding' involves increasing individual payment for services received, exemplified in tuition fees.

These funding shifts require parallel organisational changes, what Bleiklie (2007) refers to as environmental pressure, new actor constellations and new forms of governance. Firstly, individual providers need autonomy to distinguish themselves from competitors, and focus institutional resources on areas of expertise. Secondly, innovative financial models for services are needed, where funding follows consumer preference and demand. Where markets do not exist, quasi-markets can be created by specifying targets and funding formulae rewarding desirable behaviour (Bartlett and Le Grand 1993). Thirdly, creating comparability between service providers, through the use of comparative transparency tools, allows consumers to exercise choice (van Vught and Westerheijden 2010).

These trends are all evident in recent shifts in higher education management (Bleiklie 1998). Reforms created university management structures able to negotiate with funding agencies and to strategically respond to governments' policy signals. The desire for comparability has driven the growth of a range of national and international institutional league tables providing rankings of the student experience, their international reputation or their research performance (cf. Part IV).

These changes have been criticised for their instrumentalism lying behind governance reform (cf. Bridgman and Wilmot 2007; Greenwood 2007), in particular the side-effect demanding that universities create hierarchies of missions. Universities are forced to explicitly state in advance which activities they favour, while their historic strength has been in creating synergies between activities (Baumunt 1997). University societal engagement only weakly fits with performance management measures and targets.

In visiting one institution to talk about their community engagement activities, a senior manager proudly showed me their institutional strategy, nine priority areas each with a detailed table giving their own aims, sub-priorities, targets and performance indicators. When turning to the page dealing with 'community engagement' (one of their own nine priority areas), unlike the other eight, except for the heading 'Community engagement', the page was completely blank. Beyond the immediate embarrassment of the situation, the message was clear. The community engagement was an aspiration but impossible to express in performance management terms.

1.4.4   The Public Voice and Contemporary University Management

Shifts in the nature of democracy and public accountability have also driven increased expectations of university–societal engagement. The post-war Western Europe corporatist arrangement included mass political movements where citizens identified strongly with coherent political identities organised through mass membership organisations which negotiated in national political arenas to meet their supporters' interests (Allum 1995). This provided universities with easy public accountability: approval by these mass membership organisations, whether parliamentary parties, trade universities, employers' associations or social compacts, granted these institutions societal legitimacy.

This provided a strong position for universities to act as expressions of particular national socio-political projects. In the Netherlands, the creation of Calvinist and Catholic universities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century formed an important part of the Dutch consociational settlement of tolerant pillars (Pellings 1997). Vanavar Bush famously described US universities' economic contributions as the 'Endless Frontier', laying the basis for strong US government support for universities' driving forward the defence industry and stimulating innovation in strategic sectors, evoked as the 'Sputnik moment' in President Obama's 2011 State of the Union address (Bush 1945; Etzkowitz 2008).

The strength of this system was its stability, relying heavily on negotiations and deals between different power blocs within predominantly national societies. However, this became its weakness, as in the course of the 1960s dissatisfaction grew amongst Western Europe and American societies that key political decisions were being taken more for élites' advantage and convenience than for 'citizens' benefit. The most obvious signal of this crisis in HE came in the French protests in May 1968, when students declared solidarity in France with striking car factory workers. The late 1960s political crisis forced many governments into political reforms to increase political transparency and democratic accountability (Allen 2002), and universities were also subject to these reforms.

More recently, there has been a radical shift in direction in political representation towards a situation some have characterised as 'post-politics'. This refers to the disintegration and hollowing out in recent years of the stable political structures by which wider societal interests were represented in society (Leach 2002). These structures have lost their immediate connection with their membership, resulting in a much looser coupling of decision-making centres with society as a whole. This is visible in the rise of single-issue and extremist and/or radical parties across Europe, which temporarily fill the vacuum left in social interests by existing interest structures.

The social compact for higher education can no longer be fulfilled by university senior managers negotiating with political elites about desirable outcomes. Instead universities are dependent on enrolling popular support from diverse constituencies and presenting that back to government. Engagement forms a critical part of mobilising supporters and coalitions around a platform of 'the value of universities', and creating broader social consensus around the value of higher education.

This is the second engagement challenge for universities, validating themselves by demonstrating their direct relevance to a diverse range of societal groupings. Combining the pressures of excellence and accountability frames the idea of an engaged university as one in which the university is reinvented to simultaneously demonstrate societal value to a range of social interests. But given the relative diversity of these interests, universities' risk is being pulled too far in a particular direction, thereby losing their independence, central to their societal value.

1.4.5 Universities and the 'Grand Challenges'

The shift from an industrial to a knowledge society is arguably as great as any of the three previous shifts, from mercantile to industrial to democratic societies. Viewed from a broad historical perspective, change in universities has always been driven by *crises and challenges within host societies*. The urban society faced the challenge of regulating its population, the mercantile society on enforcing taxation, the nation-state on ensuring economic growth and élite legitimacy, and the industrial society on ensuring that its population received a fair share of economic growth.

The main challenges facing the knowledge society are coming to terms with the ecological limits of industrial society, developing new instruments of social cohesion, control and resource utilisation. These problems, first set out in the 1972 Club of Rome report, have only recently have become regarded as demanding urgent political action.

In 2008, the US National Academy of Engineering launched a consultation on the 'Grand challenges for engineering', socio-technical problems facing humankind, demanding large scale solutions mixing scientific ingenuity with political will and social mobilisation. These 'grand challenges', such as energy security, better health-care and access to water for all, require long-term solutions built up from multiple actors contributing in diverse ways. The institution of university is likewise likely to evolve in response to these 'grand challenges' (Boyer 1990). This may be positive in contributing to solving these problems, or it may be negative, being replaced by other kinds of organisation if it fails to produce effective solutions (cf. Phillipson 1974).

In seeking to better understand the impact of this social transformation on universities, it is necessary to understand what is so challenging about the grand challenges. Ackoff (1999) refers to this class of problems as 'multi-disciplinary messes' (Greenwood 2007, pp. 99–101).

> These are complex, dynamic, multi-disciplinary problems that have scientific, technical, social scientific and humanistic dimensions ... these are precisely the kinds of problems that graduates of universities will face in their work lives, and that local, regional and national governments consider to be urgent. (Greenwood 2007, p. 109)

Universities seem to be ideally positioned to respond to these challenges not least because they possess huge knowledge which is needed for the solution of these challenges. However, multi-disciplinary messes are also characteristic of a shift

in societal relationships of knowledge production. The industrial-age university was organised around disciplinary knowledge canons which extended in a relatively linear way except when paradigm shifts occurred (Kuhn 1962; Latour and Woolgar 1979; Delanty 2002). An organisational structure in the industrial university was provided by professors, departments and disciplines, giving a sense of order and directionality to knowledge production.

Multi-disciplinary messes have quite a different relationship with canonical knowledge, disciplines and departments: Different types of knowledge may need to be combined in quite unpredictable ways. A body of knowledge may unexpectedly become important in some particular context through its combination with another in solving a pressing social issue (Greenwood 2007). There is a *prima facie* case that universities' and academics' structuring principles such as disciplines, journals and learned societies may be insufficiently flexible for the knowledge production requirements of the 'grand challenges'.

Alongside this, the diffuse array of interests in contemporary society creates a problem for universities in sustaining a coherent narrative of their societal utility. This intuitive answer seems to be helping to contribute to the solution of problems faced by many disparate interest groups, which legitimate university interventions as useful societal contributions (Bok 1990). Therefore, we see here the key elements of the potential renewal of the societal compact for universities. Universities' contributions to grand challenges can build up a coalition of supporters who value universities' work and are prepared to vocally articulate the position that universities are valuable in a broad social coalition.

1.5 Social Exclusion as a 'Grand Challenge of the Twenty-first Century'

1.5.1 Between Meaningful Contributions and Instrumental Functionalism

In this volume, we focus on the grand challenge of social exclusion in the knowledge economy as our focus for university-societal contribution. Mindful of simplifying complex institutions and phenomenon in search of process analyses, it is clear that there is a risk of a myopia in only being concerned with the universities, and ignoring the nature of the communities themselves. The contributions in this volume have come from the perspective of higher education studies rather than sociology of excluded communities, and this runs the risk of normatively framing the discussion in terms of what is important for universities, rather than for communities.

Excluded communities can be—as Sect. 1.6 highlights—difficult communities with which to profitably engage. Increasing strategic and financial pressures on universities encourage universities to pursue only the most useful and rewarding activities, rather than the most socially valuable. This is not strictly speaking a problem,

as universities are not social welfare organisations, but supporting social formation and civic participation processes. Problems can emerge where there is a disconnect between universities' claims and societal valuation of university contributions. This can undermine societal support for universities in a similar way as do perceptions of a lack of responsiveness of universities to societies' needs.

Understanding the meaningfulness of engagement activities to socially excluded communities needs to acknowledge the role of those communities in constructing and defining their own needs and interests. Excluded communities as we define them often lack articulate representatives and suffer from a lack of internal connectivity that hinders the articulation of common interests. That does not mean that they do not have collective or community interests, just that they are not always readily articulated. In order to better understand those interests, it is necessary to define three concepts: processes of social exclusion, 'socially excluded communities', and where might lie the commonality of interest of these communities.

1.5.2   Socially Excluded Communities as Actors with Agency and Interests

The most straightforward definition of social exclusion is a systematic marginalisation of individuals in society. A Eurostat report from 2010 defines social exclusion as

> . . . a process whereby certain individuals are pushed to the edge of society and prevented from participating fully by virtue of their poverty, or lack of basic competencies and lifelong learning opportunities, or as a result of discrimination. This distances them from job, income and education opportunities as well as social and community networks and activities. They have little access to power and decision-making bodies and thus often feeling powerless and unable to take control over the decisions that affect their day to day lives. (Eurostat 2010, p. 7)

We situate the notion of social exclusion as a contemporary manifestation within a broader sociological tradition explaining social structures and social stratification mechanisms. This tradition seeks to understand societal development and change in terms of uneven structures of power and domination which may be more or less hidden or obscured. This covers more than social position, but also the structures, institutions and power relationships by which particular dominated social groups are held in their subordinate positions.

Sen (2000) charts the start of interest in social exclusion to Lenoir's 1974 text *Les Exclus: Un Francais sur Dix*, which argued ten percent of the French population were excluded. Social exclusion can be tied to the emergence of complex, late capitalist societies characterised by consumer societies, a disaggregation of the state's welfare and policing functions, and the rise of the knowledge economy. Sen cites Silver (1995) in defining social exclusion to include a lack of access to a range of:

> a livelihood; secure, permanent employment; earnings; property, credit, or land; housing; minimal or prevailing consumption levels; education, skills, and cultural capital; the welfare

state; citizenship and legal equality; democratic participation; public goods; the nation or
the dominant race; family and sociability; humanity, respect, fulfilment and understanding.
(Silver 1995, p. 60 cited in Sen 2000, p. 1)

The rise of the consumer society has affected social exclusion not only by making
identity increasingly dependent on the ability to consume, but also through the redef-
inition of welfare services towards a consumer–producer relationship. Part of social
exclusion is a failure to operate as a consumer–citizen and force providers to com-
pete in markets. Marketisation of formerly public welfare services (cf. Sect. 1.3.3)
presupposes a particular view of the citizen as consumer (Olsen 1988). Contempo-
rary capacity to benefit from social welfare services depends on one's conformity to
the model consumer, a willingness to shift between providers, well informed as to
choices, and making comparative benefit trade-off decisions.

   In parallel and partly related to this, is the shifting relationship of state welfare
services to citizens. Peck and Jones (1995) conceptualise this at the macro-level as
a shift from the Keynsian Welfare state to the Schumpeterian Workfare State (1995)
based less upon universal entitlements to contingent reliefs made only to the most
indigent accompanied with humiliation in receipt. The state's welfare functions are
increasingly being targeted at ideal-type citizens that conform in terms of employ-
ment, health, lifestyle and cultural norms, with those that fail to conform being
punished not only through the withdrawal of benefits but also moral condemnation.

   The final shift has been the recasting of the notion of the employee in a capitalist
society in the knowledge society (Beck 2000). Individuals contribute economically
increasingly with knowledge capital, not labour power. A key feature of knowledge
capital is its dynamism. Individuals' capacities to make economic contributions
therefore depend not only on their willingness and availability for work but also
on continually developing their knowledge capital. Sustaining knowledge capital
depends on continual learning: Learning outcomes are differentiated from the ear-
liest years in education systems. Thus, individuals' participation capacities in the
knowledge society have a strongly divergent tendency.

   Social exclusion can be conceived as systematic disadvantages in distributional
mechanisms for particular welfare goods (which may be publically, privately or
collectively provided). Exclusion may operate across a range of areas of provision,
with each kind of discrimination having its own particular causes. However, for
the excluded actors, there is a feeling of entrapment through the overlapping way
in which the processes may operate. An overview of social exclusion processes is
provided in Table 1.1.

1.5.3   From Processes of Social Exclusion to Socially Excluded
             Communities

On the basis of the depiction of these shifts offered above, it is clear that social
exclusion affects people who are disadvantaged in society, who do not conform
to models of the ideal citizen–consumer, who are not well-politically organised

Table 1.1 Social exclusion as systematic positional disadvantages in markets for social goods. (Source: author's own design)

Allocation mechanism	Exclusionary process
Labour market	Short-term, flexible, vulnerable contracts with limited benefits and opportunities to save
	Workfare contracts enforcing long hours in return for welfare payment, no capital formation
Housing market	Restriction to remote, undesirable parts of city with limited service provision, poor accessibility, hidden costs of transport, caring responsibilities
	High rents for poor quality housing limiting saving and housing market progression; 'red lining', negative equity
Education provision	Discriminatory access requirements based on existing pupils or residence base—inner-city schools
	Limited progression and participation through education system, access only to part-time, low-cost higher education
Access to transport	Transport network goes through, not into, area, bringing all costs and no benefits
	Poor public transport raises commuting times and reduces opportunities to network with people in other suburbs
Health services	Restriction/rationing of service provision even where theoretical entitlement exists
	Shift from public health to emergency health measures, limited preventative/elective activities
Kinship ties	Fragmentation of coherent family units across urban area reducing opportunities for interaction and informal provision
	Emphasis on household survival strategies reduces opportunities for capital formation and pooling at family level
Governance networks	Political representatives excluded from decision-making venues because no interest in constituency
	Community voice excluded from governance networks because is seen as being pathological or unreasonable
State violence monopoly	Retreat of police from problem areas, increased costs and pressures of criminality
	Territorial profiling and emphasis on enforcement rather than welfare functions of law services
Production networks	Failure to benefit from employment created through local investments in infrastructure and inward investment
	Limited workforce progression from informal–local sector to formal–external sector
Private services	Low levels of services for high costs through de facto monopoly situations (e.g. water provision)
	Reliance on informal services
Financial service	Failure to benefit from cost reductions for secure payments (e.g. direct debit discounts); time and monetary costs of up-front payments
	Reliance on doorstep lending and exclusion from formal credit markets, reducing opportunities for capital formation

to articulate their interests, and who have difficulties in maintaining their value in the labour market through their knowledge capital. They are poorly connected to the contemporary society's coordinating institutions, and also poorly internally connected. It is increasingly common in advanced societies that people suffering from social exclusion are spatially concentrated, with the spatial concentration further reinforcing those exclusionary processes (Wacquant 1999).

Spatial segregation is by no means a new phenomenon: Engels (1845) highlighted the concentration of Irish workers in indigent conditions in Manchester in 1845 arising through wage discrimination by employers. In the late 1960s, John McWilliams and Andrew Gordon identified the roles of mortgage companies in denying particular groups access to mortgages in Chicago (IPR News 2009), the so-called red-lining. The novelty to social exclusion comes through multiple discriminations, and the segmentation structurally limits particular groups' capability to participate in modern society.

For a formal definition of social exclusion, we cannot do better than Byrne's (2005) definition, in which it relates to 'changes in the whole of society that have consequences for some of the people in that society . . . [emphasizing] . . . the significance of spatial separation within the urban areas of advanced industrial societies' (pp. 2–3). Taking this specific strand of Byrne's definition, we also incorporate Madnipour's definition of 'social exclusion' as a 'multidisciplinary process, in which various forms of exclusion are combined . . . [creating] . . . acute forms of exclusion that find a spatial manifestation in particular neighbourhoods' (p. 22 cited in Byrne 2005; cf. Moulaert 2000; Stoeger 2009 for particular examples).

Social exclusion operates when particular social groups are systematically discriminated against in allocation mechanisms in ways that are mutually reinforcing, creating a vicious cycle of exclusion (see Table 1.1). That exclusion imposes costs that prevent the accumulation of capital—whether social, financial or knowledge—that would allow individuals to improve their own position without leaving that group. This drives capital flight from those communities—externally-provided public and private services avoid the communities, but also those community members who could create services have to leave in order to advance their own welfare.

Stoeger (2009) offers a neat pen-portrait of the kinds of ways in which the disadvantage in welfare service provision undermines capital formation. Consider an inner-city area in an old industrial city, physically close to the city centre and employment opportunities but badly connected by public transport (especially in the evenings). A resident with poor qualifications is therefore forced to travel for long times to access employment, and potentially cannot take up evening work, or has to pay more for child care. Kinship networks cannot readily be used for inexpensive child care because of both poor transport provision and the dispersal of family groups across estates in the city by public housing agencies more concerned with rental income over social cohesion. Commuting times prevent individuals to engage in learning activities to improve their employment opportunities. Housing and transport exclusion exacerbate individuals' labour market exclusion: Individuals that

can leave these communities do. In the absence of well-mobilised and strident communities which demand politicians responses, these places only become politically visible when their problems erupt to disturb wider public order.

Moulaert (2000) provides a neat typology of the kinds of communities which have experienced social decline and disinvestment which may create the basis for social exclusion:

- Seaside villages hit by the decline of fishing,
- Rural mining and steel communities undermined by the collapse of their staple industries,
- Inner city ethnic ghettos 'redlined' by private investors, and
- Remote rural areas without the density of population to justify investments in new social services and infrastructures.

Intuitively, universities should be able to help solve problems faced socially excluded communities. On one hand, universities are home to a range of disciplines which have detailed understandings of the kinds of problems, and the potential solutions to those problems, faced by excluded communities. On the other hand, universities can help integrate those communities and individuals back into the knowledge society, equip individuals and communities to re-engage with the knowledge society. However, this raises the question of whether universities can fit that activity into a set of demands by key stakeholders around the narrower outputs demanded by their primary missions.

1.6 University–Community Engagement as a Mutually Enriching Exchange

1.6.1 Understanding the Scope of University–Community Engagement

Part I seeks to better understand the dynamics by which university–community engagement creates real benefits for excluded communities and over which those communities have a sense of ownership and control. It is therefore useful to understand what university–community engagement is, how it relates to university core activities, and how that might potentially create benefits for the community from which the university acquires social recognition (i.e. upholds the social compact). Community engagement is not a new phenomenon: Universities have long been involved in addressing community problems, the rise of public health and development of social housing, directly providing access to social services, and indirectly contributing to democratic emancipation.

An interesting example is provided here by the university settlement movement (cf. Chap. 10); a nineteenth century movement which placed graduates into working class districts. Bradley (2007) relates how the first of these, Toynbee Hall in East London, became a residence for Oxford graduates in London, and helped to build

Table 1.2 Overview of the kinds of activities potentially encompassed by university–community engagement. (Source: Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI) 1982)

Mode of interaction	Practical examples of university–community engagement
University puts facilities at the dis = posal of the community	Use of equipment, premises, laboratories
	Use of teachers and students to make direct contribution
	Drawing on the community in delivering occupational training
University executes orders placed by community	Offering training as occupational, continuing education or cultural
	University receives a payment from community for delivery of a service
	A near private contract between the buyer and the vendor
University involved in analysis of community needs	The university comes into the community as an outside expert
	The university provides services for the community with some reference to an 'order' by the community
University analyses problems at request of community	University engages at community request in developing solutions
	University has the autonomy and freedom to suggest a range of solutions away from overarching pressure
University delivers a solution on behalf of the community	The university delivers a service for the community which is compatible with its institutional status

a mutual understanding between the two communities. Toynbee Hall was a focus of voluntary and charitable work at a time when UK social welfare provision was extremely limited. Residents were engaged with these communities in the sense of being connected to them, even if they were not authentically 'of' these communities. Bradley highlights how Clement Atlee used his two periods of residency at Toynbee Hall to enter politics via the local council.

We frame 'community engagement' as the continuation of these activities framed by increasing recent pressures for universities to be more societally accountable. Many universities do undertake and make provision for public benefit activities with a real cost and no direct benefits for themselves (cf. Part III). Table 1.2 highlights ways in which universities might undertake community-benefit activities which fall within the broad scope of the kinds of activities universities habitually pursue.

In this volume, we are concerned with meaningful engagement, making a meaningful contribution to both the excluded communities (cf. Sect. 1.4.3) but forming part of a core activity for the university. The traditional task of a university is teaching, with the original idea of a degree being as a qualification necessary to teach at a university. Since the early nineteenth century, the emergence of the Humboldtian university model saw an idea of the university incorporating autonomous research (McClelland 1988). The emergence of the US Land Grant Universities saw the addition of further direct societal roles, in two areas, through knowledge exchange, initially understood as extension activities, and in service learning, where universities help form graduates to be competent citizens as well as competent in their own disciplinary field (Boyer 1990).

Table 1.3 A typology of different kinds of university engagement activity. (Source: Benneworth et al. 2009a, b)

Area of activity		Main areas of engagement activity
Research	R1	Collaborative research projects
	R2	Research projects involving co-creation
	R3	Research commissioned by hard-to-reach groups
	R4	Research *on* these groups then fed back
Knowledge exchange	K1	Consultancy for hard-to-reach group as a client
	K2	Public funded knowledge exchange projects
	K3	Capacity building between hard-to-reach groups
	K4	Knowledge exchange through student 'consultancy'
	K5	Promoting public understanding and media
Service	S1	Making university assets and services open
	S2	Encouraging hard-to-reach groups to use assets
	S3	Making an intellectual contribution as 'expert'
	S4	Contributing to the civic life of the region
Teaching	T1	Teaching appropriate engagement practices
	T2	Practical education for citizenship
	T3	Public lectures and seminar series
	T4	CPD for hard-to-reach groups
	T5	Adult and lifelong learning

To capture some of this diversity of activity, we have elsewhere developed a classification of university engagement activities, based on the primary domain area (the core institutional interest) where the engagement takes place, based on these four traditional missions (cf. Allen 1988):

- Research which involves engagement with external stakeholders as a core element of the knowledge generation process,
- Exchanging existing knowledge between the university and external stakeholders,
- Delivering services to external groups which they find useful and/or demand,
- Involving external stakeholders (small business and community) in teaching activities which meets their needs and improves teaching quality.

This is a conceptual typology: In reality, particular engagement will be delivered through 'bundles' of activities in which the different kinds of activity are not easily distinguished. The typology is presented in Table 1.3.

Duggan and Kagan (2007) describe a social policy research centre undertaking a consultative evaluation project of an inner-city mentoring programme using the lessons to create courses to up-skill those mentors (cf. Duggan and Kagan 2007). In a single activity, which may appear as a single transaction, it is possible to identify the following typology activities, R4 (research on groups fed back), K3 (capacity building), S2 (bringing groups onto campus) and T4 (CPD). The value of the typology is in identifying the breadth of activities by which engagement takes place, folded into other core activities.

1.6.2   Barriers Communities Face in Engaging with Universities

A central contention in this volume is that the failure to properly understand university engagement with excluded communities has come with a focus on analysing and developing policies for universities regardless of their value to the communities. Our contention is that effective engagement must produce material, structural changes in those excluded communities. However, in Sect. 1.3, we highlighted the double disconnection of excluded communities, cut off from the administrative mainstream, and internally fragmented, with difficulties in articulating a common political platform for change. This affects how excluded communities can engage with universities: We highlight three areas in which issues may arise.

Firstly, socially excluded communities have symbolic properties impeding engagement (Baum 2000). At the same time socially excluded communities are often fragmented and difficult to meaningfully engage with (Cobb and Rubin 2006). An increasingly powerful rhetoric about business engagement has been influential in shaping university decision-making, whilst no one has made a similarly convincing case for excluded communities (cf. Chap. 12). This reflects the reality that whilst there are a number of eye-catching examples of successful and profitable spin-off companies, there are no iconic best-practice examples of community engagement. Indeed, it is not even clear what would count as an iconic engagement project that would catch policy-makers' attention: A successful project would by definition 'normalise' the community by eliminating a problem.

Secondly, socially excluded communities may be inadequately prepared for dealing with universities, and framing their needs in ways universities can appreciate (cf. Chap. 3). The slow progress of projects, their frequent redefinition and re-configuration, and the pervasive targets cultures can be extremely bemusing for community organisations (Kagan 2007). They may regard what are elsewhere accepted as 'the rules of the game' as a deliberate attack on those communities. University–community antagonism may have hindered past interaction, creating an unrealistic weight of expectation. Finally, initial interactions may be intended to resolve a university–community conflict, such as a campus development, which can mean that interactions begin and continue as zero-sum mediation rather than positive-sum construction (Prins 2005; Perry and Wiewel 2005).

Finally, individuals may lack skills, opportunities and social capital necessary to successfully engage with universities. It is important not to over-determine individuals by assuming that the prime determinant of some individual's behaviour is the community in which they are resident (Granovetter 1985). Rather, the personal characteristics of people in socially excluded communities might make interaction harder, and a lower university priority, than necessarily impossible. We have segmented community barriers into three types:

- *Structural divides*: There are aspects of the community which do not easily fit into the institutional arrangements which universities have created for engagement.
- *Policy issues*: The absence of incentives, instruments and methodologies in engagement policies which fit with community needs,
- *Personal characteristics*: There are particular attributes in the community which resist engagement and encourage greater distance from universities.

Table 1.4 Barriers the universities face in engaging with communities. (Source: authors' own design)

Type of barrier	Typical barrier faced by excluded community in university engagement
Structural divides	A community may lack clear leaders who can participate in and influence university formal governance structures
	A particular community may lack coherence, and nearby places with similar issues might lack capacity to mobilize
	A misunderstanding or reductionist view of what university interest and capacity to improve community situation
	Universities may unknowingly create invisible barriers for subaltern outsiders to want to engage with the university
	One-off, unique activist engagements undermine learning how to use universities as a general asset
Policy issues	A public emphasis on formalisation can exclude community groups diverting energies into structures not outcomes
	Use of 'project' approach for engagement produces participant churn and undermines learning processes
	The skills useful for a community may not be those encouraged by public finance regimes (e.g. bid writing)
	A misconstrued (linear) model of knowledge transfer to communities rather than allowing communities influence
Personal characteristics	A lack of sensitivity to expert language of professional engagement
	The absence of key individuals in the community who see a coherent rationale for engaging with universities
	Engagement enhances the social mobility of those who engage and so there are no lasting benefits of engagement
	University/community engagement is driven by expert practitioners and so communities do not build up expert
	A shortage of 'boundary spanners'—individuals with interests in both camps—to identify common ground

Different communities will in practice face different kinds of barriers, some relating to their own characteristics, some to those of the institution with which they might engage, and some to the wider public policy framework within which that interaction takes place. Table 1.4 sets out some of the kinds of barriers which socially excluded communities might themselves face in seeking to constructively interact with universities.

1.6.3 Identifying When Excluded Communities Benefit from Community Engagement

The two preceding sections help to better specify the problematic of university–community engagement. We here assume that helping those communities to become less socially excluded allows universities to gain recognition for the social value of their work, and hence their upholding of the social compact. This in turn allows the specification of a number of conditions which must be met if the range of activities

identified in Sect. 1.5.1 are to overcome the barriers outlined in Sect. 1.5.2 and create 'socially useful value'.

It is necessary here to make two simplifications, firstly in terms of the difference between real and articulated needs of communities. There is clearly a problem that excluded communities may have difficulties in articulating a common political platform. However, it is extremely problematic to argue that inability means that outside agents have a right to determine which are in the best interest of those communities. Therefore, 'need' must reflect in some way these communities' expressed interests. This raises a clear ethical challenge in researching university–community engagement, because of the strong power imbalances between universities and excluded communities which could conceivably manifest themselves through university activities opposed by the community but nevertheless claimed to be of 'benefit' to them.

The second is to assume a social consensus that addressing social exclusion is a good thing, which assumes a rather simplistic, consensual reading of urban politics at odds with the everyday experience of the problematisation of socially excluded communities (cf. Smith 1996; Cameron 2003; Allen 2008). Consider the example where a university opens a new high-technology campus on the site of former working-class neighbourhoods, contributing to gentrification and slum clearance. This creates 'value' in terms of rising land prices, developmental gain and rental streams, but working directly against the interests of those communities (Allen 2008).

Under such conditions, an 'unexpressed value' could be mobilised to undermine those communities' interests, arguing that rehousing was in the community's best interests, leaving social exclusion's real issues unaddressed. We have deliberately avoided situations of university involvement in urban conflict and social justice: Other authors have dealt with them far more effectively (for example, Columbia University in New York, see inter alia Bradley 2009; Carriere 2011; Chronopoulos 2011).

We specify universities can contribute to dealing with social exclusion where they produce benefits addressing the underlying problem. As we have characterised social exclusion as a problem of segmentation and discrimination in multiple allocation mechanisms, the criterion for 'effective engagement' must not be set impossibly high. Social exclusion builds up in affected communities through multiple processes. It is unrealistic to expect relatively small university interventions to address these vicious cycles.

To address this gap between 'big' social problems and 'small' university activities, we suggest engagement that benefits the community will be 'meaningful interactions' and demonstrate three criteria. Firstly, the communities are involved in shaping the activity, not merely being in passive receipt of supposedly beneficial interventions. This avoids the situation of unexpressed value, where powerful actors claim that something is useful to subalterns without reference to their real interests. The more intense and meaningful the engagement, the greater (more repeated and structural) would be the expected involvement of the community in university decision-making activities.

Secondly, there are clear structural benefits evident in the community's structural position within the allocation mechanisms which systematically disadvantage them. An intervention has to change a particular allocation mechanism, and facilitate community access to resources that allow capital accumulation within the excluded community. The more meaningful the engagement, the more visible the resources made available to the community and the greater the potential they offer for capital accumulation.

Thirdly, the universities value the engagement activities and have a dependence on them to achieve their missions and activities, making them a central or important part of the identity and/or organisation of the institution. In this case, the more meaningful the activity to the university, the greater it would contribute to expressed institutional aims, goals and targets.

The purpose of this framework is to provide a means for gauging the three contributions which follow. Although the three chapters that follow have not specifically adopted this framework for analysing the contributions made by universities, echoes of the idea of meaningful contributions are present in the way that the claims are made for the values of engagement activities.

These three criteria are not necessarily automatically in harmonious balance, and in the remaining parts explore the tensions in attempting to create governance frameworks to encourage these criteria. The first criterion cuts across the epistemic idea of the university as an autonomous community and raises resistance to the notion of universities involving external partners in their decision-making. The third criterion may sit at odds with wider transformations in the social environment, which encourage universities to engage with particular social partners, and not necessarily excluded communities. Nevertheless, these criteria provide a useful gauge of the extent to which particular claimed engagement activities are embedding socially useful knowledge in external parties.

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Chapter 2
Celebrating Worthy Conversations

Universities and Their Multiple Communities

Ros Derrett

2.1   Introduction

This chapter presents a case study that demonstrates how an oral history project was able to uncover local, vernacular and indigenous knowledge and get them more effectively applied within a local planning context. It identifies the voices of some key stakeholders that are generally under-heard in the public policy and planning domain. The social capital generated through a series of participative activities with residents of a regional community was encouraged by the intervention of a local university. The university facilitated the co-production of knowledge through two specific activities that created a community knowledge asset from which on-going relationships could be negotiated safely and confidently. The university–community engagement also contributed innovative approaches to the development of policy and planning for an under-developed community public amenity.

The staff and students at an Australian regional university recognised the value of interaction with multiple communities of interest. The complexity of social and cultural partnerships and their influence on planning practice, place creation and management and documentation of knowledge to be shared with a wider audience is examined. The network of players involved—some formal, others informal—shaped the research and decision-making, providing both bottom-up and top-down responses to strategic initiatives through a variety of communication tools.

The university provided a number of services to this exercise. These included story-making workshops, public space-use inventories, the friendly accessible use of technology, site exploration and its facilitated analysis, interpretation and engagement with culturally diverse community groups through creative approaches ensuring the lived and living memory of the local collective identity. Community participation was encouraged through documentation of oral history, shared food from diverse cultures, information sharing and media promotion, and critical reflection by linking storytelling and planning. By creating narrative knowledge and

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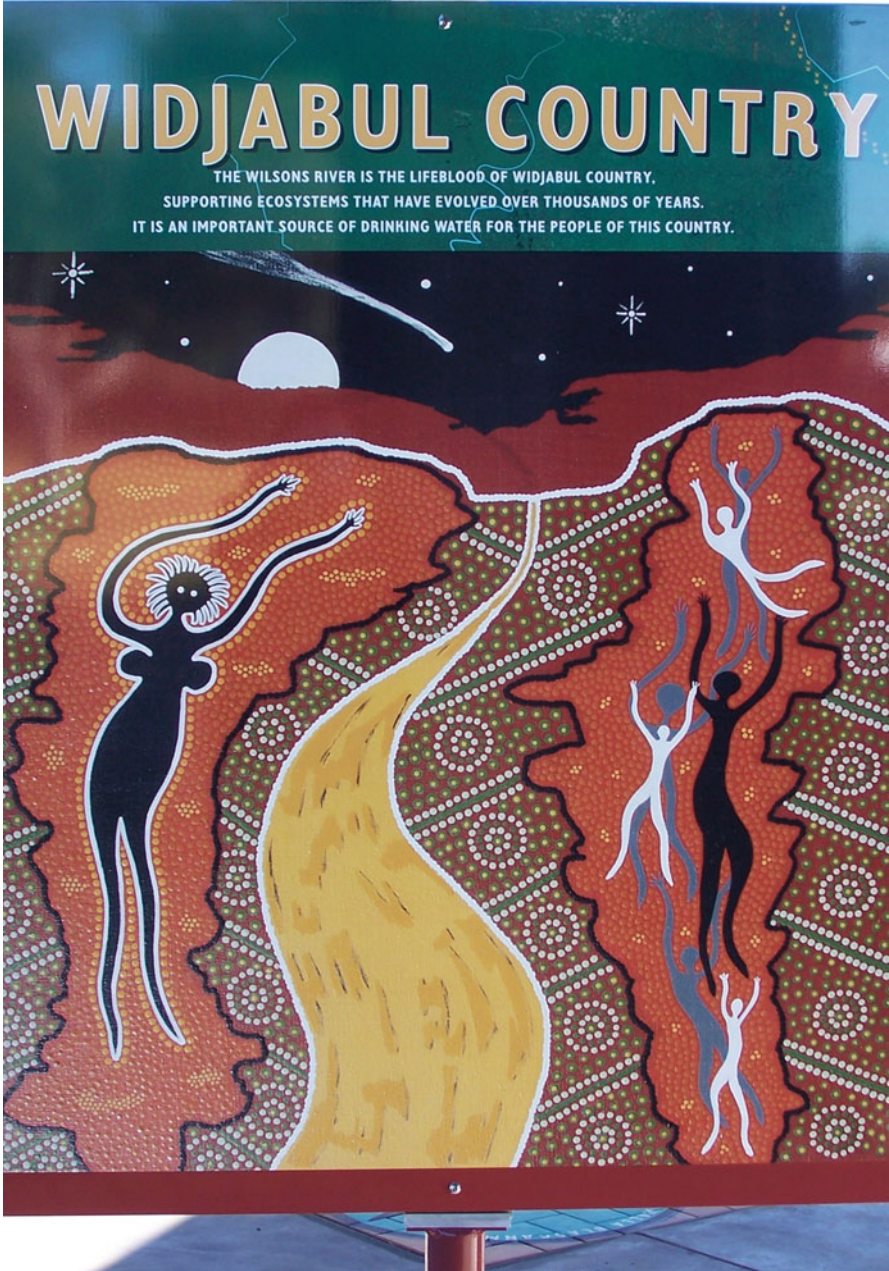
theoretical approaches to persuasive planning techniques like using images, designs and maps, resultant plans were invested with qualities that other instruments of public policy often lack (Neuman 1998, p. 214).

The university affected the roles of broker and mediator to demystify the confusion and complexity in the public domain that often surrounds knowledge generation. Through an interdisciplinary approach as collaborator, mediator and provider of independent critical analysis (Onyx 2008, p. 91), the university played a dynamic role. The stories told were built on the issues and ideas generated by the values, interests and aspirations held by a host community. The oral tradition particularly offered a springboard to understanding change.

The stories elicited through a series of engagement activities encouraged residents to feel empowered to participate in a significant civic development. This approach is often represented in social capital research (Cox 1995, Onyx 2008) where merit is seen in encouraging a bottom-up approach to practical projects. The story sharing allowed links to be established within and between community members; embedded connections between professional and lay networks and generally enhanced the multiple stakeholder partnerships that the regional university had sought to develop in recent years. The perspective of each participant was respected and each contribution enriched the narrative that was transformed into accessible formats that dispersed the knowledge.

This chapter seeks to position the case study experience as an example of effective engagement proving to be less about structures and more about people actually wanting to ensure that relationships are developed, managed and sustained (State of Victoria 2009, p. 81). It builds on the concept of socially robust knowledge suggested by Gibbons and opens universities up to the notion that they are not the repository of all knowledge and that a shared approach to decision making can have a healthy influence on curriculum design (Gibbons 2006; cited Favish and McMillan, 2009, p. 98) for example. The collaboration between researchers, practitioners and local communities can generate a set of new and different perspectives to create new knowledge (University of Cape Town (UCT) 2006, p. 11, cited Favish and McMillan 2009, p. 97). This engaged-research had an intentional public purpose. Its outcomes offered both direct and indirect benefits on participants and opened up a better understanding of how sources and forms of knowledge relate to one another.

2.2 Involving Communities in Scholarship of Engagement

This experience sits well within the growing literature on the scholarship of engagement (Boyer 1996) that refers to the use of university–community partnerships as the foundation for research and teaching activities. Boyer and others (Powell 2006) recognise the importance of engaged scholarship to underpin important research and student learning outcomes as a university's core business. The engaged scholarship that addresses solutions to challenges in the civic space described by Gibson (2006), Boyer (1990, 1996), Ramaley (2004), and Schon (1995) and Gelmon et al. (2009)

suggests that discovery contributes to the search for new knowledge; integration that connects disciplines and communities of interest; application that uses societal realities to test, inspire and challenge theory; and the transmission of knowledge through teaching beyond the institutions. Gibson (2006, p. 2) cites Holland (2005, p. 7) who suggests such engagement is based on partnerships, distributes new knowledge, can be long term, complex, episodic while crossing disciplinary lines which can be a challenge within the university.

Wessell (2008) and Bowen (2005, pp. 4–7) address different forms of enhanced student learning, for example, that encourages engagement with the learning process (or active learning); engagement with the object of study (or experiential learning); engagement with contexts (or multidisciplinary learning) and engagement with social and civic contexts (also known as community engagement). Theories of learning that view learning as a process that transforms both the learner and the socio-ecosystem through a series of positive feedback loops and resilience theory provide a useful lens for understanding community responses to changetheir environment. Boyer (1996) suggests that the scholarship of engagement offers a balance of four general areas of scholarship: discovery, integration of knowledge, teaching and service. The scholarship of sharing knowledge recognises the communal nature of scholarship and also recognises other audiences for scholarship than the scholar's peers. The mutually beneficial partnership recognises expertise outside the academy through dynamic interaction and shared curiosity.

A commitment to a strong local knowledge base needs to be created and nurtured. Sutz (2005, p. 2) highlights the steady acceleration in the rate at which knowledge is accumulated, diversified and disseminated and how learning is no longer concentrated at a single location. Social learning processes are bringing about innovation in the merging of academic and non-academic interests (Rist 2008) and interaction such as identified in the case study that contemporary university embeddedness in local society is just another model for addressing locals' needs in university research agendas. By extending the university 'campus' out into the community (Lawthon and Duckett 2008, p. 2), they also raise issues associated making knowledge relevant, pertinent and useful to host communities through collaborative processes (Lawthon and Duckett 2008, p. 3).

For academics in some institutions, the conduct of community-based participatory research risks censure. Seifer cites literature addressing the experience of staff trying to achieve professional review, promotion and tenure (Israel et al. 1998, Maurana et al. 2001, Gelmon & Agre-Kippenhan 2002, Gelmon et al. 2005, Calleson et al. 2005) with a portfolio of community-based research interests. She invokes the research of Israel et al. (1998), who report on the tension that exists for academics wishing to reach out into communities of interest for research partners in new knowledge creation:

> Our experience suggests that even those faculty with the belief that a participatory community based approach to research is appropriate and relevant to their work may find the process daunting, given the pressures of academic institutions on faculty to publish and obtain grant money. (Israel et al. 1998)

Seifer (2008, p. 426) suggests community-engaged scholarship requires the scholar to be engaged with the community in a mutually beneficial partnership. The role of expert is shared, the relationship with the community must be reciprocal and dynamic and community-defined concerns direct the scholarly activities.

2.3 University Community Engagement in Practice

Universities can play a number of roles in generating new knowledge in communities through partnerships with local stakeholders. This suggests that knowledge is socially constructed (Onyx 2008, p. 92). So, the production of knowledge now not only encompasses the traditional, scientific approach, but also focuses on knowledge that can be produced in the context of its application (Gibbons et al. 1994, p. 4). By giving public space a story shared by many requires attention to nuance in changing attitudes, needs and engagement strategies. Such practices can result not only in enhanced 'natural capital,' of a community, but also foster social capital (Krasny and Tidball 2008).

The different worlds of universities and community agencies and individuals present separate worlds of primary mission, culture, expectations and motivation and the impacts that can easily be mismatched; however, worthy are the intentions for collaboration. Tableman (2005, pp. 3–4) recognises dimensions of mission, focus, resources, control of time, reimbursement and reward system that can affect the levels of involvement in what can be one off-one time efforts, time-bound assignments and on-going partnerships. For the latter to be mutually beneficial, an environmental scan conducted by potential partners can assess the viability of the proposed collaboration through recognising the commitment, capacity and expectations of each. Clearly defined project understandings and expectations need to be documented to avoid conflict and disappointment during operationalising and monitoring of the relationship.

2.3.1 Case Study

The Northern Rivers region of NSW, Australia has experienced the intensity of the shift to a sea change lifestyle since the 1970s. The regional centre of Lismore is 50 min inland from one of the most dynamic and conflicted sea-change centres, Byron Bay. It is therefore in the heart of a region which has seen great demographic transformation in the last 30 years, as internal migration from southern states to the warm north coast has brought alternative lifestylers, hobby farmers, retirees and young city families into the rural countryside with a large indigenous population of traditional custodians (Kijas and Lane 2006).

Participants in the case study identified the value in connecting the intellectual assets of the university to community needs and aspirations. They believed that academic learning and research were enhanced while public interests were served.

The interdisciplinary nature of the engagement demonstrated a breakdown of a traditional barrier to such research endeavours. The whole-of-university Office of Regional Engagement unit brokered the internal and external relationship building that allowed for a breaking down of the silos that often exist in higher education. The engagement was based on a Memorandum of Understanding between the university and the local council. It had been in place for some years. It provided a symbolic mechanism to be appropriated for practical benefits. Harkavy (2004) suggests an approach that encourages the 'real world practice' invoked by the Dewey notion of education as participatory, action-oriented, and focused on 'learning by doing'.

This dialogue at the boundaries of relationships was refined over time as partners looked for points of interdisciplinary connection. All parties brought into the conversations sought to identify what elements of a shared agenda they could best commit to and applied resources appropriately. The arts, heritage, tourism offered a cluster to the university which allowed inputs that could not be delivered by the local government authority or business and community special groups who were other key stakeholders. The negotiations to ensure best fit for the project were protracted, but useful, as they addressed the desire to satisfy corporate social responsibility on the part of some players while others sought strategies for mutual learning through acknowledgement of external sources of knowledge.

The Southern Cross University preparation for involvement reflected a framework identified by Powell (2006) in the Thematic Questioning Framework that addresses the University's engagement agenda:

- What is truly creative in the project?
- Who are the major players/actors in the relationship between you and your external city/region and what is their role?
- What are the indicators of creative success, critical success factors that enable to determine the quality, range and success of your creative outreach projects?
- How have you built the necessary capacities for successful outreach?
- What has hindered you (internal and external) in your developments and what actions have you taken to overcome these obstacles?
- Can you include partner or client endorsement in your case studies?

The university engagement sought to contribute to public policy by embedding creativity in the planning context. The university was keen to ensure that their engagement was not viewed as a one-way flow of knowledge to external partners, but that it became an opportunity to create new knowledge from research questions stimulated by emerging relationships. As Powell (2006) suggests, there were complementary networks to achieve goals in three spheres:

- Creative partnerships: Between higher education institutions (HEIs) and their external stakeholders. This network focuses on ways in which HEIs can improve their creative potential and innovative output by involving stakeholder groups in the creative development process of products and services. It explores the development of creative lifelong learning provision, research partnership with industry and the impact of cultural activities on the creativity of local communities.

- Creative learners: Innovation in teaching and learning. This network is exploring the possible ways in which creativity can be fostered through the teaching process. In addition, although the arts have been seen as the creative field par excellence, little attention has been paid to their contribution to the overall creative potential of HEIs.
- Creative HEIs: Structures and leadership. The network is focusing upon the internal environment of HEI and the factors that can boost creativity, particularly those issues that bear directly on academic enterprise, such as internal structures, leadership and group dynamics (Powell 2006, p. 6).

2.4 Co-production of Knowledge

Two aspects of the interaction focused on the development on the over-arching community-based collaborative planning framework to be adopted by council and some specific implementation modules of the resulting Master Plan. To demonstrate how academics progressed their participatory engagement through the co-production of knowledge, this chapter, draws attention to two specific aspects of university engagement with the revitalisation of a civic development. One was an **oral history exercise** and the other was the design and delivery of **interpretative heritage signage** human and natural heritage and incorporated into a specific riverside location specifically for tourism purposes and resident recreation. Each deserves reflection as the knowledge generated, and the perspectives shared inform the transformation of a space into a place embraced by the host community.

2.4.1 *Conversations on the River*

Conversations on the River was an event organised by Southern Cross University as a public consultation and research tool. The community was invited to celebrate, share and record stories about the Wilson's River and its upstream tributaries. In and of itself, the exchange was valuable in getting a large group of people down to the river and in showcasing work that has been done over the years by the local Land Care Group and the Council. For many people, it was an opportunity to see Lismore from the river for the first time for a long time. Hospitality was a key consideration. Engaging the community is based on a reciprocal relationship—serving the community while achieving academic goals. Free food and entertainment, boat rides and music were arranged. The food was provided by an Indigenous business, Gunnawannabe. Bunya nut damper and homemade jam was a good symbol of what was being attempted, an informal gathering with serious and long-term implications (Geertz 1985, Wessell 2008).

A major contribution by academics and students came in the form of the research, design and implementation of huge colourful interpretive *Story Site panels* on the

riverbank. They measure 3.6 m by 1.2 m each. They tell the integrated story of the settlement of the Northern Rivers region in an innovative project that showcases the community's heritage. The public recreational space close to the city centre being redeveloped transforms 'living history' into a 'class room' for residents and visitors. The billboard-sized installations provide verbal and visual snapshots of the history of diverse European and Asian settlement of the region and also depict the Bundjalung stories of the Dreamtime, celebrate Widjabul culture and paint a picture of the Indigenous lifestyle and how it interwove with the emerging European settlements into the future.

Indigenous consultants and historians worked on consolidating text for story site panels.

While there was reflection of the past represented in the interviews, much was made of how the riverside site could become more connected to residents and visitors into the future. Such material was of interest to the Riverbank Development Project steering committee and City Council who integrated suggestions through an action learning methodology into planning and policy development. Suggestions were aligned to existing strategic and master planning tools and feedback was subsequently delivered via the project website for interested parties. Participants expressed on-going interest in contributing to the design and policy generation for the enhanced amenity of the location, based on the spirit of nostalgia that had underpinned the conversation consultation.

The material that underpinned the historian's text for the panels was gathered from the archive of the local historical society, interviews with specific interest groups and individuals, site visits to places of historical importance, artefacts in public and

private collections and official documents in the public and private domain. An active team, with solid community links, coordinated the collection of the data and a reference group of regional authorities from the indigenous and heritage sectors monitored the development of the project. Items that could contribute to the council's planning and design of the site were referred on. Such an example was the knowledge of endemic vegetation and Indigenous food production that manifested itself as the Lyle Roberts Memorial bush food garden's cultural interpretation.

The river is very important to the Widjabal people—as Gordon (2005) says, 'it is our friend'. Local Elders see the Wilson's River as an important gathering place for shared learning especially for Indigenous residents (Coyne 2007, p. 16). Traditionally, the information presented was learned through daily living and family connections, from generation to generation. It was Roy's priority that Widjabal understanding, history and knowledge were communicated clearly to the general public and in particular to the local indigenous youth (Lane 2007).

University students were involved in recording the conversations, which provided practical experience of oral history and a means to bring teaching and scholarship together. Engagement in the local community can provide opportunities for more intense and more personal engagement with learning (Wessell 2008). Staff and students situated themselves in local debates and history with a focus on everyday life in the shared geographical places and added a civic dimension to the learning experience. The outputs of the conversations were recorded for use by the local historical society, the university archive, used in media promotion, included in academic publications and incorporated in decision-making by site planners. There was a deliberate focus on the stories related to local indigenous citizens, especially those of the local Widjabel tribe of the Bundjalung nation. Many elders came forward. Many elders from amongst the European settlers came too.

The significance of the project was recognised by the Indigenous Heritage Management section of the Commonwealth Department of Environment and Water Resources, who partly funded the project and came to Lismore with a team to film the opening and interview participants. The protocols developed by the partners in this distinctive heritage project are documented and shared with government departments as potential templates for other communities wanting to embrace and celebrate their Indigenous as well as their European heritage. It presents a holistic historical perspective that adds a great deal of value to tourism in the city. The story-site imagery has been used as part of tourism promotion through cards, websites and council correspondence.

2.4.2 Voice of the Artist

Leonie Lane, the digital arts designer and lecturer engaged with the projects, suggests that 'Place ' and 'reinventions of place' are recognised as contemporary developments in visual arts practice in the traditional genre of 'landscape' art-making. Ideas about the development of personal and cultural identity are tied into notions of 'place'

(Schama 1996). Rivers are evocative places, powerful metaphors—a stage for action as well as reverie. They provide both a parallel to narrative flow and reveal a 'place' beyond civic control at the same time as a space that promotes settlement and social engagement.

I worked closely with writer/historian/lecturer, Kijas (2007) to produce the text, visual content and overall design of the site. We have followed each other's process— words needing images, imagery suggesting more words . . . . Common ground determined that the overall idea was to produce a visually stunning, multi-layered representation of Lismore's social history inclusive of the many perspectives of such a diverse place.

Valuable experience has been gained through listening and negotiating with the interest groups, who came to the table with their own needs, baggage and, in some cases, grudges. Trust in some cases was hard earned through much listening, patience and persistence. Despite all, strong relationships with community members have developed over the past 9 months, ensuring a positive momentum for future work (Lane 2007).

The experience gained has been a mutually rich and challenging experience across all of these groups but no longer so than with the Widjabal people. The process involved and the outcome has given me an extremely rewarding yet demanding, creative experience. For me, the challenge of imaging Widjabal lore has caused me to question my own preconceptions of image representation and a 'white fellas' design process. My role as a designer became one of translators when engaging with these themes (Langton 1996).

The use of early white contact photos carried the weight of indigenous stereotype while white interpretations of language area maps described static boundaries that did n't necessarily equate with how Widjabal people saw their boundaries. It became apparent that the photomontage strategy employed in the design of the other panels was not appropriate to the Widjabal panel. Maintaining the site's stylistic theme was essential to the project as a whole to impress the inclusive theme. Roy and the author discussed spatial representation and how the Widjabal narrative could look. Paramount to the success of this story telling was in the use of language and drawing styles. It was imperative to describe their world as it was and as it is. Many drafts were created with much consultation, questioning and reworking. . . (Lane 2007).

2.5   Discussion

Stakeholder participation in the co-production of knowledge is nuanced. It has many layers and involves spatial and temporal parameters that need to be flexible prior, during and as residual to any partnership exercise. Inside an institution the management and monitoring of student engagement needs to be grounded in curriculum. The emphasis for students, on the activity being complementary to theory, provides a useful nexus of the research/teaching experience. Brukardt et al.

(2004, p. 12) suggest that optimum curriculum development includes the contribution from the community, including students, in activities that are 'collaborative problem-based, interdisciplinary, intentional and respectful'. Academics need to be encouraged to meet the *publish or perish* imperative through an embedded framework that rewards on-going engagement. Initial success through publications, presentations at conferences and by growing content for lectures introduces more external partners into the formal education paradigm. By taking the classroom into the community,business and government allows new perspectives on the creation and new distribution networks of the knowledge.

The experience of many academics has not been as seamless as those advanced earlier. The challenge for some involves foregoing engagement opportunities to advance careers with little recognition for initiative or encouragement of partnership development and few incentives and rewards within their career trajectory. While some universities invest financially in projects that generate greater inclusivity with community and industry partners through collaboration, others seem reluctant to provide money, time and space to assist in the required integration. In some institutions engagement is seen as a cost rather than an investment. When the integration is not encouraged internally through interdisciplinary connections, it becomes difficult for interested academics to formally or informally deal with potential external partners. So the mechanisms which each university applies to recognising or rewarding the porous boundaries necessary to facilitate engaged teaching and research need to be equitable and accessible to all academics. The support required for the process and the outcomes to be effective need to be monitored institutionally across such professional management factors as recruitment, promotion, academic performance management development reporting and review, so that merit is attributed as it is regularly done for core business of teaching and research.

Student exposure to community partners through the processes explored in this case study alerted parties to the potential value of volunteerism. Students got involved with programmes that further grew the capacity of sub-cultural groups to deliver services, to encourag curiosity and to up-skill their constituencies. It encourages an environment of social responsibility inside and outside the university. It promotes social inclusion that enhances the capacity of host communities. It improves access to university resources for those outside and encourages student activism by focusing on local issues and ideas. Another dimension to the exploration of everyday life that was revealed in the *Conversations by the River* was the common sense knowledge (Gurvitch 1971, p. 28) that allowed elders to participate in the intergenerational transmission of a specific type of knowledge that addressed the consequences of upheaval of daily life over time. The empirical knowledge and the conceptual knowledge generated by the experience had important social and cultural implications for all participants.

The co-learning helped bring different kinds of knowledge together in a way that provided the new knowledge legitimacy especially in the planning sphere. It allowed new voices to be heard and provided opportunities for all players to see the impact of their shared research and discovery. The resultant confidence in communication between party bodes well for on-going exchanges and the breaking down of stereotypes of universities being sole repositories of knowledge.

Community engagement is essential about the development of mutually supportive relationships. In the case of projects involving students and members of the community, an equal consideration must be given to the needs, goals and responsibilities of both groups. People participate in interviews for their own purpose, and acknowledging this has long been recognised as good practice. Student's time is also limited and expectations must be clarified early in the project. The opportunity to make a contribution to local knowledge and their community may be their motivation in becoming involved, but ensuring that this meets the objectives of their studies and sits within their own timeframe is a responsibility of teachers. Semester timetables don't always correspond with research projects, local government calendars or community culture. Having a clear purpose, a compatibility of goals and effective communication between the people involved develops the relationships involved in the project. For it to be mutually satisfying, recognising people's different influences, interests and expectations can help maintain the relationship.

It is evident that the process of engaging with the community in diverse creative ways is unending. By giving public space, a story shared by many requires attention to nuance in changing attitudes, needs and engagement strategies. Such practices can result not only in enhanced 'natural capital,' of a community, but also foster social capital (Krasny & Tidball 2008). Theories of learning that view learning as a process which transforms both the learner and the socio-ecosystem through a series of positive feedback loops, and resilience theory provide useful lens for understanding community responses to change in their environment.

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Chapter 3
Challenging Inequalities Through Community–University Partnerships

Angie Hart and Kim Aumann

3.1 Introduction to Cupp, Amaze and their Engagement

One of the great challenges for effective relationships operating between universities and communities is in identifying where the common interest for a partnership may lie. It is possible to explore that question in the abstract, and list how particular universities and excluded communities may be able to work together. But we have a concern with that approach, that it is deeply impersonal. If you are talking about relationships, then relationships are fundamentally among people. Those people may wish to accomplish strategic goals of institutions with which they are involved, and the wider strategic environment does shape the ways those relationships evolve. But we find a real risk in overly academic approaches to understanding community engagement which fails to adequately reflect the people behind the engagement. This chapter seeks to understand the delicate ecology of relationships looking at a 5-year community–university partnership focused on improving outcomes for disadvantaged children and their families.

The project focused upon one of a number of partnerships that have been established as part of the University of Brighton's wider Community–University Partnership Programme (Cupp). In addition to supporting partnership projects, Cupp also aims to act as a 'gateway' between the University of Brighton and local community and voluntary organisations, with a reach across the south-east coastal area, including Hastings. It has office space, a full time-equivalent staff of 6, runs a Helpdesk service, and through its academic links, can draw on the advice and expertise of 30 plus senior staff members. Through successfully bidding for funding, Cupp has been hosting two programmes alongside its core work, with an annual

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budget of £550 k, involving over 100 academics and community partners per year (approx. 40 academics, 60 community partners). It has strong participation from local community organisations and most Cupp staff members have been, and/or are still involved with running community groups (Hart et al. 2008).

This chapter is unique in the book—as was our presentation at the event from which this book emerged—as being written by a collaborative team active in community–university partnership, in the Cupp project. We argue that situating this has value for the book in making visible some of the realities of community–university partnership which we feel are sometimes lost in overly academic discussions having little relevance for engagement practices. We have to be explicit here that this chapter differs from others in this collection, both in its tone as well as its aims, reflecting our best attempt to capture and understand a lived experience in which we have engaged academic and community contexts (cf. Hart et al. 2007a). We want to tell, what is essentially a personal story, how we as people were motivated to work together and create a community of practice within which university and community were engaged. Our motivation in writing this chapter has been to try to provide ourselves with a certain distance from the activities themselves with which we are involved in running. Although we are actively involved, and would not want to make an artificial distinction between our academic and community sides, we want to present our analysis in a way that might convince the sceptic of the value of what we do.

In our roles as academics, we are continually confronted with the challenge of understanding the value of the hard work that is required in order to get even the most minor of community–university ventures underway. In this chapter, we want to link this more closely with a debate in the wider literature of the value of these partnerships. In particular, we pose the wider question of whether there really is added value for teaching and research around issues of inequality in working with the communities in the teaching and research activities. But the partnership is not just of academics: As community members, we are also continually confronted with the question of what is the added value to the community of these relationships. In particular, we believe it is important to further consider and establish whether these university–community relationships are more than just the provision of a service, and indeed whether they offer a useful route to tackling inequalities.

These are mighty questions to answer and have already been raised at various points in this book so far. We cannot really hope in the course of a short reflection on a single project to be able to really do much more than provide a few insights into these bigger questions, and we are wary of trying to answer these mighty questions with something we readily acknowledge is merely a set of small stories. But we believe nevertheless that these small stories have value: We are reporting what we believe to be a successful project, and we can on the basis of this, identify what we believe to be some of the conditions which have led the project to be successful, both to the university and to the community. But of course, these successes have been delivered at a price, and on that basis, in this chapter, we want to think through more systematically whether those outputs are really worth all the effort, and indeed

whether it is worth universities more generally taking this question of engagement with excluded communities more seriously.

In order to begin to address these questions, we use the following structure in the chapter:

The following section sets out the concept underlying our idea of community engagement, which is that of Communities of Practice (CoPs), in which people work together on a common problem to build shared resources which meet each of their needs.

The third section provides an overview of the partnership till date, and explains two things: the domain area (building the resilience of disadvantaged children), and how the partnership and relationships have functioned as a community of practice.

The fourth section considers how the resilience work has supported outcomes for the various stakeholders in the partnership process, teaching, research, students, staff and the community; whilst it is clear that university teaching and research have benefited, it is much more complex to be able to establish that staff, students and the community have benefited through our work.

Fifthly, we reflect critically on what has been achieved, and the possible existence of a gulf among the rhetoric, aspirations, expectations and the realities of what we have done together over the last five years.

Finally, this provides a framework for us to reflect upon the potential for community engagement in research and the curriculum for meeting the needs of researchers, universities and communities.

There is clearly a critical issue that what staff and institutions desire from engagement need not necessarily be convergent, and there must be a much greater specification of how consensus will be reached by all those involved about the kinds of activity necessary to ensure effective university engagement.

3.2 Communities of Practice and Community–University Partnerships

We have already written about the way the Cupp project uses a communities of practice approach elsewhere, and so in this chapter we restrict ourselves to a very brief retelling of the key features of a CoP (Hart and Wolff 2006). The approach has emerged precisely within the parameters set out by Paul Benneworth in Chap 1 relating to community engagement. On one hand, Cupp clearly wanted to get beyond what he called 'detached benevolence', and we have elsewhere referred to as 'a patronising charity ethos'(Hart and Wolff 2006, p. 126). On the other hand, there are clear risks in allowing universities to have their commanding heights taken over by community interest organisations which might not necessarily have the best interests of the other important stakeholders of the university at heart. As we made clear, the Cupp community of practice model is of existing people and organisations coming together and working co-operatively to build up 'emergence' as a key characteristic of these communities—they exist because they do, and they do because they exist,

and it is difficult to empirically or conceptually divorce these two elements without misrepresenting what it is that these activities do.

Communities of practice are groups of people who share a passion for the same thing and we have used this approach coined by Wenger et al. (2002) to develop our conceptual thinking, and through its implementation, the activities. CoPs cut across traditional organisational barriers and hierarchies, to bring all perspectives to bear on an issue or field of interest. By avoiding giving more importance to professional knowledge over actual lived experience, CoPs raise exciting questions about what knowledge is and about whose knowledge we are talking. Smith (2003) defines CoPs as 'a community created over time by the sustained pursuit of a shared enterprise' while Wenger says communities of practice are 'groups of people informally bounded together by shared expertise and passion for a joint enterprise' (Wenger and Snyder 2000, pp. 139–140). The emphasis here is on the voluntary origins of such practice. People in these communities want to do things together in a way that enables them to 'share their experiences and knowledge in free-flowing, creative ways that foster new approaches to problems' (Wenger et al. 2002, p. 5).

Whilst there is a great deal of self-direction involved here, at the same time it is important to acknowledge that CoPs often have leaders and champions, although in the context of the community of practice, these may not be the people that formally fulfil that role in the participating organisations. Understanding this paradox is made a little easier by returning to the simple explanation of communities of practice, "they are because they do, and they do because they are". The glue that holds communities of practice together is the activities that they undertake, because these provide the opportunities for shared social knowledge creation that in turn helps individual members to deal with their own problems. Leaders and champions within a community of practice can therefore be relatively junior members who nevertheless influence or shape the key activities, and whose own social behaviour shaped the opportunities others have to participate in the community of practice.

Another key element of the community of practice approach which we think is useful here for understanding the application of communities of practice models to universities is that of boundary spanners. Wenger (1998) talks about CoPs in relation to community–university partnerships representing a real challenge to conventional boundaries. While they have a very positive spin on the notion of 'boundary crossing' (Wenger 2002, p. 153) because of the potential for people to look afresh at their own assumptions and create new 'landscapes of practice', we know it can be difficult for the less convinced academic to take the risk or the community partner to find the extra time and resources to work in this way.

According to Wenger, there are a number of ways to effectively manage different perspectives and help folk to cross boundaries that might have traditionally kept them apart. One includes the creation of 'boundary objects' (Wenger 1998, p. 105)—in our case a shared resilience language and terminology, resilience building materials and resources—that help individuals from both the community and university connect with each other. The other is the notion of individuals who span both worlds so to speak—boundary spanners—who broker and translate different perspectives and facilitate the application of ways of seeing and doing things across different areas of

practice. This is particularly important given the well-documented difficulties that can arise with community–university partnership work. The term describes one of the roles in CoPs that help create connections among people from different organizations, cultures, sectors or localities.

The community of practice framework provides Cupp with two things. The first is that it has provided a rationale for a particular partnership approach, an ideal type of co-operative activity to use before the event. But of course, the community of practice model also provides a means for understanding the extent to which Cupp, and its various arenas, also termed 'communities of practice', has been successful in creating collective assets—socially produced knowledge—which benefit the various partners in the project.

It is hard for us to be able to objectively assess the extent to which we were able to realise the community of practice model in creating our arenas and projects. What it is however possible for us to do is to reflect on the extent to which one of the projects in which we have both been involved has created collective assets, and the extent to which they are valuable for the various factors involved in the project. In the next section, before we analyse how far it has been possible to achieve these collective assets of mutual value, we explain a little about the project as well as the people behind the project, including both members of the authorial team of this chapter.

3.3 History of the Partnership

In this chapter, we tell the story of, and then reflect upon, the partnership between Amaze and Cupp, led by Kim Aumann and Angie Hart (more detail is available on the details of the project in Hart and Aumann 2007). Kim is the director of Amaze Research and Training, part of a parenting charity of which Kim was formally the founding director; Kim contributed in 2007 to a volume jointly edited by Angie Hart in which she likened the experience of a university–community-partnership as a tandem ride. Angie Hart is Professor of Child, Family and Community Health at the University of Brighton, within the School of Nursing and Midwifery. She is also the Academic Director of Cupp and has previously published on community–university partnership working (cf. Hart and Wolff 2006; Hart et al. 2007b, c).

Amaze is a charity that offers independent information, advice and support to parents of children with special needs and disabilities aged 0 to 19 years. It provides direct services for parents such as a helpline, handbooks and fact sheets, one-to-one help with education and benefits issues, workshops and parent support courses. A parent-led organization, Amaze believes the views of parents should be central to the decisions made about their child; so they aim to make sure parents' voices are heard, working to encourage good communication and partnership between individual parents and service providers. But they also try to influence how services operate for all disabled children and families, working alongside colleagues across the sectors towards the ideal of integrated, seamless services. Their philosophy is that the best changes come when users are involved in designing better futures. As a

result, user involvement is an integral part of their work. At the time of writing, Kim was responsible for managing the organization's training, research and consultancy service that links theory, research findings and the experience held by parent carers and practitioners, to promote best practice.

Amaze has had a mixed experience of collaborating with university partners and previously had been sceptical about whether or not previous collaborations had resulted in anything worthwhile for families. Detailed at more length in Hart and Aumann (2007), prior to the Cupp project being launched, Amaze had experienced the university's approaches as highly instrumental and fitting with the 'doing to' rather than 'doing with' approach to engagement.

> In both these cases, what was on offer was not about partnership. The [Cupp] seems to promise something different. (Hart and Aumann 2007)

The collaboration was kicked off by an approach to the University of Brighton where Amaze immediately saw the possibility for a meaningful collaboration. An eagerness in academics to link the theory and research to improving people's real lives and practically tackling disadvantage has always been what Amaze really looked for. Amaze suspects a social or moral commitment to improve the lot of disadvantaged groups might be the real glue for effective partnerships with voluntary sector organisations.

This partnership which emerged focused on resilience (see following section), suggesting that sharing an interest in the subject or the methodology provided a basic start. Personal and relational issues are also important to the mix. Quality partnerships require finding the right match. With this partnership all this was in place, and there was the necessary 'spark'. Amaze took the opportunity to get involved with Angie Hart's resilience research work. Whilst it has not been all plain sailing, the partnership has survived long enough for us to still be speaking to one another, and able to tell the tale.

At the time of writing, Angie Hart had a fairly unusual academic background, combining academic, personal and practice knowledge and experience. Her research and teaching interests have all been connected to inequalities issues, and for the previous 6 years, she had been focusing specifically on child and family resilience. Angie's own background lay in NHS practice in child and adolescent mental health; she was also a parent member of Amaze, herself having adopted three children from the care system many years ago.

3.4 Tackling Inequalities: the Development of Resilient Therapy

The essence of our partnership to work together was always about how we use resilience research and practice to find ways of helping children, young people and adults having particularly tough times. Our common starting point was the agreement that resilience is a source of very useful knowledge about how individuals overcome such times. In order to better understand the partnership and its dynamics, it is necessary to understand a little about resilience in order to understand why this was important for us both and together.

Resilience is the ability to achieve good outcomes against the odds. There are thousands of academic research studies on the concept of resilience, but only a small number relate to the marginalized children, families and adults in which we are interested, and very few tell us much about what to do to support and foster resilient mechanisms and processes. Our partnership wanted to address this gap and translate the messages from research and practice-based evidence for parents, practitioners and young people to use themselves (see Hart et al. 2007b, c, for a review).

With just three individuals involved in the beginning (Professor Angie Hart, Dr. Derek Blincow and Helen Thomas), a scholarly literature review of the resilience research base was completed. Inspired by what this revealed, Angie and her two colleagues in the NHS Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service brought the key findings from this review together with their own practice and parenting experience to create a novel approach entitled "Resilient Therapy" (RT). Kim Aumann 'joined' the partnership about a year later. She was keen to involve parents and together we agreed that trying the ideas out with families living with persistent adversity and tapping into their experience and expertise would help us in improving RT to make it more practical, accessible and useable. We set up the Resilience Parent Advisory Group to help us and we've been testing and refining the framework ever since.

What we discovered was that the glue that bound us together in that on-going development activity was and is a shared passion to explore research and practice that gets to the heart of how to build resilience in complex situations. Our work on different initiatives all in some way linked to wanting to bridge the divide between theory and practice. In the course of that work, we've written two books, published a series of articles and produced a short film to help explain RT. We have delivered conference presentations, information and training sessions and have been working directly with various groups of parents, young people and practitioners. We were continually seeking and pursuing new opportunities and successfully secured funding from a number of funding sources to develop the work further.

Our collaboration with a range of community and academic partners has so far expanded every year and has been central to our work. The community of practice approach is one that we have found to be particularly helpful in achieving mutually beneficial and sustainable joint work. We subsequently turned to developing a new resilience learning programme and testing our resilience work with social enterprise activity to see if it might provide another model of funding for the sustainable development of our resilience partnership work: as of the time of writing, we're not sure how this will work out.

3.5 Developing Resilience-Focused Communities of Practice

Having explained a little about what we did in the course of our partnership, we want briefly to reflect upon what we learned in applying the idea of communities of practice in our collaboration. Our starting point was that the critical feature of communities of practice was that they were "communities that cut across traditional

organisational barriers and hierarchies, to bring all perspectives to bear on an issue or field of interest. By avoiding giving more importance to professional knowledge over actual lived experience, CoPs can raise exciting questions about what knowledge is and whose knowledge we are talking about" (see the previous section). In order to achieve this in our work around RT, we brought together groups of academics, practitioners, parents and carers to meet monthly, over one and two years, to generate new ways of thinking about and building resilience with children and young people having tough times.

The ultimate goal of our RT CoPs has been to shape resilience practice for the better. So we have been reliant on the partners involved in the communities being willing to share their ideas, reflect on their research and practice, and be open to new ways of thinking about and supporting children and young people. Taking a snap shot of our latest resilience work, there were at the time of writing 12 academics, 30 practitioners, 10 parents and 8 young people actively involved. Although the outcomes of the community were open and flexible, and sought to avoid the dominance of professional knowledge, the authors (Kim and Angie) played the roles of champions and animateurs in this Resilient Therapy community of practice.

The impetus for, and subsequent development of, our resilience work grew out of a synergy and constructive dynamic drawing together different policies, structures and day-to-day practices. The environment for the co-operation was set by external environmental factors, in this case primarily national policy decisions, which we were not able to influence, but which created conditions under which the collaboration could thrive. In particular, English public policy emphasizing user involvement, partnerships between statutory and voluntary sector providers in service to disadvantaged children and their families were key ingredients that set the scene for our work. Sustained commitment at a national level to tackle inequalities in health, with much attention to the consequences of these for disadvantaged children and their families was also in the picture. Finally, it is important to acknowledge that the emergence and development of the concept of resilience in academic literature and in practice accounts was a further contributing factor to our work.

A second set of environmental factors were the local decisions which influenced the conditions under which the co-operation could take place. In the local university context, the development of our Cupp programme also promised support to community–university partnerships that tackled inequalities and disadvantages, and as noted, was part of a wider cultural shift in the university that made genuinely equal or at least less asymmetrical partnerships possible. The University of Brighton commitment to community engagement was highly supportive: This can be seen firstly in the then Vice-Chancellor Sir David Watson's attraction of the original grant from Atlantic Philanthropies following a radio performance (Balloch et al. 2007). Secondly, national funding from HEFCE supporting a Centre for Knowledge Exchange (CKE) was made available to further this work: This was significant because CKEs were intended to be focused primarily on business engagement and using the resources to support community engagement represented a radical experiment. But, bringing various modest funds together within the university around Cupp created synergies which supported the project, particularly those aspects of it that involved

partnership working. Cupp also provided a structure within the university in which the project could gain momentum.

3.6   Impact on Teaching and Research

One of the critiques of community–university partnership as a form of corporate social responsibility by universities into communities is that the universities themselves do not benefit from that engagement. The RT collaboration demonstrates a clear example of how community engagement can create tangible benefits for the participating university—by providing access to useful lay knowledge—whilst also benefiting those communities. We argue that one of the hallmarks of the Cupp project's success is that the benefits which collaborations bring for teaching and research can be traced back into the University of Brighton. Although Hart et al. (2007b, c) include two detailed examples of how engagement benefits research and three of how it benefits teaching, we here want to argue that part of the Cupp synergy is creating benefits for teaching and research (as well as the community partners) simultaneously.

3.6.1   Impact on Teaching

It is worth pointing out that the development of Resilient Therapy has been carried forwards into the curriculum. The undergraduate nursing curriculum now has a generic session relating to resilient practitioner issues, and a number of specialist sessions, depending on the area of nursing students are graduating in. For example, nurses studying to become children's nurses have a specific session introducing them to Resilient Therapy and considering its application to case studies in a paediatric context. The social work curriculum has also benefited from expertise developed in this project. One of the CoP members, a family support worker, co-delivers a session with a social work lecturer. This session explicitly demonstrates how RT can be used alongside existing social work assessment techniques.

At the postgraduate level, resilience concepts have fed into masters courses. For example, students studying child safeguarding are exposed to resilient approaches in relation to child sexual abuse. Contributions from our community–university engagement research have also been into the masters curriculum more broadly. The qualitative research module, open to all masters and Ph.D. students in the school, has a session on user involvement in research delivered by one of our group, and draws on our resilience work as a practical case study of community–university partnership working.

This has not purely been in an academic sense—the RT community of practice, which built up in the course of collaboration, has been actively drawn upon by lecturers at the University of Brighton.. Students are exposed in the course of their studies both to the work of researchers and the wider community of practice. In the

course of exposing students to the community of practice, there were some students who started to 'live' in that community, and there is also some evidence that the work of students fed back into the community of practice as well as contributing to developing understandings of RT.

Two Ph.D. students are working explicitly with resilient ideas and are active members of our community of practice. One of these is undertaking her own study which is exploring whether kinship carers find RT a useful support for the complex work involved in bringing up their own children's children. The other is applying ideas from the resilience field to adult mental health. As well as getting access to cutting edge resilience research developments in a university context, these students are themselves involved in developing community university engagement. The hope is that as academics of the future, they would thoroughly embed in community–university partnerships and would support others in developing these ways of working.

What has been interesting in building up this community of practice around RT in the School of Nursing & Midwifery at the University of Brighton has been the extent to which the ideas which began as very personalised, closely identified with the originating team of Angie, Helen, Derek and Kim, have become codified and abstracted into the curriculum more generally. This is a further indication of the success of the community of practice, creating a set of 'solutions' which others are able to use more easily without having to be active members of the community themselves. This can be illustrated by an anecdotal experience from Angie, who through a chance encounter with a social work lecturer in the staff room discovered that she was regularly delivering resilience sessions to her students, directly drawing on RT, without having been part of the community of practice which had developed and diffused the ideas themselves.

3.6.2   Impact on Research

RT was developed within the University of Brighton, where academics—and hence our community-engaged resilience research—are shaped by broad government agendas, research council priorities and internal university research strategies. However, a culture of relative academic freedom gives academics at the University of Brighton considerable autonomy over their research area and methodological approaches. A decade or so ago, when Angie first started to work in a participatory way, explicit community–university partnerships were rare in the UK, and other academic colleagues expressed open suspicion about these approaches. Disquiet was particularly expressed about the difficulties of obtaining funding for community-engaged research, the extra time engagement would take, as well as the concern that community partners would set the agenda and research with little academic value would be undertaken. General concerns about 'dumbing down' and the loss of academic status were also expressed, as was the well-debated issue of community–university engagement being a barrier to academic promotion. This was not a particular problem at the university, but rather is associated with the idea

that engagement is only something for people that cannot do 'real' research (cf. Wellcome 2002; Durodié 2003).

However, given the relative autonomy afforded within the University of Brighton, it was permissible if not directly encouraged to work as a community-engaged academic. We must be clear that in contrast to some of the stories we have anecdotally encountered of people succeeding despite rather than because of their institutional backing, this is no hero's tale of an academic toiling against the odds. But we do feel that it is legitimate to ask whether the concerns which academic colleagues have raised have in fact come true or whether there was a different tale to tell and that engagement did in fact lead to an enrichment of research.

In order to answer that question, it is necessary to determine the quality of the research activity undertaken within the RT partnership, and then to ask whether that research would have happened in the absence of the partnership activity. It is certainly possible to say that the community engagement element did not undermine the academic rigour of the work undertaken. The original book by Angie, Helen and Derek was published by Routledge, a serious academic publisher, and its academic reviewer prior to publication rated the book's scholarship as excellent.

This suggests that the charge can be refuted that the involvement of community partners in the research distracted activities away from serious academic work towards more consultancy or applied research activities. Further evidence of the quality of the research work can be seen in that Angie was promoted to a personal chair during our research period and her resilience research profile formed part of her submission for conferment. Angie and the Cupp team have also been working with the UK's national centre for public engagement in Bristol in reflecting upon the lessons of the Cupp programme and the community of practice approach in promoting effective engagement more generally in UK HEIs (Hart et al. 2008).

A second indicator of the quality of the research that has been undertaken are the levels of research funding which have been acquired to support the development of the programme. We received funding to further the impact of our research by way of the establishment of a learning programme, a website (Hart et al. 2010) and social enterprise activity from the UK Economic and Social Research Council. This council is seen as one of the most prestigious sources of research funding in the United Kingdom. Angie's Head of Department's policy for much of the time during our research collaboration was to permit her to reinvest any external income generated for her own salary replacements back into our resilience research. This enabled us to pay for Kim Aumann to be involved in the research whilst working for Amaze, and for a part-time research assistant, part of whose role was to support community partners to access relevant academic literature, facilitate the engagement of parents and carers and to organize a Resilience Research Forum with involvement from diverse participants.

The university also provided some internal resources enabling the establishment of the Resilience Research Forum. This Resilience Research Forum facilitated members of our research group undertaking research visits within the United Kingdom and abroad. In line with our ethos that community members of the research community of practice are active, the forum allocated conference attendance bursaries via a

competitive process to community members in our research group. One notable outcome of this was that a group of academics and community partners collectively attended an International Resilience Conference in Halifax, Nova Scotia and were able to present our research work (Aumann 2010; Cameron 2010; Hart and Blincow 2010; Hill 2010; Kirkwood 2010a, b).

Community members of the team were particularly good at asking 'So What?' questions at the conference, and our observation would be that their presence apparently sharpened the applied aspects of the debate across the conference. The level of community participation that our team brought to the conference was seen as unusual by some delegates. Some said that it inspired them to want to find ways of involving community partners more fully in the dissemination of their own work, but some seemed genuinely bewildered at precisely how to relate to the community members of our team or the value it added to the proceedings. In April 2011, an international conference on Resilience in relation to disadvantaged groups was organised at the University of Brighton to help cement the role of the research group as active in this field.

Other sources of funding have enabled us to set up and develop resilience-focused communities of practice, with academics, students, practitioners and parents experimenting with the application of RT to their own practice areas. Funding sources for this aspect of our work have come from both HEFCE as well as a local National Health and Social Services Group (Primary Care Trust). There have also been other creative ways in which we have managed to find funds to support the development of our research. Because of the applied nature of our work, we have been able to set up a donation fund within our University's charity arm. In tandem with a new social enterprise that had been set up shortly prior to the writing of this chapter, these various funding sources represent a diverse portfolio of research funding that arguably gives us more possibilities to generate research funding.

Taken together, this evidence suggests that research funding and academic promotion have not been adversely affected by undertaking community engaged research. Of course, a caveat to all this does apply, and that relates to the second of our criteria above, which is that this would not have happened without the community engagement. It's hard to say precisely if this is the case, as we have no way of knowing what would have happened to our resilience research had we taken it down a less community-involved route. Arguably, we might have been as or more successful with different research bids, and Angie may have still been promoted to a professorship, but that misses the point somewhat because Angie would still have had to find the resources to do her research from somewhere, and engaging with the community provided the key that unlocked those resources, and also has enhanced her research by making it more relevant to communities.

Regarding concerns about our research being dumbed down, some might say that this has occurred. It is hard to 'keep all balls in the air'. For example, alongside academic involvement, our monthly Resilience Research Forum attracts many participants from across the community, voluntary and statutory sector, with participation from service users and young people. Resilience research and practice

development is presented and debated, many people have said that this forum models a successfully inclusive research seminar and debate is indeed lively. However, the degree to which senior academics and academically informed practitioners feel that the debate is enhanced by the high degree of inclusion is a moot point. Some have mentioned anecdotally that they feel that the discussion is, on occasions, repetitive and unsophisticated, articulating questions without providing the thrust for further depth. However, thinking back to some of the academic conferences or seminars attended by Angie, the same criticism can be levied.

The issue of community partners running away with the research agenda could be said to have occurred. However, this has not occurred in the negative way that those who usually describe situations in that way envisage, where narrow interests divert general high-quality research into specific research that provides few broader lessons. The resilience research has a very different dynamic to the research in which Angie was previously involved. But that is not necessarily a negative feature. Undertaking research and practice development in close collaboration with different members of our community of practice has raised the standard for what is acceptable: The community of practice members continually challenge the researchers to be both theoretically robust but also useful to practitioners, parents and young people.

This chimes well with Pfeffer's point relating to inequalities research where 'the skills of getting things done are as important as figuring out what to do' (Pfeffer 1992, p. 12). Hence all of our resilience research till date has been concerned with developing aspects of the evidence base for practice application, and in evaluating whether or not these are helpful. Admittedly the challenge has been to ensure that this applied research remains engaged with academic dialogues and debates. The accent has been admittedly less on what are the theoretically interesting questions, and more on the questions and problems arising from the application of the theory.

It is impossible to answer the counterfactual of what would have happened to Angie's research had she not taken a route to engage with communities. But it is important to recognise that it is not the case that had this research route not been chosen then, the participants would have all been publishing papers in the 'top-rated' journals. The engaged research has fitted well with and built upon Angie's approach to scholarship and pedagogy. Without this community dimension, Angie probably would not be pursuing the work in the same way as she doesn't enjoy working alone or divorced from her community roots—all of which supply meaning and purpose to the work.

3.7 Lessons Learnt Along the Way

At the time of writing, it is clear that community–university engagement had become established as an important element of what the University of Brighton was offering in educational terms. Nevertheless, we have had a series of struggles along the way to establish and build up our activities, and these provide a useful lens to reflect on a number of important issues for community–university partnership. From our

experience, we strongly believe that we have something meaningful to say about how to follow the path of community engagement, and to reflect whether, on balance, all that additional effort really add value to researchers, institutions and communities. In this final concluding section, we want to make four points about what has mattered in successful engagement for these different groups, to better ground the academic debates in these books with our considered practical experiences:

- *Getting and keeping the wherewithal:* Our engagement activity has been extremely hard work, not always acknowledged by our academic and community colleagues, and every engagement brings a worry that all these efforts might ultimately be in vain.
- *Boundary spanners:* Our experience confirms the importance of 'boundary spanners' to good community of practice working, people who work between the 'worlds' of the different communities that meet; we have been comfortable operating in this in-between space, this comfort is an important pre-condition for good community–university partnership.
- *Relationships, relationships:* One of the pressures on these boundary spanners is that they have to build the relationships that hold the community of practice together: Managing these relationships can be extremely taxing. Even participating in the community of practice means managing different relationships; and this is not necessarily a widely held skill.
- *Appreciating different drivers:* Different partners have different motivations for participating in partnerships. These different motivations create tensions, and tensions cannot always be defused through rational debate; engagement seems to always involve arguing.

3.7.1   Getting and Keeping the Wherewithal

It's really time consuming to work in this way. Sometimes we can't figure out whether we just get tired and need some good individual working or thinking time to balance a stint of exertion supporting a specific community–university involvement activity, or whether in fact, this type of work is best sustained when delivered in periodic bursts. We suspect it's the latter.

Even though our experience of the co-delivery model is time consuming, it's also worth mentioning that we believe it has impacted positively on making our community–university relationships stronger. While some community members were initially worried about not having enough formal training or work experience and some academics were concerned that it might 'cramp their individual style', it has been an active way of breaking down hierarchies and levelling things somewhat, not to mention the training ground it has provided us for learning new ways to facilitate dissemination opportunities.

For example, much of our resilience dissemination work involves delivering information and training sessions to audiences interested in knowing more about resilience

theory, research and practice application. In an attempt to model our partnership work and our belief that the best can be achieved for children and young people, when parental experience combines with academic and practitioner skill and knowledge, we routinely co-deliver sessions with parent trainers or draw on academic, practitioner or service user duos to do so.

As is the case with any co-delivery combination, the benefits are numerous. Individual trainers can give each other support, provide continuity, offer different styles and strengths and share the preparation and delivery tasks. It also means that workers and parents can bring their own unique insights and skills to bear on the topic and potentially reduce the differences in theoretical and practice perspectives. But it does require the allocation of extra time to communicate clearly with each other before, during and after sessions.

In addition, choosing to work with parents, practitioners or young people as co-deliverers to share illustrations of certain issues or points, requires an awareness of why we seek personal stories, how it helps to achieve learning outcomes and what's involved if we are to do it well and sensitively. Planning, shared expectations and de-briefing can become really important features of co-delivery in this context given the potential for personal stories to open old wounds, feelings and reactions for the parent, practitioner or young person telling them. And that, in turn, places the obligation on the rest of us to manage the work carefully, so pacing the workload and making time for the support dimension are necessary to keep it going long term.

That isn't to say that at times, it hasn't worked. We have had our fair share of investing in co-delivery partnerships that just don't shape up and it's deflating when we have to call it a day. These are the moments when we wonder whether it might be easier to return to old ways and go it alone. And there are also the times when we find ourselves reassessing work schedules and seeking quieter opportunities to just work with the inanimate computer instead. The scales come out and we recalculate the nuances of this style of working.

In terms of lessons learnt, perhaps the most important is to be careful not to have too many expectations, and yet be prepared to put in a great deal of work doing things that other academics and colleagues might not notice or value. Taking a long term view also helps. There have been times when partnerships seemed to be going nowhere, and then suddenly something happened to move it to a new level. So, on balance, we think it's worth it and the benefits outweigh the hassle which is why we are actively involving parents, practitioners and academics in the design and delivery of our new resilience learning programme.

3.7.2   Boundary Spanners

We noted in our review of the literature on communities of practice that an important element of effective communities of practice was boundary spanners. Clearly, community–university partnership activities seek to bridge the gap in culture and understanding between parents, practitioners and academics: We believe that through

the work in the community of practice, we are able to identify where we have built these 'boundary spanners'.

In our partnership we've actively built up the possibility of spending much more time on each other's territory. Kim has a secondment to work part of the week on the university campus, and Angie works regularly with parent and young people's groups in community settings. We have even gone as far as to establish a new social enterprise organization ourselves—a boundary object taking us forward and drawing on elements of both our organizational affiliations, to create something new.

The effect of this is that we have a set of skills that allow us to operate far more comfortably in each other's worlds, as well as in new 'worlds' that we would not necessarily have anticipated. For example, Angie has begun to work more actively and inclusively with young people themselves in the development of RT. Kim has become comfortable and adept at speaking at academic conferences. We notice that neither of us is particularly wedded to a fixed identity, nor would we want to be. So, most of the time at least, we are comfortable with being on the edges.

This isn't the case for everyone of course. In terms of lessons learned, we think it worthwhile to actively think about who could—and is happy to—work effectively across the boundaries. If you are somebody who cherishes a singular identity, for example Professor of Sociology, then you might find it hard to work as a boundary spanner, representing other perspectives. If this is the case, the engagement is, for better or for worse, unlikely to be for you, and we could not recommend it to you. But this may not matter, or in some partnerships it might even make for more effective working. The main lesson is to be aware of where you stand and to articulate what you can and can't do, and what you do and do not want to do.

3.7.3   Relationships, Relationships

A third important point that we see in reflecting back on our partnership, is that it's really clear that paying attention to building relationships and sustaining them is fundamental. We urge readers to really use their imagination to think about some of the minutiae involved in negotiating the complex relational issues these partnerships raise. Take Angie, supporting young people with mental health experiences to write a resilience guide (Experience in Mind, Taylor and Hart 2011) for parents. Academics typically use a dense academic writing style, maintain a distance from research subjects and consider themselves to be experts with respect to lay communities. These are precisely the skills which are not needed, alienating young people with jargon, failing to develop a therapeutic rapport with them and not listening to the feedback which these young people will provide. At the same time, overlain on that is the need to manage the partnership as a project, sustaining interest in and championing the activity internally and externally, whilst producing academic outputs.

Angie found herself in the tricky position of negotiating between young people, the youth worker and her own interests in delivering the project. At the time of writing she has supported the production of a guide that, as an activity within itself seems to

have been of therapeutic benefit to the young people involved. It has also provided useful material for parents struggling to cope with their child's mental ill-health. However, this work ended up being so time-consuming that Angie has not yet been able to produce any outputs that would seriously count in academic terms.

Community partners sitting on academic forums face a dual challenge: They need to deal with these clever-sounding academics who speak their own language and might silence or intimidate them, and get something of use out of these forums. Kim's very thick skinned, so she's not bothered about the apparent academic hierarchy. But she does struggle with some aspects of working alongside more experienced, knowledgeable university researchers who share a 'researchspeak' that she can't immediately understand or keep up with, something slightly exacerbated by Kim's hearing impairment. Asking questions whilst not putting academics off working with community partners is something she struggles with. Kim sometimes worries that academics get bored with her—but don't worry, she doesn't lose sleep over it.

Given these sorts of tensions, from our perspective, a lesson learned would be to spend time thinking about relationships. Helping others in your team to find better ways of working and supporting communities of practice members is a useful focus. For us, many have developed skills in resilience working, but some of us haven't. And whilst some seem better able to draw on the unique skills and perspectives of others in our communities of practice, others clearly haven't found this networking capacity so useful. For yet others still, it may be a matter of time (and it may be a long time) before the value of collaboration becomes active.

We suggest that perhaps a supervision model for people involved in community–university partnerships might help to address these issues. This could help them think through the relational aspect of community–university partnerships and reflect on their own capacities and dilemmas in considering whether to develop this kind of portfolio.

3.7.4 Appreciating Different Drivers

The final point is that different participants have different reasons and objectives for participating in the community of practice. This may seem obvious, but our experience is it does get a lot of people into trouble. Community partners and academics often have very different priorities. Kim has learnt that many academics won't get out of bed unless their name is first on a paper that is written for supposedly prestigious journals that only 10 people will read. Angie has learnt that even though she might get excited about 'writing something up', Kim falls asleep on the sofa at the very mention. In our partnership, we've bickered endlessly about the supposed value of writing theoretical articles or presenting conference sessions that profile more of the same. But those activities are necessary for Angie as an academic to be able to tick her research excellence framework box and she does actually like thinking about theory anyway.

On the other hand, Angie can get fed up with having meetings in dusty church halls, where community members sometimes assume she has elevated knowledge and expertise and yet complain about academic elitism. Kim works in an environment that is not only interested in outputs, but is actually very focused on outcomes. She has to be able to demonstrate the way in which the partnership adds value to the organization's primary mission and chart the positive impact of it with children and families. Ultimately we have learned to at least recognize and understand these different emphases, although without having to let them go—we still argue frequently. Because of balance, the positive energy we have been able to generate to get work done, expand our thinking and meet both our sector's needs, seems much larger than if either of us had done it alone. We have demonstrated the capacity with which we all have to work together co-operatively and collaboratively, despite our differences.

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Chapter 4
Universities, Regions and Social Disadvantage

Ruth Williams and Allan Cochrane

4.1   Introduction

The role of universities has come under increasing scrutiny in recent years, with a particular interest in the extent to which (and ways in which) they might contribute to wider social and economic well-being, reducing social and geographical inequality and helping to deliver sustainable growth. Instead of existing in some separate and protected space, universities are now expected to contribute not only to the development of their regions and localities and to engage with local communities, drawing in new cohorts of students, but also seeking ways of working in partnership with others, from business and the public sector to communities and the third sector.

This chapter sets out to explore some of these issues. It begins by discussing the changed global context for higher education, before identifying the rise of a regional agenda and the drive to community engagement. The chapter highlights the extent to which universities are rooted in place, and then (with the help of evidence drawn from a research project) explores the significance of this, in the context of initiatives intended to challenge social disadvantage. The debate is focused around the three core themes of widening participation, community and civic engagement, and image and cultural attractiveness. Finally, the argument turns to a balanced consideration of university impacts and suggests ways of moving beyond contemporary policy debates about university impact and community engagement.

4.2   Universities, Globalisation and Regionalisation

Many of the UK's universities, particularly those created in the nineteenth century, were founded with the expectation that they would take on a wider civic and social role, reflecting the interests of their sponsors in the local industrial and business

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elites. However, by the middle of the twentieth century, the relationship between universities and their communities was more uncertain as many sought to position themselves in national and even global academic networks. They seemed to pride themselves for their separation from society and the purity of purpose that implied, to the extent that the stereotypical representation of the university as 'ivory tower' had some validity (see, e.g. Calhoun 2006).

Although there is a longer history of seeking to measure the impact of aggregate higher education spending on economic growth, it is only in the last couple of decades that the direct local and regional social and economic impacts of universities have been explicitly recognised and given greater emphasis in policy documents, to the extent that it is claimed that:

> . . . institutions should increasingly be embedded in their regional economies . . . The nature of the role will depend upon each institution's missions and skills . . . in all cases, universities and colleges are key drivers for their regions, both economically and in terms of the social and cultural contribution they make to their communities (DfES 2003, p. 36).

Thus, universities are increasingly seen to be central to contemporary society. They have been identified as 'crucial national assets', as sources of new knowledge and innovative thinking, providers of skilled personnel and credible credentials, contributors to innovation, attractors of international (and national) talent and business investment into a region, agents of social justice and mobility, and contributors to social and cultural vitality (see, e.g. Boulton and Lucas 2008).

The rise of globalisation as an economic phenomenon, often viewed through the lens of a globalised knowledge economy, means that national economies are no longer seen as the drivers of growth and prosperity. Instead regional and local networks are identified as the 'crucibles' of economic development 'in which the ingredients, once put in the pot together and cooked, often turn out very differently from what we can deduce from their discrete flavours' (Storper 1997, p. 255). 'Regions ' are understood as sub-national (economic) activity spaces linked in to global networks rather than fixed administrative areas set down from high (see, e.g. Allen et al. 1998). It is in this context that claims are also increasingly made about the role of universities in driving local and regional economic growth and social cohesion. As Brennan et al. (2006, p. 5) argue:

> . . . universities lie at the intersection of the global and the local. With the creation and transmission of universalistic knowledge as their central functions, they hold the potential for interchange between localised concerns and aspirations of the communities in which they are situated—and of the sub-groups within them—and the networks and drivers of the 'global knowledge economy'.

This increased focus on and interest in the relevance of the local and regional roles of universities has emerged not only in the context of an increased emphasis on global competitiveness, but also has been further reinforced by wider moves towards what has been called the massification of higher education, with some universities being specifically identified as having a local or regional rather than a national role.

Universities are identified as being important for their local and regional economies and societies because they are seen to be:

- Central to building competitiveness by creating new knowledge and transferring and exchanging existing knowledge (through education, consultancy and other external links).
- Contributors to transforming local populations (through the skilling and re-skilling of the workforce).
- Significant drivers of economic development (as employers/businesses, and as producers of people with skills).
- Sources of initiatives to challenge social disadvantage.
- Powerful agents of cultural change (as cultural nodes in their own right).

These factors, it is argued, all contribute to advancing social mobility (see e.g. Scott 2009).

In the United Kingdom, alongside the renewed emphasis on the role of universities in fostering local and regional development has run another narrative that points to the way in which universities may be mobilised more actively to alleviate social disadvantage. In part (at least until recently) this has been expressed through a commitment to widening participation. However, it has also been suggested that universities can have an impact on disadvantaged groups through their own community-based activities, as well as by seeking more widely to raise aspirations among those groups. As we have pointed out elsewhere, 'the involvement of higher education institutions in local and regional development may deliver on more than just narrow economic goals, even if the community role is often not given the attention it deserves either by universities or government agencies' (Cochrane and Williams 2010, p. 21). Even from its own heavily business oriented and economic perspective, the OECD has emphasised that:

> Regional development is not only about helping business thrive: wider forms of development both serve economic goals and are ends in themselves. HEIs have long seen service to the community as part of their role, yet this function is often underdeveloped (OECD 2007, p. 5).

In this broader context, the language of community engagement has increasingly been mobilised in attempts to change the strategic emphasis of universities, to open them up beyond what are perceived to be their narrow interests in knowledge production, teaching and research. As David Watson powerfully puts it, this 'presents a challenge to universities to be of and not just in the community; not simply to engage in 'knowledge-transfer' but to establish a dialogue across the boundary between the university and its community which is open-ended, fluid and experimental' (Watson, 2003, p. 16. See also Watson 2007 for a more developed discussion of the implications). This aspect of the so-called 'third mission' of universities (alongside teaching and research) goes beyond more traditional sets of linkages with industry and is reflected, for example, in initiatives (such as the Beacons for Public Engagement sponsored by the UK's funding councils, Research Councils UK and the Wellcome Trust), which highlight 'the many ways in which the activity and benefits of higher education and research is shared with, and informed by, the public. Engagement

is by definition a two-way process, involving interacting and listening between all parties with the goal of generating mutual benefit' (*Beacons for Public Engagement* undated).

4.3   Universities in Their Regions

Perhaps we should not be surprised that the relationships between universities and the regions and localities within which they find themselves are closer and more complex in practice than those implied in the stereotypes to which reference has been made. Universities are relatively fixed in place. This means that each will always have a close relationship with its region, even if the nature and focus of that relationship vary significantly. Universities are different and localities are different. Universities offer different things to their regions depending on their histories, the balance between their teaching and research functions, and the nature of their student bodies (who they are, where they have come from and why they are there). Regions and localities are different and provide very different environments for universities through the strengths and porosity of their boundaries and identities, their economic make-up, the social and ethnic mix of the population, mobility in and out, and the overall feel and image of place. Thus, regions influence what is possible within their universities and vice versa.

However, this does not mean that either region or university is unchanging, with each necessarily facing the other as a more or less given entity. On the contrary, although it would be wrong to suggest that the relationship is always a positive one, the relationship between university and place is a more subtle one in which, potentially at least, if not always in practice, each helps to define and shape the other.

In the United Kingdom, on whose experience the rest of this paper is based, most universities are embedded in their regions and localities, some are defined by them and a few effectively define them. Many are recruiters of local students and producers of local graduates as well as contributing to the supply of a skilled workforce. Universities are the major employers with a significant impact on local employment opportunities. They are managers of large estates and generators of major property developments, which may have unintended (and sometimes even) negative local consequences. Many universities also play the role of 'honest broker' through their partnerships with local and regional agencies, which may provide development and other funding opportunities. National policy initiatives have helped influence and shape the regional focus of universities, for example, in the form of widening participation activities, business and community engagement, and through the formalisation of networks of universities and other education providers. These developments have provided not only opportunities for universities but also challenges. These are explored below in more detail in the context of recent research into universities' roles in regional social transformation.

4.3.1   The HEART[1] *Project*

The project, upon which this paper is based, asks what the role of universities may be in helping to shape and redefine the economic and social experience of the regions in which they are located, and particularly sets out to consider their engagement with forms of social disadvantage in their surrounding regions. The project is structured around four case study universities and their regions, which are located in three different urban regions in England and one in Scotland, and cover a range of types, from the elite to the more vocationally-based. In other words, we have been able to consider both how the different missions of particular universities may affect their regional engagement and how differences in regional context may shape what is possible. Interviews have been conducted with key players in the universities and with a range of stakeholders, including community-based interests, public agencies (local government, regional development agencies, schools, colleges, health authorities) and business and industry representatives, as well as other locally-based universities. These have focused on the rhetorics, activities and impacts (indirect, unintended, winners/losers) of university–community relationships.

Rather than drawing on economic perspectives, which are the focus of much existing and continuing research (see, e.g. UUK 2006 and key themes of the wider Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) initiative on The Impact of Higher Education Institutions on Regional Economies), the project has a socio-cultural focus. However, it is evident that the social, cultural and economic aspects are closely interconnected in practice. As already noted above, universities influence what is possible within their regions and vice versa. For example, social mobility opportunities will be affected by economic developments, as well as aspirations, and similarly economic developments will be affected by 'aspirations', 'confidence' and 'identity'.

4.4   Social Disadvantage: Universities and their Regions

Some commentators argue that the re-emergence of interest in university and local/regional links in the United Kingdom has been driven by changes to the higher education system (expansion, competition for research funds) rather than 'adverse socio-economic conditions' (Mohan 1996, p. 94). Scott and Harding (2007, p. 9) similarly note that the increase in the number of school leavers and adults in the workforce taking advantage of higher education, while not being driven by local and regional needs and demands, has nevertheless had the effect of providing 'greater incentives for interaction between universities and the local and regional consumers of their services'.

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[1] Higher Education and Regional Transformation: social and cultural perspectives—a project funded by the Economic and Social Research Council as part of a larger joint initiative on the 'Impact of higher education institutions on regional economies'.

Universities also operate within a wider policy framework, which continues to identify issues of social disadvantage and deprivation as problems that need to be tackled. However, this is also a context in which there is a marked reluctance to identify structural causes for social exclusion. Instead, stress is placed on the need for individuals and communities to find ways of accessing paid employment. From this perspective, university education is interpreted as a route by which at least some may be enabled to gain better paid jobs, and knowledge transfer is seen as offering the prospect of transforming areas of industrial decline, while university-based community action initiatives help provide support to the weakest in society. The current policy approach is to place skills development at the centre of attempts to increase economic competitiveness and combat inequality and deprivation. Universities and other education providers are positioned as important players in this process.

The extent to which universities can significantly ameliorate social disadvantage within their regions remains a matter of sharp contention (see, e.g. Williams 2009). Although there is some evidence that universities can play a role, in partnership with other organisations, the extent of impact associated with this role is more difficult to assess. Timescales can be very long (e.g., associated with establishing the relationships and partnerships necessary for impact), and impact may be indirect, unintended and sometimes negative. Any honest assessment requires the drawing up of a balance sheet that attempts to bear all of these factors in mind rather than simply listing the initiatives launched by universities, which tends to be a common practice in the grey literature generated by universities and their representative organisations.

Through the data that have been gathered and the views of the people we have interviewed, we have identified a number of functions that universities are performing, which are aimed at helping alleviate social disadvantage. They include:

- Raising and changing aspirations and attainment levels.
- Creating new opportunities and routes to access existing HE provision.
- Creating new provision to meet different needs and aspirations (of students, employers).
- Increasing local employment and consumption levels.
- Contributing to regional economic regeneration.
- Raising awareness of and confidence in a region.

In the discussion below, we explore these functions by highlighting three themes that run through our case study universities and regions, and explore the ways in which these universities (along with other organisations) are shaping relationships with socially disadvantaged groups.

4.4.1   Widening Participation

The notion of widening participation brings together concerns of social equity with concerns to transform the labour force. From the former perspective, new opportunities are created for those previously excluded from higher education by helping

to raise aspirations especially among young people. From the latter, universities are helping to produce a labour force more appropriate for the global market place and the emergent knowledge economy in particular by providing opportunities for local people to acquire (renew) knowledge, skills and qualifications. However, recruitment policies and reputational status within the higher education market are key determining factors of the extent to which a university will be engaged in activities to support the *local* community and economy.

Not surprisingly, widening participation is a major theme for all our case study universities. For three of them, widening participation activities are part of the core business, which is bound up in their longer histories but is in any case now an important source of students and also funding. In other words, whatever the social mission, widening participation is a business imperative which has to be met if targets of funded student numbers are to be met. The fourth university explicitly badges itself as 'world class', and emphasises the quality of its students (confirmed through the selection process) as well as its staff. This means that its approach to widening participation is rather different. In recognition of its history as a civic institution, senior managers recognise that it has some sort of a moral and social responsibility towards the local community. Its widening participation activities are aimed at improving the quality of education and inspiring children about higher education across the city-region, rather than recruiting students directly to the university. Its widening participation agenda could therefore be described as a 'benevolent' (almost charitable) one rather than being central to its mission—or, indeed, necessary in terms of its core business of student recruitment and income generation.

The universities in our research make clear distinctions between those who they believe can be reached and drawn in through widening participation initiatives, and those who cannot. In all of our cases, there were examples cited of communities whose members place little value on education and for whom higher education was not part of their culture. There remains a strong view among young people within such communities that higher education 'is not for the likes of us' and young people's aspirations were to get a job rather than to go to university.

This has encouraged a discourse within universities and among higher education policy makers in which it is assumed that 'raising the aspirations' of such young people is a necessary and worthwhile ambition. While all our case study universities undertook initiatives which had this as a stated aim, some academic staff (especially at one university) were sceptical of the value of such an approach, suggesting that it simply diverted attention away from the perfectly legitimate aspirations of young people for skilled industrial employment that had been denied to them by a process of economic restructuring. In other words, they argued, universities were helping to redefine the problem by implying that the problem was to be found in the 'low' aspirations of young people, when actually aspirations to employment were quite 'high' but were denied by the decline of traditional industries (in all the regions in which our case study universities were located) over the last few decades.

Nor should it be assumed that because many young people from socially disadvantaged backgrounds may hold the view that 'university is not for us', there is a wider dismissal of the importance of higher education institutions for a region or

city. On the contrary, a rather more sophisticated set of understandings seems to be in play. So, for example, a household survey conducted as part of our research in particularly disadvantaged neighbourhoods in one city region provided evidence of a widespread view (even among those least likely to attend a university) that the presence of a university was of importance to the locality through the benefits it could bring to the local culture and economy. The existence of a local university was seen as an important aspect of local identity.

The research also confirmed that socially disadvantaged groups are less likely than more middle class groups to travel very far to study. As a result those institutions that are more reliant on local recruitment and the attraction of students through widening participation or part-time study were concerned to identify ways in which universities might more effectively 'come to them'. This means universities and their management have to reassess the ways in which they interact with particular communities and prospective learners from socially disadvantaged groups. In one case study, the university specifically identified poor public transport and low levels of car ownership and suggested that this encouraged people to remain very rooted in their local communities. Relationships with schools, further education colleges and community organisations are seen as pivotal to the university's widening participation strategy, and the university has established institutionally branded satellite centres in all the further education colleges in the sub-region rather than expecting potential students to travel to the university.

4.4.2   Community and Civic Engagement

In three of the case study universities, community engagement and widening participation are very closely linked with each other in terms of overall strategy. Successful community engagement is intended (at least in the medium term) to be part of the process of raising aspirations and opening up new student markets. In the case of the fourth—because student recruitment is from a different pool—community engagement is, rather, an expression of what might be called 'corporate social responsibility'.

All the universities are, however, beginning to develop other forms of community engagement, which is less directly focused on student recruitment and more on the wider social contribution that can be made. In several cases it was suggested that even if collaboration with a particular school might not directly increase participation in higher education, it might raise the aspirations of children and their families in other ways that help them to recognise the value of education and skills development.

The other forms of community engagement identified include volunteering by both staff and students . Therefore, for example, members of staff (administrative, as well as academic) are frequently involved in local action groups and committees, as school and college governors. Students take part in volunteering programmes, which link up with local groups and many of these programmes are credit-rated. Universities open up their facilities to community groups (often at no cost) for community-based activities. Attempts to forge other links were made through bridging the gap between

academic research and community practice; for example, one case study university has established a joint post with the local hospital and is involved in working with local community organisations on health-related issues. Another is working closely with its local authority and using its research capacity to help with the development of policy on regeneration and employment issues.

Universities also engage with communities through their links with museums, art galleries, music venues and theatres, and their sponsorship of festivals and so on. This was apparent for all the case study universities, but the university with the longest history and roots in a wider civic—or municipal—tradition (see Goddard 2009 for a 'provocation' arguing for the reinvention of the civic university) made an almost taken for granted set of contributions reflecting its elite status, not only through its art gallery and museum, but also through a GP practice and the provision of dental care to local people through its teaching programmes. This may not be 'community engagement' as often imagined (because there is little direct attempt by the university to engage with local communities, except, for example, through educational initiatives associated with the museum) but it does nevertheless highlight the extent to which activities associated even with elite institutions may be locally significant.

It is widely recognised that the impact of universities on the immediate areas in which they are located is not always positive—even if it is often possible to identify positive economic impacts in terms of spending and some forms of service employment. At its simplest this may be no more than increased parking on neighbouring residential streets (identified in several cases) but concerns about 'studentification' (that is the move of students into some residential areas, increasing private rental housing and housing in multiple occupation) were also identified in at least one case. Studentification can disrupt existing neighbourhood relations both during term time (changing the nature of local shops, generating noise etc.) and during holiday time (when the neighbourhood becomes deserted). Those universities that are more focused on widening participation of students and part-time students have less of an impact in these terms, since a higher proportion of the students continue to live at home, but, of course, this means that some of the more positive transformative effects are also absent. All of our university case studies recognised the need to be 'good neighbours' to their local communities and ameliorate the potentially negative effects of their presence and in at least one of them this was reinforced through the development of a strategy in association with the local authority.

Community engagement has not generally been seen to be part of the core business of universities, and has traditionally been more of an afterthought or even simply a consequence of having a particular population of students and staff likely to become involved in local initiatives through voluntary activity, research and consultancy. It is now being given more of a formal role, in part because of funding council initiatives, but also because in many cases its value to universities is being recognised (both in terms of teaching and in terms of local positioning). Nevertheless, there remains the danger that such activities will be in tension with what might be seen as *normal* (funded) university functions (i.e. those relating directly to teaching and research).

One of our case study universities is attempting to address this tension by recognising and rewarding academic and social enterprise activities in the local community

through the promotions process. However, those we interviewed were aware that to promote the institution (and the region) in terms of excellence, attractiveness and status, the university also needs to develop niche areas and extend its geographic footprint. So even here the need to maintain a balance between community engagement activities and what is identified as core business is crucial. The gradual (if sometimes uncertain) incorporation of these activities into the mainstream priorities of higher education institutions was also reflected in initiatives undertaken at another university, where attempts were made to find a means of valuing community activity by students through curriculum development and the possibility of the award of credit associated with it. At the same time, a small amount of staff time that may be used for these purposes was identified, and members of staff were encouraged to take advantage of that allowance.

Apart from engaging with local communities, universities also participate in a wide range of formal and strategic partnerships involving local and regional organisations. An OECD (2007) report identifies three principal areas where these partnerships may be successful: in matching supply and demand in the local labour force; promoting local economic development; and contributing to regional systems of governance. Such relationships produced important opportunities for several of the universities we studied: For example, funding was made available for major campus development and university reorganisation; and infrastructural support was made available for the development of new curricula, especially in niche areas (e.g. the digital industry, computer animation). In a sense, these activities and partnerships, therefore, have less to do with community engagement and more with the core business of the institutions—looking for ways of surviving and growing. But the relationships that underpin such partnerships are significant for the way in which they confirm the interdependence of regional, local and university actors.

The importance of universities as actors in local and regional economies was acknowledged by the external stakeholders interviewed in the course of our research. In this context, business leaders tended to value the contribution which senior university managers made to the development of wider skills strategies. They were less likely to point to ways in which they would benefit directly from the recruitment of students graduating from their 'regional' universities. In one case the employers looking for graduates with particular technical skills complained that the local university did not provide the appropriate courses; however, at the same time it was acknowledged that a wider regional division of labour between universities ensured that there was not a shortage of graduate labour with that expertise.

Public sector stakeholders were more likely to be directly involved in curriculum design and development (e.g. for the police and the health service, particularly nursing and related professions); and local and regional government agencies directly sought to build on universities as economic and cultural organisations to deliver their wider development ambitions. This interdependence also found reflection in university strategies. In one case, the university's academic strategy was revised to be consistent with the broader regional strategy, with academic clusters being organised to reflect the sectors of regional importance. In another university, secondments and placements have been secured in key regional organisations to

cement the relationships and to help leverage funding opportunities. Finally, the joint development strategies at the city level are most important, focused on major property initiatives that are transforming an area of the city. The precise spatial focus varies according to the benefits likely to accrue to the university, as it seeks to position itself within the urban and regional institutional network.

4.4.3   Image and Culture Attractiveness

Our third theme of image and cultural attractiveness is one that further highlights the interdependence of university and region or place. Research by the Work Foundation (Williams et al. 2008) has identified educational institutions as one of the key drivers of 'place-shaping' and physical change in a city (e.g. through the presence of old and new buildings, number of students and growing demand for research and ideas), notwithstanding the possibility of more negative effects that may be produced, and are noted above. The importance of the creative and cultural sectors in generating economic development and prosperity has been widely recognised. Not only has the search for the factors that foster and encourage the development of those sectors become a central focus of policy debate but also emphasis has been placed on the extent to which particular places are more likely to attract and retain people most able to contribute to the process (see, e.g. Florida 2002 on the so-called creative class). Universities are necessarily involved in the complex interplay between the social and cultural context and the creative and cultural economy.

The experience of our case studies highlights the extent to which universities themselves are symbols and drivers of cultural change through, for example, their knowledge transfer and exchange activities, property strategies and cultural ventures. Universities are also major employers and businesses in their own right, and students and staff are potential sources of spending power whose impact needs to be measured not just in terms of multiplier effects but also in terms of pattern of expenditure. The pubs, clubs, restaurants and music venues around the universities we looked at may not replace the traditional industries that once dominated the regions (and inner cities) in which they are based, and there may sometimes be tensions between local residents (those who are unlikely to attend university) and some of the temporary residents. However, they contribute their own dynamic, often generating a new vitality, even if it sometimes seems rather fragile and unsustainable.

Bringing the different worlds of university and existing locality together is not straightforward, and in some cases there may be a danger of generating a dual culture, a dual economy. This was identified by those we interviewed in at least one case, where it was noted that little new employment was created for local residents. However, in another case the risk was minimised by the extent to which students were part-time and in another by the extent to which students were drawn from local communities (see also Munro 2009 for a discussion of the variable impact of students on the labour market in different areas). Even where the division might have been expected to be at its sharpest, the strategies of local authority and university seemed

to come together (perhaps disingenuously) with the promise that the success of the university would bring with it success for the city. Therefore, for example, in one case, the university's broader mission was to become a world class university, which complemented the city's aspiration to be a world city.

The development strategy of this particular university, in partnership with neighbouring universities, is having a dramatic effect at the local level, drawing on investment from regional and national sources. This development aligns with the city's own plans for transformation as it moves away from traditional manufacturing industries. A whole area of the city is effectively being transformed into an extended university campus. The challenge for the partner universities and the local authority is, of course, how to promote this sort of (extensive) change without excluding the neighbouring populations whose members are unlikely to benefit directly from higher education or its associated activities. One response has been to identify ways of enabling local people to find work with the university, by ring fencing particular jobs. It is often forgotten that many of the jobs associated with universities do not require administrative or academic expertise. A second one has been to develop and actively promote community-based volunteering among students.

A contrast can be drawn with another of our case studies, one which has no aspiration to world class status, but can be understood as a regional university (with an implicit division of labour between it and elite institutions in the region and sub-region). Its students are largely drawn from the region, the focus of its wider activities is also local/regional, and it makes little claim to national or international excellence, except in a few niche areas. Nevertheless, the university has had a significant direct impact in the city both physically as the university has expanded and economically as much of the retail and restaurant development draws on the university's proximity for business. And—as in the other case—its development strategy parallels that of the local authority, with an emphasis on finding ways of shifting perception and seeking to identify ways of introducing new industries, drawing on the creative and cultural sectors (such as digital media and technologies). There is a close relationship between the university and the broader local and regional plans and strategies developed by public agencies and partnership bodies to improve the area and look for ways of developing a new economic base. Regional and local agencies are important sources of finance for the university, particularly in terms of research and workforce development.

4.5 Some Conclusions

Much of what universities do is driven by national policy, or responses to national policy initiatives. However, responses to new policy directions are shaped by a combination of factors, including mission (driven by longer histories), reputational status, as well as funding incentives and opportunities. Like other corporate bodies, universities are driven by their own business priorities and the imperative to survive and prosper. Community engagement policy competes with other more dominant university functions that may command greater rewards (teaching as well as research, and,

Table 4.1 University impacts on socially disadvantaged groups

	Positive	Negative
Monetary aspects	Availability of university jobs—clerical, technical and elementary as well as high end Purchasing power of students and staff New facilities and cultural presence leading to an improved image of the region and inward investment	Increased competition for rented accommodation, car parking space, and part-time jobs
Knowledge aspects	Opportunities to acquire knowledge, skills, qualifications (leading to improved employment prospects) Upskilling of public sector workers (leading to improved community services) Use of university research and other knowledge transfer activities (to benefit local groups) Partnerships with schools and colleges (leading to improved attainment and aspirations)	Potential local students may be excluded from elite universities that require high entry grades A reputational hierarchy of universities in the higher education market will reproduce and legitimise existing social class divisions Those most excluded will not be reached because of poor/no attainment levels and/or low aspirations and values

Impact will be dependent upon contextual features; for example the extent to which a university's student body is drawn from the local region or nationally and internationally

in a few cases, income generated through knowledge transfer and related business activity).

Universities—as institutions—are not capable of significantly challenging the structural inequalities faced by those who do not 'aspire' to higher education, nor can community volunteering be expected to have dramatic (transformative) effects on the communities involved. Of course that does not mean that the initiatives themselves are not worthwhile. It is simply to suggest that they should be viewed more modestly. Nor does it mean that the operations of universities have no significant impacts—they do, and Table 4.1 sets out to capture some of the impacts (positive and negative) that have been identified through our research.

The extent to which universities can be mobilised to significantly improve the position of disadvantaged groups (or should be expected to do so) remains questionable. There is a danger that expecting them to take on such a role simply means that policy failure is guaranteed, even if each university might be able to provide a (reasonably persuasive) narrative that stresses the success of particular initiatives. Even the gains of university expansion are not quite as straightforward as is sometimes imagined. As Williams (2009, p. 640) notes 'the expansion of higher education has not increased social mobility. Instead it has cemented the domination of the middle classes'. In other words, it could be seen to have reinforced the divisions already apparent in the socially disadvantaged areas of the regions in which we undertook our research. Universities may indeed be changing who the 'winners' and 'losers' are, through their impacts on the local economies and labour markets, but without

necessarily impacting on overall levels of inequality and relative disadvantage. In some cases these may even be reinforced, especially where more than one university occupies the higher education market. This raises important questions, especially for attempts to reduce social inequality and challenge social disadvantage.

In this context debates about community (and public) engagement remain important—it matters that some sort of interactive dialogue favoured by Watson (2003, 2007) is sought. However, even the language of engagement remains trapped in a world that sees universities as somehow separate from the rest of society and having something to offer precisely for that reason. There is, therefore, a danger of not understanding quite the extent to which universities are actually already active participants in shaping their regions (not only as institutional actors but also through the action of staff and students) for good or ill. They are embedded in their regional worlds, creating new possibilities and closing them down, generating new inequalities and sometimes challenging them. They need to be considered not as some special category of social actor, but as actors pursuing their own interests with consequences that cannot be explained through any taken for granted assumptions of their general beneficence.

Insofar as a wider role can be identified for universities, it may, finally, be helpful to turn to a rather different approach which looks to build on their particular strengths and goes beyond the ambition to deliver higher salaries for graduates, skilled labour for particular economic sectors, more competitive regions, successful spin off businesses, or even to undertake locally-based charitable—or community—initiatives. Calhoun (2006) argues that the contribution universities can make to the public good is rooted in their ability to develop spaces of communication, spaces in which individuals and groups are able to interact to generate political progress. From this perspective, it is openness to critical debate and the ability to foster spaces within which such debate and interaction can take place that should define the wider role of universities. In some respect, of course, this is entirely consistent with Watson's vision of interactive dialogue, but it is some distance away from approaches that seek to identify and codify the social and economic 'impact' of universities.

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Part II
Internal University Transformations for Effective Regional Engagement

Chapter 5
The Relationship of Community Engagement With Universities' Core Missions

Paul Benneworth, David Charles, Catherine Hodgson and Lynne Humphrey

5.1 Introduction to Part II

This part explores a central university–community engagement conundrum, namely its fit with universities' core missions, and how 'ideas' of engagement move through the institution. At the heart of this conundrum, we see a certain slipperiness around the concept of engagement. There are so many different mechanisms by which universities can engage, and many universities are already extensively engaged with outside partners, that this leads to an under-specification of the engagement idea. In Part II, we argue policies encouraging engagement can suffer from stimulating discrete adjuncts to existing activities rather than magnifying what already takes place within institutions. This part explores how engagement is embedded within universities' existing activities, using the classification developed in Chap. 1 (cf. Sect. 1.6).

Engagement raises risks for universities, and although university–community engagement might potentially create university benefits, those benefits must be clearly specified and their attendant risks explicated. There are very institution–specific requirements for engagement to be adopted and accepted by a university, not just pertaining to the benefits, real or potential, that engagement creates, but they have to be accepted within the wider university. In Part III, we argue that the concept of engagement is compatible with the idea of a contemporary university, but that a series of debates have framed the 'idea of engagement' in three mutually reinforcing ways, as contingent, low-status and peripheral. This also frames the way within which universities adjudge particular real engagement activities and affects how they become anchored within universities.

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Part II deals with understanding how—given university–community engagement's relatively low intrinsic and external status—particular institutions may embrace or otherwise undertake engagement. We do this to develop a sense of the boundary conditions necessary for anchoring community engagement within different kinds of universities. This part includes three empirical chapters with quite different perspectives; all essentially corroborate the point that good institutional intentions are not sufficient for successful university–community engagement.

The framing of university–community engagement within institutions means that even serious and principled attempts made by universities to engage with communities face pressures to compromise these ideals. The results can reinforce community engagement as institutionally peripheral, giving an appearance of opportunistic rather than principled institutional behaviour, and the raising generation of resistance to university engagement from communities who see their hopes and desires of engaging with universities compromised by their supposed partners. The three empirical chapters in this part tell, with varying degrees of optimism, the constraints that this places on engagement activity.

In Chap. 6, Lynne Humphrey explores how community engagement in one Scottish university was framed by a much wider set of policy pressures. Scotland is renowned for its emphasis on education as a public good, but has nevertheless followed similar trends to the rest of the United Kingdom in recent years with instrumentalisation and increased emphasis on commercialisation and the delivery of accredited courses rather than community learning. Exploring an activity which won an award for engaging with excluded communities, even external recognition was insufficient to allow the activity to fit with the wider university culture. Lynne's chapter concludes raising questions about university–community engagement's potential to achieve meaningful institutional change given universities' other drivers and pressures which work against the principles underlying effective university–community engagement.

In Chap. 7, Laura Saija offers her reflections on a set of engagement projects in which she has been intimately involved, the University of Catania engaging with the city of Librino. She argues that university–community engagement was an emergent feature shaped by institutional predispositions to engagement, a feeling that it fitted with the idea of the university, an imminent need in the new town of Librino, and the efforts involving a research project, LabPEAT, in which she played a role. The overwhelming message is the length of time taken for institutional change, and the sense of frustration this can breed, both within communities, but also with researchers trying to change localities. Laura emphasises the importance of socialised university–community learning as the basis for change, but also for the agency of the university in wanting to learn those lessons and improve its societal impacts.

Chapter 8 presents one university example, Salford University, in the North West of England, which has attempted to lead as an institution in stimulating engagement. The university's background was one in which local partners were important stakeholders for Salford. However, attempts to promote civic engagement had proven unsuccessful, and resistance was rising in the institution in response to core resources being devoted towards subsidising loss-making engagement. The university decided that a future as a successful civic university was dependent on profitable engagement,

and engagement becoming a core part of university employees' activities. The university created the Academic Enterprise unit to focus on a change effort and university-wide cultural shift. James Powell and Karl Dayson argue that effective engagement needs a confluence of strong leadership, institutional enthusiasm, autonomy and incentives to achieve the necessary change.

5.2 Introduction to the Chapter

This chapter seeks to highlight and make explicit some of the tensions and issues that arise in the course of these chapters, and to provide insights into how activities framed as peripheral, contingent and voluntary can become significant in the perspective of a particular institution. This chapter begins from the perspective that a university can be regarded as a set of groupings with different, and sometimes competing, interests. For community engagement to become a serious institutional interest, engagement must offer something to each grouping within the university. But the value is not an intrinsic property; it is shaped through institutional dialogues and discussions, and therefore effective engagement must be rooted in the development of a consensus that it is institutionally valuable.

Those institutional dialogues are shaped by the wider networks within which universities are situated. It is not enough for a single institutional leader to declare a commitment to engagement—that engagement idea must be plausible and implementable for a range of other actors. This chapter explores the dynamics of these institutional dialogues as a means of understanding university–community engagement. In order to understand this process of relevant engagement this chapter takes four steps.

Firstly, we provide a taxonomy of the kinds of university activities where engagement—in this case—defined broadly to cover all kinds of external activity as well as engagement specifically with excluded communities. Secondly, drawing on a framework developed by Ruiz Cortez in a Latin American context, modified by reflection on the European situation, we then argue that engagement intensity may vary from superficial public relations to engagement representing a critical perspective for rooting the university in the world. Thirdly, we explore how this diversity of activities and intensity can hang together in a single institution. We offer a study of how different university constituents told stories about engagement's importance as a means of reconciling tensions and contradictions in trying to hold diverse and diverge activities together within a single institution.

This suggests that engagement is anchored within universities in different ways, underpinned by activities in which different groupings within the university build shared engagement understanding. But at the same time, there are clearly barriers which universities face in engaging with excluded communities (Table 5.1), just as excluded communities face barriers (Table 1.4) in engaging with universities (cf. Sect. 1.5). The conclusions deal with the conceptual and practical implications of this idea that engagement is an emergent outcome which must continually be reaffirmed in its institutional setting.

Table 5.1 Barrier universities face in engaging with communities. (Source: after OECD 2007; Perry and Wiewel 2005)

Type of barrier	Barrier typically faced by university in engaging with socially excluded community
Management choices	Community engagement not required by core university governance documents, statutes, social compacts
	Absence of institutional strategy for community engagement that drives institutional change within HEI
	Absence of office/planning organ promoting community engagement at high level in HEI
	Community engagement as part of senior management responsibility too broad to effectively be fulfilled
Financial incentives	Lack of dedicated funding stream for community engagement by universities
	Incentives for universities to attract students from deprived communities then help them find employment elsewhere
	Absence of core funding mechanisms to finance specific activities for working with deprived communities
	Other government funders of universities do not demand universities engage – health, regeneration, culture …
Skills for engagement	Lack of rewarding of staff by HEIs for community engagement in terms of career development and promotion
	Community engagement seen centrally as something peripheral, optional extra, for hobbyists and enthusiasts
	Tendency to do 'research on a community' not 'work in partnership with a community'
	University lacks subject or disciplinary base with skills easily absorbed by communities such as social policy …
Fit with regional needs	University lacks physical proximity or adjacency to the communities that could benefit from their skills base
	The university lacks "roots" in particular communities so these communities voices not heard by the university
	The absence of an articulate and demanding community who can help the university to do things
	The university 'problematises' the community, as something that resists estate development or intimidates students
Staff orientation	Third parties (RDAs, councils) divert university impact into other things such as employability training
	Communities engaged with as consultancy, and funders of that work lie elsewhere, so community not central
	Staff more focused on building global contact network than local connections
	Excluded communities not seen part of the "natural university community", so avoided or ignored by university
Student direction	Town/gown tensions keep students out of the communities which could potentially benefit from their presence
	Creation of student enclaves means local students do not have a demonstration effect to encourage community into HEI
	Difficulty of rewarding community engagement by students in degree in terms of quality assurance demands
	Squaring engagement training in disciplines with the demands of accrediters and professional bodies e.g. RTPI
	Orientation of community career routes as being professionalised, so focus on professional bodies not communities

5.3   Communities as Significant to Universities

The reality of contemporary universities is of facing multiple pressures from a range of stakeholders, and choosing which pressures to address by identifying which is the most urgent, as either the greatest threat or the most secure route to institutional survival (Jongbloed et al. 2007). Engagement with excluded communities can only therefore be of strategic interest to the university when it is seen as being responding to an urgent pressure, or at its most extreme, a crisis. Webber (2005) tells an interesting story of the rise of community engagement in the (private) University of Chicago. The University of Chicago was located for historical reasons on the lower south side of Chicago, in the Woodlawn community. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, this city district faced a shift in its resident population, from a primarily settled owner–occupier population to a more transient, landlord–renter market. There was also an ethnic population shift, with an increasing proportion of African–American residents, something regarded as highly negative. This posed a significant problem for the university, because of its potential to reduce its attractiveness as a place for students and academics. From this perception of a sense of crisis, the university found itself drawn into community engagement.

This engagement did not arise out of a philanthropic wish of the university to better the lives of its near neighbours, but a sense that ghettoization in the city blocks around the university campus was making the institution less attractive to staff and students. Even then, the university's original idea was not to work with the community to improve the situation, but rather to try to redevelop the campus, gentrify the surrounding area and displace the problem communities. The effect was to stimulate a reaction and a struggle from the community, which mobilised into the Temporary Woodlawn Organisation (TWO) to resist university gentrification and campus development plans, Webber noted:

> the Temporary Woodlawn Organisation pioneered many of what would become the most effective community organising techniques of the 1960s: rent strikes, picketing of overcharging retail merchants and overcrowded public schools and sit-ins at prominent corporate offices. . . . In Woodlawn . . . the university did not have a base of community support; it was seen as an invading force and symbol of institutional dominance. (p. 73)

This community mobilisation forced the university to abandon its plan to acquire residential property in Woodlawn for redevelopment; that activism also led the university to later support two community housing projects and 'a Woodlawn experimental public school district was later developed jointly by Woodlawn community leadership and the university' (p. 73). It was only when the university was directly under community attack that it began supporting activities belonging to the classic university–community engagement canon, including the development of improved housing and schools services. But the most interesting lesson from Webber is that the University of Chicago only engaged when it had no other choices—in order to redevelop its campus and thrive as an institution, it had to engage with its socially excluded neighbours.

Our argument in this chapter is not that crisis or extreme situations are necessary for effective community engagement, but that engagement will only thrive when it 'fits' in some ways with universities' existing core activities. This means that there are two dimensions defining university engagement, firstly the kinds of activities that universities deem as core (cf. Sect. 1.6.1) and then secondly, how well a culture of engagement allows engagement to fit with these activities. This latter variable can be further subdivided into how far these activities join up to create a sense of value for engagement and how far these activities are embedded within universities' core activities, processes and structures. To do this, we explore a framework proposed by Ruiz Bravo which tries to establish embeddedness as a series of levels, from minimal to central.

5.4   Levels or Modes of Engagement by Universities

Ruiz Bravo's (1992) model based the significance of university engagement activities on the extent to which they become an 'institutional guiding principle' for other activities. Ruiz Bravo (1992) classifies universities' engagement significance to core activities based on commonalities of functionalism, scope and commitment to engagement, each mode of governance representing a qualitative improvement on the preceding level. These levels correspond to the extent to which engagement can be said to represent a guiding principle for other activities, from one end of the spectrum being completely detached from the university, to the other representing the philosophical foundation of the university. At its most basic, a university providing information about itself to community stakeholders has an almost negligible impact on the university itself and were that activity to cease, then the change would be invisible to the university. At its most significant, where engagement provides a means of rooting the university in its host society, the termination of that engagement would completely change the nature of the institution:

1. Providing information.
2. Public relations.
3. Dissemination of academic findings.
4. University as a cultural influence.
5. Critical engagement.

Further detail on these five sophistication levels for university engagement is given in Table 5.2. This classification is additive, so that outcomes and activities at higher levels include those already taking place at the lower levels. A university engaging through a 'public relations' mode will provide information as well as involve itself in social forums in an informal way. Progression between the classes involves a double effort. Firstly is developing capacities which deliver new kinds of activities and outcome and secondly is creating a discourse of the value of engagement that sees those values being accepted as legitimate for the university.

Our own contribution is in arguing that just as universities may combine different conceptually distinct activities in a single engagement process, so different groups

Table 5.2 A developmental model of modes of university/society engagement with external communities. (Source: Ruiz Bravo (1992) (translation: P. L. Younger))

Mode of engagement	Characteristics of relations	Objective of engagement	University aim	Scope of societal response	Typical examples
1. Providing information	Indirect: general public awareness raising	Informing society of university's plans, projects, opportunities and problems	Providing a positive image for HE in society, and being open about activities	"The university exists and is socially important"	News bulletins, press releases, commentaries, media announcements
2. Public relations	Direct university presence, but temporary and topic specific	Providing information; developing community rapport; shared events	Achieve acceptance of university as active social partner (more activity…)	"The university is a present, active community participant"	University representatives in cultural and arts groups; informal discussions
3. Dissemination of academic findings	Direct university participation in societal debates and discussions	Dissemination of university knowledge base in teaching & research	Shape public opinion, build and strengthen a critical learning society	Reflection on university position, then acceptance, rejection, critique	Conferences, round-tables, congresses, symposia, seminars, exhibitions
4. University as a cultural influence	Direct, permanent social presence as partner; reactive to community demands	Improve academic thinking & discussions with critical societal perspectives	Promote reflexive attitudes in community and desire to evolve	New demands on university from social partners; new forms of action	Capacity-building courses, technical assistance, advisory services, free chair
5. Critical engagement	Joint continuous, planned university/community interaction & governance	Enriching societal development fed back into university practices	Forming a transformatory societal coalition based on reflective principles	Active participation in developing activities and driving change	Participatory social change in social/economic/environmental fields

within the university may have distinctive reasons for accepting or rejecting community engagement. Here, we agree with Callon (1999) when he notes that different kinds of engagement sophistication make sense for different kinds of disciplinary and institutional orientation.

> It is difficult to imagine, for example, how particle physics could submit to [community involvement] when, in order to succeed, it had to cut itself off from the public and work in the secrecy of its laboratories, behind huge esoteric equipment. On the other hand, the organisation and production of knowledge on problems concerning the environment, health or food safety could easily fit into [democratic oversight or community involvement] and the hybrid forums they organise. (Callon 1999, pp. 93–94)

Universities, as inter alia Baumunt (1997) reminds us, represent diverse communities of academics with different disciplinary orientations, epistemologies, ontologies, politics and value systems with diverse orientations towards engagement's value and validity. In our framework, we explain the marginalisation of engagement practices within a university as the dominance of validation perspectives which regard—for reasons that may be entirely intrinsically valid and internally logical—engagement as being something superficial, over perspectives which would accept 'deeper' engagement.

5.5   Community Engagement Within one Institution

The validation of competing university engagement perspectives is not always resolved through a 'winner-takes-all' situation: The persistence of contact-time intensive studies in medicine and engineering in parallel with much lighter touch studies in the humanities shows that university curriculum boards can be flexible and accept multiple manifestations of what makes a course valid. More generally, Barnett (2003) inter alia reminds us that the institution of university has evolved fuzzy macro-governance processes in order to hold these sometimes competing rationalities and activities together (Barnett 2003). The complex nature of universities means that their internal groupings are loosely coupled, with inter-linkages and inter-dependencies not always immediately evident (Greenwood 2007).

Universities could therefore have different internal coalitions who validate and value engagement in very different ways. Whilst previous studies have tended to regard engagement as either a standalone activity or a strategic university priority, this either makes engagement look 'small' and marginal, or on placing the agency for change exclusively with institutional leaders. From this novel perspective, community engagement depends less on being a critical institutional mission, rather that there are enough people in the institution that regard community engagement as being a valid university mission. What studies of engagement and the third mission have yet to seriously consider is this negotiation and compromise process, where, to stereotype hideously, Nobel-prize winning physicists can continue in glorious, theoretical isolation, whilst engaged sociologists can begin from interesting practical problems, and both agree to respect the value and validity of the others' work.

The corollary is that an excellent engaged university need not be an institution where everyone is forced to engage at any cost, but those who valued it were supported, and their efforts were strategically exploited. This recasts engagement's marginalisation as part of a political negotiation process within universities where a fear of undermining research undermines engagement (cf. Sect. 1.4.1). We see these indirect marginalisation processes evident in the following three chapters. Lynne Humphrey explains how concerns over funding led to the marginalisation of an award-winning engagement project. Laura Saija notes how the university's unwillingness to relinquish its position as an institutional expert undercut attempts to drive community improvement. James Powell and Karl Drayson have a slightly more positive story of a highly supportive institution, but at the same time highlight the reality of sceptical colleagues resistant to the value of university–community partnerships.

Our heuristic above of the tension between the disengaged Nobel prize winner and the engaged social scientist is something of a parody which is clearly unrepresentative. In order to gain a better insight into the ways in which universities discuss their engagement activities, we explore how the different constituencies within universities validate and understand what matters to them about engagement, as a precursor for understanding the kinds of conditions around which consensus may emerge. To do this, we use a study of universities in three UK regions to ask what different constituencies exist around engagement and how do they attempt to construct a compromise around appropriate forms of engagement.

5.6   Six Stories of University–Community Engagement

To explore the extent of commitment to engagement, we explored the ways in which university staff create narratives around community engagement. We report findings from the Economic and Social Research Council-funded research project 'Universities and community engagement'. As part of this project, we went to all of 33 universities located in three UK regions, the North East, the North West and Scotland, and undertook interviews with over 100 staff. At each institution, we interviewed a selection of typically two to four internal stakeholders to attempt to understand how they defined engagement as a mission for their institution. The interviews for this research were undertaken in the first half of 2008, and the material provided dates from that period. To understand the dynamic of the negotiation of the meaning of engagement within universities, we explored the justifications and validations which interviewees offered for undertaking engagement, the conditions under which engagement would be validated from their perspective. We also attempted to understand where and by whom these stories were told, and how these stories related to wider university structures.

Our research project was rooted in a community of practice methodology, in which exploring story-telling and narratives provided one means of understanding those communities—these narratives define group boundaries, what is important to the group, collective group learning, and the telling of those stories represents a community activity in themselves (Benneworth 2007). We studied the university's

engagement periphery as a community of practice, but in the course of analysing the data, we were struck by the fact that similar stories repeatedly emerged within different kinds of institution. Below, we highlight six stories told, and we found examples of these stories being told across all kinds of institutions visited.

Even in institutions with very different de facto community engagement rationales, there were common ways of framing and validating community engagement. On that basis, we have sketched out two things. Firstly are the main stories told about engagement, from which it becomes possible to see the engagement validation strategies. The second was in situating those stories within particular kinds of group within the university. We were rather surprised to find that the disciplinary differences were not as great as might have been expected (although we only interviewed with researchers who were actually engaged). It was between different layers of the university where we found that people talked about engagement in very different and distinct ways, between senior managers, business development staff and academics.

The six different validations for engagement encountered in the interviews were:

- *Social responsibility*: Community engagement was part of expectations on the university to be a good citizen.
- *Institutional development*: Community engagement allowed the university to access resources which could fund capital campus developments.
- *Seizing opportunities*: Community engagement raised conceptually interesting questions that stimulated new fields of research.
- *Serving the market*: Community engagement kept the university in contact with key markets for recruitment in excluded communities.
- *Commitment to 'the cause'*: Community engagement was pursued within the autonomy of academic freedom as something ethically desirable.
- *Personal self-advancement*: Community engagement allowed particular activities to be delivered that supported an individual or research centre.

These six stories tended to correspond with different levels of the institution, with the first two being primarily told by university senior managers concerned with the university's public face, the second two by university senior managers concerned with the maintenance of core university activities, and the third two by individuals and research centre directors actually involved in engagement. We now present these engagement stories, and the emerging insights for understanding how community engagement can become an integrated component of universities tasks, summarising this in Table 5.3. Some of the key distinguishing characteristics of the six stories are summarised in the table.

5.6.1 Senior Management with Outside Stakeholders

5.6.1.1 Social Responsibility

All universities recognised that their wider public duty went further than purely delivering funders' targets. For some institutions, their commitment to community

Table 5.3 The first typology of drivers of university engagement with socially excluded communities

	Senior management motivations		Business unit motivations		Staff/unit motivations	
	Social responsibility	Institutional development	Seizing opportunities	Serving the market	Commitment to 'the cause'	Personal self-advancement
Why engage?	To demonstrate fulfilment of the social contract: blue skies research benefits humanity	To develop a set of infrastructures that could not otherwise be funded	To ensure that staff can take any opportunities that might enrich teaching and research	To maximise recruitment and retention by building awareness of community dynamics	Out of an ethical concern to help solve the problems which are being researched, a praxis commitment	To generate a stream of activities that fulfil tenure/promotion criteria around teaching and research
Key mechanisms	Supporting charitable/voluntary activities which cost the university and help communities	Building new campuses with funding streams that require engagement be demonstrably delivered	Administrative change & PR in the university-task groups, venture funds, champions	High levels of pastoral support for excluded students, contact with their friends/family	Community activism, using the community as a laboratory, presenting community findings elsewhere	Indistinguishable from 'committed' individuals but with less accent on participation and more on exploitation
Influence on teaching	Sporadic and unplanned, 'festival' approach with senior managers and press releases	Campus becomes a focus for community-based modules and experiences which may be compulsory for students	Where relevant, community links enrich teaching experience through placements and content	Curriculum design in selecting modules/courses that meet the demands of local communities	Provides real world examples for inclusion in lectures—longer term influences professional course and provision	Provides real world examples for inclusion in lectures but less influence in terms of professional development

Table 5.3 (continued)

	Senior management motivations		Business unit motivations		Staff/unit motivations	
	Social responsibility	Institutional development	Seizing opportunities	Serving the market	Commitment to 'the cause'	Personal self-advancement
Influence on research	Helps university to make a case for research that could potentially serve the needs of excluded communities	Campus acts as outpost in excluded communities where exploratory missions can be arranged	Potential for focus on research with community application for those academics with that interest	Allows HEI to shape local research environment in certain fields through contact with stakeholders	Community involved in 'co-production' of knowledge with the researcher, so a co-dependency	Use of community as laboratory to develop new theories, win research projects and prestigious publications
Community benefits	Access to university resources (physical, intellectual) at subsidised rate—more aware of HEI	Campus can act as a driver of regeneration and anchor for gentrification activities, local employment created	Placements etc. can provide services, build capacity and louden the voice of the community	Graduates remain in community and learn a skill set to help them improve own environment	Increasing their power in governance networks, and control over own local situation	Greater external representation of the community in external decision-making networks – communities are not easily manipulable…
Conflict areas	'We don't believe you want a genuine partnership' limited community influence over university decisions	University may seek to create profit via gentrification displacing local communities	Reliant on enthusiastic academics and strong leaders—risk of the institutional pendulum	Information asymmetries, so enrolling people on profitable courses, not really building their voices	Within university around academic freedom and tenure; RAE tail wagging engagement dog	Balancing preserving academic position with ensuring community stay enthusiastic for activity

engagement did not go much further than a kind of 'Corporate Social Responsibility'(CSR), acting as good, ethical citizens and being mindful of their impacts on others. Most universities had some kind of staff and/or student volunteering programme which ran on a voluntary, negotiated basis which embodied a CSR approach. Those who validated community engagement through this approach stressed ensuring that the university had evidence that the institution fulfilled a wider public role, without necessarily demonstrating that what they did was valued by the users.

5.6.1.2 Institutional Development

The funding freeze-and-squeeze on UK higher education in 1976–1995 meant that many universities ceased new capital investment programmes for a two decade period. Universities wanting to develop campuses during this period often looked to the availability of regeneration funding as a means of developing new facilities, particularly the urban development corporations in England, and for Merseyside, the Objective 1 programme. Subsequently, although new funding has been available, it has taken some time to come on-stream, and university campuses have a huge backlog of investments necessary to bring their estates up to their aspired-to world class status. A number of universities embedded campus developments within wider regeneration projects as a means of accessing regeneration funding to support campus development, and validated the attendant activity by the access to real estate investment resources it provided.

5.6.2 Core Business Units Delivering Teaching and Research

5.6.2.1 Seizing Opportunities

Engagement can be an important part of teaching and research activities, particularly for universities with professional education which involves much engagement with excluded communities. Given that universities largely do not micro-manage staff activities, creating an empowering environment allows staff to create rich teaching programmes and move into new research areas as the needs of the communities with which they work are changing. It was more problematic to create career incentives for engagement, so the most acceptable forms of community engagement were those that produced good courses and research outputs through effective engagement. In that sense, the engagement was validated as a means to an end, the end being the core university missions (and income generating activities) of teaching and research.

5.6.2.2 Serving the Market

All the universities were aware of the political sensitivity associated with the widening access agenda, increasing participation in higher education from communities

not traditionally oriented towards higher education. In England, the Office for Fair Access (Offa) regulates universities' recruitment to ensure that higher fees are not discouraging non-traditional students: Community engagement formed part of institutional agreements with Offa which in return allowed the higher top-up fees to be charged. Taster courses, summer schools, open access facilities all formed part of a case made that universities promoted engagement, as part of a claim to justify generating higher income for the universities.

For the newer universities more reliant on the attraction of non-traditional students, community engagement served another set of functions, which were related to access and recruitment, but also to retention of these students. Non-traditional students typically face a range of educational problems before their arrival at university; similarly, these students often needed more support whilst in university, both in terms of induction but also during crisis points, in the absence of personal or family social capital to know how to deal with these situations. Universities used community engagement as a means to improve their recruitment and retention by understanding the issues facing individuals and communities, to improve family attitudes to HE to try to compensate for lower individual social capital.

5.6.3   Individual Academics and Research Centres

5.6.3.1   Commitment to 'the Cause'

Beyond the four functional stories related above, there were individuals and groupings who were clearly ethically motivated in their desire to engage with excluded communities. Many individuals researched communities' problems as a means to develop better solutions, driven by the apparent injustices that they encountered in the course of their research. In the case of senior managers who came into post with those experiences, they could be used as examples to validate attempting a university-wide approach to engagement. The survey did not find evidence of engagement that had placed social justice over individual's benefits. There is insufficient evidence to argue that any of the universities studied were strongly motivated by an ethical commitment to social justice that came at an opportunity cost. However, some of the individuals felt they had struggled and made sacrifices in their professional lives in order to pursue an engagement agenda about which they felt passionate.

5.6.3.2   Personal Self-Advancement

There were also functional reasons for individuals and research centres to undertake community engagement, because it provided a competitive edge and was profitable in terms of grants, publications and teaching activities. It was not always possible to distinguish those who made a virtue out of a necessity (for engagement) and

those who were genuinely committed. Because universities could represent hostile environments for those whose engagement was seen to come at the expense of teaching and/or research, or whose resultant raised profile was seen as an unnecessary distraction, academics and centres continually managed the tension of engaging meaningfully, whilst ensuring that engagement could be represented as hitting other university or faculty missions and personal development plan targets.

5.7 Discussion: From Rationalities to Classifying HEIs?

An exploration of the stories helps to shed some light on the question of why supposedly rational engagements are not supported by particular institutions. These stories provide a glimpse into these discursive processes and validation rationales, rather than allowing the validation of engagement by universities to be comprehensively mapped. Nevertheless, one recurring engagement question, excellently treated by Lynne Humphrey in her following chapter, is why despite universities being public bodies with a mission to engage, a public appetite for that engagement, and academics with an enthusiasm and capacity for engagement, do they fail to endorse and better manage that engagement activity?

This analysis suggests an answer to this question by making the point that as far as engagement is concerned, rational justification of that activity is necessary but not sufficient. There must apparently be multiple justifications, with different groupings within the university able to validate engagement in abstract and practical senses. The more generally engagement is accepted to be valid, the more fertile the ground is for the support and expansion of engagement; likewise, where there are fewer groupings who validate engagement, it becomes more marginalised (cf. Chap. 9).

Quite notable is no simple one-to-one correspondence between activities and validation strategies. In a single 'real engagement', there might be multiple rationalities at play, for example, involved in university–community engagement in the course of campus development projects. A socially responsible university will do it out of a sense of the need to 'be a good neighbour', a phrase which was often used in the course of our interviews, whilst consultation might also feed into developing new research and recruitment activities in neighbouring communities. Large campus developments within larger regeneration activities almost always require engagement, and of course good relations with the community are necessary for individuals seeking to prosecute research and teaching activities in these areas.

We claim this is interesting because of the role played by the validations in holding together coalitions of people around engagement. That meant in a single university situation, there might be people whose explanation, justification or rationalisation of the same event or situation was justified in terms of very different narratives. This is also a message which comes through very strongly in Robinson and Hudson's chapter (Chap. 10), where they note that the Durham staff volunteering scheme is justified in different ways, idealistic and opportunistic ways, by users, senior managers, business unit managers, and individual staff members. The strength of the scheme is in all

kinds of groups being able to validate the activity, which helps more people to be supportive of—or at least not resistant to—the scheme.

Robinson and Hudson's chapter exemplifies that discussions within universities do not take place at a purely abstract level, and relate to past activities, present challenges and future desires. University–community engagement is dynamic and evolutionary: Engagement takes place (and universities are heavily engaged with a range of publics), and the success and acceptance of those activities influence institutional debates about future directions. Those debates in turn shape institutional policies which influence the way activities take place, further influencing internal debates, policies and outcomes. This suggests that it is wrong to focus exclusively on the abstract idea of universities being engaged, and instead attention is required for the evolutionary journey through which universities *become* engaged.

This suggests a greater need to place particular engagement activities in their wider context, and to better understand two kinds of relationships. Firstly are those relationships between particular engagement activities and the wider universities, and secondly, are the ways that university decision-making is influenced by the wider political and policy environment, and the pressures from their most salient stakeholders. Progress and regression along that journey could potentially be gauged using Ruiz Bravo's models, with evidence for engagement activity measured against the balanced scorecard presented in Table 5.1.

It is important to emphasise that we are not advocating these models as some kind of tool to 'improve' in some way universities' engagement performances. Rather, in addressing the challenge of understanding society through understanding universities, and understanding engagement in its wider university context, there is a need to urgently come to terms with the multiple rationalities which underpin engagement. Success must be understood as much as a compromise between belief coalitions embedded within sets of university engagement practices, as the application of a particular best practice 'community engagement' methodology.

We conclude by returning to the point made earlier in this chapter: Universities are complex institutions, and there is not only one rationality within the institution. Activities are proposed, mobilised, supported and sustained, or otherwise, within complicated internal governance and resource allocation models nested within complementary discursive value and validation systems. Understanding why universities engage requires closer consideration of internal stakeholder relationships, and in particular how decisions around particular engagement activities are taken. It is to these particular institutional decision calculi that the next three chapters turn.

of university engagement with wider society: A literature review and survey of best practice', undertaken for the Office of the Pro Vice Chancellor (Engagement), Newcastle University (November 2008 to April 2009), and published as Benneworth et al. (2009b). Many thanks are due to Professor Paul Younger, at the time PVC (Engagement) of Newcastle University, for his help with the development of the ideas in the research project, and for the acquisition and translation of the Ruiz Bravo table.

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Chapter 6
University–Community Engagement: Dislocation of Theory and Practice

Lynne Humphrey

6.1 Introduction

> Universities should aim 'to be of and not just in the community; not simply to engage in "knowledge transfer" but to establish a dialogue across the boundary between the university and its community which is open-ended, fluid and experimental'. (Watson 2003, p. 16)

> 'Communities do not know what universities can provide or how to contact the right people to ask the question' whilst 'Universities do not know what the needs of the community are: and the community finds it difficult to articulate those needs in a way the university understands'. (Charles 2007, p. 15)

It is a familiar argument that universities should engage with local communities, to be 'of' and not merely located 'in' their locality (Chatterton 2000; Watson 2003; Bond and Paterson 2005). In the United Kingdom, a raft of policy has given this notion practical urgency for universities (Higher Education Funding Council England (HEFCE) 1999; HM Treasury 2003 and 2004; Scottish Executive (SE) c; HEFCE 2005; Scottish Executive (SE) 2007a, b; Joint Future Thinking Taskforce on Universities 2008). But how exactly are universities responding to and understanding the demand to engage with communities? Whilst conventionally identified as a 'third strand' what does this mean in practice? These are not new questions (Chatterton 2000, Bond and Paterson 2005, Watson 2007) but following the persistent policy focus on university–community engagement revisiting the subject is timely.

Research in Scotland aimed to reassess the contemporary university–community engagement landscape. More specifically it looked for evidence of corporate commitment to community engagement beyond more traditional outputs (service learning, Continuous Professional Development (CPD), volunteering and, more recently, widening access) as well as beyond the traditional 'expert-supplicant relationship that typifies much university–community engagement' (Charles 2007, p. 16). Evidence of a more 'radical' understanding of community engagement was sought (Laing 2009), one intrinsically adding-value to universities' core business.

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A survey of university–community engagement policy and practice across Scotland's universities revealed a diversity of corporate approach and strategy alongside individual academic and managerial commitment and leadership (cf. Chap. 5). But it also revealed persistent pressures and tensions (external and internal) that continued to restrict institutional engagement practices and understanding. Examples were found of successful university–community engagement activities that delivered mutual benefits for all participants. But their success had been largely secured by individual academics *despite* corporate commitment and leadership. This chapter presents an in-depth study of a celebrated university–community engagement project that reaffirmed this conclusion. Far from being trivial, the pressures and tensions surrounding higher education have to be acknowledged and challenged for community engagement to play an integral role in future university missions.

6.2   Problematising the Policy Context

The contemporary visibility of university–community engagement is indicative of wider changes around Scotland's higher education (HE) sector. In particular, higher education's marketisation has produced competition for students and resources; forcing universities to reconsider their future functions and roles (Chatterton 2000; Watson 2003; Charles 2007; Browne 2010; cf. Sect. 1.2). Competition has sharpened the challenge of declining student demographics and its attendant necessity to widen future recruitment pools (Scottish Executive (SE) b; HM Treasury 2006). In particular, reconfiguration of 'new' universities has brought communities to the fore of both policy and practice. For many, community focus builds on institutional histories and existing disciplinary strengths in vocational disciplines that can be repackaged as 'unique selling points' to a more diverse set of potential students. It also offers additional funding for universities often disadvantaged with respect to research-intensive institutions.

Scotland's HE sector has followed a broader UK merging of universities into a 'triple helix' with government and business (Charles 2007): HE is subject to national policy objectives; primarily aimed at economic development (Scottish Executive (SE) 2001, b) but balanced by HE's contribution to the learner and wider society (Scottish Executive (SE) 2001, 2003a, b, c, Scottish Funding Council (SFC) 2006). Scotland has a distinctive lifelong learning framework for HE (Gallacher 2007) directly linking lifelong learning to economic development as well as demands for 'active citizenship' and 'social justice' (Scottish Executive (SE) c). Most prominently lifelong learning is linked to notions of 'employability' (economic development) and 'widening access' (social justice), with universities active alongside further education, vocational training and community/voluntary education in their delivery (Gallacher 2007). In practice, there are four Regional Access Forums, which link these four education sectors and act as the key drivers and funders of university participation.

However, despite its policy prominence, 'community engagement' has been inconsistently defined. As elsewhere in the United Kingdom, primary attention has been placed on 'business engagement' (Bond and Paterson 2005; Charles 2007). Hence increasing pressures on universities to reach-out to businesses (Scottish Executive (SE) 2001, 2003b, c; Joint Future Thinking Taskforce on Universities 2008) beyond the traditional service delivery curricula; accompanied by funding support for such as Knowledge Transfer Partnerships', work placements, and Continuous Professional Development' (CPD) programmes. Whilst community engagement has been linked to wider audiences and issues (culture; social inclusion; widening access), the privileging of business engagement has restricted community focus, practice and understanding.

6.3 Community Engagement in Practice

At the time of the research university–community engagement was in its infancy in Scotland. Many of those interviewed argued that given time universities would become more conversant with both its concept and practice, and that as a consequence, community engagement would become more integrated into future culture and structure. However, this optimism did not take into consideration some rather fundamental external and internal constraints that inhibit major change in comprehension or incorporation.

6.3.1 External Constraints

The policy context was a major external constraint on university–community engagement. Given the prioritisation of business engagement, it was hardly surprising that most universities viewed community engagement through the lens of business and thus commercial criteria and interests. Indeed there had been a consistent government steer on business engagement in contrast to mixed policy messages surrounding wider community engagement application. Hence, a number of universities had conflated business and community engagement.

Although Scotland provided additional funding for cultural engagement the type of activities identified within its remit were restricted; in the main aiming to open-up cultural facilities to the public and the provision of funding for small research projects. Also, despite the accompanying monies, 'cultural engagement' was not deemed a policy priority. Likewise, involving higher education into an infrastructure of lifelong learning and widening access, with accompanying funding streams, siloed community engagement within the correspondingly restrictive practices of such as CPD. Although notions of community engagement were central to both undergraduate and professional curricula, the definitions and activities were also restricted to relevant funding bodies and employers specific demands, such as the National Health Service (NHS).

These constraints were compounded by the fundamental dislocation between policy demands and available community engagement resources. There were very limited direct engagement funds available whilst the university funding model ensured that community engagement was an unrealistic unit of resource. All community engagement activity had to be separately funded, costing time and producing insecure, peripheral activities. Community engagement funding competed with other income streams (knowledge transfer, international recruitment, taught postgraduate courses, research training, Ph.D.s). And since community engagement (as out-reach, business engagement, widening access) can be a costly exercise, given tight HE budgets, focusing on activities producing immediate pay-back (international recruitment, PG courses, Ph.D.s) is the norm.

The funding model failed to adequately reflect the complicated and time-consuming nature of community engagement. Contact-making and relationship-building with relevant community organisations and representatives is labour-intensive, fraught with cultural misunderstandings, even distrust and require careful as well as sustained management of community expectations and possibly competing interests. Successful engagement often relied on dedicated individuals (both inside and outside the university) working together beyond the scope and timescales of funded projects and research. Yet such long timescales can be underestimated within funding criteria; often restricting input to certain organised sections of communities (the 'usual suspects') and a corresponding absence of wider, unorganised communities and voices.

Reinforcing these constraints is the public management culture currently driving university strategy, which demands that a business case has to be proven for all outputs including community engagement. Yet national funding agencies have no way of valuing community engagement through current metric systems that look to prove quantifiable outputs, whilst external funders likewise demand measured evidence of impact. The Research Assessment Exercise excluded community engagement activity, and marginalised its practice and practitioners. Whilst quantitative measurements, such as student, volunteer and CPD numbers, or employment creation indicators are much easier to determine and assess than qualitative impacts of 'social capital' or 'well-being'. Indeed, the difficulty in enumerating community engagement was viewed by many senior managers as responsible for relegating its profile and status within institutional mind-sets.

6.3.2   Internal Constraints

Some external inconsistencies had limited institutional understanding of community engagement and thus evidence of an incoherency of thinking and practice. Simple frameworks had been adopted to manage engagement or it was subordinated into existing structures and interpreted through the lens of more familiar objectives. Whether aligned with delivery priorities (teaching and research), marginalised within specific activities (business engagement, CPD, lifelong learning, widening access)

or incorporated within various managerial remits ('communications and marketing', 'corporate social responsibility', 'public relations' or 'corporate marketing') the implication was that community engagement was an 'extra', a 'theme' (even if cross-cutting), a 'tool', something 'to sell' to the general public and targeted stakeholders and even disposable. As a consequence, community engagement activities had to take a subordinated position, having to add-to and comply with the core missions of research and teaching.

Those celebrating their vocational curricula were keen to note the subsequent economic and social contributions of their professional teaching programmes. It was also a common practice across universities to require student placements or encourage volunteering in community workplaces. Both activities were accepted as beneficial to the curriculum, students and the external communities involved. For many students service learning or volunteering provided a unique experience of community diversity. From a labour market perspective, engagement was not merely a formative process but viewed as integral to employability.

However, what about community benefit? Service learning, community placements and volunteering were organised around academic demands and timescales; the risk being that students didn't take community placements or volunteering seriously, perhaps valuing the course credits more than the engagement itself. Several courses (Active Learning in the Community, Stirling) and community-oriented work (The Law Clinic, Strathclyde) had specifically addressed these issues. Vocational curricula also align academics and students to specific groups (social care), employers and funders (the NHS), limiting university–community reach to specific areas and communities. Most pertinently, universities are student-focused and fee-paying students expect this to be the case, whilst student employability prioritises the individual over the community, which may impact negatively on any genuine attempts to deliver community benefit.

There was also an obvious vacuum between senior management commitment and engaged academics, with the former largely unaware of the extent of community activity of the latter. Arguably the lack of senior management awareness of such work has always been the case but one would have expected evidence of increased perception given the greater visibility of community engagement as accepted practice. Some senior managers were aware of a few high-profile, centrally funded and tightly managed projects, but remained largely unaware of the much more diverse and wider spread of grassroots activity.

There was also a vacuum between senior management strategies for community engagement and middle management delivery of operational plans. Commitment to community engagement was often expressed at senior management level within strategic plans but its translation into more precise resource allocations, timetabling or other delivery targets was less evident. There was also little evidence of community engagement being acknowledged within promotion or reward infrastructures, thus denigrating the status and value of engagement and engagers, creating barriers for staff committed to community engagement (such as through workload models), and undermining wider academic buy-in.

Wider academic scepticism was clearly an issue, especially amongst those outside of the social sciences and just as prevalent in the 'new' universities despite their celebration of community engagement expertise. Despite the 'Third Strand's growing profile, there was considerable academic resistance to engagement, with its practices viewed as a dilution of academic standards. The 'excellence versus engagement' argument was commonly invoked, suggesting that engagement is incompatible with serious scholarship, parochial and thus contradictory to the global arenas within which universities are active. Engagement was likewise aligned with specific agendas and voices and therefore incompatible with notions of academic freedom. Academic scepticism reinforced a presumed distinction between engaged research and teaching and academic research and teaching with the former viewed as lacking intellectual quality.

Thus community engagement thinking and practice was evolving within a contradictory and strongly constrained environment. Despite its acclaimed profile in the case of the 'new' universities, and numerous successful community engagement stories, the identified constraints both confined and marginalised engagement's outputs and staff beyond service delivery. But how did these constraints play out in terms of the delivery of intended and/or potential community benefit? To explore this question, I present an example of an in-depth study (February–March 2009) of a successful, and officially celebrated, university–community project.

6.4   The University: Background

The university gained its status in 1992 and like many 'new' universities has an avowedly vocational curriculum. It 'prides itself on close links with industry, professional bodies and the communities we serve', whilst the afore-mentioned policy context was evident in its Strategic Plan. Hence the university 'will rise to the challenges presented by the continuous transformation of higher education and the needs of the communities it serves'; it will 'focus on practice, informed by theory' as well as 'research which emphasises relevance'; and be connected to its various territorial constituencies 'and . . . valued by them' because of its applied knowledge transfer. Widening access, flexibility of learning provision (providing a choice of place and time of study for busy professionals), the extension of continuing professional development (in markets of high demand) and enhanced knowledge transfer activities (reaffirming its strong links with business) are all identified sites through which the university aimed to match its objectives to the wider political context. A 'Widening Access Strategy' sought to clarify the university's aims and objectives as well as specific measures to be taken in line with the Strategic Plan. Collaboration and partnership were also identified as the key objectives in seeking to make a contribution to the economic and social fabric of Scotland.

6.4.1 Community Engagement

Its 'community engagement' was viewed within a social inclusion agenda that focused on widening access and participation, and thus engagement with schools, colleges and voluntary sector groups. A dedicated Lifelong Learning department worked to help both inform the university curriculum and tailor learning to local community needs. The work of the department was deliberately aligned with wider political aims governing lifelong learning as well as corporate social responsibility, skills development and volunteering.

The university had developed a range of community taster courses for returners to education with financial support from the Scottish Funding Council (SFC), European Social Fund and private funders. These courses were delivered off-campus and disseminated through links developed with the voluntary and community sector (VCS) and other agencies. Lifelong learning staff had initiated a number of successful projects, including the subject of this case-study. Research had long been utilised as an engagement mechanism of engagement. And in determining the priorities for its research activity it is claimed that 'the parameters of social relevance, quality and sustainability will be paramount'.

Community consultation and partnership had recently become central to university management. During a campus development process, management had become aware of the need to consider community views and established a 'Stakeholders Advisory Group' including local business, community and public sector representatives. Community engagement had been a subject for senior management discussion and policy, with a Vice-Principal tasked with leading a 'Community Engagement Strategy (CES)', and a project group of senior managers and staff selected to devise a phased approach to its strategic delivery.

In July 2008, a paper was presented to senior management outlining the rationale, objectives and proposed outcomes of a (CES). The paper's purpose was:

> to more clearly define community engagement, to outline a vision for Community Engagement . . . to explain the reasoning for taking a geographical approach and to illustrate how this approach will complement other work across the university.

Its communities included:

> social enterprise companies, voluntary and community organisations, public and private sector organisations, stakeholders, business and industry, government, other education providers and learning organisations, community learning and development partnerships and citizens "that are near a university campus".

A CES would likewise help to articulate the aims of its estates strategy as well as facilitate consultation over future public use of its campuses. Ultimately, the aim was to embed a culture of community engagement through staff and student activities as part of curriculum development and through commercial engagement to 'ensure that [the university] . . . becomes a hub for social and educational integration and a catalyst for commercial growth in the region'.

A timetable of activities (July 2008 to July 2012) detailed the intended work programme that would translate the Strategy's vision and objectives into institutional and cultural practices. Activities included the expansion of partnerships, the development of a communications strategy to help promote community engagement, a centrally-driven community engagement philosophy and the setting-up of an extensive community engagement infrastructure. Progress on each activity would be measured through the Scottish Executive's community engagement 'National Standards'.

The paper noted the limitations to its outlined aspirations, most specifically that there is 'no core funding and limited activity throughout the university for staff to pursue activities'. There was no mention of a reallocation of discretionary funds to support its intended work programme. Other constraints included a 'lack of awareness by academic colleagues of what is possible in terms of innovative and enterprising opportunities for engaging their learners in community learning environments'. It also acknowledged that the university had been missing opportunities to align with communities through linking students and curricula activity.

Whilst the paper was visible evidence of managerial intentions to provide community engagement leadership, its primary focus was on raising awareness of engagement practice in research projects and the appropriation of engagement activity within existing research and teaching agendas. Despite aspirations for a centrally driven community engagement philosophy and infrastructure the relevant staff were grappling with its definition and implementation beyond the confines of SFC-funded programmes.

6.4.2 The Project

6.4.2.1 Origins

This chapter focuses on a community arts project initiated in 2001 and headed by a university lecturer qualified in a range of arts subjects as well as interior/furniture design. This lecturer also had a long history of community-oriented work which had brought him into contact with communities and community organisations surrounding the university. In 2000, one such organisation contacted the university to suggest the development of a formal programme of university–community education that would align with widening access objectives. The aim was to extend access to higher education (HE) for individuals from disadvantaged communities located in close proximity to the university. The organisation would recruit students and the university would design, accredit and deliver a range of modules. Individuals would choose modules of interest to work towards a university-validated 'combined studies' degree. The initiative would provide HE in a community setting rather than on campus because of a strongly-held belief within the organisation that potential learners

would be intimidated . . . and [therefore] wouldn't set foot inside the university.

Known for his community work the lecturer, Alex[1], was asked if he wanted to explore the viability of the proposed initiative. He readily agreed and over a period of 6 months liaised with the community organisation, utilised community contacts to find premises and developed a number of arts-based modules suitable to both community and university objectives. Once the modules were approved (but not accredited at this stage) Alex designed and disseminated publicity material for the courses. Distributed in local doctor's surgeries, libraries, book shops and supermarkets, the completed flyers emphasised the support for those who had no experience of arts. And, in the pursuit of widening access, they promoted both informal drop-in sessions (flexible to suit people's commitments, health and skills) as well as formal teaching.

Classes opened in 2001 with 20 local residents as students. Modules covered ceramics, water colour painting, interior design, public art and drawing and media studies. The local community venue helped to publicise both the university and the project to a wider community audience. As its reputation and numbers increased classes extended to 5 days per week. Classes were also open on Fridays to school children as an after-school initiative. Around 12 young people attended accompanied by family members in a supervisory capacity. Project attendance grew to around 90, covering a range of ages and backgrounds, with many more on a waiting list of people wanting to enrol.

Its early success, however, was marred by criticisms from both university managers and the community partner. Most notably, although the previous Vice Principal had been keen to use the community organisation to engage with local communities others were not convinced of its status as an instrument of university-level education. There was a reluctance to validate the modules, not awarded until 2003, which effectively undermined the project's aims of progression. To help offset managerial scepticism and to raise project awareness with the new Principal (2003), Alex organised a public exhibition of the students' work. Opened by the self-same Principal, it was a huge success in both raising the project's public profile and highlighting the projects' participants learning achievements. But on-going funding remained contentious, particularly the covering of Alex's salary, which led to his eventual move to the Lifelong Learning department.

During this period, tensions developed between the community partner and Alex as the university's voice. The partner wanted ownership of the project; 'adamant that it should be a community driven thing'. But given that the university was providing Alex's salary he insisted that it had a say in the project's development and delivery and was credited for its community outreach initiative. Some community organisers were determined to fold the programme into their wider community/political objectives and used classes to discuss organisational business. It was not only disruptive but the majority of students were not involved with or interested in the community organisation.

Alex was thus forced to clarify the boundaries of the project, which soured relations. From the organisation's perspective Alex was being disloyal. But for Alex it was important 'to keep the university on side'. The two could not be reconciled and

[1] The name of the lecturer has been changed to retain anonymity.

the organisation withdrew from the project in 2003. 'Loyalties are very fierce in the community': At that time, participants 'had to come down on one side or the other'. A few people did leave but the vast majority continued to attend classes and support the project.

Rather paradoxically, once the challenge of senior management support and internal accreditation had been addressed its funding, mainly covering rent, came to an end. The university agreed to cover rental costs for a further 3 months but no more. This forced Alex to reconsider the projects' future. Discussions with all participants revealed the majority wanted the classes to continue, prompting the search for alternative and affordable premises. Support came from both participants and interested staff in lifelong learning. Two alternative sites were identified, refurbished and secured: one at a local school (Group 1); the other on-campus (Group 2). By the end of 2003 both the project and Alex's time were divided between classes at the two sites.

6.4.2.2 Consolidation

Over the next 5 years (2004–2008), both groups studied a range of accredited modules and exhibited their work at a number of project and public exhibitions. One project exhibition saw over £ 4,000 of artwork sold to a mixed audience of individuals, businesses, university staff and local politicians with 25 % of the money raised donated to the 'Amos Trust'[2] in South Africa. Group 1 organised painting holidays and day trips and submitted a successful lottery bid (*qv*). Participants in Group 2 had contributed to an outdoor mural in the local 'Teaching Gardens' and, in collaboration with the Scottish National Gallery, worked on a community project involving thousands of local people using disposable cameras to create a photographic record of local life. More recently, one member used the credits gained to apply for a foundation degree, due to begin in 2010.

> I've just been accepted to do my degree foundation in art and design for next year, but you see that's because I went to [this group]. You sort of start off in a group like that and then you think well yes I can do that and maybe I can do more .... And they are talking about going to ... university after that and I think well why not. Age is not a barrier these days is it?

Both groups had evolved from art classes to being financially and managerially independent: Group 1 in 2003 and Group 2 in 2008. Independence for Group 1 followed its move to the school premises. Led by two individuals, it devised a constitution, agreed a system of fees and income generation, opened a bank account and organised a managerial structure around an elected committee. These same two individuals continued to lead the Group as chair, secretary and treasurer. As others became more confident, additional responsibilities were identified (exhibition organisation, stock controland library maintenance) and participants elected to the committee for these roles.

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[2] A world-wide organisation that promotes human rights and local responses to situations of injustice. See: http://www.amostrust.org/ (Accessed 22 July 2009).

Independence came much later for Group 2 after being forced to vacate the campus site at the end of 2007 in preparation for university redevelopment. Faced once again with the possible closure of an integral part of the project a number of participants first secured internal (Group) support for its continuation and then, with Alex and a lifelong learning colleague, found alternative premises. The short notice period and lack of funds were challenging, particularly in finding local premises to accommodate 25 students and their equipment. The lifelong learning colleague used community contacts to find a room in a local arts and leisure centre and negotiated an affordable rent. The university covered the first 3 months' rent, providing breathing space to develop financial sustainability and management structures, including a written constitution required by the centre for the rental contract.

The constitution, agreed on 15 February 2008, outlined the group's formal title, aims, fees regime, membership and formal management structure. Ultimately the group aimed:

> To promote and support the participation of quality art experiences for the community . . . .
> To facilitate lifelong learning and training in all mediums of art. To develop the memberships skills in arts and encourage members to produce work which can eventually be shown at venues throughout [the community] and beyond.

As with Group 1, two participants led the administration and management vital to its successful transition to independence. Indeed at this stage both groups were effectively independent of the university. Both also had long waiting lists of people wanting to enrol for their classes.

6.4.2.3 And Extension

As a deliberate strategy to widen its geographical spread Alex extended the project to a third (early 2008) and fourth (November 2008) group. In keeping with its widening access aims, both new groups were sited in disadvantaged communities, with classes held in a church and community centre respectively. For Group 3, the premises were offered free in Alex's Church and his links with the local Church community made it easy to recruit new group members. To recruit for Group 4 advertisements for the classes were placed in the local community newspaper, which attracted around 12 people. Word of mouth soon increased group numbers to around 25.

Given their recent formation, Groups 3 and 4 acted more as traditional classes, although Alex encouraged group interaction to combine instruction with individual initiative. Despite their infancy there was already evidence of education/skill development, and like Groups 1 and 2; there were waiting lists of people wanting to join the classes.

> You know . . . the things that he's taught us, you wouldn't believe it. I have been going to art for 3 years and the things I didn't know, the things I am still learning, it's incredible, honestly. The things I have learned in the 6 weeks since I came here are unbelievable . . . .

It's good to show somebody I've never done this before in my life and you're never too old to learn. I think that's quite an important thing. It shows anybody can start and achieve something they never thought they could

I had no talents whatsoever and said there was no way I could draw or paint but ... since then I have amazed myself with the paintings I have done and that people want them

By early 2009 the project had an overall attendance of around 80 local residents every week. Course content was based on the accredited modules, which had been rewritten by Alex to fit the university's new approach to a 20-credit (from 15-credit) syllabus. These modules were pending university validation.

6.5 A Successful Model of University–Community Engagement?

6.5.1 Project Successes

Everyone has loads of talent; I just unlock the door and let them in[3]

This is a highly original programme that has established a strong network of external partners. Its impact is clear and likely to increase further in the future[4]

By 2007 the project had been officially recognised and rewarded as an 'innovation' in helping 'people build their self-esteem and discover their creativity through painting and drawing'. Its community base and reputation extended the university's reach to both wider audiences and across geographic locations surrounding its campuses. It had raised awareness of the university amongst local stakeholders and residents and had clearly widened access. Its participants, many of whom had never picked up a paintbrush or thought themselves creative, had followed a range of accredited courses, with progress evident in public showing, and sale, of their work.

I had never had an art lesson in my life, I just fancied it in my old age, and it's very therapeutic. I have no talent, but I can paint. I get encouragement and it's thanks to [Alex] ... and everyone else.

I discovered that I can actually paint. It's very satisfying to discover when you've never really done anything creative all your life.

It's good to show somebody I've never done this before in my life and you're never too old to learn. I think that's quite an important thing. It shows anybody can start and achieve something they never thought they could.

But alongside educational progression the project had also become a site of collaboration, companionship and support. Less quantifiable characteristics, including confidence, initiative and well-being, had increased alongside knowledge and formal qualification, facilitated by Alex's teaching style. Combining group interaction with

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[3] A comment made by Alex when interviewed.

[4] Noted by the judges when selecting the project as winner of a national award in 2007.

formal instruction he encouraged an exchange of experience, knowledge and opinion amongst participants. His style and personality produced an easy-going and flexible context across classes, which encouraged and facilitated collaboration. Members therefore learn both from Alex and from each other.

> Yes we all have different talents within art. . . . We all work together and everyone asks each other different questions. We also walk round and look at each other's work

> This class is hugely supportive. It doesn't have a lot of tutoring but people will help me and make suggestions and they ask my help . . . even though I've only been painting a couple of years. Occasionally I am sometime able to help someone else.

Through such collaboration there was evidence of broader skills sharing amongst participants, primarily in the long-established Groups 1 and 2. As the number of groups increased Alex's time constraints forced him towards a more mentoring role in Groups 1 and 2, further encouraging skill sharing amongst the respective participants themselves. In Group 1 Alex taught one member framing, who, in turn, framed a number of Groups' work in preparation for exhibitions. This same member also used skills learnt at a computer course to design and maintain the Group's website. Another member used experience with the British Legion to decide to apply and succeed with a lottery funding application. One Group 2 member with administrative skills helped organise and manage the independence process, passing those skills on to others motivated to take responsibility for group maintenance.

> I learnt computing . . . . I was a self-employed taxi driver and I did the accounts every year and so now I can do them on the computer . . . . I thought it might be a good idea to set up a website for the group . . . [and now] keep the website going.

> Everyone is active and doing different things. . . . We have all come together with different skills . . . the development is great.

The collaborative ethos and practice impacted on confidence both inside and outside the classes, bolstered by their public exhibitions and praise from friends and family:

> I really lack confidence in everything I do and I think this group gives you confidence. Everyone helps each other in this group, if you are stuck they all come up with suggestions, they boost your confidence. It's unthinkable for it to stop.

> For me it's given me confidence for things I wouldn't have done and you get a lot of confidence from people; obviously from [Alex] but also from other people in the class.

> I think it makes me more sociable. . . . I go to dancing as well and I feel I am more sociable than I would normally be. They inspire confidence in you and that's what you take outside into your other life.

> The very first watercolour I ever did is now hanging above one of my friend's fireplaces; she bought it from me you know and I was gobsmacked . . . .

The growth in confidence helped a number of participants to contribute and become more visible in other community activities. A number of women had instructed other arts classes on particular techniques introduced by Alex; one woman used project contacts to organise jewellery-making classes for local residents; another sought to offer art as a therapeutic tool in a voluntary sector setting; another found the

confidence to volunteer as a student welfare officer. The project was therefore both a site of skills sharing and skills transference.

The project was also a successful site of social networking and support. Whilst social aspects were expected from longer standing Groups, companionship and friendship were also evident in the more recent Groups. Indeed the classes' social nature was highlighted by all participants as one of the project's most positive aspects. Group 1 socialised outside classes and had organised painting holidays both in Scotland and Spain. Both Groups 1 and 2 had extended social networking to other community activities and through the showing of their work at public exhibitions across Scotland.

> It's not just the art that keeps you together it's the social thing. You can come in here and talk about anything, there is always somebody there to listen . . . . It's something else; it's a whole group of people you get on with. For a start how many groups do you get where everybody gets on? I thoroughly love this group.

> It's a social thing I think. You come here and meet your friends because we are all friends and you have a little chat. You might paint a little bit you might not but the social aspect is the biggest thing.

> Apart from the art I think that they get the social integration. People like to talk with others and . . . because we've known each other for a long time . . . it makes it easier to talk with people and you can see how people are.

But equally important the Groups acted as support networks, and for those managing ill-health were crucial to their recovery and continued well-being:

> People are aware of the needs of other people so you know somebody is ill or somebody for instance needs a lift somewhere; you know people are interested in each other as people.

> I remember one person whose son has alcohol problems; I remember just sitting talking to her in the middle of the class and everybody else just got on and ignored us. There was something valuable being done. That's not what I expected; it's relaxed, it's not competitive.

> We are quite a close knit group, we know that if any of us has problems we can talk to each other; to me it's like a second branch of my family I've got close to them.

The project can thus be regarded as successful from a number of perspectives. For a university aiming to be 'a hub for social and educational integration' and encouraging a culture of community engagement through staff activities, this project appears as a good practice model. At the time of the research, it met both institutional policy and practice on engagement and contributed to widening access and social inclusion objectives. It continued to be a formal part of the university's widening access and lifelong learning programmes, and was institutionally recognised after winning a national award in 2007.

From a participant perspective, it was an engagement model that delivered personal benefits of knowledge, skills development, socialisation and support, and subsequently confidence, identity, qualification and overall well-being. For many in Groups 1 and 2, it contributed to individual and Group empowerment; their independence demonstrating how local people 'can take ownership of something and literally run it themselves'. From a wider community perspective, it had

contributed to Putnam's (2000) bridging social capital (through transference of skills and well-being). Overall the project was a prime example of the mutual benefits that arose from university–community engagement in practice.

6.5.2 Project Limitations

However, its successes could not disguise project limitations. Most notably, some successes arose automatically from its location in disadvantaged communities, but even its location did not mean that its members were representative of those communities. There was also a lack of diversity of participant, with the majority in each group being female, retired and white, and comfortable with further and higher education. Whilst many were intimidated by the thought of a formal university course, the vast majority had enjoyed a long-standing relationship with education, wholly unrepresentative of the type of communities the project was located in and aimed to reach.

Alex was aware of and concerned about the unrepresentative nature of the current Groups. He was especially keen to encourage the participation of young people, noting that many of school age were not aware of the opportunities offered by the creative industries'. He had visited a number of local schools and suggested linking them to the project but:

> they [had] been really slow to take it up, if they have bothered at all. . . . It was almost as if there was some kind of resentment that we were offering. . . . Yet everyone is getting extra maths or English yet some arts departments couldn't handle that you could do it with art. . . . We just have to keep plugging away at the community and offer it through all channels

On a more practical level the classes were held in the mornings and afternoons and therefore were not accessible to a wider range of potential participants, for example, those attending school, those with care responsibilities or those in employment. And only one of the current premises was accessible in the evening. All classes had maximum numbers, which limited further growth. Also, the success of the classes meant that no existing participants left, which prevented new recruitment. Additional classes were possible, and Alex was enthusiastic about extending the project's reach, but this required additional funding; and it was funding that was a major limitation on the sustainability of existing Groups 3 and 4. As Alex and others noted:

> we are very much the poor relation . . . . I haven't time to think about where the money is coming from and how much we have to spend, I just know that I have never had any so what you've never had you don't miss . . . . . . I just thought I . . . just have to make some money and so I figured a way to do it and when I do need some materials I just cost it up. . . . I'm just flying by the seat of my pants and doing the best job that I can under the severe financial limitations, it's just a miracle how we keep going and have so many people.

> [Alex] . . . has struggled financially and I think that's sad that he's grabbing at straws rather than getting support to run the project, which can eventually support itself.

> [Alex] works his socks off to get things from the university, they don't offer they only give when he asks and pleads. . . . They don't think we better help them because it's a good idea,

> they take the kudos when [Alex] wins an award . . . then they put it on the back burner and let [him] get on with it.

The lack of funding had ensured that the project had become disproportionately reliant on individuals' ability and commitment, in particular Alex, but also specific participants in Groups 1 and 2. As already noted, there were four members who were and continued to be central to these groups' sustainability. Indeed, despite institutional recognition and Alex's unstinting efforts it is likely that the project would have ended in either 2003 or the end of 2007 if it were not for the commitment of these group participants. Whilst others in both groups have expressed an interest in taking-up greater responsibility for the maintenance of their respective Group there arguably remains a disproportionate level of reliance for continued leadership and management on the same few people.

A number of staff in the lifelong learning department had also been supportive at times of funding shortages and when the project was forced to seek alternative premises. But success was primarily attributed to Alex as both project driver and tutor. Participants in all four groups praised his skills as an artist and his teaching style.

> I have tried painting before; I have tried on two occasions at two different places . . . and I was terrible. I never learnt anything. . . . So I thought I couldn't paint. And when I came to [Alex's] class he showed us, he did demonstrations and lo and behold I could paint.

> I have always loved art and I always drew, I never painted. At school when I was asked to paint it always intimidated me; I felt insecure, so I just drew. . . . When I first brought the stuff in [Alex] said it was good, better than good, it's really good. I heard him but I didn't feel it. Now I feel and see what he's saying; if you can draw you can do anything. I could not relate drawing with painting, but now I do.

> Alex's got both; he had an educational background and he's a very good teacher. That's the sort of people you should first present to people coming into the university. . . . You need a good teacher to develop people.

But success was also a consequence of his level of project commitment, evident in the time and effort he put into supporting the groups beyond class attendance and instruction. He was instrumental in refurbishing the majority of rooms as project studios, and had worked in his own time on organising exhibitions and installing a permanent gallery at a local community centre (the site of Group 4). And he had raffled his own paintings to raise money for the project. His biography as a practising Christian may go some way to site his motivation for community-oriented work: Alex utilised church contacts to both recruit for, and, in the case of Group 3, host the project. But faith alone is an insufficient explanation for Alex's specific commitment to the creative industries and particular skills in art-based teaching.

It is also an insufficient explanation for another key feature of the project's success: his personality. All participants commended Alex's ability to communicate instruction and nurture confidence. He was especially praised for his consistent encouragement and the fact that 'he was never critical'. Through observation it was evident that he was both caring and engaging; essential ingredients to not only the degree of progression developed but also the collaborative and supportive nature of the groups.

[Alex] is the best tutor I have ever come across; he explains to you and you have an idea what you want to achieve.

[Alex] is a marvellous tutor and he is always positive, never negative; he will always find something [good] in it.

There is definitely something different about this group. You can put the onus all on our tutor because he's wonderful. He's always possible and never negative; nothing is too much bother and he can transform things into beautiful paintings.

Whilst arguably not necessary to the later sustainability of Groups 1 and 2, Alex remained an important figurehead and contributor to these 2 Groups. And he certainly remained necessary to Groups 3 and 4's continued survival. Alex bridged between the four groups and between the overall project and the university. And whilst none of these links may be necessary to retain the project's presence as arts groups it is probable that Alex's removal would distance, if not sever, its university links. Were Alex to leave, a question was raised as to whether his replacement would have the same skills mix and personal qualities vital to the project success.

A key project weakness was that although participants studied for accredited modules, this was not their primary motivation; and only one member had progressed to degree level. Furthermore, despite being affiliated to the university and celebrated as a university-community engagement project, there was no integration between the classes and the university's mainstream curricula. And despite accreditation the project's modules were external to any relevant undergraduate course and were excluded from the 'elective'[5] system integral to undergraduate study. Alex had argued for their inclusion but was told that the classes' off campus locations would be a major barrier to student take-up.

Here a contradiction is evident: the off-campus sitting met engagement and widening access objectives by extending university reach into local communities. But simultaneously it separated its learning communities within the project from the university. On the one hand, courses offered off-campus actively encouraged interested and capable people to access education they would not otherwise have thought relevant or possible. Being off-campus had also helped to encourage participants within Groups 1 and 2 to actively seek independence.

I actually want to know the techniques in an academic way but not in an academic setting. ... [If advertised as a university course] I would have thought ... I can't do that. I know it's ridiculous but it's true.

I would never have had the confidence to go to something that was attached to a university.

I think a lot of times it's the jargon and how you're treated .... Sometimes you get stuff and it looks so complicated ... it's all aimed at the academic .... I think that if I'd got there earlier I would have been at university, if I'd had a different background.

But, on the other hand, the physical absence of the university provoked a sense of isolation amongst the groups, reinforced by the university's 'hands-off' approach in the everyday management of the project. With the exception of attendance at public

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[5] Demanding that students select 1 or 2 'elective modules' outside their degree discipline.

exhibitions organised by Alex the university was invisible to project participants. As a consequence, whilst grateful for covering Alex's salary, the majority identified only weakly with the university.

Since leaving Alex 'to get on with it' the project was primarily a personal commitment rather than an institutional initiative or continued priority. And although in regular contact with colleagues in lifelong learning, the groups felt a growing disconnect with the institution. This was illustrated by their reaction to the 'Independent Learning Accounts' (ILAs) that staff within lifelong learning had wanted the Groups to apply to for funding. Groups were concerned that this signalled that community education was primarily about raising money for the university, leading to a monetisation of university community-based work[6]. They likewise feared that the focus on ILAs was part of a drive to charge for all community-based work and antithetical to its no-fee ethos.[7]

Hence the four groups expressed mixed feelings regarding the university. Some in the more established groups were overtly aware of and appreciated the university link and its support, both past and present.

> We were always part of [the university] definitely ... and there were times when [it] was really brilliant and there were times up [on campus] that they let us use the canteen facilities and we were a big part of [the university] and it was a bit sad when [they] shut [the room] down to refurbish it. I would have appreciated it if they had found a way to carry on as part of the university.

> We had to be independent as we weren't going to get any help apart from [Alex]. [Alex] was a great help; that was one thing the university have given us and they haven't gone back on that which is great.

> I am absolutely aware it is connected with [the university]. I think it's a terrific thing that [it] can come outside into the various places that [Alex] goes to. I think it's wonderful because half of these people would not go ... to a university.

Some were grateful for support provided by colleagues in the Lifelong Learning department.

> Even though we are now independent you still know you are part of the university, if push came to shove I could phone [lifelong learning] and say could you do this etc.; they never ever say no. You know you always have the back-up from them even if it's not in a monetary value, they maybe give you advice.

But others lamented the increased blurring of the project-university link:

> Sometimes I feel as if I am out on a limb a bit, quite a lot in fact. It's quite difficult to feel that you are part of the university when you are in fact not physically going into it.

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[6] Independent Learning Accounts of £ 200.00 for those earning less than £ 22,000 to access FE or HE (2009).

[7] Indeed, its current 'no fee' agreement is why the project was offered a room at the fourth community site. Alex was concerned that the cost of modules would deny access to the very communities targeted by the widening access objectives. As he pointed out 'unless someone is on an ILA or benefit they have to pay £ 145 per module'. It later transpired that 'leisure industries' were ineligible for ILA funding and so these concerns were unfounded.

> I think it could be more visible. I think the people have just realised that the group is part of [the university] . . . .

> We have come to realise that we are not going back to [the campus], we are now our own group . . . so no I think that we are getting out of the idea that we are [part of the university] . . . I mean we won a prize . . . and things like that so we are still part of [the university] and I think we always will be but just not at [the university] anymore.

Whilst many were disappointed by a perceived lack of support from the university. As already noted the only time the university had a visible presence was when the project was in the public eye (public exhibitions and the national award ceremony in 2007).

> I think the university could do much more. I have never thought of [it] as being a particularly elitist university; I would expect [others] to be quite a fuddy-duddy place, too academic inclined. I think [the university] could make much more of this than they have done but . . . they are driven by finance . . . by the expectations of their funding committees . . . by their academic and research . . . [that] is the priority.

> I would like to know exactly what [the university] is going to give us in the future. I was going to write to the Principal but I didn't want to get [Alex] into trouble. . . . We have the university'name on . . . the classes and they must be getting kudos for what we are doing. We bought this into the neighbourhood . . . we are doing community work . . . .

6.6 Institutional Short-Sightedness?

The project offers a good illustration of the dislocation between the rhetoric and practice of community engagement across Scotland's HE sector. The most obvious contradiction being that the university simultaneously acknowledged and officially celebrated the project's success at the same time as seemingly prepared to see it close when funding and premises had been withdrawn. Despite its successes from a range of community engagement perspectives it was institutionally marginalised and largely absent from institutional mind-set. Alex accepted some responsibility, admitting that he was perhaps not 'pushy' enough in capitalising on moments of strength, such as when he met with the new Principal in 2003, or when he won the prize in 2007. The university was supportive in covering Alex's salary since 2001 to provide full-time project tutorage. But nowhere was he relieved from having to constantly seek to raise its profile amongst senior management.

Arguably the project's success and benefits were not fully appreciated by the university, both as a model of widening access and as complementary input into a wider curricula and range of policy governing community engagement, lifelong learning and volunteering objectives. In terms of widening access the project could have easily been extended to increasing numbers of communities and potential community learners. The project was scalable, and generated its own word-of-mouth reputation, which would have made it easier—given additional resources—for new classes to have been established in new geographical areas, acting as a source of income as well as creating visibility and progression in higher education. Alex suggested that

the 'blue-print' could be packaged as a tool-kit for purchase by other institutions, thus acting as an additional source of income generation.

The project could have contributed to the wider curricula had its modules and students been incorporated into relevant courses, or as a site of student placement contributing to community engagement and volunteering agendas simultaneously. Greater integration of the project could have challenged non-traditional learners' abiding perceptions of universities as 'competitive', 'judgemental' and 'intimidating places', whilst raising awareness amongst more traditional students of the diversity of learning methods, student ability and experience. It could also have acted as a source of research, a teaching tool and ultimately inform scholarship.

On a more theoretical level, the project provides a critique of dominant learning practice and value. University–community engagement per se reveals fundamental barriers endemic in traditional learning cultures and structures. But the project specifically illustrates the limitations of the existing education system in its suppression of ability besides ignoring, undermining or undervaluing diverse students and learning practice. By valuing certified, centrally accredited education, universities reinforce problems for those intimidated by such methods or who learn through more socialised processes. The project reveals the benefits of a diversity of education access points in encouraging a broader pool of ability and talent into universities. Yet, paradoxically, being off campus does nothing to challenge the notion that higher education is the prerogative of a certain student type.

The project thus reveals both the benefits and limitations of community-based access; indicative of the lack of understanding of community engagement within HEIs. Whilst only one example of university–community engagement, the project illustrates the potential opportunities for both universities and communities arising from a more coherent, integrated and resourced 'Third Strand'.

6.7 Conclusion

Forced onto corporate agendas either through necessity (recruitment, income streams) or policy drivers community engagement was common currency across all types of university in Scotland in 2008/2009. But, as a consequence of inconsistent guidance and inadequate resources institutional understanding of community engagement was limited. The focus, with accompanying funding, on business (commercial) and more recently cultural engagement had both confined its practice and privileged specific 'community' interests and voices. Further emphasis and funding placed on employability, lifelong learning and widening access had likewise restricted understanding and practice to more traditional outputs, such as Continuous Professional Development (CPD), work placements and volunteering; all activity based and viewed as 'add-ons' to the core missions of research and teaching.

For the 'new' universities in particular vocational curricula were celebrated as a commitment to community engagement and benefit, reinforced by applied research agendas. Driven by committed academics both curricula and research were certainly of benefit to the individual student and participating professional bodies as funders

and employers. In some cases funding opportunities as well as individual creativity and commitment had linked community engagement to modular development for both traditional and non-traditional students (including activists as well as practitioners and residents), opened-up cultural facilities to the public, increased university–community dialogue (especially at times of campus development) and encouraged greater coordination and cooperation between universities and other stakeholders. But, despite increasing the profile of universities as 'of' communities, all such activities were also restrictive constraining community engagement to individual recipients.

The dislocation of policy and practice governing university–community engagement was clearly evident in the university–community project case study. Whilst acknowledged as a success from all perspectives (institutional, participants, wider community) the project remained marginalised from mainstream curricula and managerial strategy, constantly threatened with closure because of recurring funding shortages. And rather paradoxically its community base weakened identification with, and provoked distrust towards, the university.

Fundamental constraints (both external and internal) remained largely responsible for the dislocation but arguably institutional short-sightedness was also failing to recognise the potential benefits of university–community collaboration. Communities are sites of economic and social information as well as potential avenues of knowledge exchange, production and transfer. Whilst recognised by committed academics (and some managers), university cultures fail to accommodate, promote or reward university–community engagement or challenge entrenched scepticism of its scholarly worth.

Yet if accepting that universities should be 'of' and not merely 'in' their communities then community engagement cannot remain piece-meal, project-based, primarily attached to sectional interests (employers and employability) or relegated to a supportive role within institutional missions. Likewise, 'communities' must extend to specific geographies as well as interests and identities; to the disadvantaged and unorganised as well as those aligned with the professions and organised representation. Internally, its work needs to be awarded equal esteem, priority and reward and fully embedded within institutional infrastructures.

This more 'radical' interpretation of community engagement challenges many of the traditional cultural mind-sets and structural models dominating HEIs. It is a learning process and will require both corporate leadership and institutional change. Evidence of an emerging leadership was visible in some universities at the time of the research but any broadening of its understanding beyond the identified and restricted practices was problematic. Even those universities aligning community engagement with future survival acknowledged that any further incorporation would depend on resources and the policy context. Ultimately it is the individual student rather than surrounding communities that will continue to dominate corporate attention; a reality that can only intensify if the principles of the Browne review (Browne 2010) are extended to Scotland. It is therefore likely that any future evolution of university–community engagement will remain more aspirational than material, more peripheral than embedded, a strand rather than a mission.

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Chapter 7
'Building' Engagement into the Fabric of the University

The LabPEAT Experience in Librino, Catania, Italy

Laura Saija

7.1 An Autobiographical Introduction

As a university researcher working at the University of Catania (the second largest city of Sicily, Italy), and with a special interest in community planning and design, I am often invited to community meetings, even if I am not actually engaged with a specific community. Community groups are, in fact, pleased to list in their flyer an academic who has a real community work experience: It gives prestige and, at the same time, the alluring possibility that that person can follow community discourses: I emphasize here possibility rather than certainty: I have often been told 'do not expect anything academic'!

From the perspective of this book, such a warning does not make any sense. Community discourses should be considered highly academic in their own right, like everything else in life. 'Academic' should mean not 'belonging to a restricted domain', neither 'elaborated' nor 'complicated'. But that the community responds in that way cannot be regarded as surprising, as community members' behaviour reflects their own past experiences. As a matter of fact, many colleagues (in Italy, at least) can be considered as being confined in an 'Ivory tower', but at the same time they are very happy about being far from the mess even if the price they now pay is a less deep understanding of that mess.

From an academic perspective, there has been a centuries-long debate in the literature covering a wide range of disciplines, concerning how the researcher should relate with their field of research, whether to be distant or proximate, objective or aligned, external or internal. I was almost forced to trace back such a debate during my Ph.D. years in the Engineering and Architecture school at the University of Catania. With the exception of my immediate advisors, most of my professors did not understand at that time why I wanted to develop my planning research primarily outside the computer laboratory. In order to both pass my Ph.D. exams and follow my research interest, I was forced to build a detailed interpretation of planning theory which demonstrates the epistemological and ethical legitimacy of 'being into

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the mess' and participating in the problems at which my research is addressed. Under this formative pressure, My Ph.D. thesis became a hermeneutical interpretation of planning theory demonstrating how contemporary epistemological and ethical theories such as self-organization theory, Gadamer's hermeneutics, critical thinking and Dewey's pragmatism all encourage academics to engage with real problems and collaborate with non-academics on an equal basis, converging towards what is traditionally called 'Participatory Action-Research', with the joint aim of planning a better future (Saija 2008).

I defended my thesis in 2006, and it was considered a good yet strange piece of work.[1] I am happy to say that things at my university are now quite different. Despite the fact that, within Italian academia, university engagement is still not a leading issue, the Planning School at the University of Catania has a real centre for university engagement. Officially it was born in 2006 out of an initiative from a couple of planning faculty (Busacca and Gravagno 2006). In 4 years of activity, the Centre has involved faculty and students both in planning and from other disciplines (architecture, design) and schools (social science, agronomy). Every year, it allows dozens of Ph.D., graduate and undergraduate students to participate in engagement projects as part of their official academic curricula. During this time, if one looks at the way community engagement is conceived and implemented, the Centre has substantially evolved. At first, its emphasis was unidirectional and short-term efforts aimed at producing useful knowledge for the benefit of marginalized communities. It has become long-term and focused on bidirectional community–university partnerships, where academic research and community action are addressed at the same time, by a mixed university–community group.

How could community engagement have become an important feature of the university mission? Most of all, how have changes in its approach to community engagement occurred? I wish it was thanks to the quality of my theoretical work, but it was not. Nor was it due to any innovative discourse on the importance of experiential learning in the national academic environment,[2] nor the practical application of pre-conceived ethical ('it is right to help distressed communities, so let's try to do it') or epistemological ('only if you engage a community you can really understand its problems, so let's do it') statements. On the contrary, the University of Catania's engagement mission can be seen as an emergent feature, connected to faculty's and

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[1] My Ph.D. program at the University of Catania was interdisciplinary, simultaneously covering architecture, planning and engineering. At the beginning of my final defense, it was clear to me that committee members were not familiar with the concept of Participatory Action Research. During my presentation the concept was clearly appreciated by one committee member, a famous national planning theory scholar, but almost not comprehended by the other two, specialized in architectural technology and design. In particular, one of them confidentially told me: 'I am not very good in philosophy and theory, so I did not really understand that much, but it seems an elaborate and rigorous work'.

[2] The pedagogical turn from the unidirectional and theory-based teaching toward what is called 'experiential learning' has not had a relevant impact on the Italian academic system: The large majority of credits are earned by students repeating (speaking or writing), during their final examinations, what they have been told during unidirectional and mainly theoretical lectures.

students' learning and to their authentic desires to address community troubles in an appropriate and in-depth manner.

Among the many activities carried out by the Centre, there is one specific experience that has played a major role in the way which the University of Catania has built its engagement mission: the Librino project. Told from a university perspective, the story shows how the university has moved through different stages, from a traditional research approach towards a university–community partnership experience. It also shows how a real collaboration between the university and distressed communities arose from conflict and frustration, as long as it revealed its heuristic potential, being the only way for researchers to really deal with the most meaningful problems on the ground. It has not been an easy experience and there is still a long way to go. However, the story of the University of Catania–Librino community partnership shows that mutual learning between a prestigious university and a marginalized community is both possible and perhaps more importantly desirable.

7.2   Librino: From Drawings to Reality

Librino is one of the largest public housing projects in Europe: A neighbourhood more than 300 ha in area, 3 km south of Catania. Librino was planned in 1972, by the famous Japanese architect Kenzo Tange, as new 'rational' town able to host 70,000 low-income inhabitants. The area was designed to become a 'textbook case', showing how rational architecture could stimulate urban quality and particularly the quality of life of low-income communities' life. Tange designed, in a very detailed manner, a new town of ten different residential rings (Fig. 7.1). In each ring, clusters of 6- to 10-story buildings were planned in order to maximize open spaces, following Le Corbusier's 'tower in the park' design concept. The overall car circulation system was hierarchically organized (Fig. 7.2):

- One regional highway crossing the neighbourhood.
- Major roadways for citywide travel.
- Minor ways, inside each ring, to access residential units.

Roads were designed in order to keep cars totally separated from pedestrians: Green ways were designed to bring walking people from their residences to services located inside the 'ring' (schools, commercial retails, neighbourhood libraries, elderly centres, etc.) as well as to a central district hosting public offices and banks.

Despite ambitions, in reality, Librino has become the umpteenth example of the rationalist failure in addressing low income communities' real needs and desires. Most of Librino's new residents came from the historic centre and were used to one- or two-storey family houses surrounded by narrow alleys and common courtyards. Therefore, they felt totally disoriented by the new modern and minimalist landscape.

The landscape as it emerged was initially even more minimalist than Tange's vision. In 1979, the city bought the land, divided it into plots, and, while private investors, housing cooperatives and local affordable housing authorities requested
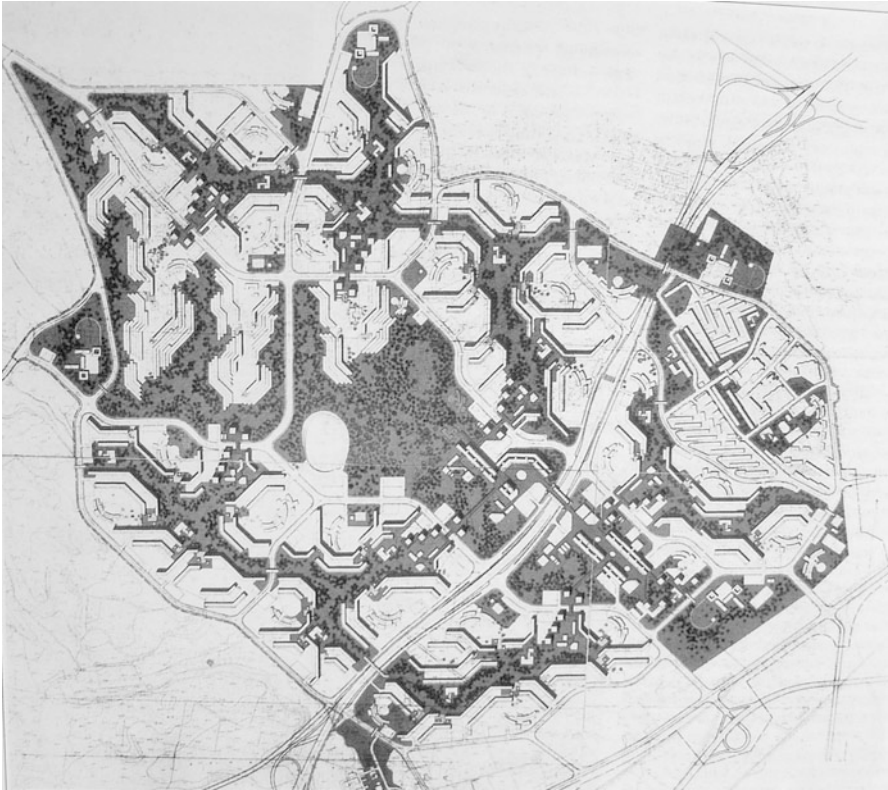
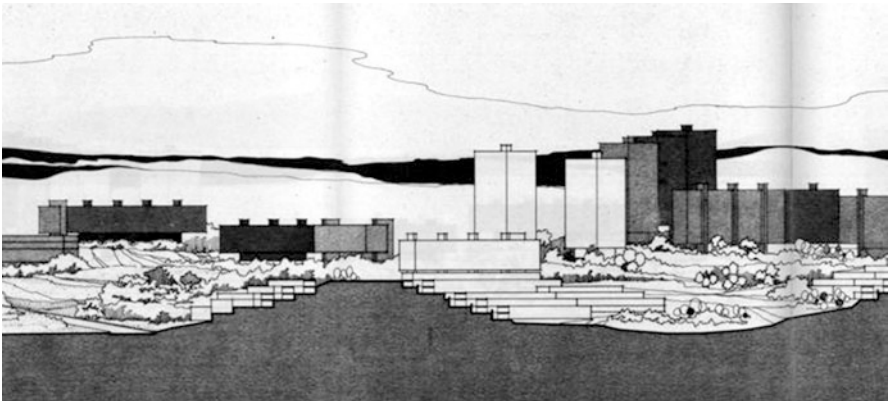**Fig. 7.1** The original master plan for Librino

Fig. 7.2 The vertical cross-section of the Tange master plan

Fig. 7.3 The contemporary urban landscape of Librino

land grants and started to build residential units, there was a long wait for the public services and infrastructures which were meant to be realized entirely with public funds: 70 % remain uncompleted some 40 years after the formal approval of the plan. Residential units are located within a landscape with a surreal tinge, as pedestrian ways, spaces and parks have not been realized. The result is a unwalkable neighbourhood where trunk roads run through desert lands and where most squares and commercial units are vacant (Fig. 7.3).

One more burden rests on Librino residents' shoulders: Perhaps unsurprisingly, since the beginning of the plan's implementation, national and local newspapers have labelled Librino as a uniform ghetto characterized by illiteracy, crime and every kind of antisocial behaviour. Because of the lack of city infrastructures or services within Librino's boundaries, Catania's residents never have a single reason to visit or even pass through, and consequently do not have the occasion to verify whether or not the public portrayal of the situation in the newspapers is truthful. Despite the popular perceptions, Librino is actually a highly differentiated neighbourhood, composed of two distinct types of housing.

Firstly are the housing cooperatives, most of which were born together with the neighbourhood in the 1970s. They are mainly inhabited by dependent workers that, 40 years ago, accepted the challenge of living in a new modern town, where they tried to start a combination between modern and traditional community life-styles. Despite the actual process of property division, most community activities survive. There are often meetings in these communities to decide about communal spaces, as well as community parties and community-driven services such as baby parking. As an aside, most of these 'happy islands' appear to the rest of the neighbourhood as gated communities.

The other kinds of units were those developed and owned by the City of Catania and the Istituto Autonomo Case Popolari (IACP, the National Independent Institute for Public Housing). In these locations, apartments have been rented or sold to certified low-income families. These neighbourhoods suffer from both social and structural problems: The low quality of the original building materials and the lack of public maintenance are combined with the presence of many illegally squatted apartments (in some extreme cases entire buildings) where even primary features such as water and energy facilities are not guaranteed.

Moreover, despite its 'public' DNA, Librino residents experience every day the lack of 'public presence', a scarcity of visible police officers on the street, no public offices for basic services such as official papers, and a highly inadequate public transportation system. The distance between city officials and Librino residents is amplified by the fact that, in the 1970s, the entire implementation of the plan was contracted out to a private company 'STA Progetti', resulting in most of the residents referring to the Chief Executive of STA as Librino's mayor.

The one exception is the public school system: Directors and teachers are strongly engaged with local community and leaders, encouraging children's school attendance in the afternoon, keeping them off the street. Despite the lack of public resources for supporting their extra-curricular activities, Librino schools are among the most effective institutions in the city. Unfortunately school's support for children stops when they become teenagers: There are not high schools within the area, and most of the teenagers do not continue studying.

7.3 Alternative Welfares

Abandoned by public authorities, Librino residents organize their collective living in a variety of different ways. Some organizing is made in the name of citizens' rights by political and cultural organizations; some others are driven by Catholic charity organizations and churches. However, much of the organizing is led by mafia-affiliated clans, that in Librino, like in many others Sicilian 'marginalized neighbourhood', find a fertile ground for their business. Younger children and teenagers are easy to recruit as drug sellers or look-outs whilst local squatters are happy to host fugitives, stolen or illegal goods, in exchange for special protection for their 'housing frailty'. The mafia clans have been able to offer a counter-welfare system that is far more efficient than the public system: Clans manage illegal squatting and are able to guarantee residents' security (in part enabled by clans relationships' with local political authorities), whilst also securing money and free food to the relatives of arrested mafia-affiliates'. As Judge Falcone, killed by mafia in 1992, was to say:

> Mafia is not a cancer proliferated in a healthy body. It lives in a perfect symbiosis with thousands of protectors, collaborators, informants, debtors of any kind, small and big masters, people just scared or blackmailed who belong to every social class. (in Falcone and Padovani 1991)

In other words, the Sicilian Mafia has only thrived because it has been nourished, and it has been nourished by society for centuries; it is not just an organization of gangs managing illegal businesses, but it has strong connection with politics, the economy and culture at every scale (local, regional, national and international). Of course the phenomenon is not exclusive to Librino; however, Librino residents are particularly vulnerable because many of them do not see any alternatives to the mafia's sponsored 'welfare' system.

In such a problematic situation, efforts aimed at counteracting Mafia influence face particular difficulties: In Librino, they are implemented by different kinds of organizations. Spiritual and/or practical support to poor residents, with special attention to Librino's youth, are offered by several community groups, some of them having Catholic roots, some others politically oriented (mainly left-wing) groups, whilst others are just sport or cultural associations. Together with several traditional parishes, two Catholic educational centres offer intense daily assistance to families and children: Both the Giovanni Paolo II Youth Centre and the 'Talita Kum' (literally, 'stand up little girl') Caritas Centre are inspired by the Catholic idea that mafia can be counteracted through proximity and collective action working around human development. Also the Iqbal Masih Centre represents an important educational resource; it started as a left-oriented but independent, self-managed and self-financed group, promoting art and cultural activities among Librino residents. The Iqbal Masih Centre has also promoted a very successful rugby team, able to involve a significant number of young children in a sport characterized by a strong ethical code and self-discipline. Other sport associations play the same role using soccer, Italy's most popular sport.

Alongside education and free services, other groups aim at playing a political role in the city debate for the benefit of the neighbourhood. The CGIL-Librino, the local section of the national left-oriented union, was born in Librino thanks to the original presence of CGIL members in many cooperatives. Today it offers legal assistance to members, organizes social events and promotes political actions (via marches, press conferences and official communiques) aimed at making public decision-making more sensitive to workers' and residents' rights to public welfare[3]. CGIL-Librino also supports active citizenship in the neighbourhood, sponsoring a community committee named 'LibrinoAttivo' ('Active Librino'). Other cultural activities are promoted by smaller associations such as 'ARCI-South Media Association' and 'TerreForti', committed to promoting local culture and tradition through theatre played in the Sicilian language.

Despite such a variety of groups committed to mitigating Librino residents' difficulties, their offer does not combine to have a transformative impact. The number of people reached by community groups and associations is not statistically significant,

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[3] Historically large Italian unions have been able to exert some pressure on public decision-making thanks to their high membership levels, and their power to mobilize a large portion of society against unfair measures; the same logic is applied by CGIL-Librino leaders, thanks to their strong relationship with former cooperatives of left-oriented unions.

with a few hundred people engaged in a district of almost one hundred thousand residents, most of whom live far below the poverty line. Moreover, even recognizing the importance of youth education and charity, there is a general agreement on the fact that the level of social distress is so high that more structural measures are needed.

7.4   The Librino Case Study

7.4.1   Phase 1: University Work in Librino

7.4.1.1   Being Useful

The University of Catania's first contact with Librino came in March 2005, when a research laboratory with the Planning Department, LabPEAT[4], was invited to collaborate with the LibrinoAttivo committee, sponsored by CGIL-Librino. At that time, LabPEAT was known in the city as a research group focused on how to plan sustainability and socio-economic development in problematic urban areas. Since the previous research in historical suburbs around Catania (Busacca and Gravagno 2006) had shown to be useful for some left-oriented community groups, there was clearly an idea that LabPEAT could help the LibrinoAttivo mission: The rehabilitation of Librino's reputation in Catania's eyes, showing Librino's hidden values and active citizenship[5] and creating a new design direction able to create a new identity for the anonymous modern landscape.

There was a clear political intent underlying the co-operation: While local administrators were stuck with searching for funds to complete the 40 year old plan, the leaders of CGIL wanted to make the point that the Librino agenda needed to be urgently updated, with a special focus on public welfare and economic development. The university was therefore considered a prestigious collaborator able to give prominence to CGIL claims.

On that occasion, LabPEAT put about 20 students to work in an urban design studio aimed at producing basic urban analysis and possible design solutions to improve the quality of the built environment. The students came up with some interesting environmental data (in particular, they discovered that Tange's design of roads did not respect natural water systems, causing structural and hygiene problems for buildings' ground floors) and came up with some design solutions addressing water drainage, walkability, urban beautification and historic landmarks protection.

The research satisfied LibrinoAttivo leaders, since it was the first material showing the environmental limits to the 1979 plan and urging for a modern city agenda.

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[4] The Laboratory for the Ecological Design of the Territory was the structure that, in 2006, promoted the Centre for University Engagement.

[5] LibrinoAttivo's previous activities had been a Librino tour open to other Catania residents, for visiting historical landmarks in the modern landscape and other cultural initiatives such as a photo- and a video-competition.

However, the university approach to community work was not particularly collaborative, and highly unidirectional. Following the consultative activity carried out among LibrinoAttivo members (representing a very limited part of the community), most of the work was conducted by university students and faculty, only unveiled to the community when finished. Very few of the initial research questions were formulated by or with community members. The initial call came from community leaders supportive of a prestigious institution such as the university turning its attention towards Librino, and working breaking the common belief of inevitable social decline. The sophisticated research and design methods were used only by university students and faculty.

Using university research outcomes, CGIL and LibrinoAttivo leaders started networking among other grassroots associations and groups in Librino, looking for a larger political 'base' able to claim radical changes in the local political agenda. During this first phase of the Librino project, the university did not consider itself a political actor to be listed among local subjects formalizing requests to local administrators; nor did community leaders consider the possibility of listing the university among local actors belonging to their political base. In other words, university acted and was considered as a *super partes* actor unable to be involved in the local political debate. However, times were ready to change, both for the community and the university. Despite the effort, none of the data produced by the studio gained the attention of a city-wide audience, nor reached city officials' ears.

7.4.1.2   A Plea for Participative Practices in Librino

In May 2006, the university had the occasion to go back to work in Librino. LabPEAT was hired as a consultant of the Public Works Department of the City of Catania, which had joined a network of southern European public institutions and research centres in Rome, Turin, Madrid, Catania, Agios Pavlos and Messina. This was funded by the EU SURPRISE (Sustainable Urban Regeneration Programmes In South Europe) project, an INTERREG III C initiative, committed to the evaluation of their EU-funded programs through the sustainability criterion.

LabPEAT members suggested to include the 'Librino città moderna' (Librino modern city) program among those to be evaluated and delivered a very negative evaluation to city officials: Money had come from a funding program aimed at improving sustainability and residents involvement ('Contratti di Quartiere II'). The documents discovered simply showed a plan for the rehabilitation of 16 apartments and for building 38 new residential units, all characterized by some basic sustainable features (solar panels and a correct north–south exposure). Moreover, other comments on other public documents were provided, such as a negative judgement of the fact that the public agenda to promote Librino's renaissance only relied on large–scale developments such as a stadium, a large complex for offices and a city hospital, without any consideration of deriving community benefits from them.

Together with their evaluative documents, LabPEAT presented a report to city officials on the presence in Librino of many active community groups that could

have been practically used in involving residents in participative practices. The report explained the imperative to spend part of the programme resources or indeed additional funds according to residents' real needs. In other words, the university was inviting the city to listen to Librino residents before making large and expensive plans over an already problematic neighbourhood.

In order to facilitate the interaction between city officials, organized groups and residents, we asked our former 'partner' LibrinoAttivo to co-sponsor, together with the City of Catania and the University of Catania, a summer Ph.D. workshop on participatory planning, design and development, entitled 'Starting community projects'. The event took place from 16 to 20 July 2007 and was the occasion to invite experts in community work from other universities, such as Carlo Cellamare (from 'La Sapienza' University, Rome), Valeria Monno (from Politecnique of Bari), Iolanda Romano (from Avventura Urbana, Torino), Kenneth Reardon (from Cornell University, Ithaca, NYS) and Thomas Angotti (from Hunter College, New York).

During the workshop LibrinoAttivo members guided faculty and students through the neighbourhood and experts led them in the use of outreach techniques designed to reach all the residents and not just grassroots members. During the latter days, Ph.D. students prepared a final document on residents' needs and priorities. The document was publicly presented to the Head of the City Public Works Department and the STA Director, a plea for redefining the city agenda regarding Librino:

> Priorities related to the activation of the revitalization process, that has to be founded on an effective involvement of the inhabitants, are:
> • to improve social organization so that revitalization processes can be successful;
> • to encourage the self-organization and self-management of rehabilitated public spaces, in order to strengthen the relation between people and places;
> • to question the real opportunity of carrying the already approved public project out; in particular, it is needed a more accurate evaluation of the community benefit and damages deriving from mega-projects like the Stadium;
> [. . .] it is urgent to start with small but concrete and participated steps, able to demonstrate the public willingness of promoting development through participation. More structural and larger-scale interventions are to be built upon such a base of small participated projects. ('Starting community projects' workshop final report, 20 July 2007)

The reaction of city and STA officials' was surprisingly positive: They proposed to use the text of the document in preparing an official agreement between the city, the university and community groups aimed at implementing, in a definite time frame, small participative projects (Reardon et al. 2008). On 24 July the agreement was ready to be signed by all the different actors. Unfortunately and, once again, surprisingly, community reactions were not positive at all. Even though the President of LibrinoAttivo signed the agreement together with the Head of the City works Department and the LabPEAT Director, they did not put any effort in involving other community groups with which they were networking.

During the signature ceremony, some of the long-term CGIL leaders claimed that the university did not have the right to act as a mediator: That was the role that should be played by the community long-term leaders. They were openly worried that the process outlined in the agreement would not have taken into account the two years' work the CGIL Librino had been doing within the community. This conflict was not

Fig. 7.4 The risveglio housing co-operative

further explored by the protagonists in the immediate period following the event. Six months after the agreement was signed, the city government tumbled, due to the convergence of the mayor's legal troubles, his health problems, and, most of all, the disclosure of a €100 million hole in the city budget.

After July 2007, CGIL leaders decided to continue their own campaign for a better agenda for Librino without the support of the university and with a very confrontational attitude toward institutional representatives. They chose to write a 'claiming' document together with other community groups and leaders, whose content had a lot of similarities with the agreement signed in July 2007 (especially the explicit request that Librino future priorities had to be addressed through participative practices). The document, named after the 'Librino Platform', bore the imprint of CGIL, 'amiconi' and 'risveglio' housing cooperatives, South Media association, a local magazine named after 'La Periferica', Iqbal Masih Centre, Talita Kum, LibrinoAttivo, the Librino 'scout' group, and 'Musco' and 'Pestalozzi' public schools. It was officially presented to city councillors during a press conference organized in the city hall on 4 March 2008. On 3 June, it was presented, in Librino, during administrative elections, to the candidates for city mayor. The university was neither invited to subscribe the platform, nor to be present during official presentations (Fig. 7.4).

7.4.1.3 Conflicting Perspectives

Why had local leaders refused the deal organized for them? After the agreement was signed, the university was forced to face this question, looking for a different level of meanings behind community reactions. Private conversations between university and community representatives brought the diverse and legitimate points of view

into light. From the *community point of view*, there was a generalized feeling of mistrust in institutional (city and university) motives. That mistrust was not only a feeling largely shared by Librino and Catania residents; it is deep-rooted, the result of two-centuries of hidden relationships between local administrators and organized crime in the face of university indifference.

In this particular case, there were many hints (related to Public Works Department Director's controversial political history as well as to the political choices made by his political colleagues in other Departments) that the agreement, despite the quality of its content, would not realistically alter the real structure of power. The controversial relationship with the city could potentially have been addressed by local leaders within a different frame in which they would have directly contributed to define. On the contrary, they did not feel sufficiently involved in the production of the final document to be comfortable with the outcome. They felt the workshop was organized by the university and followed its own rationality. This would have been acceptable if the university action was limited to knowledge production; yet, it was not accepted, since the university action was seen as a political act having an impact on reality.

From the *university's point of view*, the community's negative reaction against a document that was actually written for them, whose content was not distant from their claims, was not immediately comprehensible. The workshop had been organized to address the efficacy of community action, drawing from the observation of the reality that in 10 years of existence, local groups had not had substantial impacts. Experts coming from other parts of the world had shown, during the workshop, to University of Catania students and faculty how participatory practices and better community organizing (Reardon 1998) could help in achieving significant results.

For the first time, in July 2007, there were people knocking on doors, asking people about their problems and unsatisfied needs. This was also happening in squatted buildings, to where students had been warned by 'LibrinoAttivo' members not to go because of the danger, and where, on the contrary, people were particularly happy to speak. Probably for this reason, university faculty felt as they were teaching the real meaning of participation to CGIL and 'LibrinoAttivo' leaders. Those leaders' own community relationships were also restricted to the CGIL volunteers and organized groups within Librino. LabPEAT members felt very disappointed by the fact that the teaching was not particularly appreciated. The disappointment in part was derived from the fact that there had been community anger at some of the public meetings of which there had been no forewarning, and the criticism disregarded a great deal of work that the university had carried out pro bono.

University disappointment was certainly in part related to feelings of uselessness. As in the 1970s, when city officials did not listen to university warnings about the limitations and defects of Tange's plan, more than 200 hundred pages of reports were produced by a staff of 7 faculty coordinating more than 40 graduating students and 10 Ph.D. students. These were going to remain on paper, and there was no realistic prospective of any of the small participative projects identified in the agreement being funded by the city and/or advocated by community leaders. There was no such sign that the official agenda would actually be updated following the municipal elections.

The reality was that there was a split in the city. Against one city official interested in small participatory projects for development (in his mind they were probably tools for political consensus-building), there were many others principally interested in the kind of money flows that can be activated by a 'large-scale development' such as a stadium. The issue for the residents of Librino is this represents a political status quo, where decisions are taken by local officials who are reputed to have themselves direct or indirect connections to local mafia clans[6].

This raises the rather challenging question of how under these conditions can a university be more effective, and produce knowledge that has a real impact on reality? Are there any conditions under which the university can play a political role able to support (and not confuse or contradict) community leaders? How can university become a source of authentic innovation in community practice and public decision-making, at the same time as being respectful of community experience and history? LabPEAT members had the occasion to explore the community side of the question, when they were called into action again, in September 2008, by one of the other 'Librino Platform' subscribers: the editorial staff of the local magazine *La Periferica*.

7.4.2 Phase 2: Being Engaged

La Periferica magazine had been founded a few months previously by a group of residents with the financial support of Caritas (a National Catholic organization, which also supported the Talita Kum Centre) with the aim of giving voice to unheard local residents and groups. The newspaper's mission was in line with the Sicilian anti-mafia 'free press' movement (www.liberainformazione.it), claiming that Mafia media control undermines people's critical and autonomous thinking. '*La Periferica*' staff asked the university to work on a deep survey of the neighbourhood, to be published by the magazine, with a special attention to its history (including procedures and institutional choices) as well as actual problems (such as structural conditions of buildings, environmental issues, and residential units occupancy rates).

The university accepted the call with the intention of not just producing academic papers. For this reason, we put special attention on the preliminary organizational phase: Collective meetings (not just between representatives) were the occasion to share mutual motivations and expectations. *La Periferica* staff, at the very beginning of their 'free-journal' project, hoped the university would be involved in producing the critical knowledge of Librino's history and actual condition they needed to raise the cultural level of their magazine. The university, happy to receive such a request, expected *La Periferica* to actively collaborate in the knowledge production process

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[6] This allusion to connections between organized crime and local politicians is not just the author's opinion: There is much literature (across disciplines such as sociology, anthropology, criminology and political sciences) demonstrating how Sicilian politicians, since the birth of the Italian nation (if not before), have had mafia's direct or indirect support in change of political favors; about the Catania case, see inter alia Caciagli (1977).

and to consider that its role in knowledge-creation was to be not just limited to scholarly articles, but also to encompass documents with a political meaning. Both sides agreed to both premises, and also on the fact that knowledge produced should have included precise indications on how to address socio-economic and sustainable development of the neighbourhood.

When university faculty announced that 60 students could be involved in a service-learning activity from February until June 2008 to carry an in-depth analysis, we decided which issues were be addressed and which methods of analysis were be used: We decided that archival research and direct observations had to be accompanied by in-depth interviews with as many residents as possible. We also decided that other community leaders from other groups had to be involved in the process, and set up a weekly 'exchange' meeting in Librino and a web-based forum were the exchange could have been carried out daily.

After three months of intense field work, a mixed group of university students and 'La Periferica' staff members presented a large number of community leaders with their findings, with LibrinoAttivo leaders also participating in the event. For 3 hours, presenters discussed with community leaders what, when and how exactly was built within the Tange's plan; how buildings, roads and utilities are used today and to whome do they belong (public? private? someone else?) The presentations showed that the most problematic areas were also the ones where there had been the longest delays in building roads and services. They identified illegal squatted units, empty commercial retails, public housing blocks with structural problems, and quantified the gap between existing and required[7] services. They were also able to identify many opportunities to address vacancy and structural damages and social decay, according to residents' expectations: more than 10 small and feasible projects were identified, requiring a little public funding and a lot of community work.

The reactions of community leaders, especially LibrinoAttivo's, were extremely positive. Compared with the previous university's research, the study appeared to be much more accurate and, most of all, shared by local leaders who had directly contributed to it. The collective proposal was to integrate the 'Librino Platform' with some of the main results of the analysis, and to organize a large public exhibition to publicly discuss the small projects identified. During the organization of the event, the idea arose that the exhibition should have been the occasion:

- To enlarge the network of local groups working together for improving Librino.
- An attempt to socially and institutionally promote the value of a participative approach to rehabilitate Librino.

The exhibition took place on November 2008 in the Palanitta sport facility and was entitled '*Librino: from a satellite city to just a city' interactive exhibit*. It involved 18 grassroots, charity and cultural associations, which shared their own materials with those produced by the students. An additional work was organized in preparation of the event: during the month before the exhibit, 'La Periferica' staff and university

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[7] National and regional legislation requires that for each resident there has to be $9\,m^2$ of land designated to parks, $4.5\,m^2$ to schools, $2.5\,m^2$ to parking, $2\,m^2$ to collective activities (DM 1444/68).

faculty and students had worked with dozens of children attending four local public schools, producing additional material to be exposed during the exhibit. The goal was to involve the important public school system in the grassroots network, promoting, at the same time, children's critical thinking on their own life-space as well as their collaborative aptitude. The project was quick but intense: It left the idea that not enough was done, and more participative work was needed in the public school realm. But this was exactly the kind of result the university–community partnership was looking for: the thinking 'this is not enough, we should do more and with more people'.

Despite difficulties and failures, the second phase of university work in Librino was, for me and many community and university people I worked with, an experience of authentic collective learning, where energy floated from one person to another continuously, giving birth to new ideas and dynamics; an experience during which my personal feeling was that events, out of a single person's control, were fed not by individuals but by collective interaction.

7.5   Final Remarks: What did We Learn from the Experience

Despite our feelings of enthusiasm, none of the invited recently elected city officials attended the event: Communication between the city and the community in Librino was apparently once again missing. After the exhibition, the large grassroots network tried to keep working together but experienced difficulties deriving from competing leaderships, differences in backgrounds, ideals and attitudes. Due to internal divisions, the effort made to secure funds for implementing the small projects for development failed. Furthermore, Catania's political contingencies (the city is still almost bankrupt) do not help: Every single public and private eurocent is today used in order to cover municipal bank debt and stave off bankruptcy.

But we all shared the idea that, in terms of what is left on the ground, the overall experience can be positively evaluated. From the community point of view, a significant change in the perspective of action can be observed: Instead of clamouring for public intervention, the network is now working to collect its own money to implement one or two of the concrete projects identified by the exhibition as the most interesting and useful. The logic is 'if the City does not care, we will do things by ourselves, and we will politically force them to support our actions'. Special attention is now concentrated on the idea that a large portion of what was supposed to become a public park can be assigned to a community organization and used for urban agriculture. This means that landscape improvements can be addressed together with the creation of new jobs; a university graduate student has dedicated her final thesis to work on the feasibility of the project (Scalisi 2010).

The community is not the only side of the partnership that has benefited from the experience. When the university started its work in Librino, the goal was to produce research that could have been useful for the local community. The approach was to undertake university research, in the form of books, data and concepts, which could

then later, and separately, be used by the community for its own benefit. This can be done thanks to university's attitude 'to listen to' the local community but this is a unidirectional process, reminiscent of the one defined as a *professional/expertise partnership*, that are

> those in which colleges and University promote a sincere effort to address the economic and community building problems identified by local leaders. However they do so through a process they control which offers little, if any, opportunity for local residents to gain a deeper understanding of how to study, understand and intervene in complex urban economic systems. (Reardon 2006)

In our experience such an approach has revealed its shortcomings in this implementation. In phase I, our community partner was not directly involved in the knowledge production process and it was not able to fully understand how and why to use it, maintaining its suspicion of the university's supposed real intentions. Moreover, the quality of the research was not entirely satisfying: Despite the use of sophisticated methods of analysis such as 3D digital modelling (far more sophisticated than the one used during the second phase), the study failed in addressing some of the important community issues (such as the search for simple ways of creating jobs through landscape improvements).

Major results were obtained in phase 2, when a real partnership was created on a (more) equal basis: Researchers, students, and community members started working together, shaping issues, deciding how to move from one step to the other, sharing duties and practical things. They created what Reardon calls an *Empowerment/capacity-building partnership* (Reardon 2006). This passage from the first to the second phase of engagement with the community was possible thanks to faculty skilled in self-criticism of their own work and honestly evaluating outcomes and events. A major role was played by the confrontation with other experiences of mutual partnerships carried out in other countries and the direct involvement in the Librino project of other university experts.

Librino residents have not yet seen any concrete improvement of their landscape and their economy. They have been listened to and are directly involved in collective actions that are full of hope. But the university has learned a very important lesson that should not just be learned through academic conferences and readings. It is that lesson that, today, we are applying not just in Librino, but in at least two other projects of university engagement with distressed communities that are in progress; a lesson that, we hope, will help our University to maximize its contribution to the democratization of our difficult region.

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Chapter 8
Engagement and the Idea of the Civic University

James Powell and Karl Dayson

8.1 Introduction: The Current Context for Civic Universities

In an increasingly challenging environment, Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) across the world find themselves under threat from increased global competition for students, while governments expect more intense excellence in research resulting improved national economic growth. Yet, at the same time funding models are being transformed and politicians seek to reduce the sector's reliance on public funding: Universities are under pressure to collaborate with industry and become more enterprising. Consequently universities are formulating new ways to address 'real world' issues with academic staff adjusting to an environment where knowledge is diffused across many actors and groups, in which innovation through co-creation with strategic partners is perceived as an essential element of university activity.

Developing academic enterprise beyond the means currently employed has become a real endeavour for a group of progressive civic universities, of which Salford is part. Such 'academic enterprises' can maintain the enthusiasm of academics through thoughtful team design and support that reflects the requirements of both the individual academics and the teams around them. Thus, HEI activity can now look very different from what it once did; it remains rich in values, yet relevant to end users, adding real value to society and providing major contributions to university's strategic partners. Today, such enterprising developments can be heightened, both positively and negatively, through the global outreach afforded by the information society (Castells 1996).

In exploring the notion of an enterprising university it is necessary to place it within a philosophical and historical context. Essentially there is a dialectic between those who argue higher learning is an end in itself, a selfish activity to develop one's own knowledge, often connected with pure research and is associated with Lao-Tzu, Aristotle and Newman. By contrast Confucius and Plato argued that learning is about integration of the individual within society, and by extension is linked to

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applied research. The centrality of research to a university's identity was originally theorised by Jasper (1965) and it was not criticised until Kerr (1973) showed that the view that a university should be useful to society explicitly emerges. Even he accepted that a modern university had multiple purposes, acknowledging that what he described as the multiversity, could become over-loaded with meaning.

Therefore, the concept that a university should face outwards and engage, rather than focus on training the individual to be a better citizen or for assimilation into society, is under-theorised and thus has not developed a clear discourse that has attracted a sufficient number of supporters. Consequently, the dialectics of liberal v vocational, individual v socio-economic or elite v mass have continued to dominate any conversation about the future of higher education (cf. Allen 1988). Given this, the time now seems ripe to pose the question of how do creatively engaged universities emerge, develop these kinds of engagements further and can academics accept that this is a beneficial activity?

8.2 The Origin & Growth of 'Civic' Universities

The advent of the civic university paralleled the industrialisation of the nineteenth century. While the medieval universities were predominantly based in agrarian locations and concentrated on theological matters, civic universities developed in the emerging manufacturing cities and initially were focused on explorations of science and technology. Both types of institution reflected and served the prevailing social and economic powers of the era in which they emerged; it is this responsiveness to these prevailing powers to which we refer when we describe universities as 'enterprising'. The process followed a broadly similar pattern across industrialising economies, although for the purposes of this chapter we restrict our discussions to England, one of four (the largest) elements of the UK higher education system.

8.2.1 Civic Universities Serving Prevailing Forces of Industrialisation

The original civic universities were Manchester Victoria, Birmingham, Leeds, Sheffield and Liverpool in the late nineteenth century, followed by Bristol, Newcastle, Nottingham, Southampton and Reading in the early twentieth century. Although different in many ways the civic universities had two shared characteristics. Firstly, they had their origins in pre-existing vocationally based educational establishments; and secondly, they were symbols of civic pride, most obviously at Birmingham where the university formed part of Joseph Chamberlain's construction of municipal politics and institutions. Acquiring university status was the proof of regional authority and, in Chamberlain's case, autonomy from existing award granting institutions.

But this project of creating strong regional universities did not only include powerful local political actors, but also involved entire local elites in financially

supporting and promoting 'their' universities. This embededness in their locality was part of their ontology and although there was some attempt to ape elements of Oxford and Cambridge, this was not an exercise in duplication. Neither was the state involved in their formation, certainly for the first wave universities, which predated the first Treasury grants to universities. Their primary focus was to support the local economy and society through research, training and the pursuit of excellence. In effect, the civic universities wanted to take the finest parts of Oxbridge but replace their perceived hidebound tradition with a commitment to economic and social progress. The civic universities regarded themselves as modern universities and institutions of modernity (Holmes 2001).

But this noble sentiment contained an unresolved, and potentially irresolvable, contradiction. Being products of the Enlightenment the civics had commitment to universalist concepts of science, knowledge and truth. This universality contributed to stretching the connections between the universities and their place until they sometimes appeared as aliens in their own community. This is not to say that civic pride diminished: Rather, institutional mutuality of the formative period evolved into an admiration by local elites of the prosperity of a favoured child. Under such circumstances, the notion of an embedded university identifiable through its activity in a physically located place was replaced in popular imagination as a location for tensions between 'town and gown', something Oxford and Cambridge had long experienced.

Compounding this process was the relatively small pool of academics, most of which were for reasons of necessity drawn from Oxbridge or other civic universities. This increased conformity concerning the role of the academics with the concept of the disinterested observer, beloved of Enlightenment culture, became the dominant identity. In such an unpropitious environment, it was unsurprising that academics, and by extension universities, left aside the everyday concerns of their cities unless they contributed to universal knowledge. Certainly, there was in this era no English equivalent of Chicago University's urban sociology research.

Complementing the civics were the 'plate glass universities' of the 1960s (including the seven Robbins-era institutions of East Anglia, Essex, Kent, Sussex, Lancaster, Warwick and York, later joined by 13 others including Salford). In contrast to the civic universities, these institutions were created as a national policy response although they soon adopted their own identity. Nevertheless, they followed the civic universities' culture of academic as disinterested observers, and from their creation there was an acknowledgement that they would be detached from their location. This detachment from the community along with a greater concentration on liberal arts and the disinterested academic culture meant that the 'plate glass' institutions were in many respects less local than the civics (Rich 2001). However, these incipient institutions resisted this impulse and some of them acquired engineering and physical science departments (though some of these were later closed), as well as serving their regional economy and industry.

The most significant part of the sector was to resist this culture of academic identity as disinterested observers were the polytechnics. These higher education institutions saw themselves as no less 'modern' institutions than universities, but being explicit in acknowledging the value of their longstanding engagement with industry, the

local political state and their immediate neighbourhood (Gledhill 1999). For the polytechnic sector, the commitment to applied research and broadening the access to higher education was not a pragmatic response but part of their philosophy and identity (Pratt 1997).

For the sake of completeness, it is necessary to mention higher education colleges, who typically had a narrower disciplinary offering than polytechnics, but whose roots lay in meeting skills' needs of particular sectors or occupations, making their commitment to application equally part of their philosophy. In today's UK higher education landscape, civic universities are seen as the 'benchmark' of the system, with an emphasis on maintaining standards. The sector fragmented following the conversion of the polytechnics to universities after 1992, which placed pressure on the maintenance of universal quality which is harder to sustain.

8.2.2   Adaptation of Civic Universities to Post-Industrialisation

For institutions created to serve the interests of industrialisation, civic universities have proven remarkably well-adaptive to the emergence of a post-industrial society in England. Funding cuts in the early 1980s and a steady dwindling of the units of resources until 2002 forced the civic universities to alter their management styles and re-discover their connections with their cities. At one level, this has been about being a large employer, sometimes the largest after the local authority, and their contribution to the local economy through students' expenditure. To achieve this, universities have realised that a prosperous and attractive city helps student recruitment and thus universities have sought to create virtuous cycle of university–civic relationships, with students as the driver of that cycle.

The university as a key local economic driver fits within an emerging narrative of the importance of the knowledge economy that most of the large urban cities in England adopted as their exit from their declining manufacturing heritage. In this way, the university could be regarded as the mills of the twenty-first century, exporting their product (knowledge) globally but reinvesting locally. Unlike transnational corporations, a city's political leaders can be confident that the university, bearing the city's name, will not relocate to a place with cheaper labour. In England, the civic universities with their roots in municipality are the embodiment of this place bound 'stickiness', and their very existence serves to heighten the image of the city in which they are located.

One of the values of the civic university has been in being resistant to particular dogmatic ideologies and purposes of a university (Maskell and Robinson 2001; Barnett 2003), and certainly in the last couple of decades, to the alluring notion of the entrepreneurial university. The essence of Barnett's argument is that universities thrive where they are able to syncretise the various ideologies present in universities within a 'super complex university'. Barnett develops a critique of the ideology of the entrepreneurial university, but one ideology which, at the same time, is pernicious and needs to be controlled and restricted. Using a hypothetical entrepreneurial

university Barnett details the dangers that would be associated with placing the needs of enterprise at the core of a university's institutional mission.

The requirement to serve the market, and by extension the needs of the client, would gradually undermine the capacity of a university to undertake critical discourse and replace it with 'non-dialogical' communication. Ultimately, this would alter the university's epistemology by subtly changing its purpose towards Mode 2 knowledge production (Gibbons et al. 1994; Nowotny et al. 2001), which creates a recursive quality. In such a case the pursuit of truth is given a 'pragmatic tinge' and academic identities are, at least partially, constructed by the market and the entrepreneurial university ultimately dissolves 'into the wider world, with its activities, identities and values indistinguishable from the wider world' (p. 70). The university 'surrenders its integrity' (p. 71) and follows the call of others. For Barnett, the endpoint of the idea of the entrepreneurial university is of an institution transformed by and becoming part of the market, with whatever left after the process unable to be described as a university.

Nevertheless Barnett feels that entrepreneurialism may be beneficial because it can act to challenge the status quo within universities and forces academics to communicate beyond academe. Barnett chooses to dodge the question of how a university could take this poison without suffering those consequences, restricting his explanation to saying that it can be contained within a super-complex university.

There is little doubt that an entrepreneurial university is an ideological construct, which could challenge existing practices within the sector. It must be conceded that civic universities have never been entirely disinterested observers, but through their medical and engineering activities, they have been pulled out into the real world, and many have indeed embraced entrepreneurship. Implicitly, Barnett, along with Maskell and Robinson, present the concept of an entrepreneurial university with two challenges:

1. Can an independent and critically discursive space be maintained while working with and for market actors?
2. Can entrepreneurship be managed, is it too powerful an ideology to contain?

It is these questions that the University of Salford has wrestled with as it has sought to establish itself as a durable institution, come to terms with variable levels of support from the state, and exploit and reinvent the institution's history and culture of extensive engagement with industry for the contemporary era.

8.3   Salford Exemplifying Progressive Civic University Practice

8.3.1   Salford's Early Heritage

The University of Salford's history dates back to the high water mark of the Industrial Revolution in the Victorian era, with the government of the day introducing grants for the teaching of science. Pendleton Mechanics Institute, a mutual improvement society, founded in 1850, and Salford Working Men's College, founded in 1858,

originated to help transform the local industrial world by educating young artisans, and others, in the scientific and artistic branches of their trades (Gordon 1975). As noted above this kind of education differed from what was offered at existing universities. The new institutions in Pendleton and Salford began the process of developing towards an engaged university within the city serving common good, both in terms of industry and for the citizens.

By 1896 these two originating colleges had merged into a single entity, known as the Salford Technical Institute, combining their deep manufacturing knowledge, and enabling a sound and thorough engagement with Britain's leading industrial manufacturing base in the North West. The zeal for good technical capabilities was such that local industrialists like Sir William Mather set up a committee for the new institution to provide 'special knowledge and advice' from its industrial partners. This recognition of the necessity for close links between industry and technical institutions may now seem obvious to us all; as Gordon (1975) points out 'that it was a far-sighted decision ... that even as late as 1956, out of 195 such Technical Institutions, 131 still had no advisory Industrial Committee'.

This close and continuing engagement between Salford Technical Education and its industrial/business community undoubtedly contributed to an extraordinary local and regional transformation, helping Salford become internationally renowned with respect to its engineering, science, technologies and its skilled workforce. In 1921, this resulted in the institute receiving Royal Letters and becoming known as the 'Royal Technical Institute, Salford' and was ready

> to provide for the County Borough of Salford systematic instruction in those branches of knowledge which have a direct bearing upon the leading industries of the district. (RTI 1896)

The Royal Technical College, Salford was notable for insistence on practical work and workshop practice, which continues today in the present university, as well as the fact that some 83 % of all students came from within the Salford borough. The institution continued to develop, receiving College of Advanced Technology status in 1960, and full university status, in 1967. While its academic status increased, the University of Salford never lost its roots in the local community and its deep working practices with local business and industry. As Salford University's first chancellor, HRH Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh recalled, "Salford is a university with 'its feet firmly on the ground', willing to help local people do better for themselves, in 'work, rest and play'".

Nevertheless, despite contributing to the science and engaging developments during the 1970s, in 1981 the university's future was threatened by extensive (43 %) cuts in state funding. Mrs Thatcher, the Prime Minister of the day, had seemingly begun to question the role of engaged universities like Salford; highlighting the precarious intellectual support. Salford was forced to survive through its considerable entrepreneurial spirit, which enhanced its engagement in its local community, notably with local industry. Professor John Ashworth, its new Vice Chancellor at this crisis time, led Salford towards financial viability by reaching out further into local business and the community.

Ashworth's vision was to break down the traditional barriers between academe, and business and the community, engage all partners in a two-way flow of knowledge and 'know how' towards collaborating through trans-disciplinary working. Not only was Salford to be a progressive civic university, focused towards its city-region, it was also to be friendly, approachable and able to solve real world problems in a cost-effective way. It strove to develop the best facilities, knowledge and skills, for the real world, especially locally ensuring sustainable and effective implementation. Words and phrases like 'capability', 'relevance' and 'coincidence of purpose with industry' characterized the developing university of the time and provided it with a rich 'vision to the wider market, which then beckoned' (Brandon 1999).

8.3.2 CAMPUS—An Example of Building Engagement Relationships

The Campaign to Promote the University of Salford (CAMPUS) was formed by a group of its supporters in community, industrial and business sectors as a response to 1981's financial crisis. Some 200 firms of all sizes alongside a range of public sector organizations, set up CAMPUS as the first business club of its kind in higher education. Its intention was to send a signal to government of the importance of Salford University to local business and communities. Each firm paid a subscription–in return for which they could draw upon seminars, technical support, social events, advice and updating on issues, or work with specialists in the university to best help with problems, research and training. Some of this work, for example training, was customised to meet the needs of a particular company. CAMPUS was created not only to help save the university, but also to help its own members grow and prosper. Records of that time indicate CAMPUS members felt it was one of the few friendly and capable, 'real world' universities able to use its academic skills to creatively engage with these businesses and industries to help them survive and flourish.

Undoubtedly one major benefit of CAMPUS membership for companies derived from the opportunities it provided to network informally with professors and decision-makers, acquire student placements, benefit from graduate recruitment; and the ability to influence local developments. It operated largely in a responsive, rather that proactive, mode, primarily seeking to build long-term relationships between CAMPUS members and the university, rather than as a tool for marketing the university's commercial expertise to local businesses. Such an organisation creates strong social relationships that build bonds and lead to more worthy 'real world' explorations by any university and furthermore new opportunities for development beyond the obvious.

Salford also developed its own company, known as Salford University Business Services Ltd (SUBS), which engaged academics from Salford (as well as elsewhere) on business planning and problem solving. By the end of the 1980s, its turnover had reached around £ 10 million per annum; the university had also developed one of Britain's first business parks and a venture capital company. For about a decade,

this company produced extra income for the university and the staff involved at a time when this was comparatively rare. This activity functioned through making participating academics 'street-wise' and 'business aware' so they could add practical value to university teaching and research.

8.3.3 Contemporary History of the Institution

A further recession in the 1990s, together with further changes to government research funding policy caused the university to rethink its overall strategy. This involved an overhaul of its research structure to encourage greater cross-disciplinary work, more coordinated and central leadership, and the creation of a graduate school. The mission, which was ultimately successful, was to sustain Salford's high level 'applications-relevant' research from Research Council grant income, alongside complementary funding from other public and private sources. This enabled it to remain at the leading edge and maintaining its role as an agent of innovative implementation.

In 1996, the University of Salford merged with an HE college to produce a much larger and more broadly based Higher Education Institution, substantially increasing staff and student numbers whilst broadening its range of disciplines. This important merger was essential in helping the university through a difficult period when the commercial arm started to lose money. Indeed, resources were diverted from research activity in an attempt to maintain SUBS, generating some hostility from academics towards enterprise activities. The question emerged of how could this new institution find new ways to remain true to its roots and place its extensive engagement activities on a sound financial footing.

One of the present authors (Powell) was charged with leading an innovative and radically different integration of the relevant 'high academic values, skills, knowledge and know-how' of its staff, with a 'new dynamic enterprising and entrepreneurship partnerships with business and the community'. Professor Richard Duggan argued that the university was striving to 'look where everyone else was looking, see what no-one else could see' and more particularly, 'do what no one else was doing' in ways which rewarded itself and its partners. This thrust was to become a third major strand of all university activities, standing alongside teaching & learning and research, developing activities in ways not generally seen elsewhere. These changes predated the Higher Education Funding Council of England's own interests in a formal Third Mission for universities.

The centrepiece of the plans for Salford outlined by Powell in an internal document 'The Noble Art of Academic Enterprise' was the stimulation of 'Academic Enterprise'. This emerged in 1998 recognising the need for the sort of cultural change that the UK Government would later demand of all universities across the United Kingdom to create real impact for society. Salford's desire at this time was for its academics to enhance their enterprising skill and entrepreneurship, and thereby for them to become respected activities in their own right (Powell 2009).

In order to bring about the necessary change in processes of embedding Academic Enterprise into the university, it was first necessary to develop an internal vision that could be shared by everybody in the institution. The vision which emerged was simply to 'develop academic opportunities beyond means currently employed, to high academic values, but of relevance to local business and the community'. This represented a return by the University of Salford to its roots, but now embracing twenty-first century priorities and aspirations, where studies relating to business and the community were seen to be worthy of reasoned and powerful academic endeavour.

This vision was represented by a logo showing the strong linkage between the words 'Academic' and 'Enterprise'—the basis for all its future activities in this strand—indicating what was hoped to become an inseparable dipole for this new mode of university working. The team wanted colleagues to embody this by undertaking bold new academic pursuits reflecting their clear academic values, knowledge and capabilities. The Greek ligature Æ was chosen as a short and simple means of naturally representing this strong bond, with key words around the logo showing what was needed to bind Æ together.

Academic Enterprise became the University of Salford's unique attempt to form meaningful, wealth creating and socially inclusive partnerships with industry, business, the civil and voluntary services and the community at large. The hallmark of the Æ approach lay in opening up the formidable skills and imagination of its staff, developed through rigorous evaluation, on the basis of the highest academic values, to form reasoned specifications for actions in the real world. The emphasis placed upon Academic Enterprise recognised the need to 'tap into' the daring of its creative enterprise partnerships to stage-manage novel, yet robust, ideas, innovations, approaches and technologies into actual improvements for all our nation, and beyond. The remainder of this paper reviews the success of Æ and the challenges faced when embedding it into a conventional university setting.

Table 8.1 Income and net contribution of Æ over its first decade

Year	Contribution	Income (nearest £ m)
1998–99	Reinvestment	£ 3 m
1999–2000	Reinvestment	£ 5 m
2000–2001	Reinvestment	£ 6 m
2001–2002	£ 1 m	£ 9 m
2002–2003	£ 2 m	£ 16 m
2003–2004	£ 1.4 m	£ 18 m
2004–2005	£ 1.3 m	£ 17 m
2005–2006	£ 1.2 m	£ 17 m
2006–2007	£ 6 m	£ 21 m
2007–2008	£ 2 m	£ 17 m
Total	**£ 14 m**	**£ 129 m**

8.4   Academic Enterprise at the Heart of Salford University

8.4.1   Measuring and Driving Success in Æ

The strategy evolved in response to a set of external changes, notably the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) embracing the Third Mission and the government becoming more concerned with increasing the impact of research and university. Salford focused in particular on its development of Æ as a means of promoting not only better work with industry and commerce, but also with other stakeholders, such as those in civil and voluntary organizations, in the community at large, and, not least, those within the university itself. The vision was to remain a progressive civic university deeply engaged with its city region, developing Academic Enterprise was at the expense of other activities, namely teaching and research. A key driver for this new activity was income growth, in the development of innovative projects that enabled socially inclusive wealth creation for its partners, and itself.

The institution therefore sought, through Æ, new sources of funding to add to its traditional public resources. This in turn would enable the university to initiate novel projects, as pilots of a change process, while appropriately redistributing scarce existing resources to developments more relevant for an 'enterprising university'. Given the experience with the problems of a failing conventional enterprise company, Æ recognised the need to integrate its activities into Salford's normal engagement practices with business and the community, and to make a net contribution to the university. Tables 8.1 and 8.2 show how Æ has evolved, in terms of its income, net contribution to the university and its overall outputs.

The statistical evidence clearly demonstrates the extent of Æ activity, but understanding how Æ has operated, and drawing some lessons from efforts to achieve that success, give a better qualitative understanding of activity, thereby helping the readers anticipate possible futures for an enterprising university.

Table 8.2 Key Æ metrics 2007/2008

Number of major new academically enterprising projects	100
No. new spin out/start-up/graduate star-ups companies	200
No. students supported: Students in free enterprise (SIFE)	32
No. students supported: Local people supported projects	250
No. students supported: Enterprise learning modules	>4,000
Patents disclosed	31
Business & Software licenses granted	30
CPD course value for SMEs	£ 100,000
CPD course value for other commercial	£ 137,000
CPD course value for non commercial	£ 545,000
CPD course value for individuals	£ 474,000
New E-learning developments (courses)	50
Value of enterprise-led research activities	£ 3.6 million
Contract research	£ 1.5 million
SMEs Advised	893 million
Other businesses advised	1,283 million
ERDF income	£ 906,000
ESF income	£ 427,000
UK Regeneration Funds	£ 151,000
RDA Programmes	£ 739,000
Other regeneration grants	£ 208,000
Public lectures audience	1,482
Exhibitions audience	46,600
Chargeable performance arts audience	5,294
Knowledge transfer partnerships	38

8.4.2 Salford Binding Communities into Government and Institutions

Etkowitz and Leydesdorff (1997) describe how universities evolved out of a set of bilateral relations with the state and industry towards a series of interlocking tripartite intersections. In this process, there is a delicate tension to be negotiated, between the university becoming marketised and the need to become a communicative actor with a key role in the public sphere (Etkowitz and Leydesdorff 1997; Delanty 2001) This necessitates universities in interacting and blurring the lines with other partners, whilst moderating direct market pressures by engaging with a boarder set of partners and work at the edges of technological and cultural citizenship. Such an approach is by definition complex and necessitating a willingness by all those involved to work outside their hermeneutic and institutional discourses.

At Salford an example of this is the on-going work between a not-for-profit loan company, a mathematician and a sociologist. In 1999 the authors co-wrote, with another colleague, a policy paper recommending a new type of non-profit company to address the problem of affordable credit. They argued that such a service was required because the only providers of small loans (less that £ 1,000) in deprived communities were firms charging interest rates in excess of 200 %. In partnership with banks, government departments, local authorities and community activists, Dayson helped establish 12 of these type of organisations throughout England.

A decade after the start of this process, the most successful of these loan companies, East Lancs Moneyline (*elm*) asked the university if it could create a risk assessment process to inform the decisions made about loan applicants. Conventionally, this would have involved either purchasing a standard loan application assessment software or entering into a contract to design a specified system. However, *elm* wanted a system that allowed for individual discretion by the loan officer and was transparent and fair for the client. They were not interested in increasing profit, rather protecting potential clients from over indebtedness.

This notion of 'preventative credit' was unusual in a sector where the emphasis is on a combination of improving efficiency and reducing lender. The manifestation of this is a proliferation of automated internet loan application processes unable to counsel clients, support those that get declined, or introduce any transparency. The overall result is that citizens, especially those with limited educational attainment, are alienated and potentially excluded from formal financial services and driven back towards informal credit providers. By contrast *elm* were explicit in seeking a system that could be integrated into their face-to-face client interaction and would help guide both the loan officer and the potential client towards the most appropriate financial decision.

Clearly, both social and technological problems and therefore *elm* wanted to work with sociologists as well as computer mathematicians. Working with the AE team within the university, they sought funding under the government's knowledge transfer partnership (KTP) for a post-doctoral researcher to be placed within *elm* for 2 years. Applying for that funding indicated that this was an extremely novel proposition for the KTP funders in two ways. Firstly, there had never been a previous application from mathematicians and sociologists to work together, and there was some scepticism about the necessity of the sociologist's involvement. Secondly, although it was technically possible for voluntary and community sector organisations to be KTP partners, none had to that date applied, and the university had to challenge the funder's assumption that technology transfer to a not-for-profit organisation would not lead to improved profitability (which the proposed technology transfer certainly would).

This example highlights how the university could interact and blur boundaries with its partners, and engage with commercialisation, whilst at the same time leading to social benefit and not necessarily exclusively the marketisation of the university. Part of that comes through the involvement of an NGO, which does shift the discourse away from purely capitalist concerns and allows for other voices and claims to be heard. But a key novel element of the contribution came through the university emphasising a solution involving socially embedded technology, and using cultural knowledge, of the sociologist and *elm*, to ensure the technology's design was compatible with the users. The example also suggests that the university can also be involved beyond communicative and mediating functions. Salford created a space and a platform for the NGO to engage in the public sphere, and is a specific example of Salford's more general approach to Æ, extending social justice through opening up public spaces for a wider range of discourses to be heard.

8.4.3 Salford Emerging as an Enterprising University with Strong Engagement

On the basis of the evidence above, of many small-scale engagement activities through Academic Enterprise, engagement with business and the community can be regarded to have become embedded in its mainstream university life. What was this initially a third strand of Salford's academic activity has now become a primary mission in its own right, and was acknowledged in what was at the time of writing the university's latest strategic plan:

> Salford is an enterprising University which transforms individuals and communities through excellent teaching, research, innovation and engagement. (Hall 2009)

Salford sought and progressed towards establishing its own distinctive identity focusing its attention on the task of becoming a leading enterprising university. The strategy acknowledges a need for continuous strategic adaptation to continuously changing external environments. The intention in the future is to judge the success of that adaptation by the extent to which the notion that Salford is an enterprising university fully engaged in its surrounding, and often excluded, communities become taken for granted and an essential, intrinsic element of Salford University's internal and external identities.

8.5 Reflections on Embedding Enterprising External Engagement into University Life

The previous section highlighted the critical importance of creating an easily understandable and consistent vision, driving cultural change and following up on that with relevant implementation strategies to embed the required cultural change. In this section, we reflect on that process in the round, from strategic vision to cultural change. We explore how senior managers creatively lead their academics, and other staff, supporting constructive interaction within the institution; using governance processes to consolidate good practices and remove poor ones; rewarding success, evaluating the quality and level of community engagement; and concentrating resources by setting realistic objectives.

8.5.1 Leadership and Management are the Key

Universities often have an innate sense of conservativeness which deals with the complexity of the tasks they are required to deliver, teaching, research and social service, by creating and adopting 'private frames of reference'. These private frames of reference help the academic community to reach its goals and manage that complexity, but at the same time can be unnecessarily resistant to novel ways of thinking which challenge those private frames of reference, but whose adoption is necessary if the university is to adapt to changing environments. A particular

contemporary manifestation of that problem can be seen in academic resistance to new ways of thinking about excellence, in particular embracing innovation, collaboration or multi-disciplinarity.

At Salford, these tensions manifested themselves at the end of the 1990s when Academic Enterprise was created as part of efforts by senior managers to introduce greater community/business engagement. Academic Enterprise created new challenges for academics, because—as the *elm* example illustrates—meeting an external need typically involves combining different kinds of academic knowledges. Although that might sound straightforward, the reality is that that involves trying to combine conflicting ideas, conceptual standpoints and ways of working. Situations arose which looked radically different from that which any one of the partners understood for themselves. The key to the effective solution was a compromise between academic partners, and it required considerable effort from senior and middle managers to create environments with the space, time and incentives for academics to make these creative compromises without disrupting the external engagement activity.

The diagram below shows how one senior manager depicted Salford's hierarchy, its leadership and management and relationship to the outside world : She put 'community' at the top of the leadership hierarchy, as a focusing element, and also recognised good leadership had to come from all parts of the university. But the situation was not static and there remained considerable resistance from some quarters who sought a reversion to the status quo. It took considerable effort from senior managers and the governing body in communicating the importance of Æ in achieving Salford's strategic vision to ensure that the Academic Enterprise concept was made to succeed. From the outset, it was recognised that ideas for sustainable change would come from all levels in the university, and these needed to be harnessed for the good of all. This belief was underscored by Salford's own history and culture where engagement and interdisciplinary working were widespread.
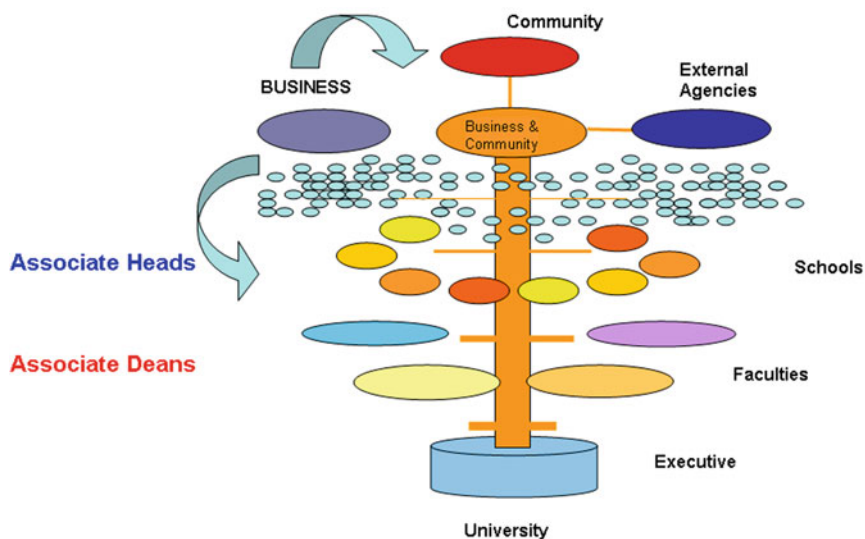
In practical terms, this change process involved creating Assistant Deans and Assistant Heads of Schools with specific responsibility for Æ, namely sharing, refining and locally embedding the vision; promoting key ideas by spreading knowledge and good practice; working closely with the core Æ office to deliver the right encouragement and support; and giving the necessary feedback to the centre to ensure problems were captured and sorted out quickly. These champions were intended to act as *animateurs* who would try to the unexplored connections in the university between ideas and practice with potential for development into new initiatives, as well as picking up on ideas at the grass roots with the potential to achieve more widespread cultural change.

These Faculty and School champions were intended to embed Æ within their home areas, improve communications and deal sympathetically and constructively with local resistance. They became projects' main creative and effective leaders, working with colleagues to perceive 'patterns which connect' Æ and industrial need, constraints as opportunities for new action, and helped provide the space to promote growth. Along with the Æ core team they fostered creativity in all members of their team and sought to inspire staff. The intention was that they would be 'hands-ready' rather than being 'hands-on' nor 'hands off'.

Powell (2010), following Clark (1998) explored how willing academics can be coached to become such leaders. Interestingly, the early findings of this study show that while Salford's academics were 'reluctant leaders', they were much better at leadership than they are at management. In response Salford supported them with suitably qualified project managers to ensure projects were delivered. The key word here is 'support', Salford found that its academics were highly resistant to instruction, which contradicted their notion of professional autonomy, but were willing to be challenged provided it exerted a positive influence on their work. Those project managers who gained credibility were those who were able to work to remove 'unhelpful' bureaucratic, administrative and disciplinary silos.

8.5.2   Governance for Improved Academic Enterprise

The Æ core team also developed a self-evaluation approach to help academic leaders understand and improve the development of their own academic enterprise teams. The issue that Salford faced was the method of working in externally-focused and trans-disciplinary teams was relatively rare at Salford. As previously noted, those involved, tended to be working in an extremely uncertain environment, trying to create useful solutions. This uncertainty made it very difficult to objectively evaluate the success or otherwise of particular projects. This was a significant challenge for the legitimacy of Æ, which depended on being able to show to staff that collaborative approaches were successful.

The evaluation approach that was developed was then subsequently validated in a joint project with twenty-five British and ten other European universities, entitled the University Partnership for Benchmarking Enterprise and Associated Technologies (UPBEAT). The tool comprised of a matrix of four skill themes for academic

enterprise, namely solution enabling, talent improving, intelligent partnering and new business enabling skill (see figure below).

The Enterprising Academic Model

Academic Business Acumen

Social Networking Intelligence

Foresight Enabling Skill

Individual Performance

The evaluation operated by assessing particular projects against the degree of their development; thus, it was possible to have world-class solution enabling with local level new business acumen. This recognised the complexity of Æ activity and that different aspects would develop at differing stages depending on the project, the partnership and a range of external factors. The tool was validated drawing upon 200 case studies of best practice: It appears that it is the development of 'qualities and levels of academic engagement' with respect to these skills that is the most generally relevant and important to the progress of almost all forms of successful academic enterprise; in particular, those which fully engages with its locality, and helping transform communities, business and civil society.

UPBEAT was not solely an external management tool, but also enabled academics to learn how better to interact within their own institution and develop more powerful and lasting relationships with strategic external stakeholders which make a real difference (www.upbeat.eu.com; Powell 2010). In Salford, we have seen how this has been used to drive efficiency and higher levels and qualities of engagement with external partners, leading to continuous improvement in all university outreach. The use of this governance process, monitoring and project management tool has been centrally important to Salford's success in engagement with excluded communities.

8.5.3 Rewarding Success

A third main lesson learned from the Salford case relates to how success is understood, promoted and rewarded by a university. We have already noted the importance of private frames of reference for shaping academic behaviour, and there is an important

interdependence between universities reward structures and policies and the way these private frames of reference evolved. At the start of the process, the emphasis was on coaching academics, by using an earlier template of UPBEAT, to maximise their performance and that of their project and partnership. But as Benneworth (2009) points out creative '*engagement needs entrepreneurial academics, who may do many things at once, and these are precisely the kinds of people who you can't tell what to do . . . . If one de-skills and Taylorises one's employment practices in the university, then entrepreneurial academics leave. It ends up with people focused on one task, and so engagement ends up being done by engagement professionals, rather than by people with the subject knowledge'.*

Academic Enterprise recognised problem this *avant la lettre* and responded by ensuring that academics could engage autonomously, whilst at the same time giving strong signals about the kinds of enterprising behaviour which were in line with strategic institutional priorities. In practical terms, this involved allowing academics additional freedoms and opportunities, including:

- The creation of new Æ initiatives including the discovery and capture of the possible.
- Marshal resources from a pluralism of funding streams to 'buy-out' staff to deliver any opportunity well.
- Ensure better dissemination and technology transfer through appropriate knowledge management.
- Provide better marketing of the academic potential and opportunities for collaboration.
- Ensure a high utilisation of scarce staff resources; so colleagues now recognise the importance of sharing ideas and the complementarity of interdisciplinary working.

One element of the incentive structure was in publicising those delivering innovative and engaged projects as far as resources would allow. Salford was aggressive in nominating its best projects for external consideration and won: a Queen's Award for Higher and Further Education, *Times Higher Education* Annual Award for Community Enterprise and an Award for the most Innovative Project in the North West of England. A series of regular national and international conference were also developed to showcase achievements to local, regional, national and international audiences.

Arguably, the more important element of the incentive structure in ensuring academic commitment were the rewards available through participation. These were in part financial, but primarily came in terms of status, especially promotion. Over a dozen academics were promoted to professor on the grounds of their proven skills and prowess with respect to enterprise, engagement and knowledge transfer, alongside many more being promoted to Senior Lecturer. Although the demands of the promotion route through academic enterprise are as demanding as for other routes, its inclusion indicates the importance Salford places on academic enterprise. Salford was at the time of writing one of the few HEIs with promotion criteria which permit this, which again signifies the importance which Salford placed on this sort of working.

8.5.4 Realistic Targets

At its inception the Æ team established clear growth targets—two major projects per faculty and two cross-university projects in its first full eighteen months in operation—leading to 10 in all. In fact over 25 were initiated, many of which were extremely successful for nearly a decade. Undertaking sufficient numbers of projects to build a critical mass and allow real change and improvement are essential, as is stretching those with greater capacity. However, Salford recognised the practical limits to engagement emerging from academics' existing workloads.

Given that rigorous research and scholarship take time to do well, Academic Enterprise was unwilling to compromise on academic quality as there is no point in developing Academic Enterprise on weak data of inappropriate understandings of the world. By setting realistic and achievable, but stretching, targets Salford was able to concentrate its limited resources on ensuring the selected initiatives were successful. There is no absolute benchmark of what can be eventually achieved. It depends on capabilities of staff and the university, but also whether senior managers are willing to invest time in getting to know their enterprising academics and when to offer support and when to stretch them.

8.6 Conclusion

The headline message from this chapter is that there is no single recipe for developing successful engagements with companies and excluded communities for the good of local cities and city regions. The chapter has sought to present how the University of Salford developed its approach, hoping helps those wishing to have a more engaged enterprising universities. The Salford perspective is that in the context of the knowledge economy, success will only arise from collaborations successfully mobilising interactions between industry, civil society, the state and university.

But Salford's story has also shown that engagement can, and should, include a stronger relationship with a university's local community. For most universities, despite their moves into distance learning and internationalisation, they are ultimately placed within a specific location. Oxford and Cambridge would be lesser institutions if they moved away from their home towns and it is this that the founders of civic universities also understood. They accepted that the pursuit of knowledge would seek universal truths, a process that could not be bound by a specific place. But this does not mean that the university would remain detached for its locale nor should it have minimal sense of community responsibility. Neither should responsibility be limited to the economic benefit to an area. This, though welcome, is a by-product of a university's core activity: the pursuit and transmission of knowledge. The question then raised is to usefully employ this to lessen urban exclusion and improve social weal.

Salford's Æ approach arose out of universities' attempts to define itself as something more than a research or teaching institution; drawing on its history and converting an existential threat into an innovative interpretation of a university. Once

this was achieved, Salford was able to explore a means to systemise its engagement to produce increased local benefit through supporting firms and drawing on its knowledge capital to assist the local community. While this story is unique to Salford many of the processes involved could be replicated for any institution seeking an alternative kind of identity. To Salford, it was vital to follow a two stage process, creating a vision and then operationalising that vision through a rich form of 'empowering democratic leadership', by people passionate in community engagement was essential.

But leadership alone is insufficient to drive through a cultural change: Leadership need be accompanied by a cadre of enthusiastic academics willing to work in different ways within different constellations. Alongside these, it is the need for a form of coaching that understands academic cultures,: in the Salford case, it was also necessary to have a group of professional project managers dedicated to ensuring that academics' visions were realised. What UPBEAT offered in this context was an innovative tool which helped with addressing uncertainty both to create informative governance oversight and used as self-reflective tool for the project team. If governance is to be supportive and not merely controlling it needs to be connected with a reward structure for academics. In the case of engagement, it is important to concentrate as much on status as monetary rewards, in line with the ways that academics construct their motivations. Finally, appropriate 'stretch targets' to ensure increasing and higher quality engagement will help manage expectations and allow the concentration of resources.

Both the present authors are now working together, and independently, to ensure their own community engagement develops more deeply, smartly and effectively. Their further studies, building on the work described in this chapter, reveal the enhanced roles universities, and their academics, should now play in co-identifying real problems worthy of collective solution with our excluded community partners, co-creating of sensible solutions with them which are systemically fit-for-purpose in the global knowledge economy, helping them co-produce those solutions and their stage management into the real world, and further ensuring the continuous improvement of all such solutions so they reach more people with more constructive effect'.

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Part III
Transformations in the Epistemic 'Idea' of a University

Chapter 9
Universities' Perspectives on Community Engagement

Paul Benneworth and Lynne Humphrey

9.1 Introduction

This part seeks to explore a second transformation in the nature of universities, in how the 'idea of a university' has been transformed within a wider epistemic community of universities and scholars beyond particular institutions and activities. This part is rooted in Haas' (1992) idea of epistemic communities in which interacting groups of practitioners in different settings unconsciously coordinate through cultural infrastructure towards common ends. The idea of a university is not something which is fixed, but evolves and is continually defined and redefined by those who have an interest in that definition. In higher education, this typically involves policy-makers, universities, institutions that aspire to university status and scholars of educational philosophy and practice. These definitions are used and influence purposive change and therefore influence the way that the definitions are themselves drawn up.

Within that context, this part is concerned with how the idea of a university has evolved within an epistemic community in response to increasing pressures to engage with society. The focus for this is how the idea of 'community engagement' has been taken up within higher education. This part builds on the intuitive narrative developed within Chap. 1 that explains why community engagement is a subordinate mission for higher education, building on the following stylised facts.

Firstly, universities are societal institutions, and so have a set of duties to their host societies (the social 'compact') in return for their privileges received. Secondly, universities are increasingly important to society in the context of the shift towards a knowledge society. Thirdly, whilst there has been a polarisation towards definitions

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of what kinds of societal benefits universities ought to bring, this has tended towards business engagement, and away from excluded communities. Fourthly, there is a consensus that this position—the subordination of engagement with excluded communities within universities' missions—is rational and reasonable, and therefore should not be challenged intellectually.

This complex set of arguments lies behind Parts III and IV. In terms of understanding why universities do not engage with communities, the focus is on why despite a strong *prima facie* case for fulfilling the societal compact through community engagement, this has not become in reality, and community engagement has become defined as a peripheral mission. Our contention is that this side-lining is an emergent outcome of the fact that universities are rather contradictory kinds of organisations and have always had a degree of freedom in defining their societal benefits.

As pressure on universities has increased in recent years to demonstrate their societal benefits, universities have been forced to prioritise, leaving them very little space to engage with excluded communities beyond very prescribed, limited and ultimately superficial ways. Universities have legitimated and justified these outcomes by mobilising a set of arguments about 'proper' kinds of engagement in the 'idea of a university'. These arguments have achieved a kind of traction and been successful in framing community engagement as a peripheral mission. Yet, they are the result of an emergent process which could have quite easily led in an entirely different direction—Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI) (1982) saw community and business engagement as two halves of the same coin.

What this part explores are the debates around the 'idea of a university', its relationship with society in the last three decades and how this reinforced the peripherality of the community-engagement mission. This allows an understanding of the alternatives for community engagement to become a serious university mission. It is important to note that this book, and certainly this chapter, does not take a strongly advocatory position regarding community engagement as something which universities should undertake. Rather we seek to understand the 'social life' of the idea of university engagement which has left university–community engagement in a relatively dependent and subaltern position.

In this part, there are two empirical chapters, each of which seeks to take a number of steps in developing this wider argument. In Chap. 10, Fred Robinson and Ray Hudson provide a practical example of how these connections and debates have played out in practice, in the university of Durham, a world-class research-intensive university located adjacent to one of the poorest and most deprived parts of the United Kingdom, the East Durham coalfield. In Chap. 11, Tim May and Beth Perry explore how community engagement has come to be mobilised within wider political structures, highlighting that the kinds of community engagement which emerge are often denatured and highly nonfunctional and lack the capacity and traction for promoting the development of excluded communities.

To contextualise these empirical chapters, this chapter asks the question of why the idea of a community-engagement mission for universities has proven so complex and contentious. This chapter explores the fundamentally contradictory nature of universities, caught between two quite different philosophies (Allen 1988) and

purposes (Baumunt 1997). Engagement has become trapped at the fringes of these philosophies and purposes, and lacking a strong philosophical underpinning has been pushed to the margins of the institution of 'university'. We focus on four debates around the social compact where these tensions have served to frame 'the idea of engagement' as something peripheral, transient and even undesirable to the institution of university:

1. Between universalist-excellent and particularist-relevant understandings of 'what matters' for knowledge, that is, the knowledge is abstract and theoretically robust as against particular and empirically useful (Allen 1988; Brink 2007).
2. Whether higher education needs to be justified in terms of a set of external societal benefits (extrinsic social value), as against whether higher education has automatic societal value (intrinsic benefits) (Jonathan 1997, Howie 2003).
3. Who are the appropriate beneficiaries for university education, and in particular, why the public sector should support universities, whether that is in terms of individuals or the collective benefits (Penman and Ellis 2003).
4. Whether there are a core of philosophies, missions and activities that all universities share or whether different kinds of institution have very different orientations and missions (Martin 2003).

9.2   The Idea of a University and Community Engagement

Before discussing the debates around the role of engagement in the idea of a university, it is necessary to have some precision about what precisely we mean by the 'idea of a university'. When we talk about the 'idea of a university' in this part, we are referring to something that is both concrete and abstract. In the main, these are not exclusively abstract discussions—the epistemic community here is not purely scholarly. Rather, abstractions are being used in the context of particular debates. Definitions of the idea of a university have a Janus-face: On the one hand, they attempt to encapsulate what universities have been, but on the other hand, the point of that definition is to guide a current choice or decision. These debates, as we later argue, have had the effect of conflating those ideas which win particular arguments with statements of what is intrinsically desirable in ideal types of universities. In short, the fact that in practice community engagement has not become important has enabled the mobilisation of ideals of universities in which community engagement is peripheral.

The phrase 'The idea of a university' traces its pedigree back to Newman's (1854) reflections on higher education in Ireland, and there are a multitude of academic articles which evoke or refer to that phrase. We start our discussion from a slightly different point, seeking to understand the role of public engagement in the idea of a university. At its most basic, it is necessary to acknowledge that universities are a societal luxury, and this creates a dependence on society as the source of support for that essentially luxury item. As Shils (1988) observes:

> No modern university has ever lived entirely from the sale of its services. Universities have received subsidies from the church, the state, and private philanthropists as individuals and as foundations (p. 210).

Biggar (2010) notes:

> Right from their medieval beginnings, [universities] have served private purposes and practical public purposes as well as the sheer *amor scientiae* ['knowledge for knowledge's sake'] . . . popes and bishops needed educated pastors and they and kings needed educated administrators and lawyers capable of developing and embedding national systems (p. 77).

Universities have always evolved in response to societal shifts which have changed lead sponsors' demands for knowledge. To date, there have been three fairly fundamental shifts in western society, each corresponding to an evolution in the idea of a university. Although particular universities and systems evolved differently at different places and times, we characterise three phases of the 'university' (Benneworth 2010):

- In the first wave, the university emerged in Europe as the church split from the state, as groups of learned religious scholars were freed from exclusive obligations to spiritual powers and able to educate a mercantile elite vital for emerging city-states (Rüegg 1992; Hyde 1988; Biggar 2010).
- In the second wave, universities evolved from being scholarly communities educating an administrative elite to suppliers of knowledge for the industrial revolution helping to create a technical elite driving national economic progress (McLellan 1988).
- In the third wave, universities became communities supporting educated free thought and emancipating minority groups through access to participation in the structures and activities of democratic society (Shils 1988).

In the last 100 years, there has been what Melody (1997) calls a 'publicisation' of universities, with governments investing increasing amounts in supporting university activities. That universities are useful to society is therefore not seriously open to debate—they produce many benefits (cf. UUK 2006). But what is much less clear is the degree to which the production of this public value should feature in the minds of universities' leaders as central to their institutional raison d'être. Certainly, there is a great deal of disagreement over the extent to which universities should define themselves in terms of their public benefits.

The fundamental issue from which this disagreement emerges is a tension between two things which make universities valuable. On the one hand, there are a whole set of direct benefits which universities produce, such as educated graduates, trained administrators, new technologies, support and advice for business and farmers and consultancy/advice services for public and private sectors. On the other hand, what distinguishes universities as knowledge producers is that they are independent or loosely coupled to demands for these benefits giving those benefits an indirectness. This raises the question of how these two elements, the direct public benefits and the wider, indirect public value hang together in an institution.

This is not a simple question to answer, and on-going debate has long attempted to reconcile these two seemingly contradictory tendencies. Smith and Webster's

(1997) central thesis was that it was this contradictory institutional nature inherent to universities which has led to its success and longevity as an institutional form. Many authors have pointed to the fact that at key points in history, universities have been regarded as being a useful means to an end, and so their lack of immediate utility has been offset by a regard for their longer term benefit. At the same time, universities have succeeded best where they were regarded as directly useful by their host societies (Wittrock 1985). Phillipson (1988) notes that when universities are no longer seen as being useful by their host societies, then they are replaced by other similar but different kinds of organisations such as national academies, learning societies or public research laboratories.

In trying to establish a set of principles for the essence of the institution of university and to infer the appropriate kinds of societal relationships from that idea, the problem recurs that the idea of a university is highly place-dependent, and particular ideal types very clearly reflect the place and time in which those ideas have been advanced (Delanty 2002). This lack of agreement over what constitutes a university is both intellectually unsatisfying and unhelpful in understanding how universities might regard engagement as part of their overall mission. Nevertheless, specific universities have made working with businesses or communities a core part of their mission (Boyer 1990; Kellog 2000; Anderson 2009). Likewise, engagement does fall within a number of commonly occurring 'ideas of universities' where both independent thought and societal relevance are evident.

- The Humboldtian concept of a university as an independent research group was rooted in the needs of the Wilhelminian Prussian state for industrialisation, modernisation and innovation (Flexner 1930; McLellan 1988).
- Newman's (1854) idea of a university as a place of education for students clearly reflected pressures in the United Kingdom and Ireland at that time for the creation of a public service with educated teachers and civil servants (Harvie 1994).
- America's Land Grant Universities were specifically created by American legislators who wanted to stimulate regional development across the American territory and provide knowledge and skills for farmers and entrepreneurs moving to new states (Greenwood 2007; Etzkowitz 2008).
- The democratic mass university of the 1960s was in reality an attempt to defuse student unrest and societal paralysis which manifested itself in demonstrations and occupations of universities and Ministries of Education in the late 1960s and early 1970s (Daalder 1982).

Attempts to precisely define universities' purposes always contain the seeds of their own rejection. The requirement that universities produce and circulate abstract, high-level theoretical knowledge makes it almost impossible to stipulate a practical mission for universities whilst universities' 'luxury' status means that a practical mission is a sine non qua. But any practical mission for universities threatens their wider universal mission. By a process of *reductio ab absurdum*, any practical mission can be demonstrated to be incompatible with their needs to retain independence and objectivity.

To take a hypothetical example, one could imagine it relatively uncontroversial to say that the purpose of universities is to provide highly educated graduates for business. One immediately encounters a category problem that there is ambiguity around what it means to provide graduates for business: Does that mean, for example, for businesses that currently exist, or businesses that do not currently exist but are held back from forming by a shortage of skills? If a group of businesses in a failing industrial sector were to come together and argue that universities should create more graduates for their sector to reduce their wage costs, then the overall national benefits of that activity could actually be negative—artificially depressing wage costs, and locking potentially highly skilled graduates out of other sectors. Any acceptable statement around universities' purposes must be so bland as to be meaningless.

9.3   Universities and the Societal Compact

The way that this tension has been resolved—or at least finessed—has been through the idea of a 'societal compact' or 'social contract' between universities and their host societies (Barnett 2000, 2003) . In this book, we prefer the phrasing 'compact' because it emphasises the implicit and multi-faceted nature of the arrangement, rather than something which can be explicitly stated in a number of clauses (Gibbons 1999). Martin (2003) points to two flavours of the social compact, the Humboldtian and the 'Vanavar Bush' (Bush 1945). Guston and Keniston (1994) highlighted a number of key strands of the social compact, namely:

- *Science as a public good:* Business typically under invests in research therefore investing in universities helps to ensure there is enough useful knowledge.
- *Accountability and autonomy:* In return for the public funding, scientists are open with their research and others can use it as the basis for their own discoveries.
- *Consensus and change:* Investments in science are based on widespread public agreement, and that can periodically be evaluated by participants to see if it still fulfilling its original role.

Nevertheless what is interesting in all these discussions are a number of clear elisions that make the 'social compact' a slippery concept. Clearly, Guston and Keniston's analysis refers to the public compact around science: Whilst universities are part of the science system, they are not its only element. Their notion of consensus and change can be split into two layers, between a short-term political consensus related to a particular government of the day, and a longer term social structure in which the relationships between universities and society are diffused into and absorbed by a range of societal actors such as unions, employers organisations, learned societies, media outlets and governmental structures. This provides no clear analytic basis for different kinds of Higher Education Institutions (HEI) to have different missions— the definition refers to the sector as a whole and then assumes common behaviours by universities. These elisions were neatly summed up by Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI) (1982):

> The problem of democratisation brings up the question of a university's society function in the very broadest sense of the term. It includes not only the development of access to qualifications, but also the production of knowledge and the social significance of that knowledge. It also involves a change in the sharing of responsibility for the development of knowledge and teaching . . . If the university is to be effectively integrated into the community, it must no longer concern only those who attend the university, namely the teachers and the students. It should be possible to pass on one's skills without being a teacher and to receive training without being a student (Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI) 1982, p. 13).

Our contention here is that social compacts are constructed through ongoing interactions with social partners rather than defined ex ante and then implemented mechanically. What Guston and Keniston (1994) point out very clearly is the importance of the process of consensus, negotiation and change between political agents with short-term agendas and the wider societal institutions through which social agency is mediated and hence with longer term horizons (Benneworth 2009).

To return to the place of societal engagement in the university mission, the social compact effectively says that it is important that universities have a societal mission and produce public benefit. The societal compact can be fulfilled when there is a consensus amongst societal stakeholders that what universities do is in some way useful. 'Reading' any particular societal compact is a complex process of understanding the way in which this particular consensus has built up and changed over time. Clearly, different places will have different consensuses at different times, reflecting both the immediate social, political and economic conditions as well as the deeper cultural and social value systems of their national science systems.

So at the same time as debates over whether universities are being useful, there are debates about whether universities should be useful. A central argument in this book is that university engagement with excluded communities is very strongly negatively influenced by the fact that these discussions about ideal type have tended to be framed in ways that have discouraged engagement with the communities in practice. The ambiguities and slipperiness around social compacts have seen universities define their interests in public use and value in ways that have increasingly made meaningful engagement with excluded communities impossible. At the same time there has been a prioritisation of other kinds of more easily fulfilled engagement, notably business engagement and public understanding of science.

In the remainder of this chapter, we look at four domains where there have been debates about whether universities should be useful as against how they can be useful. We consider how these abstract debates have constrained the practical room available for universities to define their purposes. This has had an effect on the extent to which engagement with excluded communities—as part of engagement more generally— can matter to universities (cf. King 1995; May and Perry 2006; Brink 2007). We contend four tensions have all to some degree framed community engagement's suitability as a higher education mission:

- Universities produce knowledge which is useful for societies, but that is a spillover effect from producing more generally verifiable and abstract knowledge about particular socio-physical phenomena.

- Universities have a set of impacts which contribute to the overall social life of their host society, through cultural production, democratic stimulation and social inclusion, but there can be a tendency to look to the immediate, countable benefits that they bring.
- Universities produce benefits through their host societies in general, but also produce highly localised private benefits for restricted number of students, businesses and other direct service users.
- Universities produce societal benefits, but there are very different kinds of HEIs, with qualitatively and quantitatively different kinds of benefits produced by each.

9.3.1   Universities Between Universal and Particular Knowledge

The first debate concerns in the relationship between particular-local knowledge and universal-global knowledge for universities. Academics seek to make sense of a highly complex reality by comparing between situations, identifying similarities and differences, underlying processes and independent shaping variables. To build models that explain realities where not all elements are completely understood, science creates theoretical explanations of more general validity: This provides a predictive power which in turn adds to theory's utility.

On one hand, all knowledge production is engaged with reality in some way, with the possible exception of the most theoretical kinds of mathematics (Callon 1999). Indeed, this engagement with reality separates science from other kinds of intellectual but non-scientific endeavour such as spiritualism or casuistry where intellectual frameworks are built that have no necessarily referents to reality. At the same time, places are different, and people are different in those different places, and there are very clearly different styles of science and knowledge production reflecting, for example, very different national cultures (Fischer 2009). Universities cannot produce 'universal knowledge': The knowledge they produce is intimately affected by their wider context.

But at the same time, the scientific process is constructive, building up knowledge that is more generally valid and replicable. Central to this idea of replicability is abstraction which teases out processes which operate across multiple contexts despite influence by contextual variables. Knowledge is useful precisely because studying a small situation and placing it in a broader theoretical context allows researchers to say more about the world, and students to deduce rules to understand and control the world. Theory provides a common edifice and unifying force, allowing researchers with limited and localised studies to contribute to tell more authoritative stories about their world (Latour and Woolgar 1979; Latour 1987).

But this raises the key dilemma of the process by which these 'little' local stories become validated into 'big' global theories. In essence, local knowledge is only scientifically 'valid' if it builds up into a bigger, more generalised, more generalisable and theoretical picture. This means that a key criterion for the validity of academic knowledge is whether it can be put into that wider, more general context.

Of course, that criterion is not a neutral status, rather it is an activity with agency: The scientist puts the knowledge in the global context, validating the local knowledge academically.

This provides a mechanism whereby that problem is situated within a global knowledge base, and is validated as global as suitable for scientific study. This necessarily excludes certain kinds of knowledge from similar academic validation. Our argument here is that the kinds of knowledge which emerge from community engagement suffer from a perception that they are local knowledges not suitable for global validation. Although there are many demonstrations of the ways in which global validation follows from processes of community-situated learning (see e.g. Chaps. 3, 7 and 8) there is a tendency for arguments to create a hierarchy between the two, which is reflected in turn in the subaltern position of community engagement as a university mission.

9.3.2 Universities Between Intrinsic Value and Extrinsic Worth

A second set of debates concerns the question of whether universities have intrinsic value in their own right, or have to be judged on the more immediate benefits they bring to a society. In that sense, universities are often regarded alongside other less directly identifiably beneficial activities such as culture as something worth investing in (Belfiore and Bennett 2008). This is less a debate around use and more one of the directness of the link between the activities and those benefits. Clearly, investing in the arts or universities does not create 'civilisation', and as Gopal (2010) points out, many tyrants and dictators have studied and patronised the arts. So where might such a direct link lie?

Part of the issue is that there is a tendency to look back to universities in history and idealise their contributions to building democratic societies. In reality, this tendency to tie universities to societal development was not evident until the rise of popular democracy really became a social issue (Delanty 2002). Certainly, universities were long important for producing an educated elite (Harvie 1994), but it was not until the 1960s that universities became important for producing a mass, educated workforce; indeed, some industrial regions were prevented from having a university in the early twentieth century to avoid educating the leaders of future industrial unrest (Hennings and Kunzmann 1993).

In some countries, universities emerged along with emancipation and their intrinsic value was something associated with what Delanty calls the democratic mass university. Even in France, where this happened sooner rather than later, pre-revolutionary higher education consisted of a number of highly functional academies, the *Grandes Écoles*, with liberal education for the (suitably qualified) masses in universities. Given the relatively low numbers in France with a suitable matriculation qualification, this was clearly an elite group—only in 1929 were the numbers of workers' children achieving matriculation requirements statistically measurable (MEN and MESR 2007). Therefore, until the advent of genuinely mass education,

any invocation of an intrinsic democratic value of universities is solely a rhetorical device. At the same time, the expansion necessary to realise universities' democratic roles brought a huge influx of public resources into the system to allow expansion (Melody 1997; Deitrick and Soska 2005).

What is interesting in studying the history of ideas of universities is that the term to describe universities, namely 'ivory towers', has its pedigree in nineteenth century debates concerning useful knowledge. The idea of an ivory tower was never mooted as a positive idea of a university, rather, it was used by those who wished to say what a university should not be. Throughout history, some of the world's best universities (such as MIT, Leuven, Lund and Gottingen) have their origins in attempts made by political leaders to reinvigorate the economy, society and culture of their places in a controllable image. But ideas of the ivory tower are only evoked as a negative vision of universities failing to deliver wider societal benefits.

Nevertheless, this phrase has acquired over time the sense that it was at some point a positive model for universities to aspire to, rather than a rhetorical device in a political debate around public funding and duties for universities. This has served to augment the idea of a prelapsarian university with an idea of detachment from society. But this also has the parallel effect of framing what societal engagement does take place (which has always been important) as a response to small and specific needs rather than fulfilment of a wider set of duties. That retrospective framing is well out of line with the intimate inter-relation between the evolution of the institution of university, and other key structuring societal institutions such as the city (Bender 1988), the corporation (McLellan 1988) and democracy (Delanty 2002).

The effect of this debate on the issue of community engagement by universities has to frame it as something done grudgingly or out of necessity, to be done until a better alternative comes along (Etzkowitz 2002). There is clearly a strong sense in debates around higher education that community engagement is something that is done primarily because it is useful for the institution, but under ideal circumstances it would be abandoned. This imbues the idea of community engagement with a sense of impermanence and has led in many cases to produce a project-led response to it rather than regarding it as something intrinsic to universities' core activities (cf. Chap. 5).

9.3.3   Universities Between Individual and Collective Benefits

The third set of debates which have influenced ideas of university–community engagement have been debates around whether universities produce public or private benefits. In the historical narrative sketched out in here, until the growth of mass higher education in the 1960s, there was a clear coherence between public and private benefits: Investing in universities produces trained elites who can run the country, as well as intellectuals to provide a counterweight and support to the elite, and this is clearly a public benefit (Bryson 2000). However, that position (Melody 1997;

Deitrick and Soska 2005) came under threat from a declining sense that what is good for a nation's managerial elite is also good for the country as a whole (Leach 2002).

One consequence of the massification of higher education has its individualisation. In what is sometimes referred to the 'cost-sharing' (student fees) debate, it has been argued that higher education brings substantial individual benefits to those in receipt of it. As wage differentials have grown as part of the shift to a post-industrial and flexible society (cf. Reich 1991; Leadbeater 2000), there has been an increasing call for those who benefit individually through higher wages because of publicly-funded higher education to make more of a direct contribution through fees (Lepori et al. 2007). There has been a feedback effect with an increasing framing of the value of universities in terms of these individual benefits, as opposed to the collective benefits that are produced (the Browne Review (2010) in England, being perhaps a highly egregious example of this reframing).

Of course, this is not a ubiquitous trend—in Latin America, there are still many countries and degree courses where compulsory social service is necessary in order to graduate, reflecting a belief that higher education is a collective benefit, but benefiting individuals should also make a social contribution (Aquino Febrillet 2006; Cortez Ruiz 2008). This example clarifies how collective benefits emerge, namely through chains of mutual responsibility within society. Individuals—graduates— receive benefits through higher education, and in return this places duties on them to other—weaker—individuals. Through these chains of mutual responsibility, mediated through overall solidarity, these very individualistic benefits concatenate into particular collective benefits.

There has been of late a clear framing of the purpose of universities which make it seem as if the sole purpose of the university is creating individual benefits (although we would not go so far here as to necessarily tie this into a neo-liberal project refining citizenship in terms of market relationships). The cost-sharing debate collapses the idea of mutual social responsibilities and solidarity into a transaction. At the general level, there has been an erosion of the sense of a university experience as *Bildung* (personal development to create an adult citizen) towards an emphasis on *Ausbildung*, transmitting skills useful for citizens' social and economic roles. What has been lost is the sense of the collective, that in a society in which there are a mix of people from a range of backgrounds, all have a higher standard of living because of this diversity. Conversely, to the cost-sharing argument, the only winners from higher education investments are the graduates able to occupy superior positions in increasingly segmented labour markets.

Leaving aside this unproblematic acceptance of labour market segmentation as an inevitable consequence of late modernism, this raises a number of problems as far as university–community engagement goes. Framing university–community engagement in terms of a discourse of individual benefit reduces those benefits to recruiting individuals from these places and helping them to escape deprived communities. This is quite contrary to the more community-based ideas of university engagement developed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, where universities provided leadership (educated the leadership) for these communities. These leaders would negotiate hard within political arenas, securing improvement in individuals' conditions, at the same time as a rising level of education benefited these communities.

The current individualistic approach to university engagement can therefore be regarded as encouraging those who can leave a deprived community to do so. At the same time, this undermines any political strength or mobilisation in those communities, further exacerbating these communities' problems of social exclusion. This unquestioned belief of individualisation of benefits has proven extremely potent in framing university–community engagement. This framing allows much less opportunity to articulate the benefits of higher education in terms of mutual obligation and much more pressure to do so in terms of concrete immediate outputs.

9.3.4 Universities Between Ideal Type and Specific Form

The final set of debates which have framed the idea of university–community engagement are debates around diversity in higher education. In essence, the debate concerns whether engagement could be or should be a central mission only for certain kinds of institution. It can very quickly be established empirically that there are clusters of different kinds of universities with very different profiles, emphasising very different mixes of activity (CHERPA Network 2010). As many universities supposedly engage with communities, it is not hard to envisage that there might be a kind of university for whom community engagement could be a core task.

This can be thought of as a kind of horizontal sectoral differentiation, where institutions which are effectively similar offer different kinds of higher education experience based on students' needs and demands. In principle, universities offer common educational standards to students, guaranteed by national examinations or quality standards, despite differences in the mode of delivery, the curricular content, and practical–theoretical balance. In such a situation, one would expect to find groups of community-facing universities in higher education systems whose own missions reflected higher education policy nationally and local community situations (van Vught 2008). In such circumstances, community engagement could potentially become an important third mission to a particular group of universities.

However, it is important to recognise two additional factors, namely vertical differentiation, and the 'race for reputation' (cf. van Vught 2008), which have profound impacts on the framing of the community engagement mission. Vertical differentiation is a situation where some kinds of university are regarded as being better than others (not that some universities are better than others). Some countries distinguish scientific universities and universities of applied science (e.g. in Germany, the Netherlands and Finland). In France, universities are seen as being a kind of mass and inexpensive education, beneath the *Grandes Écoles*, which are an elite higher education institution, educating 4 % of the students for over 20 % of the total higher education budget. Although the distinction might not be absolute, in each system there is a definite hierarchy of these kinds of institution in terms of the desirability of access, graduate prospects, employment conditions and research intensity.

The other additional factor is that where some kinds of university are regarded as better than others, funding may differentiate to favour the upper tiers. This has

taken different forms—in some systems, only certain types of institution are funded for research (e.g. the Netherlands), whilst the United Kingdom has tried to concentrate research funding, (increasingly explicitly) on a limited circle of institutions. In tandem with the falling unit of resource (funding per student) associated with massification, this has placed great pressure on universities to be associated with the upper tiers of the higher education system.

The issue has been cast into some focus by an increasing emphasis by governments on the idea of world-class universities (Salmi 2009). The popularity of university league tables has encouraged governments to identify their 'best' universities to secure their country a visible place in these international ranking systems (Marginson 2007). Universities are prioritising variables used in compiling particular league tables , such as research income, numbers of students, citation indices and reputational variables (cf. van Vught and Westerheijden 2010).

This means the viability of the idea of community engagement within universities has become dependent on how far that mission is identified as a characteristic of an institution in the upper reaches of vertically differentiated higher education systems. With the advent of transparency tools, part of the prestige of distinction is derived from league tables. It has been almost impossible to include community engagement as a standard variable in ranking and profiling approaches (U-Map 2008). The fact that community engagement is difficult to measure for the purpose of league tables means that it is not necessarily an activity pursued by high-ranking institutions, which in turn creates a vertical differentiation around the idea of engagement. This has become internalised through these policy discussions into an acceptance that it is an irrefutable truth that community engagement is not done by high-quality universities.

9.4 Potential University–Community Engagement Profiles?

To provide a sense of how this framing plays out in practice, we return very briefly to our research project "University engagement with excluded communities". More detail on the sample and the kinds of universities involved is provided in Chap. 5. In summary, this was a survey of 33 universities in three UK sub-national territories, the north east, the north west and Scotland. It involved interviews with a sample of actors in each institution (two to four in each university) and explored the breadth of community engagement within their institutions.

The current attitude of universities towards engagement in the sample depended in part on their traditions and history. Most institutions surveyed made at least some reference to their traditions in describing their mission, whether it be to affirm a longstanding commitment to their particular communities or to explain a waxing and waning of engagement over time. We were able to group universities crudely into five categories based on their historical development, the contemporary forms of relationship and engagement with specific communities, and the relative importance of engagement with excluded communities to those institutions given their overarching mission. This data is provided in Table 9.1.

Table 9.1 The relationship between university type and approach to community engagement in the three UK regions. (Source: Benneworth et al. 2008)

University type	Universities in sample	Primary focus	Role of university-community engagement
Ancient universities	Aberdeen, Glasgow, Edinburgh, St. Andrews	Building a critical mass of research and developing international excellence profile	Very limited/ instrumental
Civic universities	Manchester, Liverpool, Newcastle, Durham, Dundee, Strathclyde	Building research excellence	Establishing legitimacy of local commitment
Technical-vocational universities	Northumbria, Teesside, Sunderland, Manchester Metropolitan, Liverpool John Moores, Central Lancs, Chester, Edge Hill, Bolton, Liverpool Hope, Abertay, Robert Gordon, Glasgow Caledonian, West of Scotland, Napier and Queen Margaret	Recruitment of sufficient students to maintain financial stability	Enrichment of the curriculum related to taught and research degree awarding powers, unique offer for recruitment
Plate-glass universities	Lancaster, Stirling	Development of research profile in distinct niches	Accessing funding streams to support niche development
Rural network universities	University of Cumbria, UHI Millennium Institution	Providing education opportunities in remote rural areas	Activities naturally close to local community, few rivals

9.4.1   Ancient Universities

In Scotland, the four pre-19th century universities have at times played a central role in the development of the cities in which they are based and are deeply rooted in their local communities albeit often with strong links to local elites rather than disadvantaged communities. Anecdotally, the first ever piece of research on a university's economic impact (cf. Cooke 1970) took place in St. Andrews as the result of a bar room argument between academics as to whether the Royal and Ancient golf-course (the world headquarters of golf) had a greater economic impact on the town than the university (McGregor 2010).

9.4.2   Civic Research Universities

In the two English regions, there are four universities which have roots in the nineteenth century and emerged from local interests, evolving to become leading research based universities. Three have strong roots with local industry, Manchester, Liverpool

and Newcastle, whilst Durham's link with the church has become less significant over time. All are currently looking to rethink to some degree their role in their region, and strengthen their engagement. In this group we could also include Dundee in Scotland which was established late in the 19th century as a college affiliated to St. Andrews University and like Newcastle with regard to Durham split off from its parent institution in the 1960s. Although Dundee is smaller than the other four universities it has similarities in profile, with a medical school and strengths in biomedicine.

9.4.3   Technical & Vocational Colleges

The majority of universities in the three regions have origins as technical or vocational institutions of some form which have migrated to university status at some point—an initial round in the 1960s in the form of Salford, Heriot-Watt, and Strathclyde, and later rounds of former polytechnics and HE institutes such as Northumbria, Teesside, Sunderland, Manchester Met, Liverpool John Moores, Central Lancashire, Chester, Edge Hill, Bolton, Liverpool Hope, Abertay, Robert Gordon, Glasgow Caledonian, West of Scotland, Napier and Queen Margaret. Most of these were technical colleges of some kind, but with a few based on other vocational qualifications such as teaching and nursing. The earliest to convert to university status are more research intensive than those that came later but it is useful to group these together in terms of a shared background as locally focused technical institutions.

9.4.4   Democratic Mass Universities

Only two universities have been established in modern times as greenfield sites: Lancaster and Stirling. Whilst many such new universities of the Robbins period had weak community relations, these two both had quite strong connections from their formation, and indeed, in the case of Lancaster, the county council had been a very strong advocate both in the decision to establish the institution, as well as its subsequent establishment (cf. McClintock 1974).

9.4.5   Networked Rural Universities

Finally there are two 'universities' with a strong networked rural focus: the new University of Cumbria and the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI), awarded University status in January 2011. Both of these have emerged as a result of local pressures, bringing together several existing small colleges and institutions to serve a dispersed rural community. As a result of their pre-existing rural situation and linkages, their focus was primarily on working with rural communities and businesses,

as well as public sector organisations in those regions. UHI also acquired an important role in the life of the language of Scots Gaelic, as the only higher education institution undertaking research and offering education in Gaelic.

We do not contend that the table above represents a comprehensive picture of all the potential university engagement missions, or the ways that university–community engagement can dovetail with universities' overarching institutional imperatives. The CHERPA Network started developing more comprehensive multi-dimensional profiles for universities, as part of a wider project to develop alternative kinds of league tables and ranking methodologies more applicable to European universities (CHERPA Network 2010). Alongside that, in the US, the Carnegie classification provides a means of segmenting universities into different types with different lead missions (cf. Chap. 15, this book). We would expect for each type of institution, there would be different potential for the development of engagement missions. We return to this issue in Part IV, where we consider the evaluation, classification and ranking of universities, and the role of community engagement indicators in that process.

But one note of caution that is raised by the research on profiles and missions is that very similar kinds of universities can have very different approaches to community engagement. In the sample above, some of what we class as technical–vocational universities were very strongly committed to community engagement, others only insofar as it fitted with a model of business outreach and income generation, and yet others were largely uninterested in community engagement, certainly at a strategic level. It is clear that profile does not determine approaches to engagement—there is a strong role to be played both by agency and strategic decision-making, as well as context specificity and the historical evolution of the university. In England, many colleges of higher education built strong community links in the late 1990s and 2000s to mobilise community support for their applications for full university title.

9.5   Beyond the Idea of 'the' Engagement Mission

It is important not here to default to a fallacious view that 'institutions' have singular perspectives on university–community engagement; in Chap. 5, for example, the issue of complexity and diversity within the institution comes to the fore, and it is clear that there was complexity, contradiction and confusion in the designation of the community engagement missions. Universities' own missions are defined in their attempts to achieve their other missions within wider higher education systems. In systems where there is a confusion at the level of the philosophy of the idea of a university as well as around the practice of community engagement, it is therefore extremely unlikely that coherent engagement missions emerge on an institutional basis.

To illustrate the reality of the confused 'idea' of the engaged university, we focus on one region with its own higher education system, namely Scotland, and explore the ways that the community engagement missions were 'fleshed out'. Although

there were institutional differences, there was a diversity of approach, application and understanding within institutions. Most commonly community engagement was associated with the delivery of vocationally oriented curricula, continuing professional development (CPD), wider lifelong learning programmes and widening access. Alongside more conventional outputs, community engagement also came through 'institutional marketing', 'income generation' and 'campus development'. And whilst practices varied, many institutions had similar rationales. In this section we distinguish between 2 kinds of Scottish university, the old (ancient, civic, Plate Glass) and the new (the remainder), in order to preserve institutional anonymity.

New universities regarded community engagement as a marketing tool to appeal to future students. For some it was 'integral to the brand' (5 universities), with one specifically aiming to 'become the market leader in Scotland for Community Engagement'. For other older and newer universities it was promoted as a means through which institutions could deliver their wider 'civic duty' (3 ancient, 3 new), or contribute to the 'public good' (2 old, 1 new). For the majority of universities community engagement as 'partnership working' was publicised as evidence of institutional commitment to Scotland's economic and social fabric (3 old, 6 new).

A similar range of universities also viewed community engagement as a form of income generation with the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) supporting business and cultural engagement projects, as well as widening access programmes. Funding for community engagement partnerships had allowed a number of universities to access additional income streams for the development of mutually beneficial facilities; in the main cultural and sports facilities (1 old, 2 new). Further funding was developed through part-time courses, CPD studies and the more recent 'Beacon for Public Engagement' programmes (1 old, 4 new cf. Sect. 13.6, this book).

For the majority of universities community engagement was closely aligned with 'external consultation', especially at times of campus development. Some universities had initiated stakeholder forums to consult with business, local authorities, public agencies as well as community representatives (1 old, 5 new). These forums had proven beneficial in helping to open-up university–community dialogue, defusing potential opposition to development plans (all six), helping to overcome antagonistic histories (two of the six) or serving to generate wider public support for specific university interests (one). In all six of these cases, universities sought to prove they were a 'good neighbour'.

Given the evident diffusion of the concept and language of community engagement it was not surprising to find its reference in a number of Strategic Plans (2 old, 4 new); often linked to a commitment to the cultural, economic and social well-being of Scotland. Some universities sought to develop separate engagement strategies with varying titles and responsibilities:

- 'Community relations' (old),
- 'Community engagement and volunteering' (new),
- 'Community engagement' (new),
- 'Cultural engagement' (new) or
- 'Stakeholder and community engagement' (new).

For some the focus on engagement had followed appointment of new Principals; some universities deemed it sufficiently important to be tasked to specific Deputy or Vice Principals (two old, five new); although often grouped with other responsibilities such as Culture (old), Research, Training and Community Relations (old) or Student Experience (two new). Likewise application and promotion (both internal and outward-facing) had been tasked to a range of management teams (two old, three new) responsible for such as 'Communications and Marketing' (old), 'Public Relations' (new) or 'Corporate Marketing' (new).

More prevalent than the top-down drive was individual academics' long-standing commitment to community engagement within their research and teaching. Many universities had entire disciplines dedicated to 'community' subjects, particularly health and social care (two old, five new). Likewise a network of relatively independent research centres existed focused on beneficial community application (three old, three new). Individual academic commitment to service learning and applied research pre-dated recent community engagement objective visibility.

Community engagement was common within Scotland's higher education sector, across different types of university. Despite its increased visibility, its understanding, practice, offices and staff were overwhelmingly aligned with service learning, lifelong learning and widening access. Despite its commonness, community engagement remained a confusing concept with interchangeable definitions and the diversity of responses. Community engagement was synonymous with the following:

- 'Business engagement' (1 old, 6 new);
- 'Being a good neighbour' (1 old, 3 new), 'community relations' (1 new);
- 'Corporate social responsibility' (1 new);
- Cultural engagement (3 old, 2 new);
- Volunteering (2 old, 2 new); as well as
- CPD and widening access (4 old, 6 new).

Community engagement was based on existing activities, (CPD, volunteering, widening access) rather than culturally or structurally embedded, activities that were marginal or existed to support 'core university businesses'. Research tended to be project-based and reliant on relentless income generation. 'Communities' were often restrictively defined as professional bodies, the voluntary and community sector and other organised stakeholders (companies, local authorities, the National Heath Service, Police). There was little evidence of deliberate strategies to reach to disadvantaged communities and unorganised voices, despite many campuses either residing in or being surrounded by such communities. There was also very little evidence of corporate understanding of community engagement beyond institutional self-interest (income generation, recruitment, research, teaching). Indeed, for many universities community engagement was forced onto the corporate agenda rather an institutionally recognised priority.

9.6 The Limits to Contemporary University–Community Engagement

This chapter argues that it is not impossible for a university to adopt a community-engagement mission, nor to put forward an idea of a university in which engagement with excluded communities was a key element of institutional motivation. There are a number of very good examples presented in this book, of universities engaging, sometimes under very difficult circumstances, alongside university systems created to stimulate engagement with excluded communities. Nevertheless, the idea of engagement as a university mission has been framed in a particular way, leaving it channelled, individualised and marginalised as a result of a series of pressures, tendencies and evolutions across the last two decades. At the same time, the pressure on engagement as a mission and ambiguities in its definition lead to many fragmentations of its articulation which further contribute to its marginalisation as well as to its slipperiness and confusion as an appropriate university mission.

This marginalisation means that the idea of an engagement mission cannot be considered independently from these other pressures. This has a number of important consequences for understanding engagement, both theoretically, and as a consequence methodologically, as well as practically and in wider policy terms. From a theoretical perspective, these debates clarify where the idea of an engaged university might be found. An 'engaged university', theoretically speaking, would necessarily go beyond what is already immediately and readily achieved by universities, just as an entrepreneurial university can be regarded not as a university which works with businesses, but which works with businesses even when that is hard to achieve. University engagement would also have a sense of mutual obligation and responsibility between university and those communities, spread across the university and visible in strategic institutional development discussions.

This also has methodological implications for further research into universities and engagement with excluded communities. Claims that particular empirical outcomes demonstrate a new idea of an engaged university must demonstrate that they have progressed beyond this situation of engagement as being individualised, marginalised and channelled. This sets the bar somewhat higher than simply analysing particular engagement activities, but rather in explaining the opportunity costs to the universities of particular engagement activities, the deliberateness of bearing those costs at an institutional level, and also clearly identify the benefits those activities bring to those communities.

The practicalities and policy implications of university engagement are dealt with in Part IV, but it is worth here setting out very briefly what the implications of the limiting framing of university–community engagement for these two areas. Firstly, in practical terms, framing hides the extent to which community engagement cuts against the grain for universities in many kinds of university system. Becoming engaged is not a simple process, because there are so many points in the higher education process that discourage engagement by representing it as a relatively unimportant university activity.

Finally, the policy effects of framing of engagement as marginal, peripheral and individual are clear. Many policy decisions, from research concentration and world-class university policies, through a shift to cost-sharing as a funding mechanism, to increased institutional funding autonomy (increasing institutional sensitivity to external policy stimuli), are reinforcing this situation. Policies seeking to improve universities engagement with excluded communities are therefore faced with the substantial task of changing webs of policies and legislation, but also policy-makers and legislators, which is by no means an easy feat. The consequences of this are explored in more length in Part IV.

In this chapter, we have sought to explore the complexities underlying the idea of community engagement by universities, given that it seems such a common-sense way of universities fulfilling their societal duties. We firstly argued that the these societal duties create tensions for universities because they threaten excess social control which undermines their capacity to create their wider benefits. To finesse this situation, the idea of the social compact has been articulated as a means of setting out duties which universities owe to societies. But the emptiness of the concept which makes it such a useful way of defusing tensions around societal pressure on universities mean that it is a concept which requires later filling-up. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, this filling up was done through creating the idea of the mass democratic university. The conditions which made this such a fertile and successful institution have recently come under pressure from a range of sources as universities seek to sustain their privileges in increasingly fragmented and contradictory societies.

Contemporary higher education debates have radically circumscribed our ways of thinking about community engagement as a valid mission for universities, increasing its contingency, transience, undesirability and individualisation. Community engagement has become associated as a low-status activity, which has in turn encouraged universities to see it as an optional extra, and not something core to their aims. This chimes with the recurrent message in this book that sometimes the greatest successes with university–community engagement are achieved when universities are able to make community engagement core to their aims and activities, and themselves enact the idea of an engaged university.

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Chapter 10
Can Universities Really Effectively Engage with Socially Excluded Communities?

Reflections on the British Experience

Fred Robinson and Ray Hudson

10.1 Introduction

Traditionally, British universities have had few and limited connections with 'socially excluded' and marginalised communities. Universities predominantly reflect and reinforce class and power. Oxbridge colleges were built to foster retreat into scholarship and have served to transmit privilege and maintain the elite (Sampson 1962). The great civic universities of the industrial age connected with business and scientific progress, not with the working class—and certainly not with the poor— of the Victorian city. Well into the twentieth century, the universities were almost wholly middle class institutions, and socially excluded communities were usually simply regarded as problematic objects of study—or else got in the way of the university's physical expansion. 'Outreach' initiatives such as the University Settlement Movement were notable because they were so unusual (Fieldhouse 1996).

Although there is increasing pressure to engage with economy and society beyond the academy, universities remain inherently exclusive institutions, quite able to remain aloof, detached from large sections of the society around them. Until perhaps the 1980s, most people had very little idea of what went on in universities. Subsequent expansion of higher education has changed that; now there are universities in many towns, as well as in the big cities, and there are far more students—many now studying part time—than even 20 years ago. However, universities still have very limited connections with socially excluded groups at the margins of British society. Universities have been far more interested in developing their international academic links, rather than engaging with disadvantaged local communities.

It is easy to highlight the obstacles to engagement, not least because they are so apparent. Universities reflect structural inequalities, especially unequal access to educational opportunity—hence the tremendous difficulties encountered in widening participation, particularly in the older, 'most selective' universities (Harris 2010;

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Cabinet Office 2009). And there are, of course, so many other pressures and imperatives, perhaps best exemplified by the criteria of research assessment. Asking universities to engage with socially excluded communities, with people experiencing poverty and deprivation, may be seen as an additional, unwelcome burden, which hardly fits with the culture and the business objectives of the institution.

Even so, such engagement does happen—and there is often more going on than might, at first sight, be expected. Dig beneath the surface and one can find many examples of engagement, some of it effective, some of it rather awkward, even patronising. Often it is not much encouraged or supported by the university itself; it is something people want to do because they believe in it.

10.2   University Staff and Students as 'Active Citizens'

It is important to bear in mind that there are different styles and different levels of engagement. We should not just focus on *institutional* connections; there is also *personal* engagement with place and communities. Whatever a university's approach or stance, there will always be staff and students who get involved in their locality. Some of that involvement will be with disadvantaged and marginalised communities.

Those connections are often individual commitments—people volunteering with third sector organisations or getting involved in local 'causes', perhaps with a political edge. The presence of a university can thus be a resource impacting on a locality in positive (as well as sometimes negative) ways. It is a porous institution—and rather more so than, say, a large company or dominant local employer. No doubt there are many academics who are more interested in their careers, concerned with the life of the mind and not the life of the community where they live. There are also many students who have remarkably little interest in the place where they are temporarily resident. On the other hand, there are quite a few staff and students who have both the time and the inclination to engage and make connections. Those connections may well be more likely to occur in the newer universities with more local students; in universities which are part of a town or city rather than on detached campuses; and perhaps in universities where students live out, rather than live in colleges or halls of residence.

The amount of activity, and its scope and impact, can be much enhanced by the development of structures that support and encourage it. There will always be some students who will make the effort to seek out volunteering opportunities, for example, but provision of mechanisms to facilitate that will considerably increase participation. Across the United Kingdom, there are more than 150 student community action groups enabling over 25,000 students to participate in community projects. At the authors' own institution, Durham University Student Community Action provides a very effective and long-established brokerage service, linking potential student volunteers to organisations able to offer volunteering opportunities (www.dur.ac.uk/community.action/). It is also able to administer CRB (Criminal Records Bureau) checks which are required for many

volunteering roles. Durham's Student Community Action, run by students, has several hundred students on their books and many of them work with disadvantaged people and communities. Many students are providing mentoring or sports coaching in local schools. Others help out in the visitor centres at local prisons, in day centres and in community projects. It may sometimes be hard to imagine, but somehow students from affluent backgrounds and with limited experience, engage successfully with people far less privileged than they are. Obviously, at its best it can be a very useful learning experience for everyone involved.

This kind of engagement is becoming more important in a difficult labour market where students need to put more effort into developing themselves and their CVs. Volunteering is a good way of doing that and gaining 'real world' experience. In addition, degree courses are increasingly being enhanced by the addition of placements, some in third sector organisations. Such placements can span a wide range of activity: At Durham University, for example, these placements range from medical students gaining experience in community organisations to computer science students designing a website for a local charity and MBA students doing practical work for these organisations as their dissertation project.

In many British universities, especially in the older institutions, student community engagement has its origins in the traditional Rag Weeks. While Rag Weeks have largely faded away, student fund-raising for good causes—sometimes for unpopular, difficult and often local causes—is certainly still going on. Student political protest has declined, but the tradition of charity-fundraising has been sustained. Yet, while student unions might be able to point to a reasonably lengthy history of fundraising and also volunteering, there has generally been far less activity of this kind amongst staff. Most universities, when challenged to show evidence of community engagement, are able to give convincing examples of student activity, but struggle to demonstrate the engagement of staff on anything like a comparable scale.

As with students, some university staff will, of course, make their own connections. The presence of a university, bringing in a workforce of knowledgeable, well-networked academics and administrators can be of great benefit to a locality. Among them are people who can serve as trustees of local charities, who know their way around public policy and institutions, and have the confidence to develop and organise campaigns. But while some of that potential is realised through individuals finding ways of becoming active citizens, many opportunities for engagement may be missed.

Again, structures supporting and encouraging such engagement can make a real difference. Several universities have developed policies and set up systems to encourage staff volunteering (Bussell and Forbes 2008). At Durham University, attempts are now being made to realise the potential of staff engagement through an employer-supported volunteering scheme. The aim is to have 10 % of the staff—350 people—undertaking voluntary work. Staff are being helped to volunteer within local community projects and can have up to 5 days a year paid leave to do that. The University (www.dur.ac.uk/volunteer/) has signed up well over a hundred third sector organisations as 'community partners'; they identify their needs and staff interested in volunteering are placed with them via a brokerage system. Many of the

opportunities are with organisations which support marginalised groups, including people on low incomes and disabled people. In the former coal mining areas of County Durham, there is certainly very considerable need.

Some staff offer their professional expertise, and that covers a very broad spectrum. It might, for example, be knowledge of the law, helping an organisation fighting for the rights of asylum seekers. Or administrative staff able to help an organisation with personnel issues; or the university's estates and buildings staff who can advise on the condition of a village hall. Several staff volunteer with the local community foundation, doing monitoring visits to projects on their behalf. Some staff, however, prefer to do things far away from their professional lives, such as a group of staff members doing some environmental work. Others serve as trustees, perhaps offering generic skills in writing funding bids—skills which can be in short supply in poorer communities. Motives vary: Some want to support a particular cause; some are motivated by altruism; some want to broaden their experience, perhaps with a view to a change in career. Whatever may be the motive, volunteering can bring benefit to the individual, the organisation they are working with and their clients, and also to the university as an employer and local stakeholder.

It can be said that universities have come surprisingly late to all this, lagging well behind many private sector businesses with well-developed staff volunteering schemes and Corporate Social Responsibility programmes . It is still the case that many university staff who get involved in community activity do so without encouragement or support from their university. In fact, they can feel as if they are getting involved in such activity *despite* the institution; It is often not valued, or recognised, and is certainly not seen as part of the university's mission or remit.

10.3   Research: Taking or Giving?

Academics typically engage with local socially excluded communities as sites for their research. The most common examples are found in the social sciences, where researchers investigate the lives of the poor or other disadvantaged groups and look at issues like unemployment, crime and housing problems. Researchers from other disciplinary backgrounds may also get involved in these communities, working on environmental issues, for example, or researching the incidence of disease and disability.

It is notable that research forays into poor communities very often focus on problems and failures, not achievement and resilience. Too easily, 'the poor' can be presented as passive victims and 'objects' for research. It is striking, too, that the wealthy (who, incidentally, may also be thought of as 'socially excluded', but by choice) are rarely investigated.

The detached, even superior, stance of the academic researcher is perhaps less acceptable now than it used to be. But it is still common enough. Researchers often seem to be almost describing another planet, where people are not just different but also in some senses deviant, a kind of 'othering' approach that has its antecedents in the

'scientific' social surveys of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The university experts explore the peculiar worlds of the socially excluded and report back, sometimes in barely intelligible technical language. There can be an uncomfortable clash of cultures in this interaction—indeed, a clash of classes—which can further disempower people who have very little power. It can be painful, even embarrassing.

So can academics, in their professional practice, *effectively* engage with socially excluded communities? There have been real attempts to humanise the researcher–researched relationship and pay attention to the potential power imbalance. Some of the community studies of the 1950s and 1960s demonstrate self-awareness and sensitivity, getting closer to effective engagement instead of exploitation. More recently, the concept of co-enquiry or 'co-production' of knowledge has been put forward as a foundation for such engagement. This model recognises that both 'sides' have something to offer; there is benefit in dialogue and exploration, together, of issues. Co-production is an element in the 'Beacons for Public Engagement' initiative, which developed and tested out new forms of engagement and interaction between academics and communities (Duncan and Spicer 2010). This initiative, funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England, Research Councils UK and the Wellcome Trust, aimed to 'inspire a culture change in how universities engage with the public', providing opportunities for the public to benefit from the work of universities (www.publicengagement.ac.uk and cf. Sect. 13.6).

Some academics are heavily involved in policy-related work which is concerned with public policy development in socially excluded communities. Some of that is about examining options for intervention; probably rather is more concerned with policy evaluation. The typical style of this research is top-down, primarily the researcher working for public agencies. That relationship can, at times, be uncomfortable, although there is usually a good deal of common ground between researchers and policy professionals: Their worlds are not dissimilar. The researcher's engagement with the communities which are being subjected to policy may well be quite detached. In this relationship, the researcher is often aligned with the state, not the community.

It does not have to be like that. Researchers can position themselves much closer to the community as the intended beneficiary of the policy intervention. They can even 'take sides'. Clearly, a major obstacle to that is the whole question of who is commissioning—who is paying for—the research. That in itself can make it very difficult for academics to effectively engage with these communities.

A classic example of this problem was the Community Development Programme (CDP), an inner city policy experiment in the late 1960s. The CDPs were set up by the Home Office in 12 mostly deprived localities across Britain. Each of these 'action research' projects had a small team of community workers and also academic researchers, usually from a nearby university. That academic linkage was undoubtedly innovative (and would leave behind an interesting legacy of experienced and committed social scientists). The CDP 'experiment' was short-lived. Several of the teams rejected the official view that these places were beset by social pathologies of their own making. Instead, the CDPs argued that local problems stemmed from the operation of the external forces of the capitalist system. Not surprisingly, the Home

Office felt that this experiment had gone badly wrong. The CDPs were left to wither away, their recommendations were ignored, and this approach has not been repeated (Loney 1983).

The CDP saga evidently highlights possible consequences of committed engagement. It is also a useful reminder of the options which may be available to academics at certain times and in particular places. It is often possible to move at least some way from simply serving the state, and towards empathy with the community, as some of the CDP teams demonstrated. While this kind of notion might sound a little old fashioned, even fanciful, in some ways it may actually be more realistic and feasible now than it was then. The 'policy discourse' is nowadays much more receptive to 'bottom-up' solutions, community empowerment and localism. These ideas are embraced in the Conservatives' 'Big Society' (Conservative Party 2010) in a way not so very different from previous New Labour conceptualisations of community 'empowerment'. Research assessment which includes a measure of 'impact' may also be supportive of more engaged and locally rooted work. Research anchored in the 'local' is certainly wanted and valued by policymakers and other research funders. It has to be admitted, however, that critiques of capitalism generally are not wanted or welcomed.

Effective engagement surely implies a two-way relationship founded on respect and offering something of benefit to both researchers and communities. It is not easy to do. Many academic researchers are not particularly at ease with socially excluded communities and will struggle to overcome differences of class, background and experience. Moreover, the academic culture tends to undervalue research which is locally focused, is practical, committed and is simply communicated. That culture has to change in order to encourage more, and better, engagement and ensure that this kind of work is fully accepted and encouraged as legitimate academic activity.

Academics are in a privileged position and, recognising that, can use their position to bridge differences rather than reinforce them. Academics and their institutions can 'speak truth to power' and can give communities a voice. They can transmit messages and, by virtue of their position, will get a hearing. Theirs can be a voice of reflection, creativity and authority. In addition to that, universities can offer a space where different views can be expressed and considered. Such spaces are valuable and uncommon and universities need to recognise the opportunities they can offer, especially to social excluded groups struggling to get heard. Round table events, forums, workshops and so on can be used to bring people together—on neutral ground and in a setting where there is a fundamental commitment to open debate.

10.4 Access: Opening the Doors

Universities have very considerable resources. As well as their human resources, knowledge and social capital, they have substantial physical resources, including not just educational facilities but also social and recreational facilities. Nearly all of this is paid for by the taxpayer, but in practice it is certainly not accessible to everyone.

Encouraged by government, universities have made some progress on widening participation. Staff and students have done missionary work in schools to get across a message that universities are open to everyone with the necessary ability and commitment to study. There are opportunities for young people to visit universities, summer schools for potential future students, and various grants and bursaries. These initiatives have been of some use; more importantly, the overall expansion of university places has brought in more students from poorer backgrounds.

Going to university is no longer exceptional or remarkable as far as many young people are concerned. Class and socio-economic differences in participation have, however, proved very persistent and hard to overcome (Cabinet Office 2009). Many universities, particularly those which achieve a high ranking in league tables and are considered to be of high status, are still very much 'middle class' institutions. Many universities try to broaden their intake of students, but find it very difficult to overcome entrenched inequalities in British society. Some universities are resistant to being drawn into what they regard as 'social engineering'. And, while universities may have some success in attracting 'working class' students and those who are the first in their family to enter higher education, they are not having much success in attracting those who are really 'socially excluded'. There are, no doubt, many reasons for that, not least the operation of the school system and, nowadays, a real fear of substantial indebtedness.

Clearly, much more needs to be done to widen participation and increase access to universities. It is a major task which goes well beyond the universities themselves and depends on government commitment to tackling inequality across the whole society. Universities themselves certainly cannot do it all, but they can do more to open up and get across the message that they want to engage with a wide range of groups and cater for a wide range of needs.

In the past, many universities ran extra-mural courses, an outreach activity which enabled people in the community to tap into the knowledge and expertise of university staff. Much of that has now gone, as universities have concentrated more on their 'core business' of teaching degree courses and undertaking research. Further education colleges have taken over this role in many places. While extra-mural courses tended to cater for the middle class, this model of outreach can be a relevant and a practical response to the needs of socially excluded groups. With sufficient funding and institutional commitment, universities can provide access to valuable learning opportunities in community settings. Universities can also design and run courses which are relevant to community groups and some are doing so.

By concentrating on their core business, many, if not most, universities have made little effort to present themselves as being open to the public. People not already involved with the university can find it impenetrable and unwelcoming. There is frequently no obvious point of entry or 'helpdesk' and there is poor or inadequate signage on the campus. Information in the form of literature and on websites is narrowly focused and off-putting to outsiders. A university can therefore feel no more like a part of a town or city than an anonymous office precinct. Through its staff and students the institution may be porous, but the campus can be physically intimidating and excluding.

The solution to this is to open doors and welcome people in. That includes holding events within the university's buildings which are open to the public and, crucially, are well promoted to the public. It means enabling community organisations to use facilities for meetings, without exorbitant charges and, preferably, without charging them at all. Universities tend to be nervous about having people wandering around—but if Oxbridge colleges can open their grounds to the public, surely others can too.

The authors' own institution, Durham University, is tentatively trying to open its doors. It is a university which can seem very aloof and detached from the wider community, and in many respects it is like that. However, Durham has made some attempts to engage with socially excluded groups by enabling them to access some of its facilities. Through innovative partnerships, the university's sports staff provide facilities and coaching for groups of ex-offenders, recovering drug users and homeless people. These programmes are now operating on an impressive scale, working with 4,000 clients across 17 projects, supported by input from 40 staff and 240 student volunteers. Community partner organisations are now starting to get free access to the university's museums and gardens. There is a long way to go, but initiatives like this are a start.

Much more could be done if the will is there to do it. Universities could aim to purchase more of their services from local businesses, perhaps especially social enterprises in deprived communities. They could offer work experience opportunities and seek to recruit local unemployed people (as for example Tesco does through its partnership initiatives). Such ideas are hardly revolutionary, although for most universities they would represent a considerable change in their operation. Universities are big businesses and big employers; hence, initiatives like this could have very substantial impacts.

10.5   Institutional Commitment

Some individuals in universities will make the connections and develop relationships with local socially excluded communities, whatever the university may say or do. As active citizens, or as researchers, they recognise the value of engagement. Some people may do it because it fits with their professional interests, others have personal or political commitment. For some, it may be an attempt to redress the striking imbalance between the resources and privileges of the academy and the deprivation experienced by some local communities.

That personal engagement has its limitations. Much more can be achieved through institutional commitment, such that *universities*—not just individuals within them—get to the point of effectively engaging with socially excluded communities.

Where will that commitment come from? It has to come from the top, from the university's senior management and governing body. At Durham, the university has created a post at the Pro-Vice Chancellor level with responsibility for external partnerships and engagement, and a brief to encourage and support links with local

communities. Furthermore, for that engagement to be taken seriously, it should be part of the institutional mission—at Durham, community engagement is now a key strand of the university's strategy. Commitment to engagement can stem from the history and development of a university and in some cases it may have faith-based roots, as at Liverpool Hope University and, similarly, at St. Chad's, the Durham college of one of the authors, which has a stated concern with the promotion of social justice. It may have much to do with a university's connections with political institutions, notably with the local authority, and with other public agencies and the third sector. These connections can have a significant influence on how the university sees its role in the community and, consequently, how it responds to local needs.

An institution's stance is, of course, very much about the outlook and relationships of key individuals. It is evident that the role of 'champions' at the top of the hierarchy can be vitally important in developing and implementing engagement. Incorporating such engagement into the university's mission is undoubtedly important and can strengthen it, making it less dependent on personalities. Nevertheless, it is those champions who will drive it forward, clear obstacles, and make things happen.

Embedding engagement is also essential. For example, that may be done by having these activities recognised in staff appraisals, so that work with socially excluded communities is formally recognised and is seen to be valued. Community connections can be highlighted on the university's website and in the media. There are resource implications too, and if a university is really committed to engagement it will need to spend money on outreach and staff support. If that commitment is to last, it also needs to be mainstreamed, becoming an integral aspect of the university's operation and included in its budget and strategy. It has to be more than just a temporarily funded 'project'.

What is needed is a cultural shift in universities. For some, that would be a very substantial challenge, while for others—perhaps especially the newer and more locally oriented universities—the shift would need to be less radical. It may be that the most promising way forward would be to situate engagement within a programme of Corporate Social Responsibility, using and adapting private sector experience. The problem with that, though may be that engagement is seen as a marginal, add-on activity, not at the core of the university's mission—and marginal activities tend to wither when, as now, the economic situation becomes difficult.

10.6   Conclusion

Universities can engage successfully with socially excluded communities. There are examples of successful engagement which demonstrate what can be done and what works. This account may appear to some, to present an over-optimistic picture, but it does highlight possibilities and opportunities. Of course, a different, equally valid, account could be given, one which stresses the failure of universities to recognise and respond to the needs of socially excluded communities, and which discusses the many factors which militate against such engagement.

Like other institutions, universities are subject to many influences and pressures, most of which are concerned primarily with delivering quality teaching and research. It is right that universities should focus on those elements—these are the things which universities must deliver and have been set up to deliver.

However, universities are also very important in their localities, contributing to both the economy and the society. They have recognised that, but only up to a point. Universities could, and should, be much more aware of their potential impacts and responsibilities. Those responsibilities may include developing engagement with local socially excluded communities, an engagement which could have considerable and beneficial impacts.

Ultimately, it is for the universities themselves to decide how, and to what extent, they will get involved. Edicts from government may encourage them, but experience suggests that, as independent institutions, it will be up to them to commit to engagement, or not. Experience also suggests that such engagement need not compromise other objectives; in fact, it is likely to add to the richness and diversity of the institution. Moreover, working with local communities can be a very effective way of developing approaches to research and teaching that are both innovative and of high quality and help meet the needs of those communities. The central issue for debate is: What are universities for? It is especially important and relevant to confront that question in tough economic times.

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Chapter 11
Translation, Insulation and Mediation

Universities and Community Engagement in an Age of Ambivalence

Tim May and Beth Perry

11.1 Introduction

Our contribution to this volume is designed to provide a basis for understanding the range of factors that influence how universities, passively and actively, receive and act upon external messages regarding their roles and functions and the consequences this has for community engagement activities. For this purpose, we draw upon a wide range of researches that we have conducted for universities, as well as international comparative work on science, governance and regionalisation and cities and innovation. We argue that a mismatch between external demands and internal structures and systems leads to a preferencing of particular kinds of activities to the detriment of more socially oriented or altruistic areas of work.

In the context of the knowledge-based economy, universities in different national contexts have been subject to processes of both diversification and specialisation of mission. Universities are expected to fulfil multiple functions, from research and teaching to academic enterprise and community engagement. They are expected to have impacts on the global and local scales of action, achieve international excellence and be relevant to the needs of increasing policy, industry and social communities. Mixed messages are apparent in the international political economy for higher education, and differential values have been attached to different agendas in the process, including community engagement. We argue that there has been an absence of debate over the values for universities and different forms of activities, within the context of both the infiltration of market ideologies into the public sector and a narrow economic approach to the knowledge economy.

Despite a tendency to deploy neo-liberal interpretations of the knowledge economy across different national contexts, there are differences in how these are manifested. Universities are being positioned in diverse ways and are able to mobilise differential levels of institutional authority to legitimise their positions. Through our

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work, carried out in different European contexts and engagement with international networks, we outline the varying responses of translation, insulation or mediation.

What determines these strategies are the internal structures, processes and cultures within the university. Organisational form, governance, leadership, promotions and reward schemes and institutional and disciplinary cultures all inform the way in which external values are internalised. New intra-institutional divisions emerge in how activities are valued, which leads to the mobilisation of community engagement as a promotional activity rather than central to the mission of a university. An individualised model is perpetuated, based on the disposition and capacity of academics to engage with communities irrespective of the institutional conditions and occupational cultures.

Greater understanding is needed of how universities reflect, refract, re-shape and magnify conflicting expectations against a background of turbulence in order to review the values attached to different kinds of institutional roles and activities. That, in turn, requires an understanding of the relationship between organisational structures and cultures of knowledge production in terms of strategic aspirations and dispositions to enable, recognise and encourage a variety of activities (May and Perry 2011).

The chapter is organised in three sections. First, we examine the external pressures placed upon universities and the relative importance attached to different agendas. We then turn in the second section to the ways in which universities mediate external expectations through structures, processes and cultures. Finally, the implications for the attribution of values to different types of activities, including community engagement, are discussed. Whilst a range of works confirm the international relevance of the debates discussed here, from the US (Benson et al. 2000) to Australia (Gunasekara 2004; Maclean et al. 2009) and Chile (Atria 2004), we draw primarily on relevant materials from the English higher education context and specific evaluations of national funded initiatives to illustrate, where appropriate, the core argument (see also May and Perry 2006; Perry 2008).

11.2   Changing Expectations

When we think of changes there is an evident tendency to talk of breaks or ruptures in order to explain contemporary manifestations. Yet we find that knowledge and universities have always played an important function in relation to the constitution of social, cultural and political identities and have been attributed to varying powers and values. From the early relationships between universities and ecclesiastical/monastic orders to the roles played by students in the European sociopolitical revolts of the 1960s, the relationship between intellectual institutions and development, enhancement and critique of society has been close.

Any history of ideas shows periods of greater or lesser circulation of influence between the direction of research activities and broader societal developments. As such, popular accounts of knowledge as produced within 'ivory towers' are not only anachronistic but also have never been entirely accurate. Two examples from the

United States illustrate this neatly (Newfield 2003; Guston 2000). Firstly was the close relationship between industry and the growth of universities in the United States in the early twentieth century. Secondly were the unprecedented amounts of public expenditure directed towards strategic science priorities in the periods preceding and after the Second World War. What is new in the contemporary era is not the idea of industry—university relations per se, but the particular type of relationship that is emerging with different sets of expectations (Thompson 1970). From the 1970s onwards, the speed and integration of previously disparate political—economic trajectories began to produce particularly vivid and articulated accounts of the economic role of knowledge. The discourse of the 'knowledge economy' began to be consolidated, drawing on analyses of the implications for competitiveness of a post-Fordist, post-industrial economy. As global capital has little cultural affiliation in its search for profit, so manufacturing began to move to developing countries. This leads to questions over new forms of production and consumption and the need for competitive advantage in knowledge development and deployment.

Against developments such as the end of the Cold War and the formation of the European Community, a dominant 'knowledge paradigm' has emerged. This has been shaped by a more entrenched and confident neo-liberalism that has come to influence and penetrate middle-ground European social democratic ideologies with resulting consequences for a democratic deficit (Marquand 2004; Harvey 2007). A set of key assumptions underpin the 'new'—or at the very least, strengthened—knowledge paradigm. Knowledge is viewed as a panacea to specific economic problems, with a strong instrumental and strategic role.

We cannot simply see knowledge being produced in the service of interest-free illumination, but bound up with the very reproduction of the economy. Knowledge more generally now becomes a tool which can be appropriately wielded to produce competitive advantage. The commodification of knowledge and its translation into direct economic advantage becomes paramount. Equally important is the ability to measure, define and demonstrate success in knowledge hierarchies through metrics and league tables of innovative output in the struggle for symbolic and economic advantage.

What emerges from discourses on the 'knowledge economy' is the possibility that 'relevance' has come to equal if not surpass 'excellence' as a defining criteria for the justification and evaluation of academic work. Emphasis has increasingly been placed on the 'enterprise' or 'entrepreneurial' university, 'knowledge transfer' and 'commercialisation' (Clark 1998; Marginson and Considine 2000; Etzkowitz 2002). These terms have been captured by a broad term 'third mission', used increasingly as a short-hand for any activity that lies outside the traditional domains of teaching and research, including community engagement. Most universities have had a greater or lesser degree of concern with their civic duties and responsibilities as a natural extension of their productive and reproductive functions in society. Nevertheless, the notion of 'community impact' has increasingly been institutionalised within a framework that seeks to capture the value of the university—and, in the process, justify and legitimise its continued receipt of public funds (Dempsey 2009, p. 4).

Within this framework, community engagement has been re-cast in the image of the neo-liberal knowledge economy. Appeals are no longer made to the roles and responsibilities of institutions or the recognition of any moral imperative, in line with an enlightened and social pedagogic function. We have instead seen a narrowing of the agenda in favour of those activities that are deemed economically rewarding. With the armies of representatives of globalisation, including academic 'gurus', the political—and with that civil society—has been limited in the name of an apparently problematic idea of the 'economy' (Cameron and Palan 2004). Choice, value and a toleration and recognition of the myriad set of activities that have always characterised universities started to wilt under the naturalisation of competition.

The discourse of the knowledge-based society has offered some comfort for those concerned with the consequences of knowledge-based growth—particularly in relation to a deepening of skills-linked social divisions. Scholars have been keen to devise frameworks that capture and value economic, social, ecological and cultural 'impacts' and that see universities as contributing to a wide range of societal functions (Charles and Benneworth 2002; Goddard 2009). Yet policy makers' assumptions about the potential solutions or fixes offered by knowledge to societal problems still trace an economic output logic in terms of a simple calculus:

"more education = better skills = economic competitiveness".

Illustrations drawn from the English higher education context illustrate both the marketisation of civic engagement and its relative importance.[1] In the context of debates over the knowledge economy, the economic role of science and technology began to be stressed from the early 1990s onwards. The election of the Labour Government in 1997 coincided with the Dearing Report on Higher Education, which sought to broaden the debate on not only the economic, but social and civic roles of the university. Over time, the third mission has been institutionalised and funded as a permanent stream of funding alongside teaching and research, but has morphed in very particular ways (Perry 2007).

Initial schemes from the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) aimed at 'reaching out to business and the community' or building 'active communities'. Yet since the early 2000s, funding has been allocated within the more narrowly conceived 'higher education innovation fund (HEIF)', now in its fourth year of finance. In the first round of funding HEIF was widely criticised for being dominated by hi-tech consortiums. Whilst the balance of funding has shifted slightly away from research-intensive institutions over time, the emphasis remains on economically driven knowledge transfer activities. Indeed, a recent evaluation of HEFCE/OSI third stream policy defined it as

> Operat(ing) at the interface between the knowledge base, sources of new knowledge, networks and collaborative arrangements and firms' ability to absorb knowledge, technology and other expertise.

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[1] Higher education in England is funded through the 'dual support system'. Disciplinary Research Councils covering the whole of the United Kingdom allocate research funds to academics or groups of academics through competitive bidding. The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) allocates funding to institutions on the basis of periodic quality-related assessments.

Table 11.1 Indicative funding for community engagement—Commitment and cost

Initiative	Indication of commitment required	Amounts available
Manchester Beacon of public engagement: Early Career Researcher Award	Attend three support meetings; deliver activity; administrate award; collect data on impact/audience; attend dissemination event; write project case study	£ 1,500
RCUK Researchers in Residence programme	One week's placement in a school	£ 70 travel and subsistence
HEFCE Social Entrepreneurship Awards	Activities may include networking or awareness raising; support is for 'enterprising' new ventures to replicate the success of knowledge transfer and commercial entrepreneurship in HE for social ventures	Catalyst Awards: £ 2,500–£ 5,000 Development Awards: Up to £ 15,000 Staff and salary costs are not eligible

while only later, making nods in the direction of community engagement (PACEC/CBR 2009, p. 5).

Similarly, within the Research Councils, the drive for 'impact' across disciplinary areas has invariably been interpreted through the lens of business engagement, commercialisation or one-way public engagement evidenced in strategic plans and measurement objectives. Indeed, in relation to research council funding, it is all too common for calls for proposals to favour 'impact' in the justification of research funding, while continuing to value 'excellence' at the point of evaluation and assessment, reducing such activities to little more than obligatory add-ons.

Various initiatives can be identified that may offer some redress to this economic emphasis. Take for instance, the £ 9.2 m Beacons for Public Engagement initiative, designed to bring about a cultural change in higher education in terms of attitudes towards engagement, based on a belief that

> A closer relationship with HE will help people to take an informed part in the democratic process and the decisions affecting their lives. (National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement website June 2010)

Yet the relative amounts of funding allocated to these activities are minimal (see Table 11.1). This is within an overall budget for science and research where third mission activities themselves account only for approximately 3 % of the total.[2] In the context of the broader need for institutions to charge the full economic cost of research[3], the gap between the rhetoric of engagement within policy discourses and

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[2] Based on the Comprehensive Spending Review, 2007–2011, figures quoted in Science Budget 2007–2011.

[3] Following a review of the dual support model for funding university research in 2002, the government required higher education institutes (HEIs) and their funding partners to adopt the transparent approach to costing (TRAC) methodology to enable them to estimate the full economic cost (FEC) of research to and to ensure that this is properly considered in funding decisions. HEIs were asked to recover, in aggregate, the full economic costs of their activities.

the values attached to different activities—exemplified through funding streams—could not be clearer.

Discourses of 'excellence' and 'relevance', world-class status and local impact, are both prevalent and imprecise in the international political economy of knowledge (Perry and May 2006). They are allowed to free-flow through policy statements with a little understanding of how they are—or might be—understood in practice. Our brief example of higher education funding in England, shows how relevance—and with it, community engagement—has been co-opted into an economic-centred frame of reference which illustrates the implicit priority attached to different forms of activities. Yet the resonances are clear within other contexts, for instance, within Australia, where some have argued equally that the:

> Benefits of higher education (may) be undermined by higher education policies which emphasise competitiveness, commercialisation and cutbacks. (Winter et al. 2005)

In considering university responses to these changing external pressures, the question must be: to what are universities responding? We need to question the extent to which written policy documents and exhortations influence the strategies of universities or indeed the behaviours of academics. Can appeals to civic responsibility via non-binding declarations of intent issued by vice chancellors or presidents have any real effect, compared with the significance of funding streams in the orientation of strategic priorities and individual research agendas?

More fundamentally, greater consideration is needed of how—or indeed whethe—universities simply 'respond' to external forces rather than mediate and reshape external pressures. This would then negate a simple reading of an 'external—internal' dynamic. To understand the range of potential responses and their significance for community engagement, we turn now to a framework for understanding some potential university responses to external pressures in the international political knowledge economy.

11.3   Translation, Insulation and Mediation

The result of the above pressures can be seen as a challenge to the differentiation of boundaries between the academy and the world of business, as captured in the idea of 'soft capitalism' (Thrift 2005). The implication is to profoundly affect the purpose, function and form of knowledge-producing institutions and the modes of production themselves, particularly in relation to the criteria for justifying varying forms of activities.

Just as there is no single history of the university, there is no single present. What we see is a variety of university responses that refract and mediate external values as informed by degrees of institutional power. If we imagine a continuum along which universities mobilise differential resources in their responses to external value shifts, the endpoints of the spectrum can be seen as a translation or insulation.

In the wholesale translation of external pressures for relevance and economic impact, we see higher education institutions becoming increasingly subjected to

industry modes of organisational control and judged in terms of their business performances through extended regulatory systems, performance indicators and so forth, rather than by the traditional reference to a service ethic or professional values.

What results is a distinction between knowledge and context via a whole series of attempts to determine the 'how' of practice through new modes of supervision, surveillance and appraisals. The overall result is that the 'why' and 'how' of knowledge is subsumed within the narrow confines of the measurability of 'what' (May 2001): for example, external income generation, citation indexes, staff—student ratios, league tables and publications.

Due to such effects, it has been argued that universities are engaged in a process of 'creative destruction' (Fuller 2000). To this we can also add a 'hollowing out' of their distinctiveness through retreat to increasing forms of managerialism and professionalisation without any reference to the value of their own roles and responsibilities in society (Ziman 1994; Delanty 2001). Managerialism has aligned with professional ideologies to enable the targeting of the exercise of discretionary knowledge as if it unproblematically informed, as opposed to interacted with, the conditions under which actions take place. Moreover, there is no automatic connection between the importation of market principles and subsequent market advantage: The search for innovation implies freedom and risk, incompatible with too great a focus on efficiency, auditing requirements, user engagement and identifiable outputs.

With full-scale translation we see universities increasingly modelling themselves in the image of the market, seeing themselves as businesses and significant economic actors in their own right. It is not just the case that universities, industry and government are increasingly blurring roles and responsibilities, but that universities are seeking to become all-in-one to meet disparate expectations.

Their estates are managed with profit and optimisation in mind, rather than the provision of spaces and places to furnish and support varying cognitive requirements and social needs. In this way estate management is seen to be a more neutral endeavour represented in the physicality of buildings without accompanying discussion of, for example, multiple use or access to different community groups. The external generation of finance becomes a tool to supplement internal resources, replacing any notion of civic responsibility. Likewise, economic output is translated into intellectual property and commodified through new organisational units, designed to undertake activities called 'knowledge transfer'.

A resulting internal information politics then results. Activities which can be readily understood and codified as a precursor to commercialisation or proof of engagement with varying 'stakeholders' is seen to produce value. External values can be reproduced internally, rather than mediated according to a clear sense of purpose, resulting in the prioritisation of very different forms of knowledge within the same institution. Markets are both economic, in terms of commercial value, as well as being academic, in terms of ranking in hierarchies and league tables. Strategic management then easily becomes the reproduction of these differences, driven by supposed grounds of necessity (being higher up the league table attracts a greater number of rich, national and international students), rather than a more

general consideration of the need to examine the distinctiveness of the university as a site of knowledge production and transmission.

An analysis of whether such values are in tension or contradiction would require a degree of institutional reflexivity that is rare in the dynamic conservatism of academic cultures. It would also need a form of leadership that is confident in its critical capacity, rather than the continual regurgitation of so-called economic aphorisms. Instead, academics assume scholars of international repute may be better able to run their institutions in a visible collusion between excellence and globalisation. Alternatively, those from the private sector are beamed in as if the work of actual translation of opportunities into organisational cultures were secondary to the practice of public, rhetorical flourishes concerning engagement and the pursuit of excellence.

In terms of academics-turned-managers in this climate, a common reaction is to assume that with a managerial position comes a capitulation to self-evidence driven by environmental imperatives. The 'inside' of the university is re-configured in the name of the 'outside': there are no boundaries to defend, only external forces to reflect internally and remould them in the name of apparent imperatives. Choice evaporates in the face of this constructed fatalism and poor leadership results. The assumption of mobility between inside and outside positions frequently assumes a basis in which the desire for flexibility ends up as a bureaucratic proceduralism that loses a sense of purpose for universities' wider position within society as a whole.

For some, translation is absolute. These observations lead some authors to speak of a 'post-modern university' or a 'university in ruins' (Readings 1996; Smith and Webster 1997; Maskell and Robinson 2001). Here 'insulation' would be the preferred option in which universities provide shelter from external pressures and protect scholarship. Yet what would be the conditions under which 'insulation' is feasible or indeed desirable? Indeed, given the ambiguities of external pressure and the absence of debate over values, can we even argue that 'translation'—in any pure sense—is possible, as this would presuppose a clear set of expectations to translate? Instead, we see widespread mediation and reshaping of already ambiguous external forces leading to a series of inter- and intra-institutional variations in the values attached to different activities.

Mediation may be part of a deliberate strategy of universities to obtain and maintain positions in local, national and global hierarchies or to represent themselves with academic, governmental and industrial groupings in particular ways. Thus, we may see University A, engaging with a range of external organisations at the level of senior management through participation in relevant intermediary groups, such as regional science and industry councils or local economic development partnerships, whilst the practice of research carries on as usual across disciplines. In such a case, we see the external acting as a buffer to the internal. The concept of 'engagement' is embedded in and made credible through the external representation of strategic visions and mission statements, based on the assumption that having a university 'in' but not necessarily 'of' a locality is sufficient for 'trickle down' to accrue (May and Perry 2006).

University B, on the other hand, might see its very survival as tied to the successful exploitation of new funding opportunities for engagement, but place the responsibility for a response on particular organisational sub-units without any clarification

concerning feasibility, consequences or envisaged outcomes. Such internal translation may also offer shelter to particular groups of academics whose work is seen as requiring degrees of insulation from external pressures, such as those working in traditional physical scientific disciplines. Particular ironies result from this kind of mediation: We see, for instance, that the creation of dedicated knowledge exchange (KE) offices accounts for a large percentage of third stream finance within institutions, whilst the same offices are responsible for initiating only a small proportion of interactions between academics and external organisations (PACEC/CBR 2009 p. 6).

A further example of mediation might be University C seeking wholesale change in terms of forms of engagement, without necessarily prioritising particular areas of activity. In this case, the emphasis would be on new ways of working across all academic fields, rather than systematic translation and prioritisation of specific fields. To do this well would require that universities change their institutional cultures and develop 'comprehensive, realistic strategies' (Benson et al. 2000).

The issue in each case is the relationship between external orientation and internal translation; in other words, the extent to which external values are understood, widely discussed and then subsequently internalised, or not, within the university and with what implications for the values attached to different forms of activities. More often, however, mediation occurs in ways that do not always accord with the notion of deliberate strategy. The extent to which external forces reshape the university as an institution and the knowledge produced within it is dependent on the implicit, unacknowledged and unintended effects of structural, governance and informal arrangements. Accordingly, different universities may be positioned to not only translate, but magnify, refract, reshape and transform external pressures.

11.3.1 Mediating Values Through Structures, Processes and Cultures

A link between external positioning and representation of the institution vis-à-vis shifting values is the relationship between stated position, recognition and reward. Whilst strategic managers seek to position universities according to shifting environmental expectations, these dictates from on high are destined to remain so without a clear understanding of how varying calls to engagement are to be enabled and with what effect upon occupational cultures. In practice, there is a disjuncture between the demands for 'relevance' and the messages communicated internally linked to particular sources of funding. Strategic posturing with assumed significant others serves little point if publication in peer-reviewed journals is valued above other forms of academic activity. A university may badge itself as innovative and enterprising, yet promotion criteria fail to take these into account.

A survey of academics in 2008 ranked research/publications and generating commercial income for the university to be the first and second order criteria of importance in promotion, with work with the local community ranked bottom (PACEC/CBR

2009). Clearly, a number of factors contribute to the difficulties in balancing institutional, disciplinary and faculty priorities with public and social needs. Nevertheless, it is the question of priorities, recognition and reward that is often seen as most significant (Diamond and Adam 2004, p. 34).

At this point the fundamental issue of governance structures comes into play (Braun and Merrien 1999; Hedmo and Wedlin 2008; Sporn 1999). University structures shelter, mediate and magnify external pressures. Universities are multi-faceted organisations that encompass elements associated with the characteristics that Max Weber found in bureaucracies. This has two elements, firstly, regarding the organisation as an end in itself, rather than a means to an end, and secondly, those associated with a professionalism that regards autonomy as essential to knowledge production.

Universities are hardly unique in these respects. According to contingency theory, the adoption of organisational forms will depend upon a relationship between structure and function (Mintzberg 1983). Whilst conceptually neat, abstraction from societal influences, together with a simplification of complexity and the neglect of strategic choice, diminishes the levels of understanding when it comes to the direction of universities.

The traditional centralised and bureaucratic mode of organisation of the university is challenged by the need to respond flexibly to increasingly unpredictable environmental changes, to potentially engage with the varying needs of a locality and in the pursuit of funding streams beyond those normally associated with teaching and research. Concerted action does not simply require coherent policy frameworks, but also effective organisation and consent. Internal coordination needs to be matched against external expectations, thereby providing a greater congruity between organisational design and the environment.

Where the environment exhibits a sufficient degree of stability in its expectations, a more centralised and bureaucratic mode of organisation would be exhibited. In less predictable situations, on the other hand, greater degrees of flexibility are required that enable interpretations of environmental changes to be rapidly implemented into organisational responses. In these instances, mechanical organisations would produce negative effects because of the centralisation of their command and control functions; although this is not to recognise the importance of a particular ethos in a world whose demands are for change for its own sake (du Gay 2000).

Alongside external issues of ambiguity that require flexibility for engagement sits an internal drive for standardisation. Universities, for the most part, remain top—down, disconnected, hierarchical, siloed institutions. Their disciplines are divided through faculties, schools and research groups without effective cross-institutional coordination mechanisms and often subject to cost-centre budgeting that does very little for an imaginative collaboration. The reasons for such ossification also lie in scientific activity enabling deep specialisation (Lohmann 2004). Epistemic permeability between disciplines and institutions and the outside world is limited by structural and bureaucratic lines of accountability and management. Vertical and horizontal deadlock emerges that limits the capacity for new ways of working to emerge up and out or across and out of institutions, whilst preserving their sense of purpose and confidence in an otherwise fluid world.

At the same time, the existence of a strategic position that is identifiable at the level of university management cannot be presupposed, nor can the prevailing assumption that apparently exceptional individuals in chief executive positions are responsible for positive changes within their organisations. Such a deceit allows chief executives to free float across different sectors and universities with ever-greater remuneration in a triumph of the separation of character from context and content. Academics-turned-managers find plenty of incentives in new positions to reinforce the message of change, yet often end up producing the very ossifications that were the target of the original transformations.

Culturally speaking, what is argued to be at the level of second order justification as a critical, reflexive but supportive role for the institution in relation to the economy ends up as a normalisation of dominant assumptions. In practice, particular issues are focused upon the exclusion of those that may lead to uncertainty and questioning regarding possibilities, particularly when they are coming close to long-established beliefs.

It is not the case that a single and clearly communicated policy exists at a strategic level in a large organisation that is subsequently impeded in its implementation by cultures. Rather, sets of disparate and often conflicting strategies exist that internalise external ambiguities, often leading to continual organisational re-structuring as if that were a panacea to manage insecurity. An identification of mission becomes 'mission impossible' in a heterogeneous system, if the intersections between internal and external oriented objectives and those relating to past achievements and future visions are not taken into account (Atria 2004).

Without considering the interplay of these missions, it is perfectly possible for academics to receive conflicting communications from central management. On the one hand, these concern the importance of engagement and knowledge transfer activities. On the other, they may also be urged to target particular journals in ever more rapid timeframes in order to meet the next round of evaluation exercises whose criteria have yet to be determined or to reach higher into globalised league tables. It is not only incentives and promotion criteria, but practical support mechanisms that inform the workloads of academics. A different survey of universities in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, found only 7 institutions out of 65 respondents had any formal policy to enable staff to take time off for volunteering or community activities (Bussell and Forbes 2008).

Communications become disjointed. Despite hierarchical structures, tensions dominate in the translation of organisational direction through faculty and institutional structures to individual workers. From the bottom—up, similar problems emerge. How can the university collectively develop a position of understanding when there is no single point of intelligence—although there is a great deal of information—on what the university has to offer? Universities can be seen as hybrid organisations connected by multiple links between the internal and the external that are not, nor should be, filtered through any central point. The result, for those wishing to engage with universities, is often the absence of a collective voice or understanding of what values different institutions represent, but they themselves could not translate such expectations into their own organisations or communities.

The gap here is so often filled by consultants who do nothing to add value to actual engagement and outcomes, but simply write reports about what could be done according to the assumed demands of an external constituency. To try and fill that gap requires time and effort through engagement by those workers who are capable and positioned for such a purpose. However, there is relatively little overall external or internal recognition and reward for such work.

There is no single typology that can account for the different forms of mediation between the external and the internal. We can gain insights by considering the relative degrees to which external economic or civic values are subsequently incorporated within either (or both) a university's strategic direction or internal value base. Important factors clearly relate to

- The warmth with which different governments at multiple scales embrace knowledge capitalist discourses, linked to greater or lesser degrees of neo-liberalism or social democracy;
- The distinction between research-intensive, research-informed, teaching and other institutional types and the extent to which they can mobilise institutional power in support of particular knowledges; and
- The nature of funding streams and governance regimes which offer greater or lesser degrees of bureaucracy and control over university policies and structures.

Between generalised trends and context-specific manifestations, a gap emerges between the external and internal, resulting in structural and strategic mismatches at the level of the university. Even where clear institutional positions have been defined, external values are mediated in different and unanticipated ways through internal structures and policies. Mediation then leans either towards translation or insulation, with potential positive, but more often than not, negative results. Far from institutional shelter provided for in terms of clear and confident values capable of interpretation of consequences and adaptation to various pressures, we see a magnification of turbulence and an absence of concerted engagement or challenges to dominant assumptions.

11.3.2   Commitment to Engagement

What perpetuates in the face of variable and changing external expectations and internal variability in the values attached to different kinds of activities is a model of the engaged, altruistic virtuoso undertaking activities on the basis of good will. Yet the very factors outlined above—in terms of organisational structures, processes and cultures—work to minimise the extent to which the dispositions of academics to engage can be realised. Limited and short-sighted ideas of competition prevail, coupled with the pursuit of a narrowly-defined excellence. This, in turn, leads to scholars being beamed into contexts on the back of trying to climb up the ladder of indicators of global excellence. Such persons represent a celebration of the global mobility of expertise over an understanding of the distinctiveness of existing contexts,

including civil society whose only attribute must be to offer these imports a good quality of life.

Those pursuing work that is regarded as less than international prominence, are left in the wake of these short-term cultures. Resulting tensions are assumed to be alleviated by invoking 'workload balancing models'. Spatial mobility is afforded for those individuals and groups who can play this game—in other words, for those whose personal circumstances permit mobility in the first instance—and the transfer market operates on this assumption with particular effects on the movement of knowledge workers (Ackers and Gill 2008).

Institutions are internationally compared in extraordinary displays that relieve speakers of any burden of contextual understanding. New ways of measuring performance are always emerging, but the same hierarchies continue with the result that work of interest in research at scales of activity other than something called 'international', are afforded less recognition. Connectivity between institutions and their local communities is important, but modes of academic production and what is regarded as a legitimate outlet for publications are not context-sensitive. It is not only institutions, but also researchers who may be in, but not of, the places where they work.

Iconic status is attributed to academics who are not contaminated by contact with different expectations. The engaged altruistic virtuoso, on the other hand, connects with many different community audiences and is thus committed to interpreting the meaning of their work for different audiences. The process through which this is carried out both results in and is predicated upon the generation of multiple viewpoints on the validity of the research or knowledge base itself. Audiences may then feel able to judge based not just on the consequences, but the content of the knowledge deployed and represented. If community engagement concerns the coproduction and application of knowledge, entrenched conceptions of the academic as expert are fundamentally challenged (Dempsey 2009). The occupational closure that affords for the iconic is open to other interpretations for the engaged virtuoso. Here we find a different ethos, way of being and commitment:

> This work of modifying one's own thought and that of others seems to me to be the intellectual's reason for being. (Foucault 1989, p. 461).

These two academic modes of behaviour can be represented spatially. The former ethos is concentric and turns in on itself to celebrate insularity as a pre-condition of knowledge generation. It serves to alleviate its practitioners of distractions, as in the case of nineteenth Century German universities that provided well-equipped facilities and attracted researchers (Pickstone 2000). Its outcomes are seen in terms of accepted outlets for ideas that are hierarchically constituted through the application of peer-review. To act as an engaged virtuoso is more diffuse and deliberately so. To modify one's thought requires an alternative immersion, but one that is afforded by an occupational recognition in the first instance. In other words, it is necessary to succeed before one can risk diversification through engagement.

Here we see an isomorphism between an institution's clamour for a place in the global hierarchy and the forms of recognition exercised in academic cultures. Both

invoke fixed ideas of space in which ambiguity is eradicated and certainties reign. Necessity and calculation come together in the fantasy that we are in total command of reality; and the attributed logic of globalisation finds its outlet in de-contextualised celebrations of rational individualism in terms of the orientation of preferences.

Professionalism as detachment, either explicitly or by default, is informed by the same abstractions that govern the pursuit of 'international excellence', thereby reducing the significance for understanding its place of origin (Bourdieu and Wacquant 2001). What this removes from the stage of engagement is an understanding of the relation of ideas to place, without reducing content to context and connections with lifeworlds allowing, among other things, the perpetuation of ideas that they are symptomatic of a degenerate culture (Habermas 1994).

It removes from public gaze the fact that the university itself is a diverse community working at different levels—according to different logics—and it is this which makes it vibrant and distinctive. Oscillations between the revenge of instrumental positivism and the denial of position in relation to what is produced continue. On the one hand, we have the denouncement of doubt in the name of order and certainty and on the other, the abandonment of an understanding that leaves the terrain open to those who are not so reserved when it comes to speaking in the name of an unproblematic community order.

An enormous variability exists in the reflexive understandings found between the individual, their practice and institutional position (May and Perry 2011). Whether through intensive or extensive work, to absorb oneself in communities that are reflected in representational endeavours as texts, acts or speech is not a spatial activity. Not only is the author positioned as responsible in the eyes of the reader or audience, they are also located in an institution and occupation that has afforded this activity. That fate has not escaped us in the age of the author's supposed death, for it is what makes engagement worthwhile. The search for the place of passion from which is derived the affirmation 'here I stand' that drives the need for engagement as some level, mixes in an uneasy relationship to university culture . Its professionalism accompanies uncertainties about commitment, leaving no place for caring and passion to be part of its practice:

> 'Commitment' is initially a lack of good manners: to intervene in the public space means exposing oneself to disappointment, or worse, shocking those in one's world who, choosing the virtuous facility of retreat into their ivory tower, see such commitment as a lack of the famous 'axiological neutrality' that they wrongly identify with scientific objectivity. (Bourdieu 2008, p. 386).

In places where institutionalisation undermines insight and provides for an indifference to conditions that enable actions, we may see bewildering and ultimately unproductive divisions of labour. We end up in places where it is better to dislike than commit through engagement; and one can only commit when the conditions support and enable it. The existence is precarious and creates anxieties (Michael 2000). So consolations are found in individualistic practices and abstract evasion. Yet where we work and practice and how others accord a value to that activity as a result, are essential ingredients for learning from the past and for the future.

Table 11.2 Planned allocations of HEIF 4 funding to activities 2008/2009 to 2010/2011 (% of total). (Source: HEIF 4 Institutional Strategies, from PACEC/CBR 2009)

Dedicated KE staff	52.3
Support for staff engagement	14.9
Seed/Proof of concept funding	5.4
PR/Marketing	4.3
Collaboration/Partnerships/Networks	2.7
CPD/Enterprise education/Student enterprise and employer engagement	2.6
Training and staff development	2.5
Engagement support services and other internal/External KE support	2.1
KE units/Institutes and research institutes	2.0
Development funds	1.6
General KE support costs	1.6
KE initiatives and projects	1.2
Investment in spin-outs	1.0
Incubation	0.5
Community outreach	0.3
Other KE staff	0.3
Consultancy	0.2
Awards/Events/Culture change initiatives	0.1
Other expenditure	2.5
Unaccounted expenditure	1.6

What is absent is an understanding of what different sets of activities mean in terms of the culture of an organisation, its practices and effects on individuals, their commitments, as well as overall value to society at different levels of scale—local, city-regional, regional, national and international. Purpose, process and product are severed at varying times and places to be pronounced upon and regurgitated, but never discussed, deliberated upon and taken forward into action.

11.4   Whither Community Engagement?

The above external pressures and institutional conditions and cultures determine both interpretations of and values attached to 'community engagement'. The ambiguity of external pressures is invariably magnified rather than clarified through the internal structures, processes and cultures of the university. The result is both the preferencing out of community or civic engagement beyond rhetorical statements and the consolidation of an economy-centred discourse (see Table 11.2). Income generation through knowledge exchange is a long-term goal of universities, whilst this may wear the acceptable mask of social engagement.[4]

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[4] The scale of knowledge exchange income grew from £0.98 b in 2001 to £1.94 bn in 2007 (PACEC/CBR 2009, p. 10).

Table 11.3 Top 3 sectors targeted by HEI in KE strategies. (Source: Adapted from PACEC/CBR 2009)

	High	Medium	Low	Arts
1	Energy and environ-ment/environmental technologies	Creative and cultural sectors (including design)	Creative and cultural sectors (including design)	Creative and cultural sectors (including design)
2	Biotechnology/biome-dical science and pharmaceuticals	Advanced engineering (including aerospace and automotive), other engineering and manufacturing	Public and third sectors	Public and third sectors (=) Marketing, advertising, media and broadcasting
3	Medical science/tech-nology/equipment	Health and healthcare	Energy and environ-ment/environmental technologies; (=) Hospitality, leisure and tourism	(=) Other

'Engagement' has become a favoured mantra whose nebulous character works to spur on assumed complacent faculty members to pursue external income generating activities for university's financial standing. Few are motivated by an outreach mission, but rather through funding, gaining insights into research, accessing other sources of knowledge and testing the practical application of work (PACEC/CBR 2009). Community activities are relegated to the realm of 'non-essential, secondary and naturally-occurring activities' (PACEC/CBR 2010, p. 26).

While the relative dominance of the top-performing research HEIs and most-research intensive universities in accounting for HEIF funding remains, the balance is less stark than in the initial rounds of funding (PACEC/CBR 2009, p. 38). Nonetheless, inter-institutional variations are clear. A few illustrations suffice to confirm what may appear self-evident: Support for staff engagement is lower within research-intensive universities, which also allocate a higher share of their allocations for HEIF to seed and proof of concept funds. Research collaboration with industry, for instance, is a clearer focus on economic development strategies than support for community development across all HEIs: But the proportion of institutions with community development as a focus ranges from 0 % (in the top 6 institutions) to 32 % (in 'arts' institutions) (PACEC/CBR 2009, p. 61).

Sectoral foci indicate inter- and intra-institutional differences in disciplinary priorities. The main sectors targeted by HEIs vary across different kinds of institutions (Table 11.3). The emphasis on the creative and cultural industries has been argued by some to represent not a 'softening' of the third mission, but rather the dominance of an econo-cultural discourse in debates on creativity (Collinge and Musterd 2009). A gender dynamic has also been noted, with female academics almost twice as likely, to engage with charitable or voluntary organisations than their male counterparts (PACEC/CBR 2010, p. 3).

Where in the midst of the push for a tangible product, student volunteering, staff engagement, award ceremonies, public lectures and university—community cricket matches—is the space for community-based research (Miskovic and Hoop 2006)? As evaluations and strategy documents render all too apparent, it is 'impacts on', 'contributions to' or 'benefit from' engagement that are emphasised rather than work 'with' or 'for' communities (Nyden et al. 1997, p. 270). What is defined as 'legitimate research' precludes such methodologies that may produce such relevant knowledge (Stoecker 2008). Others have emphasised the need to move beyond extractive academic practices or the 'mere involvement' of communities towards 'authentic participation' (McTaggart 1997, p. 28).

The question is then not only how community engagement is reframed by external pressures and internal structures, cultures and processes, but how the conditions for working with heterogeneous communities can be forged? Nowhere in the glossy bumpf are definitions of 'university' or 'community' offered with the result that 'abstract, essentialising definitions of community deny its diversity, including how community engagement efforts can reproduce existing inequalities' (Dempsey 2009, p. 7). There are no consolations in the recognition of contingency, only in infinitude, but that is not the reality of actually undertaking engaged activities with communities.

Community engagement needs to be seen as a legitimate, expert and yet open activity subject to different interpretations. If done well it is messy, complicated, uncertain, difficult, but no less insightful because of that. Out of its practice and interactions with social life comes greater insight which does not generate resolution, but makes an important contribution to clarification. Those seeking to work with communities report a series of success factors behind partnerships—from recognition, reflexivity, commitment, trust, patience, response and flexibility—attributes that are given little oxygen within society's ambivalent and turbulent universities (Mayo et al. 2009).

The result is a lack of institutional reflexivity on the relationship between organisational contexts and conditions for knowledge production and the content of research itself. This leaves community engagement open to reinterpretation outside the cultures of academia. The politicians and media pundits are only too happy to speak of community problems and issues without understanding through engagement. Overall, as Paul Rabinow puts it:

> What we share as a condition of existence, heightened today by our ability, and at times our eagerness, to obliterate one another, is a specificity of historical experience and place, however complex and contestable they may be and a worldwide macro-interdependency encompassing any local particularity. (Rabinow 1996, p. 56).

These tensions, between the constitution of expertise as the disinterested pursuit of knowledge in an age of scepticism and the different expectations placed on universities, including engagement with different communities, is manifest in frustrated ambitions and tensions played out at an individual level.

These vary and there are cases in which academic communities continue to practice according to their capability to maintain boundaries from outside interferences. Knowledge is separated from knowing through engagement and this varies between

institutions and disciplines. It is not only the culture, but also political economy that constitutes practices. There are real limits to a celebration of the cultural as separate from the economic and instead it is the relation between the two that explains variations in order to fill the 'missing middle' (Perry and May 2006) that would enable more systematic engagement with communities.

In terms of public legitimacy, certain disciplines have to work harder than others to maintain a separation between the endogenous and referential realms of activity (May 2005; 2006; May and Perry 2011). It is the practice of presenting a normalised science that could be argued to constitute success when the political—economic conditions are in place. This explains why some practices in particular contexts do not have to engage with communities. Rather than being objects of reflection that are taken forward in action, tensions can be displaced and neutralised by the hierarchies and logics constituted by limited understandings of the changing conditions and dynamics of university life.

With occupational cultures continually emphasising the production of cutting-edge research over, for example, the value of integrating existing knowledges according to the differing needs of varying communities, forms of organisational knowing abound, leaving this product-based mentality amenable to crude sets of understanding. Hierarchies then continue around a mutually agreed de-contextualisation in which 'diversity with dignity' (Boyer 1990) suffers.

What this suggests is that sensitivity to context (which does not imply context-dependence) is precisely the key element missing in discussions on engagement. Whilst networks of individuals, working together around particular issues, can bolster activity according to resources and contacts at their disposal, the sustainability of such activities is dependent upon the level and durability of cultures and resources. Overall, there is relative silence around these issues and as a result, learning and control is, by default, given over to other terrains of activity where continual misunderstanding is more common rather than the effort of understanding through engagement.

Active intermediation is more likely to result in more nuanced positions for community engagement (May et al. 2009). In seeking a more positive mediation between the external and the internal to create the conditions in which different forms of work can be understood and recognised, a clear precondition is to tackle a 'devilish dichotomy'; (Perry and May 2010). More specifically, it is vital to link the 'what' with the 'how' of work, underpinned by a shared understanding of different values attached to forms of practice. Without this in place, a missing middle between content, context and consequence results in a disconnection that renders impossible any meaningful discussion on the appropriate purpose, structure and governance of the university.

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Part IV
Transformation in the Social Environment for University–Community Engagement

Chapter 12
University–Community Engagement in the Wider Policy Environment

Paul Benneworth and David Charles

12.1 Introduction to Part IV and Chap. 12

This part is concerned with the external dimension, the policy environment within which universities operate and the collectivity of incentives these dimensions create for the pursuit or avoidance of engagement with excluded communities. The fact that community engagement can come about in so many different ways, through teaching, research, through staff and student volunteering, through estates and services development, and through university institution governance, offers great opportunities for experiments and small scale instruments to stimulate engagement. At the same time, the diffuse nature of these activities, and the undemanding nature of excluded communities can lead to these activities being ignored.

This part looks at developing instruments and measures that stimulate engagement, making it a more central part of the overall institutional mission. University–community engagement policies have a relatively limited frame for manoeuvre. In part, this is a consequence of the argument developed in Part II: Community engagement has been framed as a peripheral, transient and undesirable task for universities (cf. Chaps. 9 and 11). However, the way that a separate set of debates have evolved has also limited and constrained university–community engagement in practice.

The central argument of this part is that whilst effective policy for promoting university–community engagement is possible, it needs to recognise the drivers that work against university–community engagement in new management paradigms. In this chapter, we will provide some more detail on the techniques of new public management (hereafter NPM), going beyond the material provided in Parts I and III. Chapter 13 firstly looks at a number of specific policies which have been implemented to try to promote university–community engagement with somewhat

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mixed results. Jongbloed and Benneworth offer four examples of policies which have sought to promote engagement with excluded communities by universities: Canada's Community-University Research Alliances, the Netherlands' Leading Social Research Institutions (the MTIs or *Maatschappelijke Top Instituten*), England's Higher Education Innovation Fund's (HEIF) 10 % free quantum and the Beacons for Public Engagement programme in the United Kingdom.

The following three empirical chapters (Chaps. 14–16) look at three typical NPM transparency tools (cf. Van Vught and Westerheijden 2010) and explore the way that university–community engagement emerges from them as something either central or peripheral to the 'idea of a university' they represent. The three NPM techniques with which these parts are concerned are indicators, classification and benchmarking. In Chap. 14, Benneworth and Jongbloed explore how university–community engagement has emerged in the indicators which governments and universities have adopted to try to measure universities' societal activities. University–community engagement has often been subordinated to easier-to-measure activities such as graduate employment, spin-off companies created or numbers of patents. They argue that performance measures need to fulfil three criteria; they need to capture the resources made available to the community, capture in some way how external partners value the university activity and clearly define what they mean by what is 'good' or excellent in engagement activity.

In Chap. 15, Ward et al. explore in more detail a long-standing classification approach developed in the United States, how university–community engagement has been included in this, and whether this does help to address the issues of marginalisation and individualisation identified in Chap. 2. Ward et al. present findings from their research into the community engagement supplement of the Carnegie Classification, which is a voluntary activity allowing universities to be given credit for things they do well given their overall mission and profile. Since 2004, Carnegie has developed a voluntary protocol for the accreditation of university engagement activity which goes beyond the standard kinds of service learning which are commonly found in universities. Based on an institutional study and questionnaires, Ward et al. explore the extent to which something similar to a Carnegie classification can help to support universities in their efforts to make engagement more central to their mission, already identified by a number of contributors in this book as a vital antecedent condition for successful engagement.

The final chapter in this part, Chap. 16, explores the rise of benchmarking techniques in higher education, and in particular, their application to engagement activities. This chapter explores what the applications of this technique disclose about the relative peripherality of the community engagement mission. The argument in this chapter is that benchmarking forces institutions to be honest about the relative importance they place on various aspects of their mission. Benchmarking approaches therefore confront universities with potential contradictions in their missions, and compel a degree of reality about community engagement. However, this chapter also highlights how university–community engagement benchmarking has also had a social life as a technique adopted by institutions who take seriously the idea of improving their community engagement activities. From this perspective,

benchmarking tools can be read as texts which describe the limits to what is both possible and desirable for universities in terms of community engagement.

The overarching message emerging from Part IV is that there is an apparent dissatisfaction with the way from which community engagement has emerged within contemporary practices of university management, as demonstrated by the wide-ranging attempts to better measure and articulate that engagement activity. At the same time, community engagement has proven remarkably difficult to stimulate within universities, particularly in ways that address its peripherality and marginalisation. Insufficient progress has been made to be able to confidently claim that there has been a shift of culture in which community engagement has become more important to universities' management practices. Yet, there is evidence that an 'idea of universities' in which university–community engagement is simply an optional extra is one with which universities, governments and social partners are extremely uneasy. The consequences of this for university–community engagement and the idea of the modern university are addressed in the concluding Chap. 17.

The policy lessons of this are quite clear: On the one hand, a new understanding and appreciation by policy makers is a vital pre-requisite for effective university–community engagement policy. Business engagement built up over time through a series of similarly effective and convincing experiments. But at the same time, it appears that the kinds of models and mechanisms envisaged for stimulating business engagement are not necessarily the most appropriate or the most valid for encouraging the modern university to be more engaged with society at large.

This chapter sets out the wider context of the mid-1980s bifurcation of university engagement, business engagement forging ahead and community engagement stalling. This has created a situation where higher education system (particularly national settings) systematically discourages engagement. What is necessary to address that is to shift the system as a whole in ways that allow community engagement to emerge as a popular consensus and where there is a clear correspondence between policy incentives and actor values.

This chapter reframes the policy challenge as less of stimulating engagement activity and more about reducing the systematic ways in which engagement is marginalised within higher education policy systems. To develop this wider argument, we adopt the following structure. Firstly, we look at the emergence of engagement policy in the early 1980s, signalled by 1982 Office for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)'s Centre for Educational Research and Innovation policy report, *The University and the Community*. Secondly, we consider how engagement gradually became associated with business engagement, and critically with a very limited suite of outputs, closely tied to one particular US-based technology transfer officer organisation, the Association of University Technology Managers.

Thirdly, we provide a typology for engagement policies, and consider how they fit with the need to change the wider policy systems which systematically discourage and marginalise engagement policy. We then look at the case of system shift using the example of Australia, where universities have become enrolled into solving the

regional problem of remote rural areas, and that has led to the emergence of an engagement mission for universities in a recent mission-contract exercise. This chapter concludes by considering the key elements of these system shifts as the basis for the empirical examples offered in Chap. 13.

12.2 The Dominance of the Engagement Mission by Business Interests

12.2.1 The 1980s Emergence of the Engagement Mission

In order to understand community engagement's position as an overlooked policy interest, it is necessary to go back to the early 1980s. The 1970s had been a 'golden age' for universities being regarded as independent autonomous institutions vital to the effective functioning of a democracy (Daalder 1982; Delanty 2002). The social revolution in Europe in the late 1960s and early 1970s had its roots in increasing social disenchantment with the dominant national post-war political and economic cultures, and particularly universities' secretive and opaque governance processes. Daalder and Shils (1982) tell how universities underwent a democratic revolution in this period, with elections for senior management becoming more widespread along with increasing employee and student co-determination on governing bodies.

The benchmark for what unfolded after 1982 in terms of the relative prioritisation of kinds of engagement activity was set by the Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI) report of that year. This represented the high-water mark of the democratic view of the university, at precisely the time when this was about to be unpicked by events and replaced with a different conception of the idea of a university and their societal duties. The report offered both a very clear, and a very broad, view of the issue of engagement:

> The problem of democratisation brings up the question of a university's society function in the very broadest sense of the term. It includes not only the development of access to qualifications, but the production of knowledge and the social significance of that knowledge. It also involves a change in the sharing of responsibility for the development of knowledge and teaching . . . If the university is to be effectively integrated into the community, it must no longer concern only those who attend the university, namely the teachers and the students. It should be possible to pass on one's skills without being a teacher and to receive training without being a student. (CERI 1982, p. 13)

The report also dealt with the kinds of community with which universities engage, highlighting three distinct kinds where similarity or bonds between university and community facilitated interaction:

- *Mission-based* (such as SMEs or farm businesses engaged with by Land Grant universities),
- *Ethically based* (such as particular religious groups by religious institutions) or
- *Locally based* (for universities with a strong regional tradition).

Table 12.1 Mechanisms for community engagement by communities. (Source: CERI 1982)

Way of providing service	Mechanism for delivering service	Problems and barriers
The university puts facilities at the disposal of the community	Use of equipment, premises, and laboratories	Weakness of information flows on what the university is doing
	Use of teachers and students to make direct contribution	Problems in translating research findings to be digestible
	Drawing on the community in delivering occupational training	Poor publicity for successful impacts on the region
Execution of the orders placed by the community	Offering training as occupational, continuing education or cultural	Service is clearly neither teaching nor research
	The university receives a payment from the community for the delivery of a service	Raises fears of the university becoming a 'service station'
	A near-private contract between the buyer and the vendor	Customer 'calls the tune' Delivering these kinds of activities potentially disrupt the university
Analysis of the needs of the community	The university comes into the community as an outside expert	Conflict between university roles (global/national/regional)
	The university provides services for the community with some reference to an 'order' by the community	Universities may produce own type of solution without reference to the community
		The university may refuse to give up land, structures, etc.
Analysis of problems at request of the community	The university engages at community request in developing solutions	Problems might not be straight-forward or may take research along unusual paths
	The university has the autonomy and freedom to suggest a range of solutions away from overarching pressure.	Community requests might overly influence teaching and research
		Conflict of taking a detached view vs. impervious to outside pressures
The university delivers a solution on behalf of the community	The university delivers a service for the community which is compatible with its institutional status	Organisations strong in theory are not always the best to deal with the minutiae of practical details

The report highlights several engagement mechanisms, reproduced in Table 12.1.

The report is interesting because it emphasises the many dimensions of engagement. In practical terms, the report had two substantive chapters, one dealing with business engagement, and one with community engagement, giving those two dimensions *parity of esteem*. The report made the case for engagement fitting with institutional culture, meaning many kinds of approach were possible, from having engagement deliberately being left informal, being organised through a single office, or being actively engaged as part of the culture of the institution. The report cited a number of interesting examples of both business (Leuven R&D) and community (North East London Polytechnic Company) engagement activities.

The CERI report highlights engagement's possibilities for universities against a background of universities not aggressively seeking to manage engagement. The report could be read as offering a tantalising view of a promising engagement landscape

for universities, something to be later implemented by individual universities. It is unsurprising that one element of the engagement mission emerged as dominant, but given the contemporaneous prevailing higher education philosophy of universities as a public democratic good, it is surprising that the winner was business engagement.

12.2.2   The Rise of the Business Engagement Mission

Around this time, separate legislation progressed through the US Congress, what would become the Bayh–Dole Act. Prior to this act, passed in 1980, intellectual property associated with federally funded research was owned by the Federal State (Mowery et al. 2001). This situation had blocked research commercialisation: Universities received few benefits for patenting, registering or licensing their discoveries. By 1982, 37 states had passed the necessary legislation to allow their universities to establish technology transfer offices, and by 2000, this was the situation in all states. The Act presaged a wider change in stimulating university commercialisation, and the idea of the entrepreneurial university (Kroonenberg 1996; Clark 1998) emerged very rapidly as universities rushed to commercialisation.

One can of course tie this to a macro-level societal change from corporatist, welfare states towards marketised, workfare states (cf. Kickert 1995; Peck and Jones 1995). Both America and Europe were profoundly worried about their declining competitiveness, particularly given the emerging industrial dominance of Japan, and were seeking inexpensive but successful solutions to the problems of industrial decline (Reich 1991; Edye and Lintner 1996). However, there is also a micro-scale story of engagement policy evolving in practice, and how business engagement and revenue generation constructed its value to a set of policy-makers, crowded out other versions of engagement. That micro-scale story has three phases, 'demonstration of success' (1980s), 'the best form of engagement' (1990s) and 'the only form of engagement' (2000s).

The first phase of the story had two key elements, the legitimation of the idea of the technology transfer office (TTO), and a number of exemplar successful TTOs. TTOs emerged in the wake of Bayh–Dole as units to identify potentially exploitable intellectual property and generate university income. The creation of a new kind of occupation within the university sector, that of the business development manager, both required legitimation internally and externally, and at this time networks of BDMs emerged to share expertise within the community and arguably more importantly build legitimacy within the sector. These networks included the Association of University Technology Managers in the United States, and the Association of University Research and Industrial Liaison in the United Kingdom.

Secondly, there were a number of high-profile successes of business engagement activities generating significant amounts of income for the university. Debackere and De Bondt (2002) highlight the success that Leuven R&D (its technology transfer office) had in licensing a synthetic plasmigen activator gene to the US biotechnology firm Genentech. This generated revenues of more than US$ 1 billion for inventor and

institution over the following two decades, and illustrated very clearly the potential rewards of university licensing activity.

The second phase of the story involved the creation and legitimation of accepted quantified measures of business success by Association of University Technology Managers (AUTM). From the mid-1990s, AUTM began a members' survey to quantify activity levels (AUTM 2003, 2007), and in line with its membership, survey questions were focused on intellectual property exploitation. Early AUTM indicators included numbers of disclosures (the first step in protection), patents registered, licensing income, spin-off creation and information on institutional research budgets and staffing to allow the calculation of intensity indicators (e.g. patents/US\$ 1 million research expenditure). By 2009, AUTM was producing its *Better World Report* (AUTM 2009), in which the figures on institutional licensing income were complemented with photographs and stories of how the technologies developed and licensed to generate this income were improving the lives of people in developing countries.

In the third phase, these indicators evolved from a tool to enable American technology managers to understand their relative performance to a generic measure of good performance in university engagement. In the United Kingdom in the 1990s, universities started to actively manage their IP portfolios. In Edinburgh, for example, Edinburgh University adopted a commercialisation strategy which not only set 'hard' targets for income generation from IP, but also for the intermediate steps such as disclosures, patents and licenses directly taken from AUTM (Edinburgh Research & Innovation (ERI) 1999; Charles and Benneworth 1999), whilst Newcastle University established NU Ventures (Potts 1998). In 2001, the Higher Education Funding Council for England commissioned its Higher Education Business Interaction survey, and this adopted these AUTM measures within the survey. This evolved into the statutory Higher Education Business and Community Interaction Survey (HEBCIS), used by all four UK funding councils for allocating third stream funding.

These indicators are not intrinsically 'good' measures of the business impact of universities. Take for example the spin-offs indicator: The relative numbers of spin-offs formed is incredibly low: In 2000, 199 spin-offs were formed in the United Kingdom whilst 47 spin-offs were formed in Australia (HEFCE 2004; ARC 2002). In the context of these economies, this is in reality a de minimis contribution but highlights that university spin-off companies offer a promise to generate wealth and create innovative, high-productivity firms (UNICO 2002; Benneworth and Charles 2005).

What is interesting is the parallel failure of techniques demonstrating universities' wider contributions. Since the 1970s, increasingly sophisticated models of university macro-economic impact have developed (inter alia Cooke 1970; Brownrigg 1973; Florax 1992; McNicoll/COSHEP 1995; MacGregor 2009). However, this kind of measure has not been widely adopted by policy-makers as a performance measure because its headline message is that more university resources create more impact. The value of the AUTM indicators is primarily symbolic, hinting that public investments in knowledge are creating the kinds of benefit more societally useful, and to which it is generally impossible to be opposed.

12.2.3   Hard vs. Soft Engagement in an Age of Tough Policies

Our argument is that business engagement has built a clear, alluring policy message which plays well at a number of levels, both rationally and emotionally. Rationally, AUTM indicators provide policy-makers with a sense that their interventions make a difference in the desired direction of travel, and that small interventions produce macro-scale improvements in university outcomes. Emotionally, the idea of stimulating high-technology innovative businesses from universities plays to a longstanding fear within advanced economies of being overtaken in competitive terms by developing economies. Business engagement has therefore to be understood in this context of a self-reinforcing complex of attractions which business engagement offers to policy-makers and which crowds out community-engagement policies.

The apotheosis of the rise of a particular—and arguably reductionist—version of business engagement by universities can be seen in the United Kingdom towards the end of the 2000s. From 2000, higher education and research in the United Kingdom received a doubling of the resources made available to it (Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) 2000; DIUS 2010). Behind the scenes, the UK government had accepted the long-term nature of investment in the science base, and that investments coming on-stream in 2000 would only become visible after twenty years. But from the early 2000s, the argument started to circulate within the civil service that if results would be evident after 20 years, then they would be visible after ten years, and so planning was needed from 2005 to ensure that the technical systems were on hand to capture these results (Gummett 2009). This led to the rise of the 'Impact' agenda in the United Kingdom, measuring the societal benefits which research produces.

From 1989 to 2008, research in the United Kingdom was measured through a Research Assessment Exercise in which departments were scored/profiled in terms of their international research excellence with panels grading papers submitted from participants, with those scores aggregated to a departmental evaluation. By 2008, this system had become to some perspectives a bureaucratic leviathan, and the government undertook to update it, and to simplify as a Research Excellence Framework (REF) which would primarily be driven by it quantitative methodologies. At the same time the government announced that it was seeking to include a measure of 'Impact' in its assessment protocols.

When the first proposals were announced in late 2008, it was clear that in the government's view, 'Impact' was to be synonymous with licensing income. This situation evolved under intense pressure from academic organisations and as a pilot exercise quickly indicated that that measure of impact was extremely unhelpful (HEFCE 2009). But what it does indicate is a more general point, which is the extent to which universities' impact has become identified across a range of policy-makers as being reducible to the direct economic benefits they make by licensing intellectual property to the business sector.

This has clear impacts for developing community engagement policies which address its channelisation, marginalisation and peripheralisation within universities. That situation has arisen because of two pressures, universities' general resistance to excessive external involvement, alongside the fact that business engagement allows

universities to discharge their societal compact in a relatively straightforward manner. Understanding attempts to build policies stimulating community engagement need to bring out both how these policies have helped to build up a sense that community engagement is valid as a policy focus, as well as challenging the assumptions that the business engagement is the only way forward.

12.3   Understanding Engagement Policies within Higher Education Governance Systems

12.3.1   Defining Policies to Support Engagement

It is possible to identify six kinds of policy intervention through which governments might seek to promote community engagement. The question for the implementation of these policies is the extent to which they can produce longer term successes that help reconfigure the debate around university engagement to something which is more widely validated and can be expanded into a full institutional mission.

Regulation of the University Mission In the case of public universities, the mission of the university may be defined in a charter or by statutes which may specify the purpose of a university or the community it should relate to. In designating new universities, governments may seek to direct the university to serve particular communities, thereby establishing a core ethos that may influence strategy and individual behaviour. Within existing university systems, governments may seek to renegotiate the mission and purpose through the negotiation of annual budgets, in which conditions of engagement may be inserted with or without additional or dedicated funding. Several recent national reviews of university systems have identified a responsibility to the community which has then carried forward into negotiations on mission.

Core Funding for the Mission Public university systems usually operate with a combination of core and discretionary funding, where the core funding is usually consistent over time (usually rising incrementally). This may be closely related to student numbers and some measure of past research performance and untied, so the university can cross-subsidise internally and fund long-term investment. Governments can, if they wish, specify a proportion of this core funding to support engagement in line with an agreed university mission. The US Land Grant Act, for example, required universities to support extension programmes as part of the deal for the investment of land-based assets.

Additional Funds for Engagement Activities More usually, governments in recent years have sought to supplement core funding by offering discretionary funding for non-core activities such as engagement, in some cases top-slicing the existing teaching and research funds, but in other cases adding funds from non-higher education budgets. These funds may be targeted on narrowly defined schemes such as supporting student volunteer activities, or open to the full range of engagement activities, and may support core or management activities as well as projects.

Access for Universities to Wider Community/Engagement Schemes Universities are often excluded from bidding into community development programmes as the funds are targeted specifically towards other community-based groups. However, the rules of such schemes may permit universities to participate in projects and may permit a proportion of funds to flow through to the universities. A key development in the United Kingdom was when universities were allowed to bid for European Regional Development Fund support and provide their own matched funding for projects which could support engagement with business or the community.

Encouragement of a Community Focus in Core Activities Governments may be able to enhance university–community engagement without direct funding by seeking to modify behaviour within the core teaching and research missions to encompass community development objectives. Thus, how quality in teaching and research is defined could embrace issues of community engagement and thereby seek to influence the behaviour of academics through quality assurance processes and the modification of conditions for bidding for research funds. If research projects are required to engage with users of research, then a proportion will develop engagement with the community as the most likely user of that research.

Creation of a Sectoral Platform of University–Community Engagement Governments may mobilise a commission, platform or other partnership organisation to engage with universities across the sector to develop a coherent approach for engagement to be adopted by its membership in return for additional funding. Chap. 13 provides concrete examples of how universities have responded to calls being made for universities and other partners to come together to agree with an engagement activity programme within broad principles sketched by government in return for additional funding for that activity.

These six forms of policy are high-level approaches and abstracted from the specific content of engagement, and a separate categorisation may be proposed of the kinds of projects and partnerships. The nature of community engagement is highly diverse and hence government schemes are usually permissive rather than excessively directive in nature. Most forms of support for engagement can be included—the form of engagement is usually determined by the university and its partners in the community.

12.3.2 Policy Analysis and System Shift in Policy Networks

In this book, the key challenge which has emerged for community engagement is that it operates in an extremely crowded environment, where it is crowded out on a variety of fronts: As a mission, it is peripheral, it seems less legitimate than business engagement, and community stakeholders have no mechanisms to apply pressures to university decision-making. This challenge not only arises out of a complex of historical trajectories but also contemporary approaches to higher education decision-making, which has consequences for developing engagement policy. No policies are

created in a tabula rasa: Any new policy deals with actors already facing pressures. As previous chapters have shown, this means that attempts to do something completely new tend to grind to a halt, whilst attempt to build it into existing activities reinforce its peripherality. The question must then be how can policy promoting community engagement help to increase universities' societal benefits and improve the environment for engagement with excluded communities?

This is linked to the fact that higher education policy can be regarded as having a very strong principal-agent problem (cf. Eisenhardt 1989 for a review); governments can steer universities, but it is very difficult to direct universities to do particular things. Universities are experts in their own domain, so governments cannot easily judge what it is reasonable for universities to offer and lack the knowledge to judge whether a particular proposal is value for money or not. Governments have a very blunt tool, that of funding, but the issue is that if universities do not want to undertake a particular activity, then there is the risk of compliance behaviour by universities and the kinds of opportunism which see funds absorbed.

This is the principal-agent problem —the principal is dependent on the agent to deliver a service; the agent can resist scrutiny of its internal behaviour by refusing to deliver the service if overly scrutinised. There are two problems manifestations of the principal-agent problem which are of salience to universities namely adverse selection and moral hazard (Kivisto 2005). However, a further issue arises with university–community engagement because of co-dependency of goals and a hierarchy of policy priorities. Core university missions are obviously more important to policy-makers than peripheral ones. With the framing of university–community engagement as peripheral, there is the risk that in negotiations between governments (principals) and universities (agents), governments will concede too much to universities around peripheral activities in order to ensure that the core missions and targets are delivered without interference.

Given that universities tend to be keen on a weaker and less compulsory version of university–community engagement, there is the real possible that the principal-agent problem reinforces the peripheralisation of engagement policy. This was demonstrated as example in Chap. 6 (this book) where Humphrey highlighted the gulf between the rhetoric and the reality of community engagement in a Scottish university. Although the principal (the Scottish Funding Council) and the agent (the university) agreed in the abstract that university–community engagement was important, there were other things that were more important (the individual learning accounts, course accreditation, widening participation and the regional access forums) which meant that university–community engagement fell by the wayside and was neglected.

Echoing May and Perry in the preceding chapter, we conceptualise this extremely resistant set of drivers as a policy system with a strong tendency towards peripheralising university–community engagement. This is rooted in understanding the public policy process as having undergone a substantial shift in the last 30 years from government in hierarchy to governance in networks (inter alia Rhodes 1997). With the increasing complexity of public policy-making, governments are no longer able to

completely understand their various policy domains to solve pressing societal problems and therefore involve users and producers in that solution process. To avoid excessive dependency on private interests, governments have developed approaches to minimise this, mobilising networks of interests to produce solutions which are as innovative and efficient as possible, and which avoid the previously identified problems of moral hazard and adverse selection.

There is now an extensive literature on policy networks as a means of governments harnessing the embedded knowledge of producer and user interests in optimising policy outcomes. Instead of governments deciding on a policy then either self-implementing it or contracting it to others, in a policy network, governments set the 'rules of the game' in ways that encourage participants to form a 'cohesive sub-group' around the best solution. Higher education can be seen as a policy network, and indeed there is an extensive literature around the application of policy network theory to the domain of higher education (cf. Dassen 2010, for a review).

The peripheralisation of university–community engagement can be reframed from a policy network perspective as a system outcome: The focus of the higher education system on the delivery of teaching and research as its primary goals, and the dominance of particular 'cohesive sub-group' (such as research-intensive universities) create a situation where community engagement is constrained, rejected or entangled. Thus, the dominance of the idea of 'excellence' means that any policy seeking to create the conditions for university–community engagement continually faces the same barrier. That is, it is not readily possible to produce a 'coherent sub-group' or position of agreement around engagement in which community stakeholders are significant actors in the engagement activities.

The question then becomes of how does policy network theory conceptualise driving system shifts and reforms that make possible outcomes that are otherwise systematically impossible to achieve. One dimension of this is that governments can structurally change the nature of the system in one of two ways. One approach is additive, in which governments may create a new activity, institution or cohesive sub-group which changes the overall dynamic of the system. The alternative to that is that the government may break up the system into smaller, more focused and less complex elements, which better correspond to the different desired policy outcomes.

These approaches can be seen implemented in the policy domain of higher education. With respect to the former, one system *addition* is the very rapid rise of private higher education institutions in certain countries which have produced a range of educational efficiencies. These include shorter, more intensive courses taught primarily by adjuncts and part-time lecturers also employed in public universities as a foundation for a later completion of the bachelors in a public institution (cf. Duczmal 2006 for the case of Poland). A further example of system segmentation has been underway in the United Kingdom since around 2007, with research funds being concentrated in a handful of top-rated universities, creating a hard distinction between the education systems of research- and teaching-intensive universities. Government issued an edict that concentration was an imperative and a range of system actors, including the funding and research councils have together negotiated policies for segmentation.

Fig. 12.1 Classifying system shift policy mechanisms in higher education by modes of steering and reconfiguration. (Source: Author's own design)

	Steering in networks	Steering by networks
System segmentation	Government 'pulls strings' e.g. contracting	Government 'funds agreement' e.g. profiling
System addition	Government creates new instruments e.g. private HEIs	Government creates new collaborations e.g. Innovation Platforms

A second dimension to governmental approaches to system change can be seen in the manner by which governments use networks in the policy process. These are means by which a single actor, the government, can produce concerted action across the many actors in a network, and produce a desired outcome—in this case a structural change of either segmentation or addition. The government may place itself central within that network and attempt to influence the configuration of the network by 'pulling on the strings' which it commands; this is known as 'steering in' the network. However, the government may also stand aside from the network, and offer a set of conditions by which actors will be rewarded for producing an innovative policy outcome, leaving actors to behave autonomously; this is known as 'steering by' networks.

Again, both of these approaches are evident in the way governments have used higher education policy networks. 'Steering in' networks are very common, increasingly seen, for example, in mission-based contracts with higher education institutions. An alternative 'steering by' network approach which is also common is the introduction of 'Innovation Platform' approaches for setting research agendas of common industrial and scientific interest. Governments typically agree to increase research funding if business and science can agree on a common research agenda and budget to be matched by central science funding; government remains outside that network and allows the network operation to produce the optimal outcome (Dassen and Benneworth 2011).

These two dimensions permit the production of a classification for policy intervention which may shift a higher education system, which forms the basis for examining policies addressing university–community engagement's systematic peripheralisation (see Fig. 12.1).

12.3.3   System-Shifting Engagement Policies in Practice

In order to explore how system-shifting policies are able to influence university–community engagement, one can consider the different kinds of engagement policy presented in this chapter. These are not always system-shifting policies, their system-shifting nature is an emergent property of whether their implementation produces

Fig. 12.2 Correspondence between policy typology and system-shift policies

	Steering in networks	Steering by networks
System segmentation	Core funding for mission Additional engagement funds	Regulation of the core mission
System addition	Community focus in core activities Access community development funds	Sectoral platform and programme for community engagement

the desired system change. Nevertheless, it is possible to consider how—were those policies to achieve the desired system shift—they map to the 2×2 classification developed above.

Both core funding for mission and additional engagement funds correspond to segmenting, steering in networks, with governments bilaterally changing the incentives provided to individual institutions for their engagement activities, creating a group of 'engaged universities' and by implication a group that do not choose to engage. Regulation of the core mission for the sector is a segmentation approach that operates at the level of the sector—although governments may make unilateral changes to the mission, as for example Sweden did in 2007, permitting its universities to own multiple companies, or in the Netherlands, where in 1992 the Law for Higher Education stated:

> 1. Universities are responsible for the provision of scientific education and undertaking scientific research, in every case … contributing knowledge for the benefit of society. (*Wet op het hoger onderwijs en wetenschappelijk onderzoek* (WHW) 1992, Article 1.3.1)

Where governments seek to add to the system as a whole, on a unilateral basis, then there are policies by which governments encourage universities to engage more in their core activities, and also enable universities to bid individually for funds which drive them towards engagement, such as regeneration or community education funding. Finally, governments may choose to add to the system at a distance by mobilising a national platform or collaborative organisation for university–community engagement, and incentivising its success by offering to reward its delivery of a solution that fulfils the government's broad wishes. This correspondence between the policy segmentation, Sect. 12.3.1, and their capacity to achieve system shifts is shown in Fig. 12.2.

12.4 From University Campuses to the Engagement Mission: Did the Australian System Shift?

The failure of community engagement to achieve its own legitimation, in the way that is evident in, for example, discussions around Impact and the REF in the United Kingdom, means that community engagement policies have a very strong tendency

to be mediated through the lenses of other activities and policy streams. Charles and Benneworth (2001) highlight the close relationships between regeneration and housing policy and universities' regional engagement missions in the United Kingdom in the 1990s. Campus development is quite clearly an area where there are opportunities to build–in community engagement, with significant sums involved in creating new institutions and reconfiguring existing institutions. This raises the question of whether that is sufficient to allow community engagement to eventually validate itself as an independent mission. To explain this, we briefly consider the experience of the development of community-facing campuses in Australia from the 1980s onwards.

Individual states had been previously working with their universities to identify and designate new campuses in non-metropolitan areas with more community-based missions. During the 1990s, the Queensland government brokered a deal with several universities and the Commonwealth government to use additional student places to establish some new campuses, partly underpinned by capital investment from the state, in order to better serve particular localities. These new campuses included the following campuses defined by a focus on local community needs, providing limited educational offerings and research support to meet local demands:

- The University of Queensland created a new campus focused strongly on regional engagement in the industrial town of Ipswich inland from Brisbane. The campus incorporates a centre for research in partnership with the local community and provides community facilities.
- Griffith University established a new campus at Logan, south of Brisbane, in an area of rapid growth and low socio-economic status. This campus is strongly focused on attracting local students from disadvantaged groups.
- The University of Southern Queensland established a new campus in Hervey Bay, an area with no HE provision, low income and with very low levels of graduates. This small campus has a very local focus and works very closely with the local community including sharing new joint library and community centre.
- The University of the Sunshine Coast, the newest public university in Australia is often given as an example of a new university with a specific community mission. Although the mission to serve the local community on the Sunshine Coast is not made totally clear in the act of establishment of the university, the university interprets its mission as to serve that community.

Australia in the late 2000s was characterised by a move to mission-based compacts between universities and the Commonwealth government. All universities were expected to sign a compact with the two lead government departments which covers the mission and vision, and the institutions commitments in the field of teaching and learning, and research. In the Framework for Discussion (Australian Government 2009) it was stated that:

> Compacts will give institutional universities the chance to build on their strengths and articulate the role they play in the higher education and innovation systems and their local regions and communities. They will facilitate greater specialisation within the sector and greater diversity of mission. (p. 1)

The dominance of the core missions was visible in debates around funding, in particular the regional loading. Regional loading was additional funding provided to non-metropolitan campuses to compensate for the higher costs of operation, on the greater difficulties in attracting and retaining students, on the lower levels of participation in non-metropolitan areas and on the higher costs of meeting needs with lower scale of this compensated the higher costs of delivering teaching and research regionally (entitlement), rather than being related to desired community benefits (incentive). More broadly, behind a rhetoric of the importance of university campuses to non-metropolitan communities, the policy for adequately funding such campuses was left to narrow sectoral ministries which choose to regard such campuses as teaching institutions rather than wider community resources.

Compacts were expected to reflect particular needs; thus, although universities were expected to articulate 'responsiveness to the economic and social needs of the region', and was not universal. Prior spatial configuration carried forward into the mission-based compacts, and it is visible in Queensland, where the State Government had been actively pushing the community development and engagement role of higher education, and the universities have a strong engagement mission. This tendency to develop small local campuses has become quite common across Australia and there are examples in most of the other states, such as the Burnie campus of the University of Tasmania, the Bunbury campus of Edith Cowan University in Western Australia or the Gippsland campus of Monash University in Victoria.

The Australian example is illuminating in terms of policies for stimulating engagement, in that it began by policy-makers creating activity and then configuring the institutions to make that activity more central to the institutional mission. This highlights the importance of effective engagement being central to university missions, and in the Australian case, engagement was literally built into those institutions through new campuses. The new campuses were immediately forced to engage with the pressures imposed on them by teaching and funding streams that did not necessarily stimulate engagement, but they were at least optimised locationally for engagement, and could secure their survival through engagement activities. That notwithstanding, community engagement has not emerged as a strong feature of the interim compacts available at the time of writing, highlighting the strong centripetal tendency surrounding university missions of teaching and research.

This provides us with a means to interpret the two policy areas from Australia that attempted to drive a system shift. The community campuses were a version of allowing universities to attract additional engagement funds, in this case regeneration and community development funds, to build the idea of engagement into the institutional fabrics and location. The mission-based compacts were an attempt to regulate the university core mission and in particular to create a class of 'regional' university— regional in this case referring to non-metropolitan Australia, to complement the 'Group of 8' large, research-intensive universities.

In this chapter, we have been concerned to look at the way policies for engagement fit within the complex governance systems and higher education systems which shape universities' room for manoeuvre. The example taken from Australia provided an interesting example of system evolution, in which a particular state was able to shift

its universities and hence shift the way their mission was later defined through their compacts with government. It is important not to conclude merely that systems are complex and change is difficult to achieve, and the Australian example suggests some tantalising ways that this system shift might take place.

The hallmarks of the Australian point are threefold. Firstly, individual interventions were not enough to achieve the shift—there were bundles of changes that led to the wider change. The second is that there was a sequencing of events, so firstly there was a national higher education policy that created regional universities with links to regions that found themselves in crisis, then to solve those crises governments encouraged universities to work with those regions. That led to the universities defining themselves as 'regional': The emergence in the Australian policy discourse of the 'idea' of a regional university and even the (ultimately ill-fated) idea mooted in the 2009 Bradley Review of Australian higher education to create a Regional University for Australia. The third was that there were ultimately 'big' political agendas lying behind the changes, in particular, the demands of regional (rural) areas which were key Australian electoral battlegrounds, so becoming enrolled in this bigger political process created a broader driver for system change.

These issues are explored in more detail in the Chap. 13, which explores four policies which sought to change their national HE systems and the position of community engagement in that system. What happened in Australia can be regarded as an engagement journey, whereby institutions began changes unaware of their final destination, and evolved towards being engaged institutions. By contrast, in Chap. 13 we take four examples of policy areas where governments have attempted a purposive 'system-shift' to make university–community engagement a more central part of university activity or at least to improve the environment for those that regard it as a worthy activity.

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Chapter 13
Policies for Promoting University–Community Engagement in Practice

Paul Benneworth and Ben Jongbloed

13.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, Benneworth and Charles set out a typology of six kinds of policies that governments might use to stimulate university–community engagement and related them to techniques by which governments might try to drive higher education systems so that they become less discouraging for university–community engagement. Viewed from the perspective of the principal-agent challenge raised in Chap. 12, the critical issue in university–community engagement policy is ensuring that the (university) agents are supportive of rather than resistive to those engagement activities. The question for policy-makers is how can that be done: governments lack the specialist expertise to compel universities to engage with communities. The overarching message in Chaps. 14–16 is that developing objective metrics for community engagement has been bedevilled by complexity. May and Perry (Chap. 11, this book) articulate the challenge neatly:

> What perpetuates in the face of variable and changing external expectations and internal variability in the values attached to different kinds of activities is a model of the engaged, altruistic virtuoso undertaking activities on the basis of good will. Yet the very factors outlined above—in terms of organisational structures, processes and cultures—work to minimise the extent to which the dispositions of academics to engage can be realised. Limited and short-sighted ideas of competition prevail, coupled with the pursuit of a narrowly defined excellence.

In this chapter, we consider how can universities be made to *want* to engage, not just being offered incentives for engagement, but for there to be an ethical or intuitive feeling that engagement is possible. The earlier chapters have shown that the peripherality of the community engagement mission is a function of complex policy and stakeholder systems. The answer for making universities more engaged is in driving a gradual process of system shift in which the system pulls in a common direction.

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The previous chapter looked at how developing new engagement campuses in Australia was a 'bundled' policy which effectively built engagement into teaching policy and helped to define from the bottom-up the way some universities in Queensland selected their core missions. This idea of 'bundles' or policy trajectories seems like a useful starting point to explore how policies can drive change in systems with strong centripetal tendencies which reinforce community engagement as peripheral and peripheralised. In Sect. 13.2, we develop a conceptual mechanism for understanding university–community engagement policy, given this peripherality, and explore four of these policy 'bundles' in practice.

13.2 Analysing Complex Systems and Peripheral Policy Goals Around Engagement

The four policy instruments we present in this chapter were by governments in ways that can be interpreted as an ostensible attempt to create more engaged university systems, or at least, systems which are not so resistant to engagement efforts by universities. All represented, in some way, substantial policy efforts, in terms of the resources devoted and the symbolism of the decision to pursue them. Whilst it is not possible to comprehensively evaluate the contribution that they have made to system shift, they do present some interesting insights into how policy-makers could give their policies to university–community engagement the best chance of success.

The first policy we examine are the Community–University Research Alliances from Canada where universities were able to access core funding for community-based research if they were able to develop plausible and excellence research infrastructures which involved community partners. Funding was also provided for the bid writing process in recognition of the difficulty that exists in community partners finding time to participate in academic activities (cf. Chap. 3). In a previous publication, we have already explored the extent to which this policy was able to bring community stakeholders more central to university decision-making (Benneworth and Jongbloed 2009), and in this we extend our analysis to its system-shifting effects.

The second policy is the Dutch Leading Social Research Institutes, which consist of four organisations that were created around 2005 in order to stimulate a collective and coordinated research effort across universities, business, government and public institutions. We focus in particular on one of these institutes, Nicis, which focused on urban governance, and in particular sought to create a situation where researchers helped to place better understanding social exclusion higher up policy-makers' research agendas. The system-shifting potential of this policy can be conceived of as potentially creating a much stronger demand—articulated through municipalities, who are strong in Dutch governance systems—for knowledge about excluded communities, which in turn stimulated more engaged research.

The third policy was the '10 % HEIF quantum', part of the third round of England's Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF) which funded universities' third stream

Table 13.1 The characteristics of the four chosen policy instruments following Benneworth and Charles (this book)

	CURAs	MTIs	HEIF quantum	Beacons
Regulation of the university mission		√	√	
Core funding for the mission	√		√√	
Additional funds for engagement activities	√	√√	√	√√
Access for universities to wider community/engagement schemes				
Encouragement of a community focus in core activities	√√	√√	√	√
Sectoral platform for university–community engagement	√	√		√√

activities. The 10 % quantum was a unit of resource provided to universities—10 % of their total contribution—which was made independent of performance against metrics, to be available for the delivery of societal benefits which were not easily measured. This intended to mitigate against the tendency of universities to invest HEIF on delivering outputs which counted towards indicators used for funding allocations. The intention was to provide a stimulation for more community-focused engagement activity which would then become sustainable in its own terms.

The final policy was the Beacons for Public Engagement, which intended to create a critical mass of activity around engagement which made engagement central to academic activity (Zilahy and Huisingh 2009). The idea emerged out of concern that academics were being insufficiently successful in communicating their messages to wider publics and generating credit for the research activity they undertook (HEFCE 2006b). Within this, engagement with excluded communities formed part of the remit of two of the six funded beacons, those led by Manchester and Newcastle Universities, as well as part of the mission of the coordinating centre. Although at the time of writing the project was still underway, it provides an interesting illustration of the inertia and centripetal forces present in higher education systems which influence and ultimately limit government attempts to stimulate engagement.

The criteria for the selection of the four policies were in part opportunistic, because they represented case studies for which considerable published material was available and accessible. The method used in this chapter was primarily based on analysis of that secondary material as cited and referenced. The section on the HEIF quantum drew on material from interviews at 12 universities in the north–east and north–west of England in 2008 and 2009 as part of the universities and community engagement project (see Chap. 5 for full overview). The section on the Beacons for Public Engagement involved interviews with those involved with the Newcastle–Durham and Manchester Beacons as well as interviews, discussions and correspondence with the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement.

We regard all four policies as representing serious attempts by governments to shift their higher education systems and also provide a set of policies with both a balanced policy focus, as well as representing different modes of system shift. Table 13.1 maps the policies against the typology provided in the previous chapter, and observes that the only missing area is in providing access for universities to

	Steering in networks	Steering by networks
System segmentation	Canadia CURAs Australian Community Campus	Australian mission compacts
System addition	English HEIF Quantum	UK Beacons for Public Engagement Dutch Leading Social Institutes

Fig. 13.1 Mapping system transformation university–community engagement policies to modes of system shift

wider community engagement schemes, already covered in Chap. 12. In mapping
the policies to the modes of system shift (Fig. 13.1), we see that what is missing is the
policies dealing with system segmentation, steering by networks, and we argue that
this was covered in the previous chapter by the Australian mission-based compacts
policy. For the sake of completeness, these two Australian examples have been added
to Fig. 13.1.

13.3 Canada's Community–University Research Alliances (CURAs)

The Canadian CURA programme emerged in the context of long-running Canadian
negotiations about the science budget. After a long period of austerity and real term
budget declines, the Canadian Government negotiated a compact with the Asso-
ciation of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC, Canada's higher education
representative body) to double research funding in return for a trebling of the benefits
which universities created for society. This created a huge groundswell of pressure
in the research community to demonstrate their impacts, and in funders to ensure
that their funding stimulated the generation of useful benefits alongside traditional
research outputs (Benneworth and Jongbloed 2009). At the sectoral level, AUCC
agreed with the Federal Government, the so-called *Momentum* approach, where the
sector would report regularly on the benefits which universities and colleges were
producing for Canada (cf. AUCC 2002, 2005).

The CURA idea emerged out of negotiations between the Social Sciences and
Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) and the Canadian Federation
for the Humanities and Social Sciences (CFHSS, cf. Benneworth and Jongbloed
2007). CFHSS were concerned in the late 1990s that the adoption of the Association
of University Technology Managers (AUTM) indicators by Canadian institutions
(as indeed happened) would damage the status of social sciences and humanities
in Canadian universities. CFHSS therefore proposed the creation of community
research and information crossroads (CRICs)—effectively community liaison offices

(in the mould of Industrial Liaison Offices) for Canadian universities to encourage engagement with excluded communities. They applied for SSHRC funding, and after consultation with community groups that proved promising, the SSHRC board committed to fund a pilot for these CRICs.

In 2002, as the negotiations around the CRICs were concluding, the Federal Government announced the compact for a doubling of resource for science as a whole, in return for a trebling of output by universities. This offered the opportunity to put substantial research resources behind CRICs, rather than them simply being a liaison point for communities in the university. SSHRC therefore created the idea of the CURAs as a pilot research activity, rather than reach-out action. They were consortium of universities and community groups who came together to bid for Research Council funding around a research agenda that was both scientifically excellent and relevant to the community organisations. Radically, within the proposals was that the consortium could be led by—and research funding received by—community groups as well as universities.

The process also offered these community groups seed-corn funding (CAD$ 20,000) to get involved with the development of proposals as well as execution of research, recognising the lack of resources that such groups enjoyed (cf. Chap. 3). Successful bids were then granted up to CAD$ 1 million funding annually for 5 years and then 2 years of funding to bring the project to a close. The Consortia had to be organised in such a way that the community groups were involved in co-production of knowledge within the research activities, and not as a peripheral user group. The CURA programme was evaluated a number of times following its completion, and the evaluations identified, that in broad lines, the project had succeeded (inter alia SSHRC 2001; Kishchuk 2003; Barrington Research 2004, cited in AUCC 2008).

The idea was clearly attractive to universities: 120 proposals were made for the first round, of which 15 were successful. What the proposals did differ in was the extent to which they allowed community representatives to shape the research agenda: Some partnerships were open and allowed substantive community engagement, including the four consortia led by community organisations (viz. Kamloops Art Gallery, Research and Education for Solutions to Violence and Abuse, the Canadian Forum on Civil Justice, and Community Services Council of Newfoundland and Labrador). An ex post evaluation of the project from the Office of Community-Based Research at the University of Victoria summed up its achievements as follows.

> In most cases grants are $ 200 k/year for up to five years. This represents a total of $ 107 m in committed investment in community university partnerships ($ 67 m in actual expenditures to 2008), that are required to demonstrate outcomes in original research, knowledge mobilization for community benefit, student training (which involves, on average, up to 50 students per CURA) and education. A further 284 "Letters of Intent" for CURAs were successful, involving a maximum of $ 20 k for development of full proposals. In total, 703 eligible applications for CURAs were received by SSHRC from 1999 to 2008 (there was no proposal call in 2001 when the program was reviewed), of which 40 % were awarded a development grant, and 15 % were awarded a full grant. In the 2004 "CURA Milestone and Year 1 Reports", CURA projects described a wide variety of knowledge mobilization plans for both academic and non-academic audiences, reflecting the wide variety of research projects. A total of approximately 400 events aimed at non-academic audiences and 250 events aimed at academic audiences were proposed. (Hall et al. 2009, p. 19)

The CURA instrument was interesting because it demonstrated a number of features involved in attempting to make universities more actively involved with communities in undertaking one of their core activities, their research. Firstly, the CURA approach demonstrated that even a relatively small-scale project was expensive and of a long term—the funding involved was substantial, and the time horizons for the research were long, involving effectively nearly a decade from the production of the expression of interest to the completion of the full project. Although it is not particularly novel to say that achieving outcomes in engagement is expensive, what it underscores is the fact that increasing the scale of engagement by universities takes substantial additional resources.

The second element was that the CURA instrument worked by making excluded communities a more salient stakeholder for the university in terms of accessing research resources *where appropriate*. In order to access these resources, at a time when, generally speaking, universities were very short of free research funds, the proposals had to seriously involve community participation. This requirement meant that the universities involved had to cede a degree of control over topics and agendas to community partners—although with the mixed results in practice that Kishchuk (2003) highlights. The fact that this requirement was restricted to CURA proposals meant that considerable resistance within the sector was avoided by only making one particular funding stream, one where the relevance to and of excluded communities was undeniable, dependent on effectively involving those communities within research governance arrangements.

Thirdly and arguably, the most interesting of all of this was the way that this instrument was introduced as part of a change in approaches to university engagement associated with an increase in funding. Universities had to demonstrate their improved engagement activity. But, rather than using existing metrics to channel the 'idea of engagement' down a route towards business engagement, it used a model of multi-dimensional impacts (AUCC 2002) where business engagement was just one of these strands (see Fig. 13.2). The model was backed by universities as well as the disciplinary organisations as a means of ensuring that in particular art, humanities and social sciences were not disadvantaged in the rush to ensure universities delivered benefits for Canada as a whole.

The story of the CURAs is therefore tied up with a more general shift within Canada to a more well-rounded understanding of university–community engagement in which business engagement has been 'tamed' as one element of impacts but not allowed to completely dominate definitions of the benefits which universities bring to their society. The CURA initiative was inserted into the space which this approach permitted and encouraged universities to behave more strategically in working with communities in order to access core research resources to support their own institutional excellence, making that in turn contingent, upon engaging with particular community groups. The initiative emerged out of an evolution of a proposal within the sector and represented more of a step forward in what was possible than a complete revolution in university–community engagement. The CURA instrument was therefore an interesting experiment in embedding community engagement more coherently within universities' existing research activities.
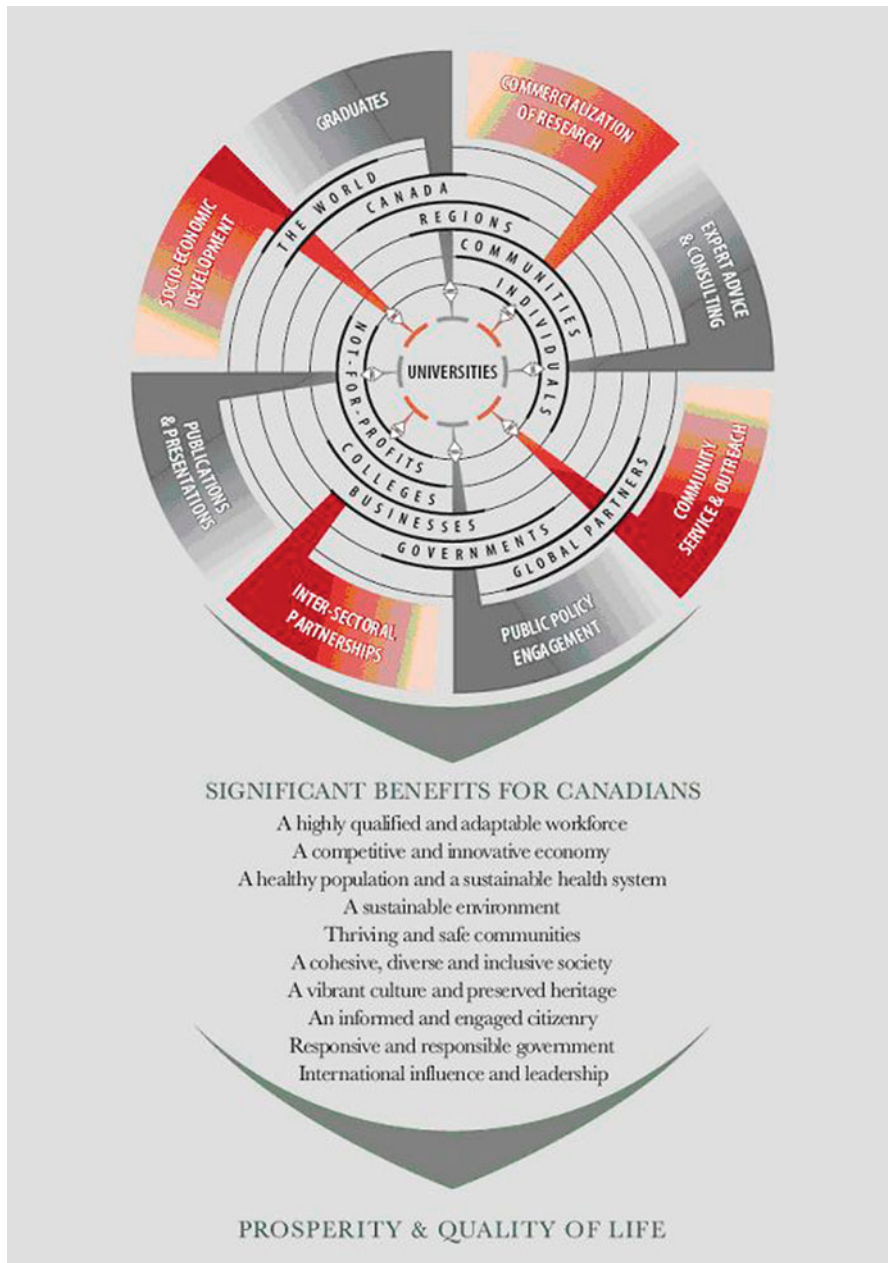
Fig. 13.2 The 'balanced scorecard' approach to engagement in the impact agenda. (Source: AUCC 2002)

13.4 The Netherlands Leading Social Research Institutions (MTIs)

The second example of a policy which has sought to stimulate, more structurally, universities' engagement with excluded communities has been the creation in the Netherlands of the Leading Social Research Institutions (MTIs, qv), and in particular, Nicis, responsible for urban regeneration and development. Seven of the Netherlands' 14 academic universities are involved in the Nicis institute in some way. This suggests that this may have been a successful mechanism for encouraging universities to engage with particular societal problems (Nicis 2010). The Nicis model was relatively bottom-up in the sense of encouraging particular activities by researchers as well as knowledge exchange between academics and practitioners.

The background to the MTIs lies within a Dutch policy innovation, dating to 1999, the creation of the Leading Technology Institutes (TTIs, *Top Technologische Instituten*). The TTIs were created by the Dutch government as public–private partnerships, initially as a coordinating instrument to bring business and universities closer together in technology domains which were seen as being critical to the future of the Dutch economy including telematics, materials science and nanotechnology. These institutes were extremely positively reviewed in an OECD review of public–private partnerships for stimulating innovation policy. After 2003, a new government was elected with a mandate to increase innovation in the public and private spheres, and therefore this TTI model moved into the policy discourse as an accepted working model for stimulating innovation.

At around this time, the Dutch Advisory Council for Science and Technology (*Adviesraad for Wetenschap en Technologie*, AWT) published a highly critical report on the way universities and the Dutch science system were responding to the challenges of multi-disciplinary research. The report was published in response to a request from the minister from education, culture and education, which was in turn a reflection of a sense of disquiet within key political actors in the Netherlands over the contribution of universities to solving key social problems. Given that this very critical piece of advice emerged at the same time as the TTIs were praised by the OECD, it is perhaps unsurprising that the TTIs became a model for the solution adopted by the Dutch government. The advice itself (AWT 2003) indeed proposed the use of these leading social institutes as a solution, and this proposal was adopted by the government.

This played very strongly into the theme established by the Dutch government (2003–2007) to promote innovation in the Netherlands. An innovation platform was called into life to bring the key players interested in innovation together to try to develop a national strategy for innovation, and identifying a few early pilot projects to create some momentum around innovation and innovation policy in the Dutch government. At the same time, and partly in a response to these pressures, the Dutch Scientific Council, the NWO, was under pressure to increase the relevance of its own research. Although the issue of relevance had been mentioned in the NWO's strategy for 2003–2005, by the time of the publication of its 2007 strategy, 'knowledge

valued', exploitation of knowledge was a key theme of its strategy. Therefore, NWO initially ensured that substantial amounts of resources were placed into the three (initially) MTIs created, € 5 million each for their first 5 years.

The purpose of all the MTIs was to use research resources from both government departments and also from the NWO, along with private financing, to develop, implement and fund a research programme oriented to providing answers to significant social questions. The choice of MTIs was based on the existence of strength on both the supply and demand side, as far as knowledge is concerned (Kamerbeek 2005). Three areas were chosen, each being areas where there wer strong research groups and strong market interest.

- Pensions, where the 2003 Spinoza prize winner had used his prize to establish the Network on the Studies of Pensions, Ageing and Retirement.
- International Law was established on the basis of connections between Dutch Universities, and the International Court at the Hague.
- Urban regeneration, based on the Knowledge Network for Urban Development, an established collaboration of municipalities in the Randstad and other large Dutch cities.

Nicis was established to bring a sense of urgency to solving social problems in the Urban Innovation Programme (in Dutch the Stedelijke Innovatie Programma (STIP) 2004–2009) funded by the NWO and which was passed over to Nicis to manage. This situation was repeated with the research programme, Knowledge for Powerful Cities (2007–2012), also by NWO. This drew on the Fund for Infrastructural Strengthening, which in turn drew its funding from the Dutch Hydrocarbon Fund, and represented additional funds for NWO. Nicis also helped NWO to make the more general case that it was investing in research which was immediately useful and helpful for Dutch society. The other drivers for this were the large cities and municipalities, which had been making the cases for greater investments in solving the problems they faced. Nicis became a means to underpin their case with greater evidence into the scope of the problems and the kind of interventions which might contribute to solving them.

In the latest of the research programmes, at the time of writing, there were six main themes, namely, management, economics & innovation, education & labour market, safety, welfare & integration, and housing. Each of those research themes was overseen by one research group in a Dutch university, funded to undertake excellent research, fulfilling the requirements and stipulations of the multi-annual research programme. The programme was overseen by a scientific committee of eminent foreign scientists as well as a user group, drawn from the representatives of the municipalities, who were also involved in funding the research. In that sense, Nicis represents an attempt to make university-research more useful for society, and some elements of it, notably excluded communities, without necessarily involving those communities directly in the selection of these domain areas (using communities in this sense in the way this book has used them, and not to confuse them with the Dutch word for municipalities, *gemeenten*, which can also be translated as communities).

The approach of Nicis has been successful at least as far as judged by the key stakeholders in the process, namely the governmental funders of the Institute. The

Commissie Opstelten reported positively, at the end of 2009, in an evaluation into the outcomes produced by Nicis in its first 5 years of operation, arguing that a long-term research programme was necessary, in a multi-disciplinary framework, to address the particular challenges facing large Dutch cities. Around this time, NWO and the Ministry for Education agreed to provide the follow-on funding to allow Nicis to implement its work programme for the period 2010–2014. This suggests that the MTI approach has at least been able to satisfy government funders of its use in helping to encourage universities to be more innovative and more oriented towards the application of their research in undertaking excellent research.

The Nicis experiment was an interesting approach in the sense that it transcended the idea that these kinds of research activity are transient. By creating a MTI for urban regeneration, the Dutch placed research into social exclusion and urban regeneration firmly onto the wider research agenda. Questions must be raised about the extent to which excluded communities are more than the objects of study for Nicis activities, with those engaged being principally policy-makers and practitioners rather those from within the concerned communities themselves.

In contrast to the CURAs, which created a relatively limited number of deep partnerships, the MTI experience has been to create many research activities into excluded communities, with limited automatic rights of involvement of communities in these researches. Nevertheless, through the research activities, communities have become involved in using the research experience to express their own views over urban policy. Benneworth (2010) highlights how, for example, an evaluation of co-decision making in social housing (Vos 2010) led to the development of social capital in those communities. This improved the quality of the housing not just because the needs of those communities were listened to, but because they became more confident and sensible in expressing their opinions.

13.5 England's 10 % Free Quantum in the Higher Education Innovation Fund

The third policy we highlight in this chapter is the experiment undertaken in the third round of England's Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF), which gave all universities a small percentage (10 %) of the overall grant which was not subjected to performance measurement or payment by results, whilst the remainder of the grant was calculated on the basis of academic staff numbers and external income generated. The idea behind this quantum was:

> to recognise performance that was not reflected well in external income measures. This element was calculated on the basis of data on dedicated third stream staff, numbers of engagements with SMEs, sandwich student placements and numbers of engagements with non-commercial organizations. (HEFCE 2006a)

This was abandoned in the fourth round of HEIF funding which reverted back to funding on the basis of staff numbers and externally generated income, with income generated from SMEs counting for double in the weighting measure (HEFCE 2008).

Understanding this situation requires understanding the emergence of the HEIF, and increasing pressures on governments to ensure that universities were being funded to produce useful outcomes. The Dearing Commission of Inquiry into the Future of Higher Education in the United Kingdom had originally recommended that the government introduce a permanent third stream of funding for higher education, to complement the capitation resource per student and the quality-based research funding which formed the first and second funding streams (NCIFHE 1997). This was implemented in England as the Higher Education Reach Out into Business and the Community (HERO-BC) fund, and introduced in 1998; all English HEIs were eligible to bid for the funding which provided a relatively small sum to fund a business or community engagement activity.

HERO-BC was evaluated and found to be successful, and in 2000, the Science White Paper announced that this one-off temporary measure was to be extended into a 'permanent' third stream of funding. This was to be called the Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF), and although the conditions changed between rounds 1 and 2, the principle was basically the same. Universities were eligible for a certain sum, and could bid for that sum subject, to their bid, meeting a minimum quality—criteria. There were some areas where HEFCE tried to use HEIF to stimulate institutional innovation, for example, in encouraging regional higher education consortia in the early 2000s. A second innovation in this period was that HEFCE, leading the UK research councils, also introduced a survey instrument to capture this engagement activity, the Higher Education Business Interaction (HEBI) survey (Charles et al. 2002).

In the third round of HEIF funding, as already indicated, funding was made dependent on a limited selection of indicators drawn from what had begun life as the HEBI survey but had evolved into the Higher Education Business and Community Interaction Survey (HEBCIS). This change in name reflected the growing scope of areas under which indicators were collected:

> HEFCE and the HE-BCI Stakeholders group have spent much time in developing indicators to measure the impact of activities that deliver benefits which, even more than other activities, cannot usefully be expressed in financial terms. These activities, categorised as [social, cultural and community engagement], are numerous and diverse and, as such, difficult to measure in a robust low burden manner. The 2002–03 questionnaire (Part A) included some trial questions. Following input from a variety of sources, including the HEFCE's Strategic Advisory Committee for Business and Community, we have developed table 5 to further address these impacts. The table does not attempt to capture all the diverse SCC activities. (HEFCE 2004, p. 1).

Table 5 in HEFCE (2004) included attendees and staff days spent on chargeable and free events in five main areas, public lectures, performance arts, exhibitions, museum education and other (HEFCE 2004). Four of these indicators were used to calculate this 10 % metric in the HEIF 3 round, numbers of staff employed in business and community engagement staff, numbers of small and medium-sized firms engaged with, numbers of community groups engaged with, and numbers of year-out sandwich students (HEFCE 2006a, Annex A).

The effects of this were visible in the strategies adopted by the institutions for engagement, and in particular encouraged a broader view of engagement than purely business engagement, or engagement with excluded communities where it provided access to particular subsidies (Benneworth et al. 2010b). Benneworth et al. analysed the HEIF 3 strategies of the seventeen universities in the North East and North West of England, and found that in HEIF 3, one-third of those institutions (6) had determined to use their HEIF funding to support community engagement activities in ways that were qualitatively different to those used in business engagement. It is important to stress at this point that these activities were not created de novo by HEIF, rather it allowed activities already under way in these institutions to receive additional institutional support, and justified them as valuable activities at a time when many such activities were under pressure.

The experiment, which came to an end with the publication, in 2008, of the HEIF Round 4 guidelines in which this smaller component was eliminated, was interesting because it demonstrates that community engagement activity is amenable to policy stimulation. Universities were willing when funding was made available to develop interesting models for knowledge exchange and engagement with excluded communities. However, the policy also illustrates the continuing problem around community engagement in that a single project and subsidy round was insufficient to establish community engagement as a core task for universities. HEIF allocated around £ 150 million annually to universities through the formula, 10 % through the 'social, cultural and community quantum' (i.e. £ 15 million annually), with no guarantee that all of that allocation went to community engagement.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that the reason for the discontinuation for the policy was that the 10 % quantum was always viewed as a transition measure, pending the development of more convincing metrics (cf. Day 2010). Towards the end of HEIF 3, when the various HEBCIS indicators were considered, the 'Table 5 metrics' (qv) were not regarded as robust enough to stand up to hold the confidence of the wider academic community, and therefore HEFCE reverted to income measures. Day (2010) pointed out that the total income generated by the sector from voluntary and community sector groups was greater than that from the business sector. Nevertheless, the relatively small sums involved were able to stimulate interesting experiments in university–community engagement that could conceivably have formed the basis for more community engagement.

13.6 Promoting Engagement Through Flagship Beacons for Public Engagement

The idea for Beacons for Public Engagement can trace its origins to the same 2000 UK Science White Paper that led to the creation of HEIF (cf. Sect. 13.5). The White Paper set the foundation for a doubling of the UK science budget after two decades of relative underfunding and underinvestment. The reason for this White Paper was that policy-makers were finally persuaded of the long-term returns on investment in

science, and that universities could be permitted a long-term perspective to generate returns, set at 20 years (Langlands 2009; Gummett 2009; cf. Sect. 12.4). From the point at which the science budget began to increase, science funders were aware of the need to be able to convincingly demonstrate impact, with doing so convincingly being important.

There is a long-standing concern in the United Kingdom with how public perceptions of science shape political willingness to support science and the impacts that this has on the kinds of research, development and technological innovation possible in the United Kingdom (Science and Technology Committee (S&TC) 1999; Select Committee on Science and Technology (SCST) 2000; Science and Technology Select Committee (STSC) 2002; Wilsdon et al. 2006). The notion of 'public understanding of science' emerged in the 1990s as the idea that if the public better understood scientific activities then they would support them. In the early 2000s, this idea was evolving into that of 'public engagement', in that science's 'license to practice' in society was dependent on science building linkages into society, and involving society in setting research agendas (Jackson et al. 2005). The idea underlying the Beacons for Public Engagement was to stimulate public engagement, which would sensitize the UK public to science's benefits, and make it easier for science funders to gain acceptance and convince people of the value of their impacts.

A key player in the emergence of the idea of Public Engagement was the Wellcome Trust, the largest private funder of research in the United Kingdom. The Wellcome Trust was active in ensuring public support for their area of interest, the potentially ethically contentious field of medicine, pharmaceuticals and life sciences (Wellcome 2002). Wellcome came together with the seven UK research councils and the Funding Councils from the four UK nations to launch the £ 9 million, four year Beacons for Public Engagement programme (HEFCE 2006). The explicit aim of the Beacons programme, as articulated in that initial brief was to:

> create a culture within HEIs and research institutes and centres where public engagement is formalised and embedded as a valued and recognised activity for staff at all levels and for students
>
> build capacity for public engagement within institutions and encourage staff at all levels, postgraduate students, and undergraduates where appropriate, to become involved
> ensure HEIs address public engagement within their strategic plans and that this is cascaded to departmental level
>
> create networks within and across institutions, and with external partners, to share good practice, celebrate their work and ensure that those involved in public engagement feel supported and able to draw on shared expertise
>
> enable HEIs to test different methods of supporting public engagement and to share learning. (HEFCE 2006, p. 4, bullets in original)

There was a two-stage bidding process, in which consortia assembled to bid for either Beacons or a national coordinating centre. The final outcome was six Beacon networks, involving around 80 HEIs, with the coordinating centre operating as a partnership between two Bristol-based universities, the University of Bristol and the University of the West of England. Clearly, the focus for the Beacons was not necessarily in engagement with excluded communities, but in engagement with the

public, of which excluded communities are just one segment. They are also a group that are typically very hard to engage with: They are not typically aware of the constraints that universities operate under nor of the social norms of public sector partnership activities, making them extremely easy to side-line if their engagement is seen as being 'difficult' in some way.

The six Beacons were based in Newcastle–Durham, Manchester, Norwich, University College (London), Cardiff and Edinburgh, all leading research universities with expertise in social affairs as well as with significant local problems of socially excluded communities. Each of them had a specific focus to their engagement, building on their own research profiles and engagement experience: Very generally, UCL and Cardiff focused on science education, Norwich and Edinburgh on public attitudes to technology and Manchester and Newcastle–Durham on engagement in the policy process. The aim with the Beacons was to create expertise and resources across the institutions as a whole, and therefore, community engagement was only really a relatively small element of their activities, and primarily focused on Manchester and Newcastle–Durham (Beacon NE).

Beacon NE emerged from past experience in Newcastle and Durham in public engagement, critically around the tensions between community regeneration and science investment. The International Centre for Life had been created using public regeneration funds to stimulate high-technology development and had been forced to think through precisely how it would generate benefit from nearby excluded communities who did not directly benefit from that regeneration (Benneworth et al. 2010a). The response had been the creation of the research centre, PEALS (Policy, Ethics and Life Sciences), to explore providing public acceptance of and involvement in local science research through engagement, pioneering in the early 2000s now common engagement techniques such as citizens' juries and *Cafés Scientifique*. The focus for Beacon NE was co-production of knowledge between science and publics around three key themes, energy & the environment, social inclusion and social justice, and ageing and vitality.

As part of the social inclusion and social justice theme; its theme leader at Durham University was able to secure funding for a new research centre, the Centre for Social Justice and Community Action. As Robinson and Hudson observed (Chap. 10, this book), Durham University is an institution which has long been wrestling with the tensions of being an elite institution in an extremely poor region. In 1932, the university petitioned the King to offer its assistance in helping dealing with the backwash of the Great Depression, and more recently, the collapse of employment and living standards in the Durham coalfield have confronted the university with a need to make a difference to its locality. In the late 1990s, Durham University became involved in a new regional campus in Stockton and this has made its local engagement all the more urgent (Fraser 1999). The centre therefore fitted well as part of its wider efforts to demonstrate more effectively its societal benefits and secure its position into the future.

This brought together people working across the university on these themes, who were working in a collaborative and participatory manner within a single research

centre, and sought to support extending collaborative knowledge creation with excluded communities. At the time of writing, it appeared very similar to the Canadian Model of CURA (qv) in that there was a steering group with co-membership of researchers and community organisations, a portfolio of participatory action research projects in community settings, and an International Advisory Committee (including two authors of chapters within this book, Saija and Hart). As well as the action research, there was a strong scientific programme, with seminar series and methodology training activities offered, and a high-quality publication record which underscored the extent to which the Beacon had been able to embed itself within and contribute to public and community engagement at Durham University.

13.7 University–Community Engagement Policies for Effective System Shifts

The four policies, when viewed as experiments, help to make more generally the point that it is possible for sensible intervention to encourage university engagement with communities that goes beyond a benevolent disinterest approach and instead binds that engagement into core university activities. The experiences do allow some other tentative conclusions to be drawn relating to the development of university engagement policies that help to shift the higher education policy system to be supportive of university–community engagement. There are a number of caveats and boundary conditions which help to nuance the message emerging in the other chapters in this part.

13.7.1 The Limits to Policies for University–Community Engagement

The first caveat is that the impact that these policies have brought has not been cheap by any measure: The CURAs cost CAD\$ 110 million over the 7 years of the programme, Nicis received € 25 million for its first 5 years, and the HEIF quantum represented around 10 % of the programme's total funds of £ 238 million or £ 24 million. These are substantial sums of funding in the context of the budgets of the funding agencies, although not in terms of the total expenditure on higher education in each of the countries. This is not a particularly popular message for policy-makers that doing something differently costs money. But at the same time, it is important to challenge the common-sense view that the fact that universities already have good community contacts means that small sums of money can unlock huge amounts of community engagement.

Nauwelaers and Wintjes (2002) note that for innovation policy, it is easy to fund direct technology transfer, but it is much harder to develop policy instruments that stimulate innovation in networks or across economies as a whole. We see an analogue

here with university–community engagement; it is easy to fund particular community engagement activities. It is much harder to create inter-related networks of communities and universities whose interdependence kept them interacting and co-operating once funding support ended.

The second caveat, continuing the first, was that it was extremely difficult to stimulate behavioural change through the use of these occasional funding streams and projects. Both Nicis and the CURAs operated through funding particular research groups to undertake research with a particular research focus. Although HEIF3 did try to reward activity at the level of the institution and to maximise behaviour in the sector, once that incentive was removed, it was apparent there was no structural behavioural shift as universities' valorisation activities reverted towards engagement with funded partners.

In all cases, what was not achieved was a shift at the level of the system, rather funding agencies paid for a certain amount of community engagement (possibly maximising it through competition). As a result, the outcomes were not sustainable, and continued funding was necessary for them to continue. Of course, certain groups had been sensitised to the value of working with communities as a way of generating income, but having been sensitised to income generation, it suggests, the loss of that funding stream would in turn have a discouraging effect.

A final comment that is necessary to make was that it was clear that these measures were far better at engaging universities to work with intermediary organisations rather than directly with the community groups. The immediately preceding chapter told a story of a university-level partnership project that worked directly with community groups (cf. Chap. 3) as did Durham University's Centre for Social Justice and Community Action. Likewise, some HEIF 3 funding in some universities was invested in some community development activities—so for example, Edge Hill's HEIF 3 proposal (2007) included (and was implemented to deliver) direct contact with community groups, building on their experience in that area. But for the other two instruments this was not the case—in Nicis, the emphasis is on providing knowledge for policy-makers rather than the communities themselves. The CURAs required well-configured community partners to be able to provide a leadership role in the way that the public sector would understand it. That is not necessarily always easy for small, vulnerable organisations facing pressures to sustain service standards and meet the demands of their own user groups.

13.7.2   Policies for System Shifting to Promote Effective University–Community Engagement

One potential way to reconcile these different limitations and restrictions might be to consider university–community engagement as a kind of eco-system with universities, intermediaries, and communities. Effective engagement depends on solid linkages between the various groups, so universities supporting their academics,

academics working directly with trusted communities and facilitated by various intermediary organisations, which in turn pressurise university managers to remain committed to engagement.

What policy cannot do is to create de novo that ecosystem—it is something that evolves in particular places—and the best that policy can hope to do is to encourage linkages between different elements of the system, and hope that those linkages continue to build up, with the eventual end point of a well-functioning system. That system lies at the heart of the story Hart and Aumann (Chap. 3) tell about CUPP in Brighton—the 40 or so university–community linkages were one element of the ecosystem, but a supportive Vice Chancellor and university environment were equally important.

One could imagine different kinds of ecosystem depending on the kinds of linkages within the system; an important dimension in policy terms here is what creates the linkages between universities and the community. The kinds of relationships that universities have with communities vary considerably, depending on whether the relationship is in research, recruitment/Widening Participation, lifelong learning, or student placements. For policy-makers, a key consideration in developing an instrument must therefore be its impact on the kinds of relationship already in place, to encourage and not displace activity; encouraging stronger community research relationships makes sense where there is already a good set of co-creation activities going on, but may fail if the primary links into the community are in student placements.

As community engagement by universities is relatively advanced in terms of activities but relatively novel in terms of policies, it is necessary to be modest and careful in designing policies to stimulate more and better engagement. There is a need for a much better understanding—at an institutional or even divisional level—of where that activity is, how it fits into the wider ecology of engagement relationships, and how that can change the system towards being more supportive of engagement. For some universities, community engagement is a relatively small element of all engagement, and part of the ecosystem is the way that community engagement can establish its validity with respect to other kinds of engagement activities that may be closer to core institutional missions. In these kinds of situation modest and tentative experiments can be useful in helping community engagement to establish itself within a university.

The overall message from this chapter, and also for this part, as a whole, is that good engagement policies encourage deft, light-touch activities which are well tailored to particular institutional activities. Successful community engagement must fit with universities' core activities, and this means that it must fit with something in which the university is interested. There is a clear risk that the university seeks to exclude community interests to manage its own institutional risk, because no university would wish to be dependent on an external private stakeholder for the fulfilment of its core obligations, meaning that universities work with existing, trusted partners. Over time those relationships build up to densify what might be thought of as the 'engagement ecosystem' around particular universities, and in particular to ensure that it remains well connected into, and at the service of the needs of, its key communities.

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Chapter 14
Learning from History

Previous Attempts to Measure Universities' Community Impacts

Ben Jongbloed and Paul Benneworth

14.1   Introduction

A number of contributions to this book have highlighted policy-makers' increasing emphasis of universities' third missions, including as part of this efforts to engage with and transform (the lives of) excluded communities. Part of the 'push' coming from policy measures to change institutional behaviours has involved attempts to enumerate that engagement activity. We identify at least six methodologies currently in use in some format for measuring community engagement activity, which raises the question of the extent to which these methodologies are able to capture "what matters" in community engagement, something which in the previous chapters has proven extremely difficult to precisely define. This chapter explores what these attempts and methodologies tell us about both how community engagement can be measured, and also how universities' key stakeholders perceive community engagement.

There are a variety of purposes underlying efforts to measure university–community engagement, and this has come about at the same time as efforts by external stakeholders to measure universities' wider 'third mission', closely linked to rising interest in exploiting universities' knowledge capital to drive economic growth within an increasingly knowledge-based world economy (Geiger 2004; Paytas et al. 2004; Lawton Smith 2007; OECD 2007). Many methodologies used for assessing engagement activity, therefore, consider community engagement within a wider set of commercialisation processes comprising the 'third mission'. This chapter, therefore, attempts to determine from a synthesis of a number of institutional assessment methodologies, *how* what matters for universities in community engagement has come to be understood.

What we observe in this chapter are difficulties in developing compelling and universal definitions for community engagement, and even greater difficulties in developing good measures for that engagement activity. It is hard to say here

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what the "cart" is and what is the "horse": Has it been difficult to develop good measures because there are no good definitions, or has a failure to measure hindered conceptualising what community engagement is? To that question, we have no easy answer. But community engagement has certainly been far less easy to measure than business engagement, where important outcomes are articulated both in indicator sets such as those used by the US Association of University Technology Managers (AUTM) and also increasingly adopted by governments as their measures of university impact (cf. Chap. 12).

There are three main messages emerging from this chapter. The first is that community engagement is very difficult to measure, in a meaningful sense that can be considered objective, even when universities are given broad discretion to choose their own goals. The second is that this makes assessment of community engagement a subjective task and therefore dependent on the perceptions and interests of those undertaking the measurement or assessment. The third is that this lack of objective definitions and intrinsic subjectivity makes it extremely difficult to define a singular university definition of what matters in engagement. At the same time, bringing together the different methodologies begins to highlight some of the key contours for what can be achieved in terms of university–community engagement.

14.2 Principles of University Assessment and Performance Management as Applied to University–Community Engagement

The starting point for this chapter is the rather simple observation that there are no straightforward measures for university community engagement, unlike the AUTM or UNICO indicators for commercial engagement (AUTM 2008; UNICO 2002). We argue that part of the problem in developing effectively accepted measures of university–community engagement arises from the nature of community engagement as a university mission. It is widely accepted that universities have special societal privileges and those privileges bring a set of responsibilities to their host societies. These privileges are never fully defined but the nexus of expectations, demands, claims and activities have been described by Barnett (2000) as the 'social contract', and covering a wide range of universities' societal impacts (cf. UUK 2009). Part of developing indicators for university–community engagement is, in turn, part of demonstrating that universities are upholding 'their' side of the deal.

As an aside, we also note that part of developing university–community engagement is in making the task manageable, in allowing principals (governments) to specify outcomes for the agents (universities). One reading of a failure to develop satisfactory community engagement indicators is that the agents have collectively rejected the idea that they should be managed in terms of community engagement. Identifying this is out-with the scope of this chapter, but would involve demonstrating that universities regarded other missions as more important and less threatening,

then negotiating with principals that the focus of steering them would be these other missions.

A series of problems in the looseness of the social contract emerge at a variety of levels in assessing community engagement. In this book, we are concerned with engagement with excluded communities—communities, as has already earlier been identified often have little to do with higher education. It is therefore hard to define compellingly what activities universities should specifically provide for these communities. Simultaneously the vagueness of the social contract, and the urgency to demonstrate the fulfilment of it, given the current economic crisis and the emergence of the knowledge economy, has driven universities and policy-makers to emphasise those things which are easily measured, are eye-catching and widely understood.

This does not create a particularly propitious environment for the dispassionate measurement of university–community engagement, and we argue that the relatively weak approaches developed for university–community engagement, in part, attempt to finesse a series of underlying problems. In order to understand these responses, presented in the following sections, we firstly look at problems that exist with indicator development for higher education, and in particular as applied to university–community engagement. We in particular highlight three problems here:

- There are two competing rationales for the measurement of engagement, between universities seeking self-improvement, and governments seeking to reward good performance.
- University–community engagement unlike business engagement is not readily reducible to directly comparable figures, and
- There are many activities legitimately undertaken under the auspices of community engagement, which correspond to differing institutional profiles.

14.2.1 Diversity of Rationales for Engagement: Toyotaism vs. New Public Management

The first problem is the range of different reasons for measuring university–community engagement. The rising volume of attempts to measure university performance in terms of community engagement has to be understood in the context of the rise of performance management as a public administration paradigm. There are a number of reasons why one might wish to measure university performance, as with any activity, and differences in those reasons can make different approaches for measuring that performance better under particular circumstances. The roots of assessment and performance management lie in the idea of scientific management, a notion which can trace its lineage back to Frederick Taylor's *The Principles of Scientific Management* (1911). Taylorism was an extremely top-down form of time-and-motion management in which tasks were reduced to the least-skilled single activities which were then managed 'scientifically' by a separate managerial class, in a way that minimised time-wasting by the unskilled labouring class.

Ideas of scientific management were refined by Japanese manufacturing in the 1950s in large corporations such as Toyota, which sought to reintroduce the autonomy

of the individual based on teamwork and collective improvement (Fujita and Childs-Hill 1995). They were driven by a desire to eliminate the problems which arise when small faults in complex manufacturing processes create substantial downstream problems, whilst at the same time not unduly burdening manufacturing systems in responding to the natural variation of inputs.

Improving performance relies on understanding the complex networks and inter-relationships through which manufacturing operates, gauging how well current performance matched to the potential, and improving processes to maximise system efficiency. This is direct performance management—measuring particular processes, seeking to identify problems in those processes, to eliminate those problems and have the numerical data which tells one that those problems are solved.

At the same time, a different variety of performance management has since spread from manufacturing into the service sector, and critically into the public sector. This has been associated with the introduction of a novel goal for performance management, for the assessment, measurement of performance, and allocation of rewards within state-centred quasi-market environments. This has become an increasingly important component of the way public services are currently managed and held to account.

Ackoff (1999) terms as 'new public management' the approach in which national governments contract with semi-autonomous service delivery organisations and fund them against measured performance to those targets. This is still a form of performance improvement, in that institutions are stimulated to improve by these targets—and critically, the threat that their contracts will be withdrawn. However, the stimulus is an indirect one, in that the measurement is not seeking to understand the performance of the system and to identify areas suitable for improvement.

A number of authors already in this book, notably Robinson and Hudson and May and Perry, have noted the pernicious effects which external performance management can have on universities as complex systems. We contend that these negative effects arise when performance management approaches are used in which these two logics are either confused or conflated. This undermines the coherence of the approach and risk mixing attempts to improve engagement processes within individual institutions from attempts to reward universities for their performance in terms of delivering against the societal mission. In the following analysis we, therefore, make a separation between indicators primarily focused on individual institutions—and improving their performance directly—and those which are focused on comparing competitive institutions—and indirectly improving performance by stimulating competition between institutions.

14.2.2 Problems of Monetary Quantifiability

The second problem arises out of the difficulties encountered in seeking to quantify community engagement, and particularly to append monetary values that correspond meaningfully to particular impacts. As background, it is necessary to remember that

business engagement, and those involved in its promotion, have been very effective at demonstrating their positive economic impacts. Business engagement often operates through contracts which generate income, which in turn employs people and drives economic expenditure (UUK 2009). Likewise, knowledge transfer helps companies start up and grow, and those employees also spend money, and support further employment. There are accepted indicators for university-business engagement and methodologies for calculating their wider economic impact (e.g. Florax 1992; McGregor et al. 2009).

The issue here is partly one of the salience of excluded communities (Benneworth and Jongbloed 2009) and the fact is that the poorest groups in society do not have substantial resources to invest in university research and third-stream activity. Moreover, there has been very limited uptake of ideas to give excluded communities any co-determination of resources to be spent within HEIs. Although that idea may at first sound frightening, one example of a firm–university codetermination policy is innovation vouchers, where SMEs who cannot necessarily afford to work with universities are given a small sum of money to pump-prime collaborative innovation. There have been some attempts by particular institutions to create community innovation vouchers, as Robinson and Hudson have related in the case of Durham University (cf. Chap. 10, this volume). However, the fundamental problem here is that excluded communities cannot readily pay for university knowledge, and therefore it has difficulties in having a price attached to it as determined in the market.

The absence of a 'price' for community engagement raises a number of further issues for the measurement of community engagement. The first of these problems is that the impact of community engagement never appears as compelling as that of business engagement. Although calculating indirect employment effects of knowledge transfer activities relies on many assumptions to produce a number, at the end, it allows impact expressible in a simple and apparently objective number, whether in terms of additional jobs or turnover. This has the effect of belittling community engagement activities, making them seem weak and locally valuable, whilst framing business engagement activities as strong and globally valuable (cf. Sect. 9.3.1).

The second issue is that it is much easier to measure the impacts of a few big activities than activities which make very small impacts repeatedly (particularly if those big activities have a set of outputs which can be expressed in terms of jobs or economic growth). But as we have seen in terms of the model of community engagement as stimulating collective learning within these communities, these are often impacts that may yet influence a collectivity rather than individuals. The difference made to individuals may not readily be measurable, particularly if it is something intangible, such as improved expression of interests within public governance networks. But measuring those impacts would require time and resource-intensive surveys of large groups to demonstrate these relatively small benefits, which might not at that point be perceptible to the beneficiaries. But this also can arouse the suspicion that these claims of special interests are rather convenient for those that wish to avoid evaluation, and raise the sense that community engagement is not really making 'proper' contributions.

The third issue is the fact that community engagement encompasses a very diverse range of activities which are not directly comparable, particularly at the level of outcome. At the level of output, community engagement involves writing for newspapers, attending meetings, making representations, drafting evidence, facilitating community workshops, undertaking novel community research, and training community members. Community engagement may variously seek to improve voting rates, community perceptions of safety, access to finance, information about social issues, relationships between communities and public professionals in health and education. This has the effect of encouraging those attempting to measure their community engagement activities to create lists of impacts. When seen against the fact that these are often not able to compellingly justify their economic impact, these long lists can give rise to a suspicion that community engagement is seeking to obscure its lack of economic impact.

14.2.3 Diversity of Activities

The final problem with the measurement of community engagement is related to the immediately preceding point, which is to say that community engagement covers a huge amount of activities which are not directly comparable. This is in part a reflection of the fact that different kinds of institutions undertake different kinds of engagement, which reflect both their profiles as well as the kinds of communities (including businesses as well as excluded communities) with which they naturally have connections. Throughout this book, it has been stressed that locally and universally useful knowledge are not incompatible. Therefore, we demur from the point here that there are some kinds of institutions for which community engagement is irrelevant because of their need to focus on 'world-class' or excellence. Our point is that different kinds of institution will be doing different kinds of engagement dependent on their research specialties, their curricular offer and indeed the demands placed on the university by community and other third party groups.

But in terms of the idea of a social contract, this necessary diversity adds a degree of complexity in terms of determining what the appropriate level of engagement by institutions is, in their local communities. There may be opportunistic reasons for universities to profile themselves as unsuitable for engagement when the reality is that they simply do not wish to undertake the efforts which engagement necessitates or profile themselves around that activity. Conversely, other institutions and universities may cherry-pick their engagement-activities and present a set of activities which are undertaken for one purpose, as demonstrating that they fulfil societal demands placed upon them. In the United States, for example, it is fairly common for universities located in inner city areas to undertake community engagement in a functional way to minimise resistance to any expansion plans that they may have (Webber 2005).

In such situations, universities are able to minimise external interference in their internal affairs, and minimise the extent to which engagement takes place. In the absence of any clearly defined simple indicators for community engagement, universities have become responsible for defining their own approaches to community

engagement, and collecting appropriate date for its measurement. Duggan and Kagan (2007) highlight from their own research practice that community groups often feel that they are deliberately excluded from universities' key decision-making arenas, and are offered a very limited selection of involvement in activities chosen by the universities in order to make a wider political statement. This can have the effect of silencing the voice of the community in the university, which is problematic, given that the community is intended to be the ultimate beneficiary.

Benneworth et al. (2010) have characterised these various factors coming together to create 'detached benevolence' in community engagement, which reduces community engagement to default to a form of corporate social responsibility rather than co-determination of stimulating learning processes in socially excluded communities. This detached benevolence is a substantial problem for university–community engagement, because on the one hand, it drives towards the selection of hard, independent outcome indicators for application to all universities to measure their community engagement. But at the same time, as has already been shown, there is a legitimate concern that different universities may choose to make different contributions to excluded communities.

14.3   Boundary Conditions for University–Community Engagement Indicators

These three preceding issues create a set of tensions which a range of indicator sets have had to negotiate, different approaches being framed depending on the purposes and priorities of the particular measurement approach. These tensions delineate a range of choices which those constructing indicator sets have to take in positioning themselves. These dimensions form the basis for the analysis that follows the overview of the indicator sets, which we divide into four groups as follows:

- *Quantifiability*: The extent to which it is possible, desirable and rational to get quantifiable data which measures the processes under consideration, as against reliance on qualitative and opinion data.
- *External verifiability*: The extent of the involvement of external auditors or reviewers in checking the data and assessment against the claims made by the institution for its own performance.
- *Flexibility*: The extent to which universities are able to choose from a suite of suitable/appropriate indicators deemed to best represent their institutional interest, versus the imposition of a set of limited variables against which all institutions in a particular set are assessed.
- *Fairness*: The extent to which it is intended that the indicators and measures chosen capture what the institution itself is seeking to do, as against engagement outcomes for the whole HEI system desired by policy-makers.

There is a rich literature on the topic of indicators for community/regional engagement. Some of this literature has proposed sets of indicators to use in evaluating the

benefits, costs and otherwise of university–community interactions (inter alia Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI) 1982; Goddard et al. 1994; OECD 2007; Jongbloed et al 2007). Our literature search identified the following sets of indicators, potentially applicable for analysing university–community interactions:

1. The Russell Group indicators for measuring third-stream activities (Molas-Gallart et al. 2002)
2. The Higher Education-Business and Community Interaction Survey (HE-BCI) carried out by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE 2007)
3. The PASCAL University Regional Engagement benchmarks (PURE 2009)
4. The AUCEA Community Engagement metrics (Garlick and Langworthy 2006)
5. The societal engagement indicators proposed in Sweden (Vetenskap & Allmänhet 2007)
6. The Carnegie Foundation Framework for elective classification of community engagement (Driscoll 2008).

We acknowledge that this is not a thorough coverage of the literature, but we do think it is representative, because as will be demonstrated in the analysis, there is good coverage of the key dimensions pulled out of the debates concerning university–community engagement. The heterogeneity of the contributions illustrates the considerable debate in the literature concerning how spill-overs and interactions between universities and communities actually take place and—consequently—about the way in which the university's impact on its regional environment can best be assessed (Bonaccorsi and Daraio 2005; Goldstein and Drucker 2006) and measured.

In the following sections, as previously noted, we make a distinction between performance measurement approaches, whose primary audience is individual institutions, and those whose audience are external, including funders. This represents a fundamental difference in intentionality in the purpose of the performance measures, between direct process improvement and indirect institutional improvement.

14.4   Institutionally Focused Performance Measurement

14.4.1   *The Carnegie Classification Community Engagement Elective*

For more than three decades, the Carnegie Classification has been the leading framework for describing institutional diversity in US higher education. With the 2005 revision of the Carnegie Classification (McCormick and Zhao 2005) the single classification system was replaced by a set of multiple, parallel classifications providing different lenses through which to view US colleges and universities. This re-examination of the classification system was initiated to better reflect the diversity of US higher education. One new elective classifications allows US higher education institutions the opportunity to have their "community engagement" acknowledged, defined broadly as

the 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 (Driscoll 2008).

Of the 76 colleges and universities recognised in the first elective classification, 44 are public and 32 are private; 36 are doctorate-granting universities, 21 are master's colleges and universities, 13 are baccalaureate colleges, five are community colleges, and one has a specialized arts focus. Within those 76 institutions are varied approaches to engagement; diverse partnerships in terms of disciplinary focus, size, length of time, and purposes; and varying interpretations of community, both conceptually and geographically. Among them, five documented only a focus on curricular engagement, and nine focused their documentation on outreach and partnerships, while 62 institutions qualified for classification in both categories (Driscoll 2008, p. 40).

Classification involves substantial effort invested in data gathering by participating institutions around two main areas: Foundational Indicators and Categories of Engagement. *Foundational Indicators* cover two categories: 'Institutional Identity and Culture' and 'Institutional Commitment', measured through required and optional documentation. One requirement of 'Institutional Identity and Culture' is that 'the institution indicates that community engagement is a priority in its mission' demonstrated through relevant quotations from mission statements. The 'Institutional Commitment' category requires documentation regarding budget, infrastructure, strategic planning, and faculty-development efforts to support community engagement.

Information in both categories is frequently qualitative, with the number of affirmative answers also providing an indication of institutional engagement. *Categories of Engagement* calls for data about, and examples and descriptions of, focused engagement activities in the categories of 'Curricular Engagement' and 'outreach and partnerships' demonstrated by describing teaching, learning, and scholarly activities that engage faculty, students, and the community in mutually beneficial and respectful collaboration, address community-identified needs, deepen students' civic and academic learning, enhance the well-being of the community, and enrich the scholarship of the institution.

14.4.2   PASCAL Universities and Regional Environments (PURE) Community Engagement Indicators

A second example of an institutional assessment device was the tool developed by Charles and Benneworth (2002), which languished until its adoption in 2009 as part of the PASCAL Observatory, a group of regional authorities and universities concerned with place management, social capital and learning regions. This group developed the PASCAL Universities Regional Engagement (PURE) programme, with management documents from this group highlighting that the benchmarking approach was still

experimental and developmental, focused upon 'learning and improving, not ranking or competing' (PURE 2010 p. 1; cf. PURE 2009).

Unlike Carnegie, the focus of Charles and Benneworth 2002 lay on regional engagement, with community engagement as one of eight processes within university regional engagement. These processes were identified through a piece of antecedent research, funded by Universities of United Kingdom and the Higher Education Funding Council for England, *The Regional Mission* (Charles & Benneworth 2001). The section on community engagement was added specifically in response to findings from the research project underlying this book, part of the research programme the *Regional Economic Impact of Higher Education Institutions*. The report identifies eight community engagement strands against which institutions were benchmarked, which come some way to define a field of community engagement activity:

- Contributing to healthy cities and health promotion
- Support for community-based regeneration
- Student–community action
- Opening up university facilities to the community
- Organising and hosting events and festivals for the community
- Coproduction of community-relevant research with community partners
- Supporting community and social development through the curriculum
- Leading debates around the university/society compact.

The approach was specifically a benchmarking approach: The authors defined performance at three qualitatively different levels, as representative of a more general performance spectrum. The methodology involved a team within the institution gathering appropriate data on their perceived institutional performance, placing themselves on the spectrum for each variable, and then consulting with external stakeholders in that process to gauge the extent to which their internal perceptions match external beliefs (Charles & Benneworth 2002; PURE 2009). The benchmarking tool had three principal functions:

- To assess improvements in the strategy, performance and outcomes of HEI's regional engagement
- To help the HEI set its strategic priorities
- To support joint strategies within a regional partnership.

14.4.3   AUCEA Community Engagement Metrics Matrix

The *Australian University Community Engagement Alliance* (AUCEA) committed itself to developing indicators to assess university community engagement , developing a series of potential benchmarks (Garlick and Langworthy 2006). Based on earlier studies proposing indicators for university-regional interaction, AUCEA began from the premise that higher education institutions (HEIs) can be seen as having a number of broad areas of core business that can contribute to local, regional and national

Table 14.1 Some examples from AUCEA engagement metrics. (Source: Langworthy 2007)

Goal	Measures
The university executive and wider staff are strongly linked to and engaged in regular and mutual dialogue with the community and community leaders on agreed priority issues	Number of community presentations and events contributed to, by staff, where there is new knowledge and university leadership contributing to community priorities
The university effectively resources identified engagement strategy	$ budget allocated to engagement as a proportion of total university operating budget
Engagement opportunities and activities are effectively communicated	Existence of engagement in communication strategy plan; and evidence of implementation in university publications, web sites and other public material
Ensure that innovation, research and consultancy has relevance to and impact upon the community	Number of grants received for projects undertaken in collaboration with industry and community as a proportion of all funded projects
	Partner perception of relevance and impact of research including research outcomes implemented
Designing new courses and redesigning existing courses in ways that are demonstrably based on student and community need	Number of community representatives on course advisory committees and number of meetings of advisory groups/reference groups
	Number of teaching and learning plans involving student collective input
	Number of courses that contain a perspective on community priorities in their design and delivery

objectives—which are delivered through community engagement. The draft framework was crafted around five overarching community engagement goals deemed to be common to all universities committed to community engagement.

1. To facilitate and encourage informed debate and dialogue in the community on issues of local and global importance.
2. To ensure university governance, management and administration processes support effective community engagement.
3. To ensure that university is accessible, outward reaching and responsive to its communities.
4. To increase the social, environmental and economic value of research to the university's communities.
5. To design and deliver high-quality teaching and learning that responds to community needs and produces graduates who are ethical, employable and engaged citizens.

Each of these five goals is further broken down to give a total of 18 strategies or actions along with a suggested measure: A number of the more pertinent ones are represented above (Table 14.1).

Table 14.2 Overview of the three institutionally focused community engagement indicator approaches

	Carnegie	Charles and Benneworth	AUCEA
Quantifiability	Limited to a simple count of whether a majority of the individual criteria are met	A Likert-type scale with different numbers on the scale representing points on a spectrum; no direct comparability between the variables	There are some quantitative variables, but no way of comparing between them or ranking institutions
Verifiability	Entirely based on self-certification by the participating institutions	Intended that institutions verify their self-assessment through a discussion process with local stakeholders and/or international peer-review team	A mix of self-assessment variables that can be externally verified and quantitative indicators that can be directly compared with other HEIs
Flexibility	HEIs can choose to respond to those indicators of the greatest interest to them; from 2010, the universities have to have a majority of activity in all categories	Universities that feel that particular indicators are non-applicable can disregard them as long as they are prepared to justify why they have been disregarded	There is limited flexibility; universities are supposed to report on all indicators for the 18 topic areas. There is flexibility in how the indicators themselves are developed by AUCEA
Fairness	The concern is on allowing universities that believe themselves to have a strong interest in community engagement to demonstrate that to an outside audience	The indicators aim to allow universities to make a case for the strength of their engagement, to identify priorities to address internally and to demonstrate engagement scope externally	The emphasis is on internal self-understanding; the process specifically precluded the development of a ladder comparing the 28 Australian HEIs

A subsequent paper by Langworthy (2008) identified that despite the publication of a proposed indicator set, Australian universities were still a considerable distance away from having implemented effective university–community engagement measures. It is significant to note, as Langworthy does, that the AUCEA measures do go a long way beyond the quality assurance audit, adopted by the Australian University Quality Agency, which sought out qualitative practices in community engagement, broadly defined (Stella and Baird 2008). The question is therefore raised of how far university–community engagement measures can go whilst they are not backed up by external review and scrutiny when it comes to implementation, even when they clearly align with a process directed at meeting a specific university interest/need (Table 14.2).

> The AUCEA Pilot was an ambitious project that has yielded some useful data but more importantly useful lessons about what data is currently captured in universities and the use

of this data. It has demonstrated the gap between the rhetoric and the reality, the dangers of survey fatigue and the distance still to be travelled. (Langworthy 2008, p. 8)

14.5 Accountability-Focused Performance Measures

14.5.1 Russell Group

In 2001, as part of discussions with government in the United Kingdom over how university's societal impact would be measured which led to the introduction of HEBCIS (cf. Chaps. 12 and 13), the Russell Group, at the time representing the United Kingdom's 22 most research intensive universities, commissioned the Science Policy Research Unit (SPRU) at the University of Sussex to develop a framework for analysing universities' third-stream activities. This was to be:

> ... an analytical framework and a comprehensive set of indicators that may assist in the tracking and management of university Third Stream activities. (Molas-Gallart et al. 2002)

Third-stream activities were defined as knowledge exchange and productive interactions with business, public sector organisations and the wider community, for the benefit of the economy and society. The report developed 34 indicators potentially to be gathered, although because of the relatively underdeveloped data collection systems at the time that the report was written, these were not then being implemented. A number of these activities fell under the classification which this book has taken to university–community engagement:

- Invitations to speak at non-academic conferences other than of research funders.
- Invitations to present participate in non-academic advisory boards.
- Income generated by leasing university facilities to outside groups.
- Number of external users of university facilities without a fee being charged.
- Number of events run and organised by university for public benefit.
- Non-academic collaboration in research (joint publications, research funding, research contributions).
- Placements of academic staff outward and non-academic staff inward.
- Media appearances and references.

There are a number of characteristics which we ascribe to the Russell Group indicator set. The first is that it was never implemented, it was an attempt by a group of universities with a specific profile (large, research intensive, urban, with medical schools) to shape the agenda for university engagement at a time when pressure for engagement was increasing. Secondly, was that the focus was the particular activities rather than the beneficiaries, so no account was taken of the rather nebulous definition of "user". Finally, the authors were quite explicit that this approach did not begin from ideal but rather existing indicators, and premised upon on attempting to increase volumes of current impacts rather than encourage universities to undertake new kinds of engagement.

14.5.2   HEBCIS

Related at least politically to the Russell Group classification was the Higher Education Business and Community Interaction Survey, developed by HEFCE (qv) as part of its own efforts to stimulate university third-stream activity, and to form the basis for a permanent third-funding stream for HEIs (Charles and Conway 2001). The instrument started life as the Higher Education Business Interaction survey, with community engagement added later once universities were ready to accept that the survey did not generate a substantial burden. The data collected has now been added to the statistical returns which institutions in the United Kingdom are required to submit to the Higher Education Statistics Agency, as well as being used for the allocation of third-stream funding, the Higher Education Innovation Fund. The majority of the indicators were financial (HEFCW 2006), but not necessarily adequately capturing what was important in terms of engaging with excluded communities.

> HEFCE and the HE-BCI Stakeholders group have spent much time in developing indicators to measure the impact of activities where financial income is a more inappropriate proxy for impact. These activities, categorised as [social, cultural, community, (SCC)], are numerous and varied and, as such, difficult to measure in a robust low burden manner. (HEFCW 2006, p. 14)

This is illustrated in the following table, taken from the HEBCIS return for 2006–2007 (Table 14.3), which shows the number of events designed for the external community, the number of attendees, and staff time involved in their development. This is an interesting approach in attempting to create a single standard 'value' for engagement, enumerating it in terms of the days of staff time involved and numbers of attendees.

However, a key issue here for the salience of these indicators to universities is given by the fact that they are not included in the indicators which are used to determine institutional allocations for 'third-stream funding'. Indeed HEFCE noted considerable institutional resistance to using such indicators for funding allocations. The funding allocations remain exclusively driven by quantitative indicators related to contract research, consultancy, equipment use, facilities access, regeneration and intellectual property indicators rather than the society, cultural, community indicators (HEFCE 2007).

There is little suggestion therefore that these HEFCE community engagement indicators have any great salience in influencing institutional behaviours, other than making the point that universities make a huge contribution to the social, cultural and community life of their host nation. Indeed in Scotland, the Scottish Government and the Scottish Funding council introduced a cultural engagement fund specifically recognising the bias towards commercialisation in traditional engagement policies (Benneworth and Jongbloed 2009).

Table 14.3 Events designed for the external community, English universities, 2006–2007

	Free events		Chargeable events	
	Attendees	Staff time (days)	Attendees	Staff time (days)
Public lectures	649,613	15,681	110,944	3,447
Performance (music, dance, drama)	412,568	10,412	1,392,082	11,789
Exhibitions (galleries, museums)	4,639,083	25,771	897,006	4,106
Museum education	388,620	4,886	35,092	807
Other	207,988,035	19,437	1,647,249	5,523

14.5.3   Sweden's Vetenskap & Allmänhet

In Sweden, the association *Vetenskap & Allmänhet* (Public & Science; VA) presented a set of indicators for measuring societal engagement (Vetenskap & Allmänhet 2007), part of the duty enshrined in the law for Swedish science to engage with its publics. This background study was carried out in the context of two national enquiries: The Academic Career Inquiry (*Befattningsutredningen*) and the Resources Inquiry (*Resursutredningen*). The aim of developing indicators was recognising that the best way 'to change attitudes is to place a clear value on societal engagement when resources are to be allocated by formalising the measurement of the efforts and initiatives of universities and by measuring such things as the number of papers published' (Vetenskap & Allmänhet 2007, p. 4).

The specific focus taken by VA was public engagement supporting the 'societal contract' by maintaining public trust in science, and as well as a set of institutional indicators, they proposed a set of indicators for individual researchers, the only one of the six to do that. They drew a distinction between three key groups as far as engagement by researchers was concerned, namely the public, research users and schools, as well as highlighting the role of engagement as generating income streams for research organisations. What was interesting about this discussion was the degree of consideration given to trying to compare between the different types of activity.

- Interaction with the public was to be measured by 'Publications, mass media, one-way communication' in terms of websites, media and journal articles alongside activities that make dialogue and contact possible.
- User engagement was to be measured through a mix of industrial measures similar to AUTM, as well as esteem measures for academics within non-academic spheres (e.g. participation in Inquiry Commissions).
- Schools engagement was to be measured by authoring of textbooks, and long-term collaborative projects (to avoid game-playing).
- The financial indicator was to be measured as a straightforward third-stream measure, covering revenues from patents, licensing, facilities use, services, courses provided.

The idea for the measurement (and rewarding of) engagement activity was that for each of the four engagement categories a university would be measured and

Table 14.4 Overview of the three accountability-focused community engagement indicator approaches

	Russell Group	HEBCIS	Sweden
Quantifiability	A primarily quantitative set of variables to be recommended for widespread gathering at the system level	A mix of quantitative and qualitative variables, with a coding of the qualitative variables into classes	A two-stage quantification process, firstly gathering data on a set of quantitative indicators, then assigning scores to institutions and individuals on the basis of comparative performance
Verifiability	Intended to be gathered by the universities themselves on the basis of what was readily available	Now passed to the Higher Education Statistics Agency and subject to the same institutional audit procedures as for university financial information	A concern to count only large-scale and significant activities to avoid game-playing on small-scale activities such as one-off school visits
Flexibility	The indicator set was already chosen to profile the Russell Group as contributing substantially to the United Kingdom 's third-stream effort, so already selective in the kinds of variables chosen	No flexibility–all institutions judged on the same data, although SCC data does not form part of the data used for the allocation of third-stream funding	There was to be a very limited degree of flexibility in the indicators, although clearly institutions and individuals would have choice in the kinds of engagement that they chose
Fairness	The aim was to judge between universities, and in particular to show that the Russell Group universities were better than the United Kingdom 's former polytechnics	They allow a comparison of institutional performance and aggregate demonstration of sectoral performance in terms of SCC	The aim of the indicators was to provide a score allowing institutions and individuals to be measured in terms of their output

rewarded in terms of their overall output by individuals. Thus four indicators would be constructed from the underlying diverse set of dimensions (public, users, schools, revenue), leading to a measurement system respecting diversity in engagement-activity and rewards such activity without over-emphasising a particular dimension of engagement. This avoided a bias towards, for example, commercialisation. No explicit attention was paid to excluded communities in the measurement and rewarding of engagement, but it was intended that for some types of engagement (for instance with schools) it is likely to take place primarily in the immediate environment of the university and potentially with excluded communities (Table 14.4).

14.6 The Messy Business of Assessing University–Community Engagement

This chapter seeks to explore what various extant attempts and methodologies to measure community engagement by universities can tell us about both how community engagement can be measured, and also how universities' key stakeholders and universities themselves perceive community engagement. This section now turns to reflect on the three problems set out following the literature review, namely the two competing rationales for measuring engagement, problems in reducing engagement to a set of numbers, and different kinds of engagement for different kinds of institution.

There is no simple consensus around ideal type indicators for university–community engagement, but by reflection on the six cases presented, it is possible to better understand the potential for assessing university–community engagement, as well as setting out the boundary conditions for effective assessment measures. Before turning to that latter issue, this section firstly reflects on the three underlying problems affecting university–community engagement.

In terms of the competing rationalities for community engagement, what is clear from the six examples is that there is a 'Copenhagen trade-off' involved in measuring community engagement between measuring for improvement and measuring for control. There is a great deal of variety of university–community engagement, and extremely detailed knowledge is necessary for individual institutions to improve their own performance. However, that extremely detailed knowledge—and the measures and metrics which can be used for that approach—are of little use in allocating funding because they relate so closely to institutional profile.

The first main message from this chapter is that there needs to be a clearer distinction therefore drawn between the purpose underlying measurement and assessment. We are not convinced that there are simply two underlying justifications: Universities may themselves measure their performance to improve it, but also to create public-relations successes, to attract students, to satisfy their local partners.

In terms of the second problem, holding universities to account and reducing community engagement to a set of numbers appears to be a fruitless pursuit unless those indicators are able to capture what really matters to those communities. At the same time, we see in the HEFCE and VA approaches that it is possible to develop a way of keeping track of engagement, whether in terms of hours of staff time (HEFCE), or an adjusted impact-based measure (VA), with the Russell Group set using a hybrid of these. There is great institutional resistance in England to allocating funding directly according to those measures because they are input rather than output measures, but the possibility at least exists.

Nevertheless, these metrics do offer direct comparability between very diverse activities, in terms of the staff time dedicated to those activities. This suggests that a resolution to measuring community engagement could be found in by bringing together the two elements, and measuring the staff time devoted to activities sanctioned or supported by the community, or attendance at events supported by communities.

Indeed, that forms one of the AUCEA metrics (Number of community presentations and events contributed to by staff where there is new knowledge and university leadership contributing to community priorities, Garlick & Langworthy 2007).

That is not to say that measuring time spent on activities would be easy—rather it would be to say that that approach provides a better way of understanding the economy of university–community engagement. This implies that policy measures and instruments need to consider more fully ways to make university staff time available to such communities to address the problems which are of salience to them.

The third problem is that of different institutional missions and individual competencies: The methodologies suggest that this is not such a problem—provided that at the level of the system there is substantial community engagement built into university activity. VA specifically argue for a 'balanced score-card' of activity, with most university employees undertaking some kind of engagement, and then across the system as a whole, concern has to be taken that this adds up to covering all three areas (public, business, schools).

However, what is notable in all three accountability debates is the failure of any actors to clearly express what they believe should be the appropriate level, volume or distribution of community engagement by universities. Approaches seem to hinge more on attempting to improve what is already delivered. Less ambiguous statement by the key policy-makers about universities' societal roles and responsibilities towards these communities appear to be necessary before the much more than very general system level assessment can be undertaken.

14.7 Conclusions: The Boundary Conditions for Effectively Measuring University–Community Engagement

This brings this chapter round to considering the boundary conditions for university–community engagement and three key messages emerging from the chapter:

- Community engagement is very difficult to measure in a meaningful sense that can be considered objective, even when universities are given broad discretion to be assessed on goals of their choice,
- Assessment of community engagement is a subjective task, and therefore dependent upon the perceptions and interests of those undertaking the measurement or assessment, and
- This lack of objective definitions and intrinsic subjectivity makes it extremely difficult to define singularly for universities what matters in engagement.

Firstly, community engagement is embedded within a series of other activities that universities already carry out specifically for that purpose. Measuring for performance measurement seeks to measure the impact that those activities have on the communities, rather than the specific purpose for which they are oriented. The focus for external assessment therefore should begin with the community, considering how those activities make university resources available to the community, and how

able such communities are to absorb those resources. Even more internally focused approaches such as benchmarking should have a concern for user uptake rather than efficacy of provision to avoid high levels of instrumentalism in university–community engagement.

The issue of community absorption is not a purely technical issue and relates to the fact that engagement is a highly subjective issue not easily measured. What the six models all point to is the fact that this subjectivity is constructed in discursive processes between various political actors. The Russell Group sought to dominate a UK discussion about engagement metrics in developing their report; VA sought to ensure that a broad definition of engagement was taken in the key Swedish enquiries into the future of university funding and academic careers. The discursive process is also a learning process, as Carnegie implies by its three iterations, and which PURE explicitly states. Where there is consensus between the partners in these political networks, then what are in reality subjective value judgements can appear as objective factual statements because of the support underlying them.

Effective metrics for university–community engagement are unlikely to spontaneously emerge without concerted efforts from a range of stakeholders actively seeking to define and agree on such metrics. This leads to the third message, namely that the subjectivity of community engagement is in part a function of the fact that nowhere seeks to define what is 'good'. In terms of research and teaching, there is a detailed understanding of what is good. Good teaching involves volumes of students achieving accredited levels in systems which effectively assure quality. Similarly, good research involves producing volumes of publications in influential journals which respect the traditions of peer review. Business engagement 'goodness' is measured in terms of number of spin-offs, patents and generating income in the market place. 'Goodness' in all these cases appears to be a function of volume, value and independent review.

We contend that any effective definition of what 'good' community engagement is needs to respect these three criteria. In terms of volume, we have already identified that staff hours or community participation appears to be a reasonably fungible measure. In terms of independent review, all AUCEA, PURE and Carnegie are able to offer a quality standard for the process of good engagement. It is this issue of value which is harder to disentangle, but at the same time, we are clear from contributions elsewhere in this book that value must relate to what is valued by the community.

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Chapter 15
The Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement

Helping Create the "New Normal" in American Higher Education?

Elaine Ward, Suzanne Buglione, Dwight E. Giles Jr. and John Saltmarsh

15.1 Introduction

In her 2012 Kettering Foundation working paper on academics' civic agency, KerryAnn O'Meara poses the question:

> [is there a] sea shift or movement of sorts to change higher education and its relationship with public work [and to] what degree are the individuals doing this work with such passion changing higher education so that there might be a "new normal"? (O'Meara 2012, p. 36)

O'Meara's use of the "new normal" also invokes the current economic crisis which has upended comfortable and stable notions of what is considered normal. In the midst of this economic crisis, what is the role of institutions of higher education in public problem solving and directing, as Ernest Boyer wrote,

> the rich resources of the university to our most pressing social, civic and ethical problems, to our children, to our schools, to our teachers and to our cities. (Boyer 1996, p 32)

While individual faculty are indeed carrying out community or publicly engaged scholarly agendas (O'Meara 2012; Ward 2010), Ward underscores that the individual work of community-engaged faculty needs to be examined alongside the

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individuals' institutional context to gain an understanding of how institutional culture supports or hinders the faculty member's engaged scholarly work.

While there are multiple and varying influences on a faculty member's motivation for engaged scholarship (Ward 2010; O'Meara, 2008; Colbeck and Wharton-Michael 2006), the institutional context within which these faculty members work are key to the choices they feel they have and the choices they need to make about the work they choose to do in the academy (Ward 2010). The individual faculty work of community, publicly, or civically engaged scholarship,[1] or the work of service learning as a teaching practice, cannot be separated from institutional change efforts to move the community engaged scholarly agenda forward (Saltmarsh et al. 2009a; Saltmarsh and Hartley 2011).

With the prospects of a "new normal" pushing higher education toward deeper public purpose and the commitment of individual faculty members to carry out community-engaged scholarly work, to what degree are institutions of higher education changing their policies, practices, and priorities toward rebalance of higher education's commitment to the public good?

More specifically in this chapter, we explore how the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching through its Community Engagement Elective Classification (a classification available only for US-accredited institutions of higher education) is promoting transformational and lasting change in the heart of academic culture. If transformational change is to take place in American higher education, the higher education system needs to make an honest self-assessment as to how institutional identity, mission, and purpose align with individual faculty work, and how these align with the culture of the institution in terms of reward policy and practice (how the actual work of individual faculty gets recognized and rewarded through promotion and tenure)—perhaps the clearest artifact of academic culture. It is through such institutional recognition of community-engaged scholarly work—through formal reward structures—that a clear message of culture change that values community engagement and community-engaged scholarship is conveyed.

This chapter explores how the Carnegie Elective Classification for Community Engagement—at an institutional and national level—is contributing to/advancing the public mission of higher education through offering a counterbalance to the traditional frame of the American academy as nationally focused, basic research oriented and prestige chasing, to an emphasis on "the value of the local" (Rhoades 2009). Our contribution is based on the existing literature and 4 years of our research on the institutions that have been awarded the classification (all Carnegie classified institutions have a "basic" classification—from the 2006 and 2008 classification cycles, 196 campuses, in addition to their basic classification, have achieved the elective community engagement classification through a process of application and review by the Carnegie Foundation).

The authors do four things. Firstly, place the classification within the US context and the civic mission of US higher education. Secondly, explore the classification as

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[1] As noted later in this chapter, there are language variations when talking about the work of community engagement.

a tool for benchmarking institutional commitment to community engaged and public scholarly work. Thirdly, show how this movement is taking hold in some institutions by examining institutional change through the lens of institutional recognition and reward of community-engaged scholarship particularly through promotion and tenure policy and practice. Fourthly, offer some recommendations for further advancing the work of institutionalizing community engagement. This latter work is based on interviews with chief academic officers at institutions found to be doing an exemplary job at institutionalizing community engagement on their campuses.

15.2   Clarifying Language

We noted our own struggle with the loose nature of the language in the area of engagement, and we are certainly not alone in the realization of the challenge-differing terminology presents to both researcher and practitioners in the field. Within the United States, researchers have identified the challenge terminology presents in the field of the Scholarship of Engagement (Giles 2008; Sandmann 2008) particularly when different terms are used to describe the same or similar meaning or practice. This can become problematic as the terminology used can often shape the characteristics of the work. This challenge is amplified in international discussions of engagement and warrants attention in this chapter. Therefore, we offer some definitions of terms as an attempt to clarify language and terminology in a US context.

The variation in terminology was very apparent in our 2009 study of the institutions that received the community-engagement classification (the Classification) where we identified 14 terms used across the institutions to convey community-engaged work (Saltmarsh et al. 2009b). The terminology used with greater frequency included—service to the community or public, service-learning, community engagement, outreach, engagement, and to a lesser extent—engaged scholarship, civic engagement, scholarship of community engagement, scholarship related to public engagement mission, community-based research, scholarly civic engagement, service-related publications, scholarship which enhances public good, and civic engagement scholarship.

The Classification has made a key contribution to advancing this sea change toward engagement and normalizing community-engaged practice and scholarship within the academy, through its definition of the term community engagement which is framed as

> the collaboration between higher education institutions 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. (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching)

This definition captures the breath of diverse interactions between higher education and community, promotes inclusivity and "intentionally encourages important qualities such as mutuality and reciprocity" (Driscoll 2008). The most important part of the definition is the word "reciprocity" which is often missing from other

articulations of engagement. Reciprocity, for the Foundation, defines "engagement." Reciprocal relations between institutions of higher education and communities are two-way interchanges that involve collaboration and shared authority in shaping the relationship and its outcomes—campuses work *with* communities. It is not the equivalent of a more common understanding in higher education of "application," which conveys a unidirectional relationship of the campus applying its knowledge, resources, expertise, and/or service *to* a community.

15.2.1   Civic Engagement

There are numerous definitions of civic engagement. The National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges' (NASULGC) Kellogg Commission (2001) frames engagement as referring to institutions that have redesigned their functions to become more sympathetically and productively involved in their communities. For Plater (2004), civic engagement is social action for a public purpose in a local community (in Langseth and Plater 2004, p. 10). A leader in the field, Thomas Ehrlich defines civic engagement as

> working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values, and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes. (Ehrlich 2000, p. vi)

Brint and Levy (1999) define civic engagement by building on primary and secondary meanings of civic, the activities of citizens, and engagement, active participation, until they conclude that civic engagement is when someone actively participates in, and has deep and broad concerns for the public needs of the community (in Skocpol and Fiorina 1999, p. 164). For the purpose of this chapter, civic engagement is understood as rooted in respect for community-based knowledge, grounded in experiential and reflective modes of teaching and learning, aimed at inclusion and participation in education and in public life, and aligned with institutional change efforts to advance collaborative knowledge generation and discovery and make the resources of the university a community asset. In this chapter, we use the term engagement to capture the full spectrum of scholarly, community, and civic elements of the work.

15.3   Recognizing the Need to Rebalance Commitment: The Civic Mission of US Higher Education

15.3.1   US Higher Education's Public Purpose/Engagement

It began as what Saltmarsh (2011) terms a quiet revolution where four academic leaders—Ernest Boyer, Ernest Lynton, Eugene Rice, and Donald Schön—came together during the mid-1980s and contributed serious thinking to the nature and

purpose of higher education. Together and through their connections to the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, they considered the public purpose of higher education and thought through ways to bring about changes so that colleges and universities would be more responsive to meeting public needs.

They believed their concerns for the public purpose of higher education to be inseparable from their commitment to improving the undergraduate experience and their concerns for the nature of faculty work, roles, and responsibilities. They were particularly concerned with the core research and scholarship role of the faculty in the generation of new knowledge. These intersecting themes weave in and out of their individual work and have collective influence on reforming the academy.

Boyer is credited with the expanded conceptualization of scholarship beyond basic research to a quadrant of scholarly activity—that of the scholarships of discovery, application, teaching, and integration (Boyer 1990). A key indicator of a campus deepening its commitment to engagement is when they identify Boyer as influencing the framing or expansion of their categories of scholarship rewarded in the promotion and tenure process—identifying their guidelines as "Boyerized " (Saltmarsh et al. 2009b).

It was not until after Boyer's death that his expanded thinking beyond the scholarship of application to that of the "Scholarship of Engagement " was published. Here, he expands application to the scholarship of engagement where

> the scholarship of engagement means connecting the rich resources of the university to our most pressing social, civic, and ethical problems. (Boyer 1996, p. 32)

And while this concept of engagement is critiqued for its academic centricity by contemporary researchers (O'Meara and Rice 2005), it is still the work that moved us out of focus on the needs and wants of the academy to those of the community.

Ernest Lynton's work (1995b; Lynton and Elman, 1987), most notably *New Priorities for the University: Meeting Society's Needs for Applied Knowledge and Competent Individuals* (with Elman 1987), was also focused on the academy's public purpose. He made the connection between institutional rewards and faculty engagement with social issues. He advocated a reform of reward structures to recognize and reward the service and engagement work of faculty.

Eugene Rice worked closely with Boyer and can be credited with having a strong influence on the formulation of the arguments in the Carnegie publication *Scholarship Reconsidered* (1990), particularly around the expanded frame for faculty scholarly work. Yet it is 15 years after *Scholarship Reconsidered*, where Rice's impact is truly noted. It was at this point that he, along with KerryAnn O'Meara, further expanded these notions of engagement. They call into question the university-centric, highly rationalized expert knowledge of the academy being *applied* to the external community. Instead, they offer an alternative notion of engagement as a move beyond this expert model toward collaboration between researcher and practitioner and recognition of the knowledge and resources the practitioner brings to the partnership of mutual exchange (2005).

Donald Schön challenged the dominant epistemological norms and values of the academy and highlighted the need for change in the organizational culture of the

academy toward a reconceptualization of what "counts as legitimate knowledge" (Schön 1995, p. 27). In his 1995, *Change* magazine article, "The New Scholarship Requires a New Epistemology" he contends that if faculty is to engage in the new forms of scholarship Boyer, Lynton, and Rice identify then

> we cannot avoid questions of epistemology, since the new forms of scholarship. . . challenge the epistemology build into the modern university. . . [I]f the new scholarship is to mean anything, it must imply a kind of action research with norms of its own, which will conflict with the norms of technical rationality—the prevailing epistemology built into the research universities. (Schön 1995, p. 27)

According to Saltmarsh,

> perhaps more than Lynton, Schön recognized that legitimizing a different epistemology would lead to wrenching battles in the academy because the change it required went to the core of the dominant paradigm that had dominated American higher education since the late 19th century. (Saltmarsh 2011, p. 346)

These early leaders paved the way for the engagement movement we recognize within the US academy today.

15.3.2   Civic Engagement Today

There is a rich contemporary civic and community engagement landscape at the national level in American higher education (see Appendix A).There are also a number of key events and subsequent publications that furthered engagement in US higher education.

For instance, in 1998, the Wingspread Conference was held. This was a collaboration between the University of Michigan, Association of American Universities, American Association for Higher Education, American Council on Education, Association of American Colleges and Universities, Campus Compact, New England Resource Center for Higher Education, University of Pennsylvania, and the Johnson and W.K. Kellogg Foundations. The focus of the Wingspread conference was on renewing the civic mission of the American research university. The participants issued a declaration in 1999—the Wingspread Declaration—calling on higher education to renew its commitment to civic purpose and mission as an agent of democracy.

Also in 1999, Campus Compact convened 51 presidents in an effort to advance civic engagement on their respective campuses. The resulting *Presidents' Declaration on the Civic Responsibility of Higher Education* challenged higher education to reexamine its public purpose and commitment to democracy, and engage with its communities. Presidents of other institutions were asked to join:

> in seeking recognition of civic responsibility in accreditation procedures, Carnegie classification, and national rankings. . . to catalyze and lead a national movement to reinvigorate the public purposes and civic mission of higher education. (Ehrlich and Holland 1999)

The benefits of these declarations can be seen in new streams of funding for the institutionalization of civic and community engagement. In 2002, Campus Compact received a grant from the Carnegie Corporation to document best practices of engaged institutions with the goal to increase institutionalization of civic engagement practices. Research supported by the funding focused on the assessment of engagement within institutions of higher education leading to what was considered indicators of engagement (Hollander et al. 2002). What follows is a brief history of the early assessment measures that led to the development of the Carnegie Elective Classification for Community Engagement.

15.3.3 Assessment of Engagement

In 2001, Barbara Holland identified five foundational components that needs to work together to

> build and sustain an institutional culture in which community-engaged research, teaching, and public service are valued to the extent that they become fully infused within the academic fabric of a higher education institution. (Holland 2001, cited in Furco 2009, p. 47)

These five foundational components include:

1. A philosophy and mission that emphasizes engagement;
2. Genuine faculty involvement and support for engaged research or teaching, or both;
3. A broad range of opportunities for students to access and involve themselves in high-quality engagement experiences;
4. An institutional infrastructure that supports engagement practice; and
5. Mutually beneficial, sustained partnership with community partners.

Andrew Furco in his chapter, "Issues in Benchmarking and Assessing Institutional Engagement", states that

> [t]o help ensure that the components take shape in ways that best facilitate the advancement of community engagement, the employment of an assessment process that can measure and benchmark each component's development is essential. (Furco 2009, p. 48)

He further states that assessment structures:

> help collect and review information so that informed decisions can be made about an institution's engagement strengths and weaknesses. (Furco 2009, p. 48)

So, what constitutes an assessment structure or framework? These vary according to Burack and Saltmarsh (2006) because of the different motivations for the assessment. The assessment methods will be just as varied as the motivations for conducting them. In their review of engagement institutionalization, they highlight as many as eleven different assessment instruments. They organized these into five categories including, checklists, indicators, benchmarks, rubrics, and matrices.

Checklists provide opportunity for a quick and easy assessment to count if components deemed necessary for advancing engagement are present. Indicators are a little more robust providing data on the strengths and weaknesses of the engagement efforts. Benchmarking requires a higher presence of empirical data and introduces "the notion of performance expectations that can be established through internal and external comparisons" (Furco 2009, p. 49).

Rubrics bring in dimension and are usually two-dimensional and capture statements about the characteristics regarding levels of engagement. And finally, matrices being similar to rubrics are two-dimensional incorporating both engagement components as well as description for determining the level of institutionalization. The descriptions are not prescribed as in the rubric, but provide opportunity for variance in the description depending on the context and concerns.

While the instruments are utilized to assess a wide variety of engagement efforts, for example service-learning, the Carnegie classification framework is exclusively used for the assessment of the institutionalization of engagement on a given campus. This framework builds on a long tradition within the Foundation for reforming higher education, firstly in terms of teaching and research and now in relation to engagement. (See the CFAT website for a full list of their publications on higher education reform http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/publications_archive.)

15.4   The Counterbalance: The Carnegie Elective Classification for Community Engagement

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement in Teaching (the Foundation) has been a key influence in the direction of US higher education for more than a century. Since 1905, the Foundation has been an independent national policy and research center to encourage, uphold and dignify the profession of the teacher and the cause of higher education in the United States. In particular, since the 1970s, the Carnegie Foundation has been the developer and custodian of the most prominent higher education classification system in American higher education.

Originally conceived as a system to describe, characterize, and categorize colleges and universities to meet the analytic needs of those engaged in research on higher education, it has evolved into a "sort of general-purpose classification employed by a wide range of users for a variety of application" (McCormick and Zhao 2005, p. 54). It is used by institutional personnel from trustees to faculty; politicians, and regional and state authorities; accreditors, philanthropic foundations, and other funders, as well as by local and national media and magazines. In contrast to its original purpose of highlighting the institutional diversity in US higher education, it has had a

> homogenizing influence. . . as many institutions have sought to 'move up' the classification system for inclusion among 'research-type' universities. (McCormick and Zhao 2005, p. 52)

The Foundation worked to counter the tendency of institutions to view the classification as a ranking system particularly in 2005 when it planned to develop a set

of "elective" classifications to move from a single system to multiple classifications that reflect what is taught, to whom, and in what setting. The goal was to foster institutional movement and innovation in a variety of directions over encouraging a strictly hierarchical model of higher education (Rhoades 2009).

The elective classification would allow institutions to voluntarily participate and document aspects of their work that are not reflected in the national data. The first such elective classification featured community engagement. Rhoades (2009) reminds us of the significance of this being the first elective classification as a shift away from the traditional focus on the national to an emphasis on the value of the local. Where previous work of the Foundation helped shape the focus of higher education toward a strengthening of undergraduate education, here the Foundation emphasizes the importance of connecting the activities of the academic profession

> more to the public good and to public service than to the academic prestige market and revenue generation. That model emphasized not only teaching but also the application of scholarship in local contexts. (Rhoades 2009, p. 4)

Based on consultation with national experts and national associations, and honed through multiple drafts and a year-long pilot, a documentation framework was developed for *benchmarking* community engagement across diverse institutions and approaches to the work of engagement. The framework assesses institutionalization of community engagement through identifying indicators in the following key areas:

1. Vision and leadership,
2. Curricular engagement,
3. Infrastructure to support community engagement and faculty professional development (which includes developing the capacity for establishing reciprocal community partnerships),
4. Multiple means of assessment, and
5. Policies that define the incentives that shape faculty scholarly work.

The framework reflects an understanding of institutionalization that implies that when engagement occurs in an educational institution, it is required that this engagement is embedded in core academic work—that is reflected in the curriculum, in all the faculty roles (teaching, research, and service), and in student learning outcomes. There are two main sections to the application: (1) foundational indicators and (2) categories of community engagement (Table 15.1; see Table 15.4 in Appendix A for the full application template).

Given that the elective classification is self-reported data, the classification does not represent a comprehensive national assessment. It is also a benchmark of outputs not outcomes (it does not provide an assessment of impacts of community engagement). However, we learn a lot from the data presented in the first wave of applications that reveal much about the general state of engagement across different institutional types and functions in the United States. The classification also identified challenges faced by institutions in the institutionalization of community engagement as well as identified some emerging best practices.

Table 15.1 Application template summary

Foundational indicators	Institutional identity and culture (five question areas)
	Institutional commitment (six question areas)

Upon completion of section 1, the institution must do a self-assessment to see if community engagement is institutionalized on its campus. If not, the application must be withdrawn, if yes, they may proceed with the application process. If the applicant proceeds, this section also provides opportunity to submit supplemental documentation in five areas.

Categories of community engagement	Curricular engagement (four question areas)
	Outreach and partnerships (five question areas)
Wrap-up	Three opportunities to provide more detailed information
	Request for release of information for research purposes

15.4.1 Challenges

In assessing the application from the 2006 classification, Amy Driscoll, the Senior Scholar at the Carnegie Foundation administering the classification found three areas of "challenges". One was community involvement: This was described by Driscoll as a weakness around

> assessing the community's need for and perceptions of the institution's engagement and developing substantive roles for the community in creating the institution's plans for that engagement.

A related weakness was that

> most institutions could only describe in vague generalities how they had achieved genuine reciprocity with their communities. . . Another challenge for institutions was the assessment of community engagement in general and of the specific categories of engagement in particular.

Finally, a third area of challenge was support for faculty engagement, or what Driscoll described as "lack of significant support for faculty who are engaged in this work", including faculty-development support and faculty recruitment and hiring practices, as well as "changes in the recognition and reward system for promotion and tenure." (Driscoll 2008, p. 41)

15.4.2 Best Practices

Sandmann et al. (2008) identify five (though we have separated them out into six) best institutional practices that lead to the institutionalization of community engagement. Firstly, executive leadership and leadership by key faculty members matters. Secondly, successful institutions are those with some infrastructure (positional or

structural) to support engagement activities. Thirdly, purposeful advancement strategies are critical to providing the necessary resources for engagement activities to be sustained as well as develop.

Fourthly, evaluation is important and needs campuses moving toward more comprehensive, longitudinal assessment plans including authentic forms of evidence such as student products that capture student learning in a community-engaged course. Fifthly, constructing policies that reward community engagement across the faculty roles and including and valuing community partners in the peer-review process are both important. Sixthly, community–campus partnerships include those that have a clear focus and direction that coincides with the culture and mission of the community partner *and* campus.

15.5 Normalizing Community Engagement—The Tensions Becoming Clearer

In our study of the 2006 recipients of the classification, using Eckel et al.'s (1998) model for assessing transformational change in higher education, we explored how the Carnegie classified institutions may be transforming higher education through the normalization of community engagement as a central institutional practice. In doing this we used the "Foundational Indicators" for their focus on institutional identity, culture, and commitment. These indicators also reflect an understanding that community engagement is an element of transformative institutional change and that institutional transformation is characterized by changes in institutional culture. The supposition is that institutions that receive the Carnegie Community Engagement classification demonstrate that they have implemented changes in the core work of the institution.

In their 1998 study of transformational change in higher education, Eckel et al. defined transformational change as that which

> (1) alters the culture of the institution by changing select underlying assumptions and institutional behaviours, processes, and products; (2) is deep and pervasive, affecting the whole institution; (3) is intentional; and (4) occurs over time.

Changes that "alter the culture of the institution" require "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." Attention to deep and pervasive change focuses on "institution-wide patterns of perceiving, thinking, and feeling; shared understandings; collective assumptions; and common interpretive frameworks"—the "ingredients of this 'invisible glue' called institutional culture" (Eckel et al. 1998, p. 3). It is precisely these elements of institutional culture that constitute the "Foundational Indicators" of the community engagement framework.

Transformational change occurs when shifts in the institution's culture have developed to the point where they are both pervasive across the institution and deeply

Fig. 15.1 Two dimensions of transformational change. (Source: Eckel et al. 1998)

Depth		
	Low	**High**
Low	Adjustment (1)	Isolated Change (2)
High	Far-Reaching Change (3)	Transformational Change (4)

(with "Pervasiveness" label on vertical axis)

Adapted from Eckel, Hill & Green (1998)

embedded in practices throughout the institution (see Fig. 15.1). Change in an institution can be understood along two dimensions, the depth or substance of the change, and its breadth or pervasiveness, and this allows for a 2×2 matrix to be composed and particular institutions to be mapped onto the space for analysis of the depth and breadth of their change.

Eckel et al. (1998) describe adjustment (Quadrant 1) as "a change or series of changes that are modifications to an area. One might call this 'tinkering' . . . changes of this nature are revising or revitalizing, and they occur when current designs or procedures are improved or extended. An adjustment may improve the process or quality of the service, or it might be something new; nevertheless, it does not drastically alter much." The change has little depth and is not pervasive across the institution.

Isolated change (quadrant 2) is "deep but limited to one unit or a particular area: it is not pervasive." Campuses in the third quadrant achieved far-reaching change that "is pervasive but does not affect the organization very deeply." Quadrant 4 represents deep and pervasive change that transforms the institutional culture. Eckel et al. call this change in "the innermost core of a culture . . . our underlying assumptions; these deeply ingrained beliefs" that "are rarely questioned and are usually taken for granted." Transformational change, they write, "involves altering the underlying assumptions so that they are congruent with the desired changes" (1998, pp. 3–5).

Examining the Carnegie Foundation's Framework for the community engagement classification in light of Eckel et al.'s work suggests that campuses that achieve the classification have undergone shifts in institutional culture that have led to change such that community engagement is both deep and pervasive. Is this actually the case?

For us, a proposition emerges from this conceptual framework and from the literature on both community engagement in higher education and institutional change. The proposition is that campuses that received the Elective Carnegie Classification for community engagement provided sufficient evidence to be located in the fourth quadrant, demonstrating transformational change reflected in institutional reward

policies that are artifacts of an academic culture that values community engagement. It is this proposition that we tested in our research and ultimately needed to reconsider in light of our findings.

15.5.1   *Engagement Taking Hold: Whether, Where and How?*

In our study of the 76 campuses that were awarded the elective Community Engagement Classification in 2006, 5 received the classification for curricular engagement, only, 9 received the classification for outreach and partnership only, and 62 received the classification for both curricular engagement and outreach and partnership. We focused on these 62 institutions as they emerged as the most engaged meeting criteria in both areas.

Within this 62 campuses, we were unable to gain permission to use the applications for 5 institutions, so we were left with 57 campuses in our study. Of the 57, 33 elected to answer the question on institutional reward policies and provided documentation to support their answer. None of the campuses answered no. Twenty-four campuses chose not to answer the question. Our assumption was if a campus that chose not to answer the question on promotion and tenure did not have such policies in place, nor were in the process of revising them.

Using a qualitative approach (Denzin and Lincoln 2000), our analyses consisted of analysis of the applications followed by an analysis of the official promotion and tenure guidelines form the applicants' campuses. Using both the application documentation and the official policy documents, we used a process of concept mapping to code the documents and identify emergent concepts, themes, and patterns (Creswell 2007).

Finally, after coding the applications using the four themes that emerged, we used a modified axial coding process (Creswell 20007) that mined each campus's data for evidence supporting the themes we had identified in the application. This allowed us to contextualize the occurrence of the themes and to more readily identify incongruities between application narratives and available promotion and tenure guidelines.

Tenure and promotion is considered a core function of the institution and reflective of the embedded culture of the academy. In examining tenure and promotion, we examine the cultural norms, practices, and experiences of the institution. Evidence of institutional transformation from the Carnegie classified institutions is most clearly revealed through the promotion and tenure guidelines that outwardly recognize and reward community-engaged scholarship. We unfortunately needed to revise this proposition as the findings clearly revealed that not all institutions classified fell into the fourth quadrant, showing both deep and pervasive change.

Of the 33 institutions that elected to answer the then optional question on reward policies and provided evidence in the form of a written narrative to support their answer, we found variation in the degree to which these campuses provided legitimacy for community-engaged scholarship. Sixteen of the 33 campuses responded that they

Table 15.2 Applications and institutional reward policies

Campus applications	Number of campuses $N = 62$ (applicants that received the classification for both curricular engagement and outreach and partnerships) $N = 57$ (applications available)
Campuses that responded to the question in the application on promotion and tenure guidelines	33
Campuses that are revising or have revised their guidelines to include community-engaged scholarship	16
Campuses that have "Boyerized" guidelines	9
Campuses that have guidelines that specifically include community-engaged scholarship (research)	7

had community-engaged scholarship either (1) had revised their policies to incorporate community-engaged scholarship, (2) had revised their guidelines to incorporate broader notions of scholarship using Boyer's categories, opening the possibility of rewarding community-engaged scholarship, or (3) were in the process of revising their policies in ways that made room for community-engaged scholarship.

There were almost three times as many campuses in the process of revising promotion and tenure guidelines that specifically incorporated community engagement as a form of research than campuses that had reached the point in the revision process of implementing new policies for community-engaged scholarship. Of the 17 campuses that did not indicate involvement in revision, those applications either did not address community-engaged scholarship or research as part of their application or specifically identified community engagement as part of the service role of faculty (see Table 15.2).

Of the 16 campuses involved with policy revisions, 9 had addressed revision of guidelines through a process of broadening notions of scholarship by adopting Boyer's categories (1990). Only 7 of the 16 campuses, which included four of the campuses with "Boyerized" guidelines, had explicit criteria articulating the legitimacy of engaged scholarship —that is, community engagement defined a legitimate form of research.

Four of the sixteen campuses that expressed involvement in a process of revising faculty rewards issued responses similar to the following:

> All departments have been asked to review tenure and promotion guidelines to ensure that engagement of students with community is part of the expectation for faculty ... we are currently moving to revise the Faculty Handbook tenure and promotion guidelines to reflect the importance of community engagement as scholarly activity.

What is not known from this statement is how long the process has been going on or if it will result in revised policies. In the case of one of the four campuses in the process of revising their guidelines, the application identified revisions proposed by an advisory committee (the "publication of research... connected with... public service should be considered creative work insofar as they present new ideas or

incorporate the candidate's scholarly research") but the adopted guidelines that appear in the faculty handbook do not reflect the suggested changes.

Nine of the 16 campuses have made changes to faculty roles and rewards through Boyer's broadened notion of scholarship, with six campuses noting that "community engagement scholarship fits logically as scholarship of integration, application or teaching." Yet this broadening of the definition of scholarship did not, for the most part, specifically recognize and reward community engagement as faculty scholarship. The six of the nine campuses employing Boyer's categories do so in ways that include a broader view of scholarly activity inclusive of community engagement but maintain a traditional evaluation process through academic peer-reviewed publications, as in the following example:

> Scholarship of Application: This involves applying disciplinary expertise to the exploration or solution of individual, social, or institutional problems; it involves activities that are tied directly to one's special field of knowledge and it demands the same level of rigor and accountability as is traditionally associated with research activities.

This conception of research not only fails to make a distinction between application and engagement, but also it does not broaden notions of what counts as publication and who is considered a peer in the peer-review process. Further, while a campus application claims that community engagement can be rewarded under the "Scholarship of Application," it was not unusual to find policy statements that did not specifically articulate community engagement as an element of "application." For instance, one "Boyerized" set of guidelines states,

> Application involves asking how state-of-the-art knowledge can be responsibly applied to significant problems. Application primarily concerns assessing the efficacy of knowledge or creative activities within a particular context, refining its implications, assessing its generalizability, and using it to implement changes.

Of the nine campuses that adopted Boyer's categories, three of them specifically articulated a shift in terminology from application to engagement. As one Boyerized policy document articulated, scholarship of engagement entails "community-based research, technical assistance, demonstration projects, impact assessment, and policy analysis," as well as "scholarly work relating to the study or promotion of public engagement."

So, we can see how the reward of community-engaged scholarship is a change that is taking place over time; thus there is a transitional quality to what is happening on campuses as they engage in a process of defining, implementing, and adjusting to the implications of change. These are campuses where institutional reward policies are in a process of transition to rewarding community-engaged scholarship. Many more campuses are involved in the difficult task of revising their promotion and tenure guidelines. For those that have revised their guidelines to reward community-engaged scholarship, the policies exhibit a quality of establishing conceptual clarity around community engagement, address engagement across the faculty roles, and are grounded in the values of reciprocity.

Most prominent in the revision process is the adoption of guidelines that broaden scholarly activity in Boyer's four domains: the scholarship of discovery, the scholarship of integration, the scholarship of teaching, and the scholarship of application.

As this adoption represents a transitional movement toward rewarding community-engaged scholarship, community engagement is less specifically written into policies than it is implied in their interpretation. For example, one campus explained its use of Boyer's categories of scholarship in this way:

The scholarship category is broadly defined as "Scholarship and Related Professional Activities" and Boyer's four types of scholarship are made explicit. Given these broad definitions, faculty scholarship related to community engagement is rewarded in promotion and tenure decisions. The point is that our scholarship criteria are broadly defined and community engagement activities are regular key components of scholarship in successful P&T applications. Community-engaged scholarship fits logically as scholarship in integration, application, or teaching.

As this example indicates, community-engaged scholarship "logically," but without explanation, could be evaluated under integration, application, or teaching. In other cases, the campus application noted that "we don't fit the community engagement scholarship into one of Boyer's other categories, we recognize that engagement can cross-cut them all." Yet, more common was to have community-engaged scholarship specifically subsumed under the scholarship of application.

The Faculty Handbook uses the term "scholarship of application" in its standards for promotion and tenure. Summarizing Boyer, the handbook states, "This involves applying disciplinary expertise to the exploration or solution of individual, social, or institutional problems; it involves activities that are tied directly to one's special field of knowledge and it demands the same level of rigor and accountability as is traditionally associated with research activities."

Occasionally "application" referred specifically to community-related interactions, as in "scholarship encompasses . . . the application of knowledge in responsible ways to address problems of contemporary society, the larger community, so that one's scholarly specialty informs and is informed by interactions with that community." More often "application" was used as a broad category into which community engagement activity most logically fit. "Application involves asking how state-of-the-art knowledge can be responsibly applied to significant problems. Application primarily concerns assessing the efficacy of knowledge or creative activities within a particular context, refining its implications, assessing its generalizability, and using it to implement changes."

15.6   Getting to the New Normal—The Institutionalization of Community Engagement

The above examples show clearly where the tensions and indeed subtleties are when assessing authentic community engagement and identifying that apart from the spectrum of variations of applied scholarship. And while we set out in our study presupposing that institutions that received the Classification would be able to provide clear evidence, placing them confidently in quadrant four—having shown transformation and cultural change, the reality was found not to be the case. We identified

some movement among the classified institutions toward a change in the traditional institutional culture.

But the movement toward change was not as deep or pervasive as receipt of the Classification might indicate. So what is the significance of the Classification in light of these findings? How do external forces such as the Classification promote transformational and lasting change in the heart of the academic culture? Is the Elective Classification for Community Engagement continuing the long reform tradition of the Foundation and helping to create a "new normal" in American higher education?

Evidence from our interviews with chief academic officers shows that, rather than being a catalyst for change, the Classification is more seen as a way of documenting, measuring, and validating work already being done on campuses (Ward et al. 2011). Here the Classification was seen to bring greater awareness to and reenergize campus efforts to institutionalize engagement. Evidence from our research also indicates that the Classification through revisions of the Documentation Framework is in many ways forcing validation of this "new normal".

The Classification accomplishes this by no longer allowing institutions to avoid the question of recognition and reward of engaged scholarship by making the question on promotion and tenure a mandatory rather an optional question. This move alone sends a clear message to institutions that if you are going to *say* you take engagement seriously then you must *demonstrate* that at deep as well as surface levels of institutional culture and practice.

Relatedly, the Classification process provides an opportunity for a campus to increase transparency, openness and clarity around the promotion and tenure process, where areas of engaged scholarship were more clearly defined and articulated. The Classification also provides an opportunity for campus leadership to more clearly tie engagement efforts with institutional mission and identity and create institutional infrastructure—faculty support offices or higher administrative post such as Vice President for Engagement—to sustain and grow engagement efforts on a campus.

This assessment process, both voluntary to the institution and externally assessed, provides an opportunity for institutions to begin to take a look at where they stand in relation to their commitment to and work on engagement. What we have learned is that one cannot presume that with the Classification comes acknowledgement of a deep and pervasive level of cultural change and therefore institutionalization of engagement. What the Classification does is it identifies areas that need attention if institutionalization of engagement is to be achieved (Table 15.3).

15.7 Concluding Thoughts

The Carnegie Elective Classification for Community Engagement is a vehicle through which institutions that are committed to engagement can map their campus engagement efforts and have the impact of these efforts externally assessed. Yet, receipt of the Classification alone does not mean that a campus has reached the epitome of work needed in this area—it is merely an indicator that successful work is being carried out in this area. There is always room for improvement. For authentic and institutional

Table 15.3 Shifting norms from marginalization to institutionalization of community engagement

The current norm—community-engagement marginalized	The new norm—community-engagement institutionalized
All valid knowledge is rational, analytic, and positivist (pure, disciplinary, homogeneous, expert-led, supply-driven, hierarchical, peer-reviewed, and almost exclusively university-based.) (Gibbons et al. 1994)	Engaged knowledge generation (applied, problem-centered, trans-disciplinary, heterogeneous, hybrid, demand-driven, entrepreneurial, network-embedded etc.). (Gibbons et al. 1994)
Engagement is a referent for the service function of the university or synonymous with active and collaborative teaching and learning	Consistent and clear use of language, articulating clear understanding of the characteristics and values of community-engaged scholarship
Compartmentalized faculty role	Integrated faculty role
Partnerships mirror understanding of knowledge application—the university does its work in communities or for communities but not with communities	Clear understanding of and value for reciprocity in community partnerships
Valid knowledge is generated through positivist, scientific, and technocratic methods	Valid knowledge is generated through rationalized, localized, and contextual methods
Prestige culture	Culture of institution as a steward of place
Community engagement is broadly understood as part of the mission of the institution	Community engagement operationalizes the mission of the campus through clear alignment between institutional identity, mission, place, faculty work, and institutional reward, policy, and practice

transformation, real change in terms of how faculty work is recognized and rewarded is needed. As it stands, the Classification shows us that when we dig deeper than the self-reported data the evidence of transformational change, especially around core cultural issues, rewarding engaged faculty work weakens (Giles et al. 2008).

Along with the issues of faculty roles and rewards, if the third mission of higher education is to happen in any serious way across institutions, then the following challenges need to be addressed. Firstly, a paradigm shift is needed toward engaged knowledge generation that is applied, problem-centered, transdisciplinary, heterogeneous, hybrid, demand-driven, entrepreneurial, and network embedded. And, this is a move away from a more university-centric, hierarchical, academically expert-led, supply-driven, rational, positivistic knowledge paradigm.

Secondly, there needs to be clear use of language articulating clear understanding of the characteristics and values of community-engaged scholarship incorporating multiple stakeholder views.

Thirdly, the compartmentalized and fragmented faculty role needs to be abandoned and replaced with an integrated faculty role where one's teaching, research, service, and professional or creative practice come together in an integrated scholarly body of work.

Fourthly, an acceptance is necessary that valid knowledge is not only generated through positivist, laboratory, scientific, and technocratic ways, but that knowledge generation has multiple sources and methods including thorough, rationalized, localized, and contextual methods.

Fifthly, a recognition is needed that prestige culture and striving currently marginalize the work of engagement as a bit part of the mission whereas a conceptualization of the institution as a steward of place can imbed engagement efforts in the institutional mission and identity in ways that create a more seamless alignment between institutional identity, mission, place, faculty work, and institutional reward policy and practice. This level of integration leads to an authentic engagement that is strongly institutionalized.

Going forward, a longitudinal assessment of the Classification is needed to fully understand the impact it has on institutional change related to the normalization of engagement. Likewise, study of institutions currently identified as exemplary community-engaged institutions is needed to provide tried and tested benchmarks for successful engagement for others to follow.

Appendix A

There are many organizations involved in promoting civic engagement in the American higher education landscape. These include at the time of writing:

- The American Association of State Colleges and Universities (2002)—AASCU (http://www.aascu.org/) and its American Democracy Project (ADP) (http://www.aascu.org/programs/adp/about.htm).
- The American Association of Colleges and Universities (AACU) (http://www.aacu.org/).
- The Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities (CUMU) (http://www.cumuonline.org/) and the Campus Compact (2000) (http://www.compact.org/).

At regional and institutional levels there are also a number of entities that are responsible for advancing the engagement mandate. For example:

- The University of Washington's community-campus partners for health (http:/www.ccph.info/);
- The New England Resource Center for Higher Education (NERCHE) (http:/www.nerche.org/);
- Syracuse University's Imagining America (http://www.imaginingamerica.org/index.html);
- Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis's Center for Service Learning (http://csl.iupui.edu/); and
- The International Association for Research on Service-learning and Community Engagement (http://www.researchslce.org/).

This list is in no way exhaustive, but paints a picture of the levels and layers of civic and community-engagement activity in the United States at the moment as well as identifies who the key researchers are in framing the conversation and research agenda for the field.

Table 15.4 Carnegie community-engagement elective classification application. (Adapted from the online 2010 Documentation Reporting Form)

I. Foundational indicators	A. Institutional identity and culture
	1. Does the institution indicate that community engagement is a priority in its mission statement (or vision)?
	2. Does the institution formally recognize community engagement through campus-wide awards and celebrations?
	3a. Does the institution have mechanisms for systematic assessment of community perceptions of the institution's engagement with community?
	3b. Does the institution aggregate and use the assessment data?
	4. Is community engagement emphasized in the marketing materials of the institution?
	5. Does the executive leadership of the institution (President, Provost, Chancellor, Trustees) explicitly promote community engagement as a priority?
	B. Institutional ccommitment
	1. Does the institution have a campus-wide coordinating infrastructure (center, office) to support and advance community engagement?
	2a. Are there internal budgetary allocations dedicated to supporting institutional engagement with community?
	2b. Is there external funding dedicated to supporting institutional engagement with community?
	2c. Is there fundraising directed to community engagement?
	3a. Does the institution maintain systematic campus-wide tracking or documentation mechanisms to record and/or track engagement with the community?
	3b. If yes, does the institution use the data from those mechanisms?
	3c. Are there systematic campus-wide assessment mechanisms to measure the impact of institutional engagement?
	3d. If yes, indicate the focus of those mechanisms.
	– Impacts on students
	– Impacts on faculty
	– Impacts on community
	– Impacts on institution
	3e. Does the institution use the data from the assessment mechanisms?
	4. Is community engagement defined and planned for in the strategic plans of the institution?
	5. Does the institution provide professional development support for faculty and/or staff who engage with community?
	6. Does the community have a "voice" or role for input into institutional or departmental planning for community engagement?
	At this point, applicants are urged to review the responses so far and determine whether Community Engagement is "institutionalized"—that is, whether all of most of the Foundational Indicators have been documented with specificity. If so, applicants are encouraged to continue with the application. If not, applicants are encouraged to withdraw from the process and apply in the next round in 2015
Supplemental documenta-tion	1. Does the institution have search/recruitment policies that encourage the hiring of faculty with expertise in and commitment to community engagement?
	2a. Do the institutional policies for promotion and tenure reward the scholarship of community engagement?
	2b. If yes, how does the institution classify community-engaged scholarship? (Service, Scholarship of Application, other?)

Table 15.4 (continued)

	2c. If no, is there work in progress to revise promotion and tenure guidelines to reward the scholarship of community engagement?
	3. Do students have a leadership role in community engagement? What kind of decisions do they influence (planning, implementation, assessment, or other)?
	4. Is community engagement noted on student transcripts?
	5. Is there a faculty governance committee with responsibilities for community engagement?
II. Categories of community engagement	A. Curricular engagement
	1a. Does the institution have a definition and a process for identifying Service Learning courses?
	1b. How many formal for-credit Service Learning courses were offered in the most recent academic year? What percentage of total courses?
	1c. How many departments are represented by those courses? What percentage of departments?
	1d. How many faculty taught Service Learning courses in the most recent academic year? What percentage of faculty?
	1e. How many students participated in Service Learning courses in the most recent academic year? What percentage of students?
	2a. Are there institutional (campus-wide) learning outcomes for students' curricular engagement with community?
	2b. Are there departmental or disciplinary learning outcomes for students' curricular engagement with community?
	2c. Are those outcomes systematically assessed?
	2d. If yes, how is the assessment data used?
	3a. Is community engagement integrated into the following curricular activities? Student research; student leadership: internships/co-ops; study abroad
	3b. Has community engagement been integrated with curriculum on an institution-wide level? If yes, indicate where the integration exists: Core Courses; First Year Sequence; In the Majors; Graduate Studies; Capstone; General Education
	4. Are there examples of faculty scholarship associated with their curricular engagement achievements (action research studies, conference presentations, pedagogy workshops, publications, etc.)?
	B. Outreach and partnerships
	Outreach and Partnerships describe two different but related approaches to community engagement. The first focuses on the application and provision of institutional resources for community use with benefits to both campus and community. The latter focuses on collaborative interactions with community and related scholarship for the mutually beneficial exchange, exploration, and application of knowledge, information, and resources (research, capacity, building, economic development, etc.)
	1. Indicate which outreach programs are developed for community: learning centers; tutoring; extension programs; noncredit courses; evaluation support; training programs; professional development centers; other
	2. Which institutional resources are provided as outreach to the community? Cocurricular student service; work/study student placements; cultural offerings; athletic offerings; library services; technology; faculty consultation
	3. Describe representative partnerships (both institutional and departmental) that were in place during the most recent academic year

Table 15.4 (continued)

	4a. Does the institution or do the departments work to promote the mutuality and reciprocity of the partnerships?
	4b. Are there mechanisms to systematically provide feedback and assessment to community partners and to the institution?
	5. Are there examples of faculty scholarship associated with their outreach and partnership activities (technical reports, curriculum, research reports, policy reports, publications, etc.)?
III. Wrap-up	1. (Optional) Use this space to elaborate on any short-answer item(s) for which you need more space. Please specify the corresponding section and item number(s)
	2. (Optional) Is there any information that was not requested that your consider as a significant evidence of your institution's community-engagement? If so, please provide the information in this space
	3. (Optional) Please provide any suggestions or comments you may have on the document process and outline data collection
	4. May we use the information you have provided for research purposes beyond the determination of classification (for example, conference papers, journal articles, and research reports), with the understanding that your institution's identity will not be disclosed without permission? (Your answer will have no bearing on the classification decision)

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Chapter 16
The Evaluation of Universities and Their Contributions to Social Exclusion

Paul Benneworth

16.1 Introduction

This chapter looks at one of the practical consequences which emerged in the course of attempts to modernise universities via benchmarking methodologies. In response to fears that universities represent classic dominant producers, governments have sought to stimulate efficiency and innovation within the higher education sector with a mix of increasing autonomy alongside competition for funding. The rise of marketisation is part of a broader transformation, evident in late capitalist societies.

The role of government has shifted from delivering public services in accordance with the wishes of their lead constituency, to stimulating other providers to provide innovative services, therefore reducing the burden on taxpayers and allowing solutions to increasingly intractable societal problems to be addressed (cf. Chap. 1).

The market principle and competition between service providers is now an unavoidable facet of public life. Formerly stable and staid institutions and services such as hospitals, public housing, and railways are now forced to define their goals, missions, clients, business models and revenue streams. But unlike genuine market provision, the persistence of quasi-monopolies around many of these kinds of services has seen the rise of an increasingly complex bureaucratic structure to regulate and enforce competition and contracting.

The issue for the introduction of new public management in the university sector is that it has forced a redefinition of what matters in higher education (cf. Chaps. 1, 12 and 14.) The conundrum this poses for universities arises from the fact that universities are quintessentially joined-up institutions (Baumunt 1997), a point to which we have continually returned in this volume. Universities operate through a kind of un-traded interdependence between various activities, allowing synergies to emerge between teaching, research and service missions. This means that it is very difficult to map the processes through which universities operate as a set of discrete and independent activities.

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There is clearly considerable overlap, which makes it very difficult to develop a set of meaningful contracts with universities for their outputs without producing either compliance behaviour or perverse incentives. But at the same time, a failure to find a mode of accommodation with new public management, and demonstrating that universities are accountable for the public funds they receive, is likely to result in a reduced flow of funds to the sector, to the detriment of the sector as a whole. What is necessary therefore is a degree of 'smart engagement' by universities with new public management, and it is this challenge of smart engagement with which this part as a whole is concerned.

There is a risk for universities that, in developing a set of contracts and targets between governments and universities, the whole area of university–community engagement becomes entirely invisible, because of canalisation, individualisation and marginalisation in the system as a whole. The challenge is how to make university–community engagement suitably visible within the technologies and techniques by which new public management operates. This chapter explores the reality of new public management in higher education sector as experienced through benchmarking of university–community engagement.

16.2 The Rise of New Public Management in Universities

The rise of new public management as a landmark of public administration was initially raised in Chap. 1. Two trends came together, the massification of higher education and a desire to maximise universities' societal contributions (Neave and van Vught 1991; Longden 2001; Scott 2007). Governments tended to over-regulate the sector, discouraging innovation and reducing potential spillover benefits between university activities (Maassen 1996). Governments wanted universities to pay attention to an increasing number, and an increasingly diverse group, of stakeholders (Jongbloed et al. 2008). The solution identified was to increase the autonomy, universities had to choose their own solutions, and identify which stakeholders' needs they themselves wished to serve.

To ensure efficiency in this approach, universities were to be subjected to a new form of single regulation where in return for more simple funding streams and this greater autonomy, they would work towards clear targets. In parallel with the growing interest in marketisation in public services, this approach was seen as a mechanism for driving efficiency, with governments specifying high-level targets for universities to achieve, and then with the most efficient universities thriving. Universities would specialise according to their 'comparative advantage' and the overall effect would be to create a socially-optimal provision of higher education services.

Of course, it is widely accepted that higher education is not a transparent and efficient market, a situation particularly exacerbated where the market mechanism does not function directly, but rather operates through quasi markets established through government regulation. In reality, 'markets' in higher education can better be understood as systems connected through resource dependencies and causal chains

(cf. Chap. 12). In such circumstances, encouraging universities to act as independent market-following actors can create systematic deviations which lead to service offers which whilst individually optimal for the providers, are clearly sub-optimal (cf. S and TC 2005).

It is perhaps easier to understand the emergence of new public management with reference to the problems of 'old' public management in an era of austerity, increasingly complex societal problems alongside changing societal demands for accountability. There were two variants of the 'old' model, the autonomous and the dependent. In systems with high degrees of user autonomy, institutions had no incentives to innovate and change because of the risk that those changes posed. In tightly controlled systems, innovation was stymied because there were no free resources which were not already allocated to certain outcomes.

In the United Kingdom, for example, until 1989 the University Grants Committee received a block grant from government which it allocated along largely historical lines to its member institutions. By contrast, in Germany, funds were allocated to universities by state legislatures with very detailed requirements as to what those funds would be spent on, so-called line-item budgeting.

The net effect of both of these approaches was that innovation in university systems became an arduous and slow process, and most of all, the system was not directly steerable by governments. What new public management seeks to do—however imperfectly—is to move beyond a situation where public bodies have no incentives or resources to innovate. This is achieved by placing bodies in a competition with other bodies for resources, and rewarding those institutions which achieve the best performance.

At the same time, many of the traditional barriers to university innovation from the state, such as employment, ownership, investment and strategic decision-making restrictions, have been limited. This has been characterised widely as a shift in university freedom, away from a freedom from (having to seek out resources) towards a freedom to (take decisions to compete most effectively).

An example of this is in removing limits on student numbers and allowing universities to compete for the attraction of students. By selecting institutions which best meet their needs, there is a market effect as universities' profile themselves to best meet the needs of different kinds of students. Rewarding recruitment, retention and completion rates by students ensures that public resources are spent as efficiently as possible on higher education services. But at the same time, something like creating a market in student places as a means of dynamising universities' higher education provision raises a number of practical problems which demonstrate the limits to NPM approaches.

The first is that education is a typical experience good, that is to say that its value can only be judged properly after it has been consumed, which means to say after it has been paid-for (McPherson and Winston 1993). This raises a clear problem of imperfect information, which is that students are not well-positioned to judge the value to themselves of the particular university education until after they have chosen it.

Part of new public management has therefore focused on creating better information which can be used to allow consumers to choose an education product which best

fits with their own individual preferences. Given that individual student-consumer preferences are difficult to know ex ante, emphasis has been laid on creating league tables combining a range of indicators and information about institutional performance which allow student-consumers to make a more informed choice of institution. The aim is that in the long run this will tend to reflect reality more than the contrary, and therefore this will help to allow the market mechanism to reward success.

The second issue arises from the fact that the aim of new public management is to optimise system performance rather than ensure a privately optimal demand level. Adam Smith was the first author to note that education was characterised by high levels of social returns, and therefore something which the state should invest in to avoid underinvestment by private individuals. The aim of competition is not to produce an equilibrium with the highest private benefits, but to stimulate public producers to produce the best outcomes possible, as efficiently as possible, in line with resource levels set by governments who set levels of tolerance of subsidy. To ensure that unsuccessful producers (universities) do not simply withdraw from the market (with the high social costs and opportunity costs that that produces), a second element of new public management concerns improving performance across the board.

With increasing freedom to set their own strategic direction, universities have an increasing responsibility for understanding their own relative position within these various markets, and setting a strategy to strengthen their position. This has seen the rise of benchmarking as a means of strategic development by universities (van Vught and Burquel 2010; Benneworth 2010). Benchmarking is a means for universities to identify a group of universities seeking to achieve similar aims, understand how well they perform within that group, identify where best practice might lie, and develop strategies to achieve that best practice. The accent on benchmarking lies in both a better institutional self-awareness as well as improving performance, allowing institutions to maximise their use of the freedom to innovate.

A third issue arises because universities deliver 'bundles' of services rather than single activities, and part of the aim is to maximise the efficiencies and spill-over benefits that emerge from different elements of the bundle. Some universities may specialise in research-intensive teaching whilst others might lack that research base— given constrained research resources, it is not sufficient to set research-intensive teaching as an ideal for all universities.

The question in such cases should be how teaching-intensive universities can produce a degree course that is as valuable for the student as research-intensive courses. It is interesting therefore to note a rising interest in policy communities in this issue of profiling or classification, identifying a series of archetypes for university behaviour and placing universities (either voluntarily or compulsorily) in one such class, and then judging them according to that classification (CHERPA Network 2010).

In the Netherlands, for example, the recent Veerman Commission declared that the simple binary split between universities and the universities of applied science (Hogescholen) was too simplistic for the needs of either the country or students. The Commission argued that any future Higher Education Development Plan (*Hoger*

Onderwijs Ontwikklings Plan, or HOOP) should consider a more nuanced differentiation. This might include adding pre-bachelor foundation courses, streaming out bachelors wishing to progress to masters at an early stage, and creating specialist elite institutions for potential doctoral candidates at undergraduate level. The U-MULTIRANK project has highlighted using European institutions that such a classification process need not involve delimiting a small number of archetypes, but instead allowing universities to select the suite of activities in which they are involved and understand how they perform in relative terms in those activities (CHERPA Network 2010).

When talking about the technologies and techniques of university benchmarking, profiling and performance measurement, what is being referred to are the processes and approaches which have been adopted to deal with the problems specific to community engagement. There are other kinds of techniques which are widely used in new public management but which have been less evident around this topic: Contracting and high-level compacts between governments and providers has been quite common, for example in Denmark and Switzerland, in setting medium term (about 5 year) frameworks where governments and universities agree to work towards a limited number of goals. As a consequence of its marginalisation, university–community engagement tends not to feature in high-level compacts which tend to relate to the direct provision of 'useful' societal outputs which are also easily measurable.

A second approach is in creating high-level regulators with the powers to create direct incentives and address perverse outcomes which emerge when institutions compete against one another, potentially disadvantaging particular groups in a structural way, whilst ensuring compliance with legal duties. The United Kingdom created the office of fair access (OFFA) as an impartial adjudicator to ensure that high-level fees were not discouraging students from poorer backgrounds from applying to the best institutions, and that research-intensive universities were not shying away from accepting high-potential students with more limited academic backgrounds. However, perhaps unsurprisingly, we are unaware of any formal regulators created with legal powers to compel universities to better engage with excluded communities.

16.3   University Benchmarking as a New Public Management Technique

Benchmarking emerged to contribute to making sense of how universities are progressing towards being autonomous and competitive institutions. Indeed, within the European Commission's Europe 2020 strategy, the ambition is articulated for benchmarking to have a pre-eminent role in understanding the interim progress made in higher education reform, both between member states and their HEIs, as well as within the wider global environment:

> To step up the modernisation agenda of higher education (curricula, governance and financing) including by benchmarking university performance and educational outcomes in a global context. (CEC 2010, p. 11).

Benchmarking is a tool developed and popularised within industry, to reduce the variability of activities that reduce reliability and quality through eliminating irregularity and uncertainty. Benchmarking works by distinguishing where process variability is a consequence of the way that the organisation chooses to manage the task and those which are a consequence of random variation in the external environment. Performance can be improved by eliminating variability caused by poor internal management, and the adoption of processes which are optimised for dealing with external variation.

Benchmarking is a comparative improvement process and works by comparing one's own organisation with other organisations operating in a similar kind of environment which therefore face the same kind of external variations and uncertainties. A benchmarking process is a comparison of a group of comparators, all of whom face similar kinds of uncertainties. What is compared is the performance of the group in the face of these uncertainties, and the best performance suggests what the best performance can be achieved given the external variations. A benchmarking process typically follows three stages (cf. Benneworth 2010):

- Identifying best practice: Using evidence for identifying what counts as institutional good practice, and understanding how one's own institution compares to that best practice.
- Process analysis: Identifying the processes through which particular outcomes are delivered, and understanding where, in the process, one's own performance falls short of what might be expected.
- Strategic improvement: On the basis of the identification of performance, the areas requiring improvement and the best practice, developing a strategic plan to improve one's own performance.

At the same time, university benchmarking begins from what is important to universities: Benchmarking is a tool for universities with the "freedom to" take important strategic decisions, and therefore the use of benchmarking in NPM requires that universities themselves determine what is strategically important. Given that benchmarking in higher education is at a relatively underdeveloped state with regard to its application in manufacturing and service industries, it is perhaps then unsurprising that there have been relatively few exercises in attempting to benchmark university–community engagement activities. As a peripheral activity, it is unlikely to be to the fore of universities' strategic interests as something in which university's senior managers are willing to invest their time to better understand and to improve, something which lies at the heart of benchmarking activities (Charles et al. 2010).

In the EU-funded "Benchmarking European Higher Education" pilot project, for example, around 40 European universities participated in an experimental benchmarking exercise. As Benneworth (2010) indicates, these universities selected strategic priorities covering four areas, namely governance, lifelong learning, curriculum reform and university–enterprise co-operation. Although there was a group of universities with an interest in strategic improvement of the 'third mission', the focus of this activity was on links with corporate bodies, public, private and voluntary, rather than engaging with communities. This hints at one of the problems

for benchmarking university–community engagement beyond the absence of indicators and effective measures, namely a failure for university–community engagement to represent a strategic priority for universities worth investing additional time and effort in improving.

However, that is not to say that there have been no efforts in benchmarking university–community engagement. In order to understand how widespread it is and the forms that it has taken, this chapter considers two pieces of evidence. This provides a reflection of how the idea of the value of university–community engagement diffuses back into the more general idea of an excellent university. In order to understand the uptake of university benchmarking methodologies for university–community engagement, the chapter examines how 33 universities in the north of England and Scotland have used benchmarking of university–community engagement as a strategic development tool.

In order to understand what kinds of idea of university engagement are being advanced in its benchmarking, we then turn to look at a single benchmarking tool which evolved over a decade. The evidence in this chapter provides a means of gaining a first insight into how the promotion of benchmarking as a modernisation methodology is influencing the more general idea of the role of community engagement in a modern university.

16.4   Benchmarking University–Community Engagement in English Universities

The first set of evidence we use to address this research question in this chapter is drawn from our research project 'University engagement with excluded communities'. More detail has been provided concerning this project in Chap. 5, but from the perspective of the question of benchmarking engagement, the following details were salient. All 33 institutions interviewed were specifically asked about their strategic management practices, the setting of goals and priorities, and the techniques used to monitor and drive progress towards the attainment of those targets. The discussions around benchmarking were therefore couched in terms of the use of benchmarking at the level of the institution to drive forward strategic improvement. These therefore did not cover cases where sub-institutional units, such as faculties or departments, had undertaken their own benchmarking exercises, except where these had become visible to institutional managers and had informed attempts to drive forward benchmarking at the level of the institution. These findings are published in a slightly modified form in Benneworth et al. (2010).

The survey did not find evidence that benchmarking of university–community engagement was widespread. Of the 33 institutions, only 4 were involved in any kind of community engagement benchmarking activity. Although this is not enough to be able to draw firm conclusions, there were three findings which were suggestive that benchmarking university–community engagement had been used in a particular way which was not necessarily directly related to driving forward strategic institutional

development. One of those four institutions is Salford University, whose "UPBEAT " benchmarking methodology is related at greater length in Chap. 8, and therefore less is said directly here about UPBEAT.

The first issue, which emerged in institutions (not necessarily the four involved in benchmarking), was the fact that community engagement was strategically invisible. The anecdote was related in Chap. 1 of the institution whose strategic plan section relating to community engagement had been left blank, at the time of interview. This reflects the more general problem that community engagement was not amenable to the way that universities have chosen to manage strategic development.

In setting a series of strategic priorities and targets to measure progress, contributions in this volume have already shown that community engagement tends to emerge as an afterthought or appendix to strategic management themes, more readily operationalised via targets and indicators. The relatively limited uptake of benchmarking by universities can be regarded as reflecting and reinforcing the strategic invisibility of the topic. Addressing that invisibility is a necessary pre-condition for more widespread university–community engagement benchmarking.

The second issue was that the four institutions which used benchmarking had one of the two reasons for choosing benchmarking. One group was interested in trying to demonstrate that the institution was behaving in a 'corporately socially responsible' way. These institutions were drawn towards the widely accepted (in the United Kingdom) Business in the Community (BitC) methodology for measuring Corporate Societal Responsibility (CSR). BitC developed together with HEFCE and a number of pilot institutions (including those interviewed in this survey) a tool to measure universities' wider environmental and social impacts (BitC, HFECE & EAUC 2007; Hart et al. 2008; BitC 2010).

That model relied on benchmarking corporate performance against particular variables demonstrating social responsibility against corporate norms, seeking to demonstrate that the institution had become more socially responsible over time. Those universities who were driven by a CSR motivation did not develop an institutional momentum for making university–community engagement less peripheral or marginalised within their institution.

CSR approaches are rooted in what we have described in Chap. 5 as a 'detached benevolence approach' to engagement. In Chap. 5, we noted that a hallmark of that approach to engagement was that the idea of engagement was something 'good' for universities to do, but that there was no duty or compulsion on universities to engage more, or more effectively. The enrolment of university–community engagement benchmarking within universities' CSR approaches effectively reinforces the normative message that engagement is a peripheral activity for universities, which while it creates benefits for society should at the same time not be a university's strategic purpose. The emergence of benchmarking in CSR approaches can therefore be read as underscoring an idea of a university where engagement is clearly not a core university mission.

The other group which chose benchmarking approaches were those which had in some strategic way deemed engagement as important and encountered difficulties in strategically managing business engagement. One of the main findings from the

survey was that institutions found it almost impossible to generate strategic intelligence about their university–community engagement activities, comparable to their research or teaching activities.

This goes beyond Goedegebuure and van der Lee's (2006) point that senior managers did not know what their institutions were up to. A number of institutions started with mapping activities which sought to create databases or overviews of all engagement activities undertaken by staff and students at all levels of their organisations. An issue recurrent across institutions was that these surveys did not produce useful "strategic management information", in that they tended to be highly partial, incomplete and out of date by the time they were completed (cf. Hart et al. 2008).

Faced with this absence of useable strategic information concerning community engagement, two institutions attempted to fill that gap by the use of benchmarking. Benchmarking was chosen in two institutions in the hope that it would fill an informational vacuum, rather than indicating that engagement represented a substantive institutional priority. Respondents across the 33 institutions had already remarked that one of the problems for them in supporting community engagement at an institutional level was a lack of knowledge about precisely what it involved and what was already underway.

Benchmarking was seen as a methodology in helping those institutions to mitigate risks in seeking to become more engaged by providing better knowledge and strategic information about engagement activities. The uptake of benchmarking in these institutions is therefore more indicative of being in the very early stages of trying to consider whether engagement is a reasonable university mission, than being able to read into it a wider narrative that universities have been seriously wrestling with making engagement a strategic imperative or defining institutional characteristic.

So what can be inferred from this situation? To some extent the answer to this depends on the optimism of the person answering the question. Powell and Drayson (Chap. 8) present an engaging narrative where community engagement can be made visible by benchmarking its processes using similar dimensions to those for benchmarking the (much better understood) enterprise engagement activities. Given the number of universities in the survey who were struggling with developing suitable information for managing community engagement, this suggests at least a feeling within the sector that university–community engagement—if not strategically important—should be more strategically important than currently the case.

A more negative interpretation of this situation could equally be inferred, where the lack of ease by which community engagement can be benchmarked acts as a barrier to the emergence of university–community engagement as a strategic priority. Again, this perspective should be nuanced with an acknowledgement that many more of the institutions had made serious strategic attempts to improve their community-engagement activity.

- Six institutions had senior managers whose title explicitly included community in the title.
- Four institutions had 'community' channels on their websites.
- Five institutions had created schemes granting substantive time to staff for engagement.

The reality seemed to be of a situation where universities had a sense that more should be done in terms of engagement, and were tentatively moving forward, experimenting and seeking ways to do it better, without ever fully committing that the end point would be that community engagement is a core mission or task of the university to which they are prepared to be held externally accountable.

16.5 Benchmarking Community Engagement within the Regional Mission

An alternative approach to exploring how universities have used benchmarking in a strategic way is to examine how benchmarking tools have been developed to assist with that process. It is important to say that in empirical terms, the two processes are not easily separated, as benchmarking tools are best developed with the involvement of those being benchmarked, which represent experts in the area, or at least those with the self-awareness to understand what constitutes good practice.

One of the universities in our sample reported above was involved in a pilot assessing the way the London Benchmarking Group's model, *Universities that Count*, was applicable to large, research-intensive civic universities. However, there have been a number of other attempts to develop benchmarking tools for community engagement which have not been driven by universities' own desires for benchmarking, but those of their key stakeholders who seek evidence as to the extent to which universities are engaging effectively with communities.

The case presented in this chapter emerged in the late 2000s as a result of a long-standing tension within the English Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE) around funding regional engagement by universities. Until 1996, Government Finance Ministry (HM Treasury) regulations prevented universities from accessing regional development funding made available, for example, through the European Structural Funds. In 1996 this position was changed, and universities became active in bidding for European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and European Social Fund (ESF) funding.

From 1999, the newly created English Regional Development Agencies became an increasingly important source of funding for universities' regional development activities (Benneworth 2001; Charles et al. 2003). HEFCE acknowledged that this process was taking place, and contemplated whether its own funding should have a regional dimension, but these contemplations were caught in a tension between two fundamental values. Firstly, there was some successful regional engagement by universities, but secondly, there was an increasingly dominant discourse that universities should be "excellent", and allocating funds according to regional impact could undermine that impact.

From the late 1990s until the fiscal crisis of the late 2000s, it is possible to see HEFCE wrestling with this tension. One way through which they did this was supporting the drive for better evidence regarding regional engagement. In 2000, the author was part of a team funded by HEFCE and Universities of United Kingdom

(qv) to produce a series of regional profiles. In conjunction with the regional higher education associations then being established, a set of 9 "regional profiles" covering the 9 English regions were produced, alongside an overview national report. These reports highlighted how universities were contributing to regional development along a range of processes, including innovation, social inclusion, sustainable development and urban regeneration (inter alia Charles and Benneworth 2001a, b; Roberts et al. 2001).

Related to this project, the authors produced a benchmarking tool for regional engagement (Charles and Benneworth 2002) which used similar dimensions to the regional profiling reports to suggest how universities and their regional partners could understand how effectively the universities were engaging with their regions, given the underlying regional situation. Very little substantively happened with this tool following its publication, although it was cited by a number of authors who were seeking to develop their own tools for benchmarking non-core university activities (e.g. AUCEA cf. Sect. 14.4.3). It is important to note that in 2002, neither the regional profiling framework nor the benchmarking tool specifically included an explicit dimension on community engagement, although the issue did arise tangentially in some of the other dimensions, notably social inclusion and urban regeneration.

The next step in the development of the idea was that HEFCE continued their search for effective evidence with the OECD Institutional Management of Higher Education programme. The regional profiles from 2001 were regarded as being too qualitative, lacking either compelling quantitative evidence or an international comparative dimension. In 2004, the OECD IMHE launched their universities and regional engagement activity, building on earlier IMHE interest in universities' regional impacts (e.g. OECD 1999) with strong support, both morally and financially, from HEFCE.

The first phase of this activity involved a study of 14 regions from 12 countries using a territorial review methodology where a consortium from each region prepared an extensive evidence base which was then reviewed in a field visit by an expert team (the author was involved in preparing the evidence base for the North East, as an expert for the Twente region, the literature review, and in writing a chapter of the final report, cf. Arbo and Benneworth 2007). This activity was published in the OECD (2007) report Higher Education and Regions: Globally competitive, locally engaged.

Two project findings are here salient. Firstly, although many universities did have community impacts, they were not effectively strategically managed, nor was there much interest among senior managers in seriously improving those impacts. The second was that although the report made relatively limited reference to benchmarking, it did reflect difficulties encountered in finding hard evidence for regional engagement when it noted that

> [t]he search for indicators and benchmarking mechanisms has remained a weakness in many countries. Even if measuring is difficult and controversial, engagement policies will not improve without sound evaluation processes. (pp. 17–18)

What the OECD report also noted was

> Regional engagement has been further strengthened through initiatives such as the Australian Universities Community Engagement Alliance (AUCEA) project for which the Australian Government has provided establishment funding through CASR. AUCEA is providing leadership in community engagement and regional development, creating opportunities for peer and community discussion and benchmarking, and promoting social, environmental, economic and cultural development in communities across Australia. (p. 69)

The background to the AUCEA process was driven by the Australian quality assurance system then prevalent in the late 2000s of formal institutional audits against agreed goals and targets (cf. Sect. 12.4). The intention in AUCEA's process was to define ex ante the quality of community engagement as a means of allowing universities to be recognised and rewarded for that engagement. Their approach was that effective university–community engagement would be built upon four 'clusters' of activity which supported effective community engagement, namely governance, resources, leadership and monitoring (McKenna et al. 2007). By the time of the publication of the OECD report, it was increasingly clear that benchmarking universities' regional impacts would need to include a community engagement dimension.

In 2007, after the publication of the OECD report, a group of the participating regions established the PASCAL network seeking to continue the partnership working initiated by the OECD project, which had subsequently begun a second round of regional reviews. The PASCAL network (an acronym denoting Place Management, Social Capital and Learning Regions) initiated the PASCAL Universities and Regional Engagement project (PURE). This project sought to support the further development of regional partnerships, moving beyond the mapping process undertaken in the initial territorial reviews and contribute to performance improvement (Charles and Wilson 2012). This took the form of a territorial review process in which benchmarking played a role

> helping the review visits and especially the regions to work out what is needed and facilitate the setting of priorities. This will assist regions in forming interest clusters according to their priority needs. (PURE 2009, p. 6)

In parallel with this, along with the other UK funding councils and the Economic and Social Research Council, HEFCE initiated the 'Impact of Higher Education Institutions on Regional Economies' initiative. This initiative emerged from a confluence of two pressures, firstly from a group of researchers active in the field and secondly from the Funding Councils interested in creating a better evidence base in resolving the tensions raised by questions of universities' regional impacts.

The majority of the research projects funded under this initiative were directly focused on universities' economic impacts, through their economic linkages, through business interventions and their labour market effects. Nevertheless two of the projects (including the project feeding into this chapter, "Universities and excluded communities" (cf. Chap. 5) and the HEART project (cf. Chap. 4), were directly oriented towards research into community engagement. The proposal for the "Universities and Excluded Communities" project was directly inspired by the finding from the OECD project that university–community engagement was underdeveloped.

This research team was at the same time approached by the PURE project managers to revise and refresh their 2002 benchmarking tool in line with recent academic developments. Drawing on the evidence base gathered from the project Universities and Excluded Communities (cf. Chap. 5), a set of benchmarks for community engagement were developed and included in the tool. The update included community engagement in two ways, in which the authors intended to reflect AUCEA's findings that engagement needed to be promoted separately as a goal in its own right, and also across the other core activities of the university. Therefore, two new chapters were added which offered benchmarks for university contributions to community-development processes as well as to the thoroughness of the inclusion of engagement as a core strategic mission.

What this situation indicates is the persistence of an interest in university–community engagement by policy-makers, practitioners and researchers, in parallel with an inability to frame it in ways that are acceptable to change underlying narratives and policy contexts. In the period under question, HEFCE created two funding streams for engagement, the higher education innovation fund (HEIF) supporting business engagement and the Higher Education Active Communities Fund (HE-ACF), supporting volunteering activities by staff and students.

Whilst HE-ACF ran through a single funding round, HEIF has grown in scope and was the only area of HEFCE's budget to receive a real term boost in the 2010 emergency budget statement that heralded the fiscal crisis. Thus, it is not possible to say that the activity around developing benchmarking tools has succeeded in framing university–community engagement as an appropriate area for policy intervention.

At the same time, it is interesting to note the enduring nature of the issue of university–community engagement as defined in this volume and its continual return to the policy arena despite the dominance of other societal engagement perspectives such as commercialisation. Chapter 1 noted how in 1982, the Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI) at the OECD placed community engagement on a par with business engagement in its study of how universities were coming to terms with reach-out activity. Since then, it has not substantially been able to make a breakthrough as a serious focus for the 'idea' of a university, but at the same time, the feeling has remained that engagement is something that universities do—and consequently that universities should be doing well.

The inclusion of community engagement in benchmarking tools represents an agreement amongst a set of key university stakeholders that community engagement should matter in some way. These actors are seeking to make it possible for universities to become more committed to engagement in a strategic way. In turn, this is a necessary precondition for supporting successful engagement, and addressing its peripheralisation (cf. Chap. 5). At the same time, benchmarking on its own is not sufficient to address the barriers which restrict the development of engagement as a serious university mission.

Benchmarking, therefore, discloses that peripheralisation of the university–community engagement mission is built up from an array of competing claims and assumptions which hinder the wider development of engagement. These can be regarded as forming a complex which self-reinforces the peripheralisation of the

activity within national higher education systems. The chapter concludes by turning to this idea of a 'peripheralisation complex' as a means of sketching out some of the boundary conditions that require addressing before engagement can emerge as a serious component of "ideas of universities" within (national) higher education systems.

16.6   There's Something about Engagement

The evidence can be presented as three stylised facts relating to the initial research question, regarding how university–community engagement is valued as an activity by universities and how that in turn is influencing the more general idea of an excellent university.

- *Stylised fact 1:* It is not reasonable to regard community engagement as one of the most pressing strategic priorities for change facing universities or the sector as a whole under contemporary conditions in Europe (without necessarily saying whether the long-term outcomes of this neglect will damage the sector).
- *Stylised fact 2:* University–community engagement is something that is not easy to strategically manage, because it is something which because of its grass-roots and diffuse nature, about which it is difficult to generate strategic knowledge.
- *Stylised fact 3:* There is a general or at least recurring unease that community engagement is being systematically neglected within institutions as a topic for strategic management, and there is a wish amongst those who are uneasy to address this neglect.

Tying these facts together produces an understanding of the neglect of community engagement by universities as being a consequence of three drivers. Firstly, which does not emerge from this argument, is that some institutions simply do not feel that it is something for which they have a responsibility other than at a very basic level of being a responsible public body. Secondly, for those who regard community engagement as being potentially desirable as a university mission, its urgency is diffused and displaced by other more urgent and imminent drivers more closely related to institutional survival.

Thirdly, for those who regard community engagement as an important mission and worthy of strategic institutional attention, there is insufficient information to provide institutions with the confidence that particular courses of action are sensible. Indeed, there may be a sense that a process of becoming engaged is unmanageable in the sense of not being subjectable to strategic management processes, setting visions, targets and developing change plans with milestones to achieve those endpoints.

One, very pessimistic, reading of that situation would be that university–community engagement is incompatible with new public management processes as applied to higher education, because of its diffuseness and the incomparability, uncountability and unknowability of its outputs. This is a consequence of the fact that one can never be certain that particular behaviours and outcomes produced in

engagement are either the best that can be produced, given the circumstances, or indeed are a result of purposive action rather than random fluctuation and chance events. However, it is perhaps a little unfair to draw such sweeping conclusions in the light of both an extremely limited evidence base in this chapter, as well as the stories emerging in other chapters of other serious attempts to make engagement work at some level as a university mission.

A more positive perspective might point to the irrepressibility of the idea of community engagement as something important to the idea of a university in particular situations, as highlighted by Flexner (1930), Robbins (1964), Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI 1982), NCIHE (1997) and Kellog Commission (1999). Even if community engagement is not core to the idea of a university, this suggests that there is something about community engagement that is important to the way that HEIs are regarded by societal partners.

The narrative in this chapter could reasonably be interpreted as indicating that community engagement has permeated into benchmarking because there is something about community engagement which is important to the idea of a university, and there is the feeling that that needs including in the techniques by which universities are managed, in this case, to benchmarking.

Understanding that 'something' is important to nuancing the idea of a university, because it is important to note that that 'something', whatever it is, has persisted from the idea of the democratic mass university into contemporary notions of the 'modern' university. That these reports cited previously are dealing with what we might regard today as 'research-intensive' universities, suggests that engagement, or whatever the 'something' about engagement is that is important, is neither something exclusive for a particular kind of 'less worthy' university nor incommensurable with ideas of excellent and indeed world-class universities.

16.7   The Idea of an Engaged, Excellent University

This implication that there is something about engagement forms part of how society values universities do can be used to reflect on the idea of an engaged university. This can be related back to the idea raised in Chap. 1 on the societal compact (cf. Barnett 2000) which is the general set of assumptions and implicit agreements between universities and societies which justify the privileged treatments they receive. It was CERI in 1982 which noted that universities tended to focus their engagement activities on three groups, either those which were close to them, those which they had been created to help, or those with which they had a cultural link (e.g. religious). One interpretation, implied by CERI was that universities chose those groups because they were in some way proximate or cognate to the university, and therefore easier to work with.

However, an alternative reading is that proximity makes it easier to work with harder-to-reach groups, and in all three cases, there are good examples of how universities have worked with groups that are very hard to reach, with excluded

communities, with small firms, or disenfranchised social groups. Rather than it being easy for universities to work with these groups, what is valued in some way is the effort that universities make in trying to solve intractable societal problems. The fact that community engagement has recurred as something that people feel is important and should be measured suggests that this effort is valued, and modern management tools should be used to support that valued effort.

This has implications for the way the societal impact is understood, and in particular, the way that the third mission relates to this societal compact. Rather than universities being valued for the absolute good that they do, this hints that in fact what is valued might be that universities help particular groups do better, and help these groups overcome the barriers they themselves face to be more successful. Clearly, this was the case in the creation of universities supporting under-represented and disenfranchised groups. One can then imagine two responses to ensure that higher education adapts to these new societal demands, either through the creation of new kinds of universities in which engagement is explicitly a mission and defining feature, or the delivery of better quality engagement across existing institutions.

This may be suggestive of a set of shifting positions, resulting in a redefinition or renegotiation of the societal compact. At its most extreme, this could result in a reconceptualisation of universities' privileges being reserved for those who place the greatest effort into working with hard-to-reach groups, and making the greatest societal difference. Those universities which work with the best students and research partners would relinquish some of the special funding and freedoms currently enjoyed in return for a lifting of the obligation to work with these harder to reach groups. The other universities that continued to work making an effort around engagement would, in the language of Gunasekara (2006), become institutions that created developmental rather than generative impacts, and change, rather than merely reproduce, socio-economic systems and structures.

In this last discussion, a certain degree of speculative license has been used in order to try to place a very technical and administrative set of events into a broader interpretative context. It is important therefore to remain within the boundaries of the evidence offered and to note that at best what might be visible is a sense within universities' societal stakeholders that universities should become more concerned with socio-economic change.

Their role in this is not just creating and disseminating the knowledge for that change, but helping other kinds of actors, be they excluded communities or small firms, to create changes. This suggests at the very least that engagement must at least be recognised as something more than a peripheral addition to universities' activities, but an important element of the way that universities justify their privileges and as part of the interwoven elements comprising the societal compact.

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Part V
Conclusions

Chapter 17
The Engaged University in Practice?

Reinventing the Social Compact for the Grand Societal Challenges

Paul Benneworth

17.1 Introduction: Towards the Idea of the 'Engaged University'

The purpose of this book has been to try to create a space to debate the idea of engagement within universities, and in particular engagement with excluded communities, in ways that allow a broader reflection on the idea of the university. The starting point for this debate was tension between universities needing to justify their social contributions, whilst working with excluded communities is extremely hard to deliver. A series of debates had appeared to frame engagement as something peripheral from universities' core interests, and which—we contended—undermined a more positive rather than normative evaluation of its role.

The aim of this book has therefore been to reflect on how universities might engage more effectively as part of an expanded third mission with the potential to renew the university–societal compact. This book has revealed how this framing has been neither actively nor intentionally promoted by universities. It has been the consequence of a shift within higher education systems which have become increasingly sensitised to social stimuli. The means by which this has been achieved has encouraged universities to marginalise engagement, but that marginalisation cannot be addressed without wider changes to the higher education system as a whole.

In this final chapter, what we seek to do is to pull together some of the strands which emerged in the course of this book to try to make sense of this wider evolving third mission, the nature of the university, and reflect very briefly on public administration and governance in late capitalist society. The picture which has emerged in the previous chapters has been very messy, with universities pulled between many competing pressures, where engagement or attention to imminent societal problems has not featured extensively. At the same time, there have been indications that in some kind

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of way, the idea that universities should contribute to societies and their imminent challenges remain important to the values that people ascribe to universities.

In this final chapter, we take a look forward as to what might be the future implications for our findings. The backdrop to this chapter is that society is potentially at a significant turning point on a number of different scales. In the most immediate short-term, the financial crisis is likely to cast a fiscal shadow over developed economies, depressing demand, taxation and public expenditure as the credit bubble of the 1990s and 2000s unwinds. The experience of Japan after its 1990 crash suggests that this rebalancing may also have long-term consequences. With many governments turning to austerity measures, this is likely to emphasise the 'sweating' of public services increasing micro-management of universities.

In the medium term, it is clear that the global economic centre of gravity is shifting away from Europe and North America, towards India, China and Russia. Unlike the rise of Japan in the 1980s, this is far more threatening to advanced western economies: If the global economy evolves over the next decades into a global supply chain centred around these emerging economies, then there will be far greater dependence of Western economies upon these economies. This would threaten national autonomy to control national investment and consumption levels. The challenge is shifting towards making sustaining aggregate demand as an overarching policy goal and away from the previous emphasis on making incremental productivity improvements in industries by supply-side deregulation.

Then, finally, in the long term, it is highly likely that there will have to be a concerted effort towards transition from the industrial to the post-industrial economy. The challenge for this transition is that the resources upon which previous reconstructions and growth phases have been built were previously effectively limitless. Now the challenge is to use resources in smart ways to create genuinely sustainable economies. The last period of reconstruction and mass infrastructure development, such as developing national electricity grids and nuclear and hydro power were based on mass coordinated investments driven through high taxation and socialised expenditure. The question remains as to the extent to which this resocialisation will be necessary to rebuild societies in order to ensure their more general longevity.

All these changes will have implications for universities and indeed for the general evolution of the idea of a university. We here use the idea of the 'system shift' as developed in Chaps. 12 and 13 more generally to explore how this might change the conditions under which the third mission is operating and indeed how the social mission for universities may evolve in coming years. This chapter has the following structure. In Sect. 16.2, we return to the idea of the system shift as presented in Part V to consider the way in which the third mission for universities is currently constituted. Section 16.3 sets out the main elements of that system and their interrelation emerging from the preceding analysis in this book.

Section 16.4 considers how the changes outlined above in the short, medium and long run might potentially impact upon the system, and outlines three new system configurations. From that, Sect. 16.5 then speculates more generally on some of the implications which might exist for our understanding of late modernity, and in particular, shifting models of governance, accountability and individualisation. This

chapter and the book then concludes with an agenda for future research on three levels:

- Making the case for more consideration of the systems within which universities' missions are defined.
- The application of system complexity more generally to inform higher education research.
- Reflections on how this applies to the higher education modernisation project and that project's future directions.

17.2 The Idea of System Shift and the Third Mission

This book began from the idea of 'complexity' facing universities, and the impacts that this has on the way that universities—and indeed other societal stakeholders—define their missions in general and the third mission in particular. A critical issue here is that universities are both pulled in many directions at once, serving many different goals—in the abstract and general—simultaneously. In the course of the book, we have seen the effect that this has had on the way that engagement is regarded. The validity of engagement, its capacity to become a basis for action, and the willingness of stakeholders to support it are not grounded on common acceptances of what engagement is.

Rather, different groups take singular readings about engagement—which are not necessarily congruent with those of others, but which can lead to disagreements which seem intractable. The effect is to create the contemporary situation where engagement seems to matter on some level, but it is impossible to define the value of that activity. One way that this situation can be understood can be that universities are nested within highly complex networks which shape their activities. These networks or systems are highly interconnected and that means that simple interventions do not necessarily produce simple outcomes.

One sees this with policy attempts to produce community engagement, with the closest to simple outcomes being delivered where large sums of money were provided to universities for research with communities, where their willingness to involve communities in that activity was largely a matter for their own consciences (the CURAs, cf. Chap. 13). The converse of this is that many attempts by universities, policy-makers and communities themselves to get universities more engaged have become bogged down in a mess of distractions and hindrances.

But that is not to say that system change is impossible—and Chap. 12 demonstrated the way in which the system shifted in the 1980s in favour of business engagement. On one level, this can be portrayed as a political mobilisation by a group of universities and policy-makers to increase the degree of commercial activity undertaken by their universities. This became embedded in the idea of technology transfer managers, and transmitted through the development of the appropriate indicators. But this describes only the internal nature of the shift, and downplays the other element of the story, in which shifts in the nature of the state, particularly

in America and Europe, empowered a mobilisation by those interested in commercialising university research.

These shifts happened on a number of levels. At the highest level was a concern of the declining competitiveness of western Europe and America against Japan, and the 'stagflation' affecting particularly Europe. This drove efforts by policy-makers to improve productivity levels by removing barriers on the supply-side, increasing new product development rates. But part of the supply-side agenda was also increasing deregulation of the private sphere and reregulation of the public sphere, including the marketisation and cost-reduction around public goods. This created an environment where universities' commercial activities thrived because they were seen as supporting the supply-side agenda and produced neatly quantified benefits in return for public funding.

So, the system shift involved both internal and external elements. But it is also important to stress the third, dynamic and path-dependent element of the shift. Although the Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI) 1982 report identified the key internal and external elements of the shift then underway, what it was not able to successfully do was to identify that commercial engagement would go on to become far more successful and acceptable than community engagement.

The system change was actively constructed by actors, and it is important not to simplify that agency to these actors simply following the tenets of 'neo-liberalism' or 'deregulation'. There were chains of causation where the Association of University Technology Managers' metrics became solutions for a range of policy-makers and practitioners looking for a way to understand university impact, who then took decisions which indeed made those metrics, and commercialisation, more important.

In terms of these three elements of a contemporary system shift affecting the HE third mission, in Sect. 17.1 we identified that the key external shift is a growing tension between short-term pressures to suppress consumption along with longer term pressures to raise collective investment levels to drive forward transition towards genuinely sustainable societal infrastructures, to address the grand societal challenges alluded to in Chap. 1. In terms of internal shifts, we have seen that there seems to be a sense that community engagement is important to the 'idea of a university', despite quotidian pressures squeezing it out of the direct policy consciousness. In dynamic terms, although there have been many interesting experiments in university–community engagement, what has not yet happened is a change in the way the engagement mission has become the basis for the validation of universities' duties to society.

17.3   The key Elements of the Third Mission System

In the introduction, we noted that higher education community engagement systems could be regarded as being comprised of four distinct elements. Alongside engagement activities themselves, activities were also shaped by universities' internal constituents, which were highly interdependent with the 'idea of a university', defined in practice by an epistemic community, the third system element. The fourth

element were the social contexts for engagement, not in terms of the 'users' of university knowledge but those involved in the validation of universities' societal contributions.

This book explored each of those elements of the system in a degree of detail, albeit from the perspective of studies primarily drawn from higher education systems where substantial systematisation of higher education has taken place (inter alia The United Kingdom, Australia, Canada). In this concluding section, we try to highlight the connections between the elements to develop a deeper understanding of university–community engagement as an emblematical form of upholding the societal compact.

One issue is that this system has become extremely complex in recent decades. In the 1970s, governments controlled universities more or less directly either through block grants or cameralist funding. This led to the problem identified by Maassen (1996) in that universities were trapped in multiple and competing demands placed upon them by government. What the 'reform process' has sought to do over the last 20 years was to make those competing demands more explicit, so that rather than being mediated through government, individual groupings have been given powers to hold universities to account.

At the same time, governments have not relinquished all of their powers over universities. There is the increasing use of direct ties, creating rules and regulations that shape the evolution of the system. The use of quasi-markets, for example, in allocating resources, recasting students as consumers, has made universities pay attention both to students' wishes and also to the regulations that shape that quasi-market. This is true in the case of additional student numbers in England, allocated by the regulator against a semi-transparent, semi-strategic criteria set. But also interesting is the fact that the time of writing in England is the political row over the appointment of a new regulator and, in particular, the sense that the elite universities encouraged MPs to try to veto a candidate that might use the regulators' powers to challenge their privileged situations in the status quo.

This has greatly complicated the environment within which universities operate and creates uncertainties about how particular strategic decisions will affect the universities in the future. This has the effect of reinforcing the systematic exclusion of community engagement interests. They are not represented directly as customers of the university, nor is there in many countries a regulator or institution seeking to create markets within which universities undertake community engagement, and nor is it easy to measure and reward effective community engagement. The case of the row over the appointment of the regulatory was instructive in that the elite universities apparently feared that the Office for Fair Access would use its powers to cap their fees for recruiting too few students from poor backgrounds, a distinctly individual reading of community engagement.

The net effect has been that universities have to pay attention to many different kinds of competing stakeholders, prioritise between different activities, with the result that engagement and the third mission, particularly in terms of its community variety, can be neglected or made peripheral. But it is not enough simply to say that the world is complex and hence to give a sense that complexity, or indeed the

current network topology, is an intrinsic and unchallengeable system element. The last 30 years have seen an enormous re-ordering of the system, driven by policy-makers' concerns with competitiveness, marketisation and the promise of university commercialisation.

At the moment, the nature of that system is clear in terms of the dominant paradigms which frame the ways in which actors pursue their aims within the system. The meta-paradigm is provided by neo-liberalism and the extension of private markets into public services to provide greater efficiency. The paradigm is of the promotion of both accountability and competition through the use of transparency tools. The effect is to add salience to those activities that can be rendered in terms of transparency tools, and marginalise those that cannot. But this is a current feature of the system rather than a ubiquitous feature of university–community engagement, and we return to a number of interesting examples of serious higher education projects where community engagement has been fundamental to the activity.

This brings us back to the tension identified at the outset of this book and chapter, namely what happens when society wants universities to produce utility but universities are prevented from doing so by the wider system. The problems that universities face is not unique, and across advanced economies, capacity to address societal problems is greatly hindered by the fragmentation of producers which marketisation has brought through its requirement for competition, and the definition of relationships via commercial contracts (Van Berkel and Borghi 2008). It is now commonplace to argue that the tensions within this system are reaching their limits and that the current paradigm cannot deal with the mass transformations required to deal with contemporary social challenges (inter alia Clarke 2004; Van de Walle and Hammerschmid 2011).

The shift towards neoliberalism and the rise of marketization in public services can be situated in terms of a crisis in the legitimacy of western states in the 1970s arising from stagnating living standards and rising unemployment. In the case of the United Kingdom, Hall (1992) highlights the role played by the balance of payments crisis in 1976 as stimulating policy-makers to embrace monetarism and marketization to avoid a future humiliation at the hands of international markets. In France, the failure of Mitterand's 1982 reflationary programme marked a similar end to explicitly Keynsian policies and the emphasis primarily on fiscal budgetary responsibility. These crises guided the particular political and administrative decisions in each country towards a similar end, that of new public management, and can be regarded as a turning point in a process of system shift.

The question then is whether we are standing at the brink of a similar set of system shifts which might lead to a further system reordering in which community (or at least broad) engagement would evolve into something which universities undertake much less contentiously, as happened with business engagement. Clearly, particular kinds of emerging problems could stimulate crises of political legitimacy which challenge the kinds of political discourses which have enabled the emergence of neo-liberalism. But what are the conditions under which this might drive changes which would also change the way that engagement in its wider sense was regarded as a university mission?

17.4   Three Scenarios of Future System Shift Development

It is quite clear that there is a common set of pressures emerging from the current global situation coherent across the short run to the long term. There is likely to be a clear problem in falling demand and investment, creating a vicious cycle in which advanced economies run the risk of entering a period of economic stagnation, and fail to invest in the measures necessary to make them sustainable and resilient. What is less clear is the extent to which these problems in turn drive political changes capable of addressing the heavy degree of fragmentation and individualisation which characterises late modernity, and begin to re-emphasise collective action. In parallel with this is a question about whether the responses will be driven by the 'carrot' or the 'stick'—will governments seek to build up welfare systems which encourage compliance in collective action, or 'policing systems' which punish deviation from increasingly repressive norms necessary to uphold the social order?

In this vein, we would sound a note of caution in using the contemporary situation as suggestive of underlying position, because there are some hints that we may have approached the peak of the knowledge economy bubble which may have accounted for recent shifts in the way that universities seek to position themselves in society. In the 1980s, there was a correspondence of a trend in the public realm and in universities in quite a different way from the current situation which nevertheless saw universities position themselves as being particular kinds of actors. The 1980s was a period of belief in enterprise and entrepreneurship as a great solution to societal problems, characterised quite neatly by Harvey (1989) in identifying urban entrepreneurialism as an emerging approach in the regeneration of Baltimore (1989).

It was at this time that a set of universities began identifying themselves as 'entrepreneurial', in portraying themselves as creating new kinds of business and employment opportunity necessary to help advanced economies come to terms with the economic problems of the early and mid-1980s (Clark 1998). At the same time, this became entangled with a particular understanding of the way that universities exercised their entrepreneurial function, in line with the rise of Harvey's urban entrepreneurialism.

Universities became involved with these entrepreneurial development and regeneration projects, and in particular with the development of science parks which were intended to transmit their entrepreneurial capacities to the level of the economy as a whole. But as Massey et al. (1992) convincingly demonstrate, science parks were more a reflection of buoyant high-technology complexes such as Cambridge in the United Kingdom (cf. Segal 1985) rather than a positive attempt by universities to change the underlying spatial division of labour.

Although science parks have adapted rather seamlessly in the shift in the public policy paradigm from ideas of entrepreneurialism to innovation discourses, the point remains that there is a disconnect between what science parks and universities actually deliver in terms of their business outcomes, and the sums that are invested in creating them. If there is a shift away from the innovation notion in public discourse, and in particular a shift towards greater degrees of collective action necessary to deal

with these Grand Challenges, then one might expect a challenging of the idea of universities as spaces of entrepreneurship and innovation, towards ideas of universities as spaces of integration, socialisation and the production of solutions to these wider problems.

However these future pressures eventually influence the emergence of novel political philosophies and organising principles of government, it is clear that there are changes already afoot which imply that higher education systems may stand at the edge of a fundamental upheaval. These upheavals, in response to these new grand social challenges, may lead to a reconfiguring of the higher education systems in ways that change the way that universities' societal missions are regarded. As a thought experiment, we consider three different changes in political philosophy, administrative approach and university behaviour. Each scenario foresees different models of university engagement, and also for the societal role and function of university, and hence of the 'idea of a university more widely articulated.

In the first scenario, the shift in governmentality is towards encouraging coordinated action in which agents assemble bundles of capacity to deliver change and receive preferential funding for those large-scale activities. In such a situation, the university could evolve to be a project manager for these strategic shift projects, the place where the necessary human resources come together to identify and solve problems, create the necessary human capital to deliver wider social changes, and oversee the delivery of these changes. In such a situation, wider engagement could become a core task for all universities in stimulating social innovation as well as more restricted versions of economic engagement.

A second scenario might be that governments seek to generate efficiencies through increasing specialisation of formerly common types of institution, with much more narrowly defined tasks delivered with a much greater degree of efficiency. In such a situation, particular universities might evolve into 'Academies for Transition' more reactively than in the previous scenario, but nevertheless as cornerstones of social transition processes. In this scenario, the task of engagement becomes decentred and destabilised with different kinds of engagement suitable for particular kinds of institution, with of course the corollary that for some kinds of institution, very limited (e.g. restricted to information-sharing and public-relations) engagement might be the most appropriate form.

A third complete scenario might be of an intensification of current trends towards micro-management, with an unbundling and simplification of services to allow governments more direct control and steering over public expenditure and investment levels. In this scenario, there is a direct unbundling of the university into its various components, with a separation of teaching from research activities. In such situations, talk of the idea of an engagement mission has no meaning because of a total destabilisation of the idea of a university as a place integrating teaching and research. This might make it easier to more clearly specify engagement missions for these various new kinds of institution, by reducing the problems imposed by the complexity of the idea of university, but the sense of a university is here lost.

The critical point to make here is that the future remains to be created and is not necessarily preordained on the basis of current activity. We have taken great pains

in this book to say that we are not part of a community that believes in community engagement for universities at all costs. Rather, our point has been to argue that community engagement seems to have an increasingly important role to play, given contemporary evolutions in higher education. But at the same time, it is important to appreciate that there may be wider contextual shifts that turn out to be far more important for the way that that evolution takes place than we are currently able to credit.

So, the point in sketching out three potentially very different scenarios is to destabilise the idea that the future can be predicted on the basis of very simple forward extrapolations. In particular, we seek to avoid ending the book, as do many reports on university–community engagement, arguing that we stand on the brink of an exciting engaged future for universities. Instead, we reflect on the wider social consequences of these potential changes, greater social co-ordination, for understanding the knowledge society.

17.5 Knowledge Institutions in the Individualised, Modern Society

Section 17.4 makes the point quite clear that the changing 'idea' of a university is inexorably tied up with broader changes in society, both at the level of societal attitudes but also micro-discourses and practices of governance. In Chap. 1, we highlighted Kickert et al.'s (1997) point that higher education was a 'canary in the mine' for the emergence of new public management, and transformed very quickly in some countries from democratic to managerial institutions. Kickert et al. were able, by observing higher education, where these reform pressures and the pace of change were high, to get an early indication into the emergence of new public management in general.

The question can therefore be asked on the basis of what we have observed in the preceding chapter about what could potentially be inferred more generally about the changing nature of government. More particularly, questions can be asked concerning what indications exist around the broader shift in conditions away from individualisation towards modes of governance capable of delivering collective solutions to urgent societal problems.

This new approach to governance appears to be based on a shift away from direct contracting with public actors towards funding flagships which are then empowered and resourced to substantially change societal systems. Whilst in the past it has been quite common for pilot experiments to have pre-competitive funding, it might be that in the future, increasing amounts of public funding will become allocated to leading flagship projects which have the plausibility and capacity to achieve wider societal changes. The weaknesses of this approach are well known, in that funding and rewarding past success locks-in the group of recipients and can lead potentially to complacency. But at the same time, it could be that such an approach is necessary to achieve the required degree of coordination in governmental action amongst currently fragmented actors in order to deliver national projects.

This in turn—at its most speculative—links with interesting questions about the kind of underlying democratic philosophy which are possible in order to respond to, or which may emerge in response to, these grand challenges. Wittfogel (1957) highlighted the emergence of what he called 'oriental despotism' out of which despots and large bureaucratic systems were 'necessary' in order to arrange the labour necessary to support the extensive irrigation systems which permitted rice-based agriculture in the Yellow River valley.

Likewise, Swyngedouw (2007) charts in fascinating detail the relationship between Spanish fascism and the national rebirth project in which national hydrological reengineering produced a scientific cadre that influenced the culture of Spanish higher education in ways that persisted even through democracy. But universities do not play simple, instrumental roles in political projects, but also more general unpredictable impacts as spaces of resistance, as typified in the waves of student occupations of universities in the Netherlands in the early 1970s or more recently in England in late 2010.

There are of course a number of health warnings that must be attached to any such reflection, not least that they are largely speculative and run the risk of being slightly tautological. In this book, we have clearly played up the problems of the Grand Social Challenges as something which self-evidently need addressing. Nevertheless, it may yet remain that governments do not address themselves in a serious way towards these problems, and that approaches to governance evolve in an entirely contrary way. It is therefore necessary to be very modest about of what the changes portrayed in this book are suggestive.

A further degree of modesty is necessary because clearly universities are not a magic bullet which can transform their wider environments. Our argument here is that universities can be part of a wider coalition that builds the future in a more sustainable way, and in which the system evolves to encourage more collective solutions. Given the way in which universities have changed in response to wider societal changes, it is not unreasonable to expect the idea of a university to evolve with the Grand Challenges of the twenty-first century. That is not the same as to argue that universities will be significant actors in addressing these problems, rather it is an emergent property that remains to be empirically explored in the future.

A final degree of modesty is necessitated here because it could be that the peak of the discourse of universities as societal actors has passed. There has been the development of a discourse in the last 20 years which has deliberately and purposively played up the societal role of universities to legitimate a huge net inflow of resources into the sector (e.g. Committee of Vice Chancellors and Principals (CVCP) 1994; OECD 2007; Goddard 2009). This has come at the same time as a wave of massification of higher education, and general expenditure increases which have helped to fund this expansion.

Given the crisis, it could be that this latest growth phase for universities is over, and there is less political willingness or interest in universities in supporting such a discourse. In such circumstances, it might clearly be overblown to regard universities as the natural loci for creating joined up technological solutions to wider societal

problems. Costs in the sector could conceivably be reduced by focusing on scholarship and education over research, on knowledge transfer over knowledge creation. Caution is necessary concerning the assumption that the investments that sustained the technological advances since 1945 can be sustained in the downturn. Although it is perhaps hard to envisage this situation, the future role of the university as a societal institution might equally come to be as modest and yet as all pervasive as those of compulsory education.

17.6 University Futures, Research Futures

As a conclusion (or coda) to this book, this chapter now turns to suggest three areas where further research is necessary in order to respond to the issues which are raised by this reflective process. The contribution that this book has made to the field has been to use community engagement as a means of exploring universities' societal compact, rather than as a discrete task of universities (either equal or subordinate), but separate from the core missions of teaching and research. This provides a means to explore community engagement within the mainstream of the higher education management literature without necessarily having to normatively advocate that engagement. On the basis of the evidence, here are three main areas where further research into universities and community engagement may be productive in feeding into on-going research trajectories in higher education management.

The first is research into higher education systems, and in particular in the way in which wider external/environmental variables affect universities within the web of stakeholders within which they operate. There is currently a prevailing 'rational choice' model of understanding the impact of policy on higher education, whilst the struggle for the last 40 years has been that universities have become overburdened with stimuli, stakeholders and missions (Maassen 1996) that undermine any pretence to rationality in decision-making. A system perspective on higher education would be useful in illuminating how relationships within and between universities, and with particular societal groups influence the way in which supposedly rational policies are implemented.

One area where this is particularly important is in debates around profiling within the sector, whether in debates around World Class Universities (Salmi 2009), or in the reintroduction of divides between teaching-led or research-led universities (Veerman 2010). There has been a tendency to focus on the universities as individual elements of a higher education system, and not to consider the relationship between them in, for example, creating norms—or cohesive sub-groups with novel properties—that change the topology of the system and hence new systems' capacities and outcomes.

With world class universities, much thought has been devoted to the impact that these have on their host countries and not the impacts that it has on the higher education system, despite their being an implicit assumption that all the benefits–and in particular the externalities and opportunity costs of these programmes are positive. So, we argue on this basis for more work to consider higher education systems as

systems embedded within wider socio-cultural landscapes. These wider landscapes influence actors' behaviour in leading to policy outcomes, and help to imbue the system with path-dependency and potentially lock-in, as well as the tendency to change through system shift rather than gradual institutional evolution.

The second research avenue relates to complexity and the idea of a university. Complexity for universities is a relatively well-understood idea—universities do many things, there are positive externalities between those things they do, and this makes it difficult to essentialise universities. But at the same time, higher education management literature has a tendency to simplify universities by idealising them, and assuming that all universities are some reflection of an ideal type of university.

But the book has shown through community engagement that it is very difficult to essentialise or idealise what universities do, and efforts to idealise produce their own tensions from a recognition that those idealisations in some way fall short of what would be desirable. Where this has salience for contemporary debates relates to discussion over the contemporary nature of the university as the evolution away from the democratic mass university continues to unfold, even without considering the future changes which may emerge as a result of changing social compacts and the grand challenges (Delanty 2002). Delanty's contribution here emerges in a book which is discussing the notion of whether the virtual university is indeed the new ideal type for universities, but as Benneworth et al. (2010) note, others have similarly tried to propose new emerging ideas for universities.

> Various authors suggested archetypal forms, from the entrepreneurial university (Clark 1998) through the virtual university (Cornford and Pollock 2003), the engaged university (Watson 2007), the ethical university (Garlick and Palmer 2008) and the useful university (Goddard 2005, Benneworth et al. 2010, p. 1615).

Our argument here is that proposing new ideal types of universities is a rather unproductive activity. What the absence of an ideal university suggests is that there should be less normative research emphasis on identifying the ideal type of university, and more on understanding how these disparate pressures interact in ways that produce distinctive types of university–and higher education system.

Clearly, one dimension of this is the profiling which emerges in the first element requiring future research, producing new segmentations of universities and their missions. But arguably a more productive avenue of research would be in better understanding this complexity and how different pressures to be virtual, entrepreneurial, ethical, engaged and useful, relate to the institution of university. An essential element of this should be engaging with societal partners and their definitions and understandings of universities, to understanding the conceptual space where this decentred idea of a university may emerge, and to develop clear language to articulate the concept along with its policy concepts.

A final area where more research seems justified is in the practical implications of the universities as a decentred and unidealisable institution. If universities are trying to do many things, then a new public management approach, rooted squarely in the belief of one policy to achieve one outcome, appears out of step with what is necessary for their management. The modernisation 'project' (never a project and

more a series of homologising policy desires and regulations) already repeatedly alluded to therefore suffers from having in its mind an ideal type of university, which could be regarded as the 'steerable university'.

But steerability as an ideal type falls some way short because of the well-known problems which increasing university central management has for encouraging multiple activities which are not all easily understood or known by the steering centre (cf. Greenberg 2007; Bridgman and Willmott 2007). There appears to be a need for 'smart modernisation'in the sector, which both sensitises universities to external stakeholders as well as allows them to use their internal expertise to generate economies of scale and positive spill-overs within the sector.

At the same time, there is a short-run challenge currently that governments may be encouraging 'dumb modernisation' by forcing tighter adherence to policy models based on singular ideas of universities at a time of declining budgets. There seems to be a risk here that the economic crisis drives a homogenisation of higher education towards easily measured goals at the expense of the more peripheral and less easily managed goals. More research is therefore needed on potential future avenues for the continuation of the modernisation project, with a little more modesty regarding the capacity of indicators and managers to capture what universities actually do, and a greater appreciation of the externalities and spill-over benefits which universities offer, and through which their societal value-added is realised. At the very least is a demand for 'smart modernisation', which recognises the intrinsic complexity of universities and the challenges that this raises for changing the systems of governance within which they function.

This book opened noting the problem in understanding community engagement as one of the excessive emphasis on the individual benefits of higher education and a corresponding neglect of higher education as a collective good producing benefits beyond the individual. Extending this line of thinking leads us to the notion of the higher education system as a means of understanding something which demonstrates a high degree of complexity and which simultaneously serves multiple missions.

This importance of higher education's collective existence also serves as a useful ending point for the book in looking forward into the future. The excellent engaged university is not an isolated atomistic institution, but one which forms part of, and appreciates its position within, a wider system of higher education nested in turn within policy, government and social environments. The excellence in that engagement comes in best contributing to those multiple environments, stakeholders and their desires, and thereby securing and reinventing the institution of university into the challenging times ahead we collectively face.

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