

# TRANSFORM:

THE JOURNAL OF **ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP**

*Engagement: the next thousand years are crucial!*





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*education engaging with communities*

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# INTRODUCTION

## **Engagement: the next thousand years are crucial!**

Universities (along with the churches) are the longest living institutions in our culture and society. A thousand years of learning, scholarship, research, disputation, scientific endeavour and recent mass access to higher education on a global scale have endowed us with 'riches' beyond avarice. In Australia, these intellectual, economic and social formations we call universities are integral to life as we know it. However continuity without change as we progress within this third millennium can only lead to dissolution and decline. Change is in the very nature of things and we must surely grasp this era of change we find ourselves in and work it for the best interests of all. We, the universities, must contest the idea that all we need do to continue to thrive is accede to the needs of the evolving market forces. As the great John Donne pointed out the bell tolls for everyone; this is possibly the one absolute that everyone has in common. The bigger picture is out there and this will shape our future existence. The tolling bell is signalling the demise of the previous incarnations of universities as ivory or concrete and glass towers, dedicated primarily to growing elite cultures of scholarship and research. This means we must surely engage with the key issues of that bigger picture and if so the idea of a different university can begin to emerge. The vocabulary of motives for such change has shaped the emerging discourse within what we are recognising as 'engagement'.

This first edition of the journal does not intend to be cultural dynamite however it does seek to disturb and provoke thought by bringing into the light of day the notion of university engagement, at a time when the challenge of change and the uncertainty of our global future is at the forefront of public consciousness. The articles and contributions cover a wide range of actual practice as well as the thoughts of some leading practitioners, who lead some of our greatest institutions of higher education. This is in itself evidence of the seriousness of the issues and we hope to bring more of the leading thinkers and leaders to these pages in future editions.

As we move into this uncertain future this issue covers a variety of current themes: a key issue is that of 'strategy', what Melbourne University's Vice-Principal, Engagement, Mr. Adrian Collette, refers to as 'going beyond the 3rd stream'. In an interview with this journal, Collette argues for a new model of place-based learning based on co-location with partners. Our opening article considers what are described as the 'big' issues which continue to bedevil university thinking such as action on poverty, the marginalisation of young people, the impact of new technologies and the need for democratic engagement. And Bell warns us against keeping our 'eyes wide shut' to the conceptual roadmaps previously provided by Watson and Gibbons that have never been more relevant in the emergent 'post-truth era'. Briggs and Betts provide insight and analysis into engagement models used by universities to develop and maintain newly formed collaborative innovation spaces and Dostilio advances the powerful idea of neighbourhood-emplaced centers, referencing some prominent American examples which are both instructive and useful for developers and thinkers alike. We include in this issue two shorter 'injection' pieces, reflecting the Viewpoint of a leading CEO and Vice Chancellor. Their purpose is to stimulate dialogue in the best tradition of that great educationalist Paulo Freire and we invite responses from readers for future issues in the form of short debating pieces based on their experience and practice. Owen alerts us to the changing work mindset of young Australians which will require universities to respond and Craven articulates how the practice of community engagement, through impact and empathy, is at the heart of the university he leads.

If the world stood still we would be spared the great trials of life. However it does not and we have no choice but to change with it. We must keep reforming and transforming our universities. How we do this and in what spirit is crucial. We must preserve the best and create the new and to do so we must have dialogue. We must contest what exists where it requires reform and create a power and reality for the new 'engaged' university. The new journal we hope is a platform for this dialogue.

Edited by Professor Jim Nyland

## COMMUNITY, ENGAGEMENT, LEARNING AND THE UNIVERSITY



Professor Jim Nyland took up the role of Associate Vice-Chancellor (Brisbane) at the Australian Catholic University (ACU) in October 2011. Previously, he has held academic appointments at the University of Queensland, where he was the Director of Corporate Education and Director of UQ Business School Downtown. Prior to this he

was Manager and Principal Advisor in the Vice-Chancellor's Office for Engagement at Griffith University and has held managerial positions in a number of universities in the UK. He holds a doctorate in Education and has published research covering curriculum change, the nature of learning and the impact of modernity on educational opportunity. Professor Nyland's work has been international in scope and he has developed programs in the UK and Australia as well as keynote academic papers in Ireland and South Africa. He is particularly interested in extending our knowledge and capacities in 'new learning' both in work and professional settings and in communities which are in transition and face challenges. He is Editor of the Australian journal Transform: Journal of Engaged Scholarship and contributes to current educational debates and issues in regional and national publications.

The title of this paper is "Community, Engagement, Learning and the University" which brings together several related but distinctive concepts and concerns. The idea of community is under severe challenge according to some and when we examine the idea of community we can find ourselves embroiled in questions of identity, nationalism, ethnicity and belonging which go to the very heart of what we think we are and what we would like to become. One such issue is that of how knowledge gained inside and outside the classroom can engage people and communities in new and meaningful ways. This has been called 'real knowledge' and focuses on issues to do with learning and knowledge in workplaces, communities and life experience. It forces us to engage with the 'big issues' – and we signal some of these in this paper.

The 'real' world, out there still consists of millions who are without an adequate income to rear their families, a world without dignity or education, without clean water or adequate food and medicine and whose share of world wealth is actually diminishing. There is also a world out there where climate change and pollution are far from improving and where the threat of human extinction is real. The arguments for devising a new curriculum which addresses these issues seems to be self-evident

The rapid pace of social and economic change, the apparent quickening of mass migration across large parts of the globe, de-industrialisation and the 'hollowing out' of many traditional economies and communities have meant the growth of more challenges to the neoliberal consensus in many societies. For many young people this has meant their future is at risk with youth unemployment and marginalisation the fate of many across the world.

In a society where knowledge has exploded, learning is being transformed by the artefacts and the apps of the information age. Communications can be instantaneous, and reality becomes 'virtual'. Local communities can become marginalised and impoverished by the almost instant switching of production to cheaper locations, perhaps half way across the globe.

The sheer power and availability of computerised automation has now shifted the nature of work and leisure so fundamentally that it faces us with an existential challenge. Modern work, for many, involves a lack of engagement in the task and even leisure and free time may be occupied by 'lazy' and sometimes aimless pursuits.

The task facing universities is of developing knowledge and skills and a curriculum which can cope with the capacities and threats presented by the machines we depend on and which can help us challenge the loss and separation of ourselves from our communities.



Ms. Emer Clarke is currently researching for a UK social research group which specialises in youth education, widening participation and employment issues. She has been Principal of a College of Further Education, a Government inspector of colleges and a Director of the Government's Learning and Skills Council for Cumbria. Her recent

project publications have included: Renewal in Loweswater: a quiet valley in England's Lake District; youth voices and unemployment in Doncaster; Dancing in Nazareth (with Reem Shamsoum): community renewal through dance and music and on learning for community engagement.



Professor David Davies is Emeritus Professor and Retired Executive Dean from the University of Derby in the United Kingdom (UK). Prior to this he held senior leadership roles at various universities throughout the UK. He has an outstanding and varied academic career supporting a diverse range of communities from the leafy

suburban communities of middle England where he trod the boards at Cambridge University as their Director Public Programs, to the barbed wire fence of 'The Maze' prison community in Northern Ireland where he delivered innovative professional development programs via the Open University, UK. He has published widely in the areas of Education, Lifelong Learning and Access, he holds two Doctorates and is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts.

This paper seeks to raise these and other major challenges that set the tone and register for higher education's engagement academic enterprise.

## INTRODUCTION: THE MEANING OF COMMUNITY.

Universities are always thought of as somehow being learning communities; if not this then what are they? They certainly have to do with learning and knowledge production in its various guises. The relationship a university has to its community or its communities may be, however, much more tenuous. Its community may denote the local neighbourhood or town; the oldest universities had a venerable connection with a locality and some of these places have taken on board the aspects of sacred space. Oxford, Cambridge, Harvard, Heidelberg, Bologna, Paris, Prague- all are infused with the special meaning of place (see Urry, 2002 and 2005) and could be said to be examples of emotional geographies. A university community may relate strongly to the local or regional town or city and stand for a set of localised identities. Manchester, Liverpool, Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Christchurch may all have such a resonance. On the other hand the largest UK university, The Open University, has no specific geographical identity with a place other than the UK as a whole and the world in general, though it too has a headquarters on a campus. It does not aspire to being a physical community but to being a learning community without borders of a conventional kind.

## WHAT MAKES A COMMUNITY?

Our main purpose is, however, not to explore the university itself as a community. It is rather to look at what makes the idea of community relevant in the 21st century to what universities actually do; what sustains and challenges accepted notions of community and how should a university grasp and respond to this understanding? The idea of community is under severe challenge according to some and when we examine the idea of community we can find ourselves embroiled in questions of identity, nationalism, ethnicity and belonging which go to the very heart of what we think we are and what we would like to become. These are existential questions in a world where migration, globalisation, dispossession, war, terrorism, poverty and extensive cultural and social conflict characterise our way of life. We live in changing and uncertain times which force us to confront such issues if we wish to have universities which help shape our communities as active and engaged partners, because it is ultimately as communities that we face the challenges of change. The ideology of individualism has created and sustained much modern thinking and behaviour, especially in relation to consumer-driven economic development and the cultural industries. However, when faced with what we have said are existential issues, the notion of belonging and community re-asserts itself, sometimes with a vengeance!

What then makes a community? One influential theorist argues that it is a sense of shared understanding which is in effect

a reciprocal binding sentiment shared by a certain group of people (Bauman, 2000:10). He writes, "...in a community people remain essentially united in spite of all separating factors". This unity involves a shared understanding which is tacit and taken-for-granted by its very nature. Community attributes, which are the substance of this shared understanding, cannot be random. They involve what he calls "sameness". Once we are no longer the same we are unable to maintain the boundaries of 'community'. This raises the question of whether and how in a globalising world we are all becoming the same? Does the fact that regardless of our national origins or identities, we all consume similar food, clothing, consumer durables, entertainment and technological 'fixes', mean we are all becoming the same? Or does it mean that as local customs and behaviour become impacted by global changes we lose that local community which was given to us by birth and by having grown up within its boundaries.

What makes a community is obviously more than the place. Community is one of the longings of our century. In spite of all the definitional problems associated with it in relation to education, it retains a powerful charge and seems to offer a framework of meaning for modern life. Those communities which have been left behind by industrialisation and the forces which supposedly were to eliminate scarcity, poverty and ignorance, offer paradoxically an image of continuity and stability. The longing for meaning, for a sense of continuity of past and future has relevance for all of us. This perspective concerns itself with the notions of community and ecology, by which is meant the potential that may exist for integrating learning and community experience. Such experience has geographical, ideological, emotional and political levels; it is never a single reality, but is always imbricated and multi-layered. This paper considers some of the difficulties facing us when we wish to understand and use the notion of community in relation to learning and the university in modern times.

## SOME CURRENT AND FUTURE ISSUES: THE COMMUNITY AS A MICROCOSM

One such issue is that of how knowledge gained inside and outside the classroom can engage people and communities in new and meaningful ways. One response to this is the argument that we should seek out experience which yields the knowledge and expertise to understand and transform communities. This has been called 'real knowledge' (Davies et al, 2015). The issue is international and transcultural - we are forced to be part of the global world and are thus interdependent, yet we are losing our sense of belonging to communities which were once local and specific, and were once recognisably 'ours'. This is the conundrum which our learning needs to address in order for real knowledge to be put to the test.

This paper, therefore, aims to explore and understand something of the nature of knowledge that can be gained beyond the classroom or lecture theatre. It looks beyond the boundary and it focuses on issues to do with learning and knowledge in workplaces, communities and life experience.

The focus is on how learning needs to engage with our lives and identities as individuals who live within communities of interdependence.

Yet we live in a world of neo-liberal thinking where individuals are seen to be acting in their own interests, rightly and without reference to the wider social context. The freedom of one individual is said to be about the right to pursue happiness and make choices without considering the essentially social nature of all human activity (Rustin, 2013). The realities are of course entirely different. Individual freedoms are always controlled by forces and institutions over which no individual has control. The essential interdependence of social life and activity forces everyone into mutual interdependence but this is often unrecognised and refuted by those whose interests lie in stressing the separateness of us all, which leads us to keep returning to the question of what is shaping experience and reality in modern times?

All of this is occurring in a world where communications will continue to be ever more globalised and where cultural and social identities are re-defined and re-made. On the one hand this shared culture makes us all members of much larger communities whilst on the other hand it leads many people to re-assert more local and comprehensible identities in terms of how people feel about their localities, their national and ethnic groups and frequently their faith and religious affiliations. This too creates issues for learning at all levels.

One of the effects of these changes is global pressure to replace systems of national planning and control with devolved and fragmented market-led systems, which allow a more rapid and individualised response to changing needs. These pressures make individuals more vulnerable to change and they challenge traditional notions of authority, accountability and democracy. Giddens (1990) has referred in this context to the ending of traditional sites and sources of authority. We are moving, argued Giddens, into a more fragmented society where the social bonds and shared values and traditions which held us together in the past are breaking apart or dissolving. Beck (1994) has referred to the notion of a risk society within this changing, shifting and uncertain social order.

Perhaps in reaction to this there is also a counter-balancing pressure to assert local identities within nations and regions and within social, ethnic and religious differences. Cultural pluralism which allows the blossoming of many diverse cultural phenomena exists alongside a more fiercely committed orthodoxy where communities feel their identity and/or existence may be at risk.

Economic logic often runs counter to the needs-based logic of human goals (Rustin 2013). The quality of relationships in work and in communal life are often decisive for a positive outcome and there are values located in work, in labour, in community life, in social activity and in reflective self-consciousness which have significance way beyond any profit to be made from them. It is vital that we seek the content of these values so we can organise and educate around them. These themes and issues

have led us to identify some six related sets of concerns in an attempt to answer the question of how to get valid knowledge of the issues facing communities as the proper basis for thought and action for change and progress – and as a proper and commensurate objective for universities.

## POVERTY IS STILL WITH US – GLOBALLY AND LOCALLY

There is currently in existence an ideology of progress which asserts that new technology can and will bring in a new and better future. This future involves the use and application of computing and digitalisation to transform our working lives. Technological innovation, it is assumed rather than actually proved, will transform our economic and social lives as a vanguard for change. Whilst there is surely truth of a kind in this vision, there is also a wilful wish to ignore the deeper question about the harm and threats our present industrial and social 'progress' is making in its dependency upon this technology. The 'real' world, out there still consists of millions who are without an adequate income to rear their families, a world without dignity or education, without clean water or adequate food and medicine and whose share of world wealth is actually diminishing. There is also a world out there where climate change and pollution are far from improving and where the threat of human extinction is real. The arguments for devising a new curriculum which addresses these issues seems to be self-evident and though this may be the case, it is equally the case that the curriculum and what constitutes valid knowledge in higher education and elsewhere is contested territory. The forms of learning and curricula which predominate in most formal schooling and higher education are not adequate to the tasks they face (Porter, 1999). New and radical forms of 'knowing' which are also rooted in community lives pose difficult questions for conventional educators and universities. Such questions involve not only the problem of delivering institutionally based learning and accreditation to very poor communities who cannot afford to pay for it, but also the thorny issue of whether the knowledge taught is actually 'real' and relevant to the lives and communities who need it (Teare, 2013).

## THE MARGINALISATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE

The rapid pace of social and economic change, the apparent quickening of mass migration across large parts of the globe, the de-industrialisation of many traditional manufacturing heartlands and the 'hollowing out' of many traditional economies and communities have meant the growth of more challenges to the neoliberal consensus in many societies. For many young people in particular this has meant the future is severely at risk.

Those young people who are not in education and training or in work with career and training prospects, constitute a persistent and troublesome problem for society which says it believes in offering all young people the chance to fulfil their potential in life. The local economy and neighbourhood characteristics are important in understanding and combating the persistent and multiple disadvantages of certain



communities. Worklessness and lack of access and take up of education and training by young people is a key indicator of such a community, often now referred to as young people at risk (YPAR). Spatial segregation and concentrations of worklessness can be pronounced and show us that economic processes can be profoundly territorial. Spatial development (neighbourhoods) and the 'ecological' cultures they contain are crucial in understanding local concentrations of deprivation. A number of contributors to this issue, notably Bell 2017, stress the importance of neighbourhood and space and perceptions of space and community.

These social processes impact in particular on YPAR and working class people, who often live in economic insecurity and cannot predict the future, and consequently there is a need to define oneself always in the here and now. This enforces a certain type of localism and security around certain primary links such as family and neighbourhood. Neighbourhoods represent specific types of social relations and therefore provide an 'encounter' (not always harmonious) with the 'system' which allocates resources and determines the social practices (ie behaviour) of the inhabitants. YPAR present themselves as a contradiction: they are active agents in a system of social practice and behaviour (they are often unemployed, uneducated, dis-located, 'dangerous' and vulnerable). At the same time they present themselves as themselves but always in relation to something else – as what might be their potential and their position in the wider society and social structure. They may be severely at risk but they are certainly part of our future.

From the perspective of learning providers, including schools, colleges, universities and the myriad of training providers, it can be argued that a new approach is required to meet the challenge of YPAR. This involves, we would argue, a greater degree of understanding of the nature of the actual places where YPAR live and a re-working of the kinds of learning which young people find 'real' and useful. It may lead us to want to re-define our ideas of what useful knowledge and skills are! Our first step could do worse than re-visiting notions of space, neighbourhood and community and identity. The relationships that are experienced in the streets and neighbourhoods of poor and deprived communities are physical and social. They may be dangerous and threatening but may also be close, warm and supportive. Specific social relations with the world of public authority and local government are structured and experienced differently from those who have wealth and economic and social resources. This yields a particular set of attitudes and expectations again whose explanation is social rather than simply educational.

Our starting point in engaging with these issues is a belief that it is possible to break the cycle of deprivation and dependency which underpins the at risk experience in such neighbourhoods. Young people at risk, like all of us, need to have a place in the scheme of things – a sense of being equipped for the present and the future. These are the outputs to be desired. What is needed is that willingness to engage and

to learn, a readiness to learn from others and a determination to bring about much needed change through critical and collaborative thinking and action.

## THE GROWTH OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

In a society where knowledge has exploded into availability, learning is being transformed by the artefacts and the apps of the so-called information age (see Castells, 1996). Giddens (1990 and 1991) has argued persuasively that the new communication technologies have disrupted the fixed realities of time and space. This impacts on economic and social life in fundamental ways. Distanciation occurs, where individuals can no longer identify with the sources and meanings of the products they acquire. Everything that is consumed is made somewhere else. All communications are instantaneous, no matter where in the world that is. Delivered items arrive the next day; reality becomes something 'virtual'. Local communities can become severely marginalised and impoverished by the almost instant switching of production to cheaper locations, perhaps half way across the globe. The sources of authority can be undermined and fragmentation of value systems and traditions appears to be rampant to those left behind in the global race for economic supremacy. The fixed realities of time and space are increasingly disrupted as the media we use are available 24 hours per day and everyone on the planet is a potential media partner no matter where they live.

What is of huge significance to each and every one of us and to our collective experience, the stuff of our daily lives, is now mediated by the products of the knowledge economy and the communications/entertainment industry. A changing social and economic reality has been accompanied by a rapidly changing knowledge base. It can be argued (Gardner and Davis, 2014) that for some young people the reality of experience and real life has already been replaced by the reality of digital dependency. What Gardner and Davis refer to as the "app generation" may be a metaphor for what young people have come to think of the world as an "ensemble of apps" where everything they do is part of a larger digital system experienced via the screen. The effects of this on the younger generation are as yet unknown. It may be imagined that they are not all entirely healthy as they impact on identity, imagination and intimacy. The question has been put... are young people becoming app dependent, their lives slavishly reliant on software and surrealities of the screen as substitute for actually being out there and doing something with other people? Or are they becoming app enabled, with new technology allowing them to express and organise themselves in ways previously unimagined?

Today's young people are internet driven; they download ebooks and articles, skype with their tutors, observe lectures on their ipads at several locations and as students get open coursework on-line from a variety of university and other sources. MIT open coursework has 100 million individual learners and this is increasing by one million a month. The Global University for Lifelong Learning (GULL) takes learning to the remotest villages in Papua New Guinea and Africa (Zuber-Skerritt and Teare

2013). The learning revolution has meant that the mass higher education agenda has penetrated some of the most elitist and prestigious institutions, including the Ivy League in the USA and the Oxbridge axis in the UK.

The explosion of digital technologies has undoubtedly opened up access to learning (Teare et.al, 1998). The virtual classroom has accompanied the virtual university, bringing an explosion of learning resources and open access for learners. However, as well as positive outcomes for many it is also possible to discern some threats to cherished values for those generations who are defined by these dominant technologies. These dangers are part of the mass psychology of contemporary experience.

Gardner and Davis (2014) have argued that a 40-year-old parent may be four generations away from their teenage child, separated by the internet and its applications, smart phones and tablets. Young people today have come to think of the world and themselves as inevitably linked by the internet. The world for young people is an ensemble of apps and they are the app generation. In Gardner and Davis' formulation the metaphor of an ensemble of apps describes life lived as part of a larger digital system, through the screen. This is a world where young people in particular have developed a slavish reliance on their machines and apps. As opposed to the notion that this technology allows people to liberate and express themselves in ways previously unimagined, young people are becoming less capable of developing their identity and imagination. They are becoming app dependent and this is a growing problem which is curbing creativity and creating a conformist generation that is risk averse, shallow and self-regarding.

### LOSS OF COMMUNITY – DISPOSSESSION

What then are the dangers and threats to our vision of new learning needed for young people and in higher education presented by the digitalisation of learning and communication? Should we be technophiles or technophobes and do we have an effective choice at all? One of the contexts we would suggest should shape our response might be how such technology does or does not increase our personal autonomy and enhance our freedom to be what we might be. From differing but related perspectives Ivan Illich (1971) and Herbert Marcuse (1964) explored such themes decades ago. Whether we are conscious, creative and active agents in our own world and communities or whether we are passive consumers of things produced for us, elsewhere becomes a vital question? Levitin (2014) and Carr (2015) have shown that extensive use of computer and hand-held screen time encourages consumerism and leads children to value money and branded goods. Furthermore, it induces anxiety, low self-esteem and depression and it harms children's relationships. These arguments purport to show that screens turn children off from accountability and empathy and has proposed that this type of toxic technology does not teach the core curriculum of the human condition such as kindness, generosity, self-control, sensitivity and courage.

There is a loss of 'belonging' and this is frequently experienced as a loss of 'community' and a longing for a sense of continuity

of past and future. Community as we have already argued, has geographical, emotional, ideological and identity dimensions. It is a multi-layered and over-lapping idea (see Berger, 1984 and 1985) and can be so over-used that its specific meanings are lost in the generic 'amorphousness' of 'community'. It can be all things to all people. Nevertheless, community represents still the longings of our time and the sense that it can be lost is a powerful driver of emotions and actions.

The new technologies of communication enable and sponsor what are in effect compromises and distortions of face-to-face reality. The struggle for a viable identity, for example, can be transposed to a virtual place and time; it can be postponed and evaded, for a time. There are people who cannot apparently look up at the sky outside their buildings to see what the weather holds. They unflinchingly consult their hand-held device to check whether an umbrella is needed before venturing out. Virtual reality has become more real for some than reality itself. Remote, dislocated and evacuated- the words that are used have lost their meaning - 'friend', 'cloud', 'search' and 'identity' have been drained of life by their web usage; they have somehow been annihilated by their new on-line connotations so they no longer mean what they say.

We are clearly not going to simply lose these means of communication, however, and therefore we need to be able to control them and to conceptually 'master', them in order to be able to benefit rather than suffer from them. This is an agenda for teachers and learners if ever there was one. The problems are compounded by an accelerating set of issues and concerns. The loss of cognitive control and skills already alluded to means that the individual can become an operator of a computerised system rather than an 'activator'. When the computer performs complex activities and intellectual work such as observing, sensing, analysing and judging, and even decision-making, it changes both the nature of work and the worker in unanticipated and disturbing ways.

The contradictory character of modernity is nowhere more clearly shown than in the contrast between the vast expansion of personal means of communication and digital technologies available to all who can afford them and the millions of people simultaneously trapped in economic poverty and backwardness.

Modernity then has brought with it a capacity for dialogue, communication and the attendant benefits of reflexivity and self-awareness and self-development. It has also created unpredictability, uncertainty and exclusion.

All of this illuminates the importance of the learning agenda for an uncertain future, where we shall need 'really useful knowledge' (Johnson, 1988) within the new and emerging 'real' and virtual communities.

### THE UNIVERSITY AND LEARNING FOR ENGAGEMENT

The modern university is expected to be many different and contradictory things. It is expected to be an innovator in learning and knowledge; collegial in its dealings with its staff

and its partners yet competitive in an increasingly marketised and monetised world; caring in its concern for people yet entrepreneurial in its business dealings; it is expected to be both a public institution and a private organisation and it is almost always both a local and an internationalised institution. This wide array of university roles and identities does not imply that it is in any sense isolated from its community!

We have already touched on the origins of some types of university. The sense of place of a university of course does not necessarily chime with its origins and from medieval Oxford and Cambridge with their support for poor scholars to the mechanics institutes of Victorian Britain emphasising useful and applied knowledge to the vast array of American colleges and the world impact of modern technological campuses, we can see an amazing diversity in 21st Century provision of university learning. What is perhaps surprising though is the fact that they all seem to be **engaged** with their communities.

How can we categorise this activity? The late Sir David Watson a decade ago suggested that there were essentially two domains of university engagement. The first order of engagement referred to the fact that a university was just there! It existed and it produced graduates who became workers and professionals; these graduates contributed to society as professionally educated and qualified citizens; as such they paid taxes, raised children and played a part in civic society. Universities also did such things as provide museums, libraries and galleries and they allowed challenging ideas to be explored. Watson (2006) also suggests they provided the content for some popular cultural dramas and fictions. In the USA universities are venerated, says Watson, more than they deserve whilst in the UK and Australia they 'stimulate more opprobrium than they deserve'.

First order features might also include the ways in which a university seems to offer the best of our opportunities as a model for aspirations for a better life in all senses. Universities might be the place where the best of ourselves finds an authentic expression and as a model for community itself. On the other hand they may fail to tell the truth about themselves to others and to themselves. As large scale institutions they also have all the pitfalls of 'big businesses' and they can be seen to fail as progressive and democratic institutions. In general the university is expected to behave as a moral force and be better than other large organisations. It is expected to be fair and even generous in its dealings with others.

The second order engagements are focussed on the contractual obligations universities carry out. Graduates and researchers are produced in the relevant and required skill areas; professional updating is pursued; services and consultancy are provided and economic activity is sponsored with spin-off companies. The university is also a consumer of services, an employer of a significant labour force and a developer of its environment and spaces.

In recent times the notion of partnership has impacted on

universities and these may be with commercial concerns where the laws of the market and competition rule, or they may be with local organisations or communities themselves, where different rules are thought by many to apply. Universities, says Watson, are somehow expected to hold the ring. There may be dilemmas here for any university.

Who amongst the partners of a university actually carries the risk; who represents the public interest, especially where financial matters are concerned; and if we have university stakeholders, who are they and how much of the actual risk do they take when it is the people's money at stake?

## THE PUBLIC INTEREST

Some of the answers to what are undoubtedly difficult questions lie, according to Watson, in the notion of stewardship- of both the intellectual and moral as well as the concrete assets of the university. Perhaps there are echoes of Cardinal John Henry Newman's 'The Idea of a University' in which "...poetry, oratory and liturgy can, all have in common the power to stir us into recognition of something that we cannot name... the ideal of the untrammelled quest for understanding..." (Collini, 2012: 60). At the first order of engagement the internal and institutional issues facing the university - about how it governs itself (normally), sets its strategy and admits staff and students-do not necessarily cope with how the university deals with its responsibilities to the wider and deeper public interest. This concerns the idea that learning and education are for the public good; they are for a progressive social purpose

Of course the university is not alone in having such a responsibility. Government itself takes on this mantle; intermediate agencies with funding or quality concerns may also be responsible for right and proper behaviour; and benefactors and sponsors may see themselves as holding responsibilities. At the end of the day, however, universities almost always assert their own sense of autonomy and the value of their own independence as voluntary associations from the state, notwithstanding their financial dependence on public and state authorities.

## THE UNIVERSITY AND DEMOCRATIC CITIZEN-MEMBERS?

What then are universities and what are their characteristics that we value? They are voluntary associations and communities and play a significant role in promoting social solidarity and cohesion. They provide key information and analysis for policy making and development and as such are vital to good and democratic government. However, at the heart of the university is the concept of membership, which now of course embraces a wide range of professional and administrative functions, not just the academic ones. Spheres of professional competence now infuse all levels of university learning and activity.

At its heart a university is a community of itself and perhaps for itself, where academic citizenship can be seen to be central to the idea of membership of the community. Students and

staff as citizen-members have a set of responsibilities as well as the rights of consumers. These membership characteristics might just be crucial to the future of universities in the age of modernity and change, as they were perhaps in a very different sense in the past age of elite selection of people destined for higher education. They include recognition of rational and scientific enquiry and procedures as the basis for learning, rather than the handed-down dogmas of orthodox belief. This implies a kind of academic honesty in which all belief systems are open to scrutiny, dialogue, questioning and critical discourse. This is a live issue and is hugely contentious in different parts of the world. Hate speech and the proffering of violence to those with whom we disagree is clearly not acceptable in a university community (or elsewhere for that matter), but that apart it should be possible in a free society, under the law, for one person to express views which are abhorrent to another person without fearing a backlash of hatred, condemnation and proscription. This requires perhaps a special type of academic honesty and it is universities which must help guarantee this freedom by providing open forums for debate of contentious issues and in providing the conditions for study, learning and communication which make discourse possible. Honesty, reciprocity and openness are both the pre-requisites and conditions for the existence of a democratic and progressive community/society. As E. P. Thompson (1963) remarked about the formation of the English working class; they were present at their own birth - and so a militant democratic impulse is needed to ensure the presence and continuity of democracy. Universities can lay claim to the protection of this impulse as one of the key things they do for their communities.

#### WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Universities of course are diverse institutions; even within a single nation there are significant differences between types of universities. Nevertheless, we can say most strive towards being 'good' institutions, committed to openness to other's ideas, engaged with respecting the local environment and collectively committed to policies and practices on equalities, grievances and fairness. Hopefully most universities are doing the right thing in respect of their position as a 'public' or citizen's institution. However, in present circumstances universities are forced the world over to maximise their resources and income; they are forced to play a linear game of knowledge transfer from their campuses to the world of industry and commerce. University- business interaction can become the dominating hegemon of academic life; after all money counts. We cannot over-estimate the difficulty of universities implementing learning derived from the real world and real life processes. This situation contains a significant threat to the world of higher education and presents universities with a series of dilemmas. To cope with it universities will have to play a fully developed role in the emerging civil society; a society that on a global scale is faced with a series of problems and issues outlined above.

A first response must be to define and identify an appropriate

and justified institutional mission; an arena of autonomy and action in which it is free to be what it declares itself to be. This is not easy when the purse strings are held by government which may have different and competing visions or missions for those it funds. Watson (2006) argues that universities must engage in 'reflective pragmatism', by which he means being serious about who your stake holders really are and responding to your 'true' market. This means we cannot and should not all aspire to be, for example, an institution which replicates all the successes of comparator universities. It means, for example, that 'access' universities can thrive in terms of their values and objectives in the same way that 'research universities 'are encouraged and rewarded for their success in delivering a mission. It means an end to what George Orwell called the graded snobberies of the English where endless league tables purport to show excellence as a disguised form of preferential funding. Such funding often expresses historical inequalities in access to resources and people, and from the start rigs the outcomes of any competition. C. Wright Mills, the great American sociologist noted decades ago, and it remains true today, that for sections of the middle classes, in the 'white collar pyramids' education has 'paid off'; it has been a source of cash and a means of ascent. Here 'knowledge', although not 'power', has been a basis for prestige. It is clear that in the modern era of mass higher education such an approach will simply not do. A university education remains a potential passport to a better life for many people but it is by no means an assured route to the top either for an elite or for the broader masses that it was once. Education does not pay off for everyone and it surely does not pay off in the same way for all social groups (Savage, 2015). In fact universities are still very much in the game of 'sorting them out' that is to say, providing avenues of mobility and achievement for some whilst relegating a majority of graduates to a lower order place in the hierarchy of jobs and careers in a highly stratified and inequitable structure of jobs and social life. Having indicated some of the directions to which we think universities appear to be heading, we can tentatively indicate the key areas where universities must now re-think their positions and act decisively.

#### WHAT DO ENGAGED UNIVERSITIES DO?

They must of course sort out the money issues and secure their incomes within an envelope which protects the key academic missions and portfolios. After that they must make certain that their boundaries are protected where that is necessary and then, if necessary, join together with those institutions which are compatible in terms of mission and location. Peter Scott (1995) pointed out some time ago that three quarters of British universities have been created since 1945 and that scarcely a single university has not been involved in a merger, amalgamation, status change or radical re-definition of its role at some point in time. Universities could of course view themselves as part of a narrative of communal and socially progressive forces intent on advancing scholarship, learning and opportunity. On the other hand there is plenty of evidence that some of them are defending privilege, social exclusiveness,

snobbery and class distinctions. Some see themselves as driving change whilst some see themselves as defending traditions and values which are universalist and long-standing. Adapting Watson we can list a 10 point agenda for engaged universities now:

- they must devise an attractive and relevant curriculum and learning environment
- they must contribute to research in some way
- the community must be a key focus for engagement
- the university must help its community to define itself and be part of it
- the campus must be a good place to work for students and staff
- the institution must be environmentally and ethically sensitive and responsible
- good staff and students must be recruited and retained
- a mission must be internalised and understood and also the attendant challenges
- a university must play its part in improving the environment, local education and health and community outcomes
- a reputation locally, nationally and internationally must be forged and preserved, and carried forward on behalf of the university by its staff and students.

#### A CONCLUSION – NOT TO CONCLUDE

This paper has raised questions and concerns on the meanings of community and asked whether the concept is relevant to today's evolving universities and their own concerns with a future role. Some of the global issues surrounding disadvantage, poverty and the marginalisation of young people have been considered because whatever the future holds these young people must be the ones to live it and deal with it. Questions of identity, ethnic and community belonging, nationalism and learning in a world where such matters have impact on our lives have been considered. Universities must be engaged in new and different ways if they are to figure as key elements in the solutions and their critical and defining role, that of promoting and fostering learning, must be re-invented for a new generation.

For this to happen learning must be credible; it must be really useful knowledge for those who are bent on acquiring it. Really useful knowledge may be skills based, it may be qualifications-related and it may be academic but whatever domain it exists in, it must pay off for the learners. In this context we must remember that millions of people across the globe have absolutely no access to university accredited learning and unless their poverty and geographical isolation is substantially relieved they will remain outside our western system of mass higher education. In the light of such reasoning

surely the time has come to consider the role of universities in a new light and to give our support to those who have demonstrated that alternatives can exist and can succeed, even on the slimmest of budgets (see Teare, 2015). It may be time for universities to take the side of and be in solidarity with collective identities and communities which are in struggle for a fairer society (Crowther, Galloway and Martin, 2005).

The new view of the university in its community will also need to embrace the fact that learning will have to be 'social' that is to say it will be shared and will be for a progressive social purpose. That purpose will be to improve the mass of people's learning and give access to what learning can offer. This agenda, for agenda is what it is, implies that the provision of schooling and universities for elites has a limited future. In a globalised world where mass migration flows are commonplace, it is ever more clear that the old system is broken and cannot serve the needs of the democratic majority. That elite higher education systems have paid off for many cannot be denied, however, the next stage requires not merely a scaling up of existing provision but a wholesale re-thinking of learning for those billions of people who can view the benefits of advanced industrial society (via their hand-held devices and computers) but who cannot achieve it. Stability, let alone morality or prosperity demands that this issue be addressed.

Learning is of course not just a social activity, it is also and co-extensively an intense personal activity. It is about the self and self-awareness and these aspects of life are key to successful learning for change and transformation. Identities are involved and ethnic, religious, cultural and social factors shape our aspirations and outcomes. We do not learn in a vacuum but with intentions and objectives- sometimes even with the intention of surviving and earning a living. Change yourself and you change your situation is no mean epithet, especially when allied to a notion of a community since all individual action needs to find its appropriate object and community, as we have seen, is one of the longings of our century. Achieving a community is a goal striven for by many and is still perhaps one of humanity's most sought after aspirations.

In the developed world, the era when a large majority of citizens had little contact with our universities has passed into history. The emerging, and still largely and spectacularly unequal distribution of wealth and opportunity that characterise our societies, places a challenge of huge significance on our universities. The impoverished and disempowered are one constituency that must be addressed but there are others including that of 'community' itself. It is hoped that this paper has at least raised some serious questions for universities with regard to this most persistent and profound theme of community engagement. No easy answers to questions was presumed and none have been found but in questioning the nature and meaning of community we can begin to bring some critical insights into a contradictory and difficult, yet vital "longing"- that of community and the role of a university within it.

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**Professor Sharon Bell** has recently concluded a five-year term as Deputy Vice Chancellor at Charles Darwin University. She is an Honorary Professor at the Australian National University and Emeritus Professor at the University of Wollongong.

As Deputy Vice Chancellor at Charles Darwin University Professor Bell had what might be described as an unparalleled coupling of strategic and leadership challenges in the tertiary education sector. In this role, with responsibility for the International, Research and Academic portfolios she led a highly focussed and strategic engagement agenda that concentrated on developing long-term and multi-faceted relationships with a small number of valued partners, together with capacity building investment in a wider range of institutions in the region. She has also ensured that CDU remained committed to significantly increased student mobility through the New Colombo Plan. Throughout her career Sharon has also been privileged to work closely with Australian Indigenous Communities. Her award winning documentary 88.9 Radio Redfern was first screened on Australian television in 1989, is regularly rescreened on NITV and was this year screened at the ARC cinema in Canberra as part of the Black Screen program. Professor Bell established the University of Wollongong's artistic exchange program with the Yolngu community of Yirrkala, a link that was strengthened during her time at CDU with community leaders at Galiwin'ku. Professor Bell is a Board member of Ninti One, the managing entity of the CRC for Remote Economic Participation. Professor Bell was also a Board member of TVS Sydney from 2010-2016.

## UNIVERSITY ENGAGEMENT IN A 'POST-TRUTH' WORLD

At the turn of the century the late Sir David Watson and Professor Michael Gibbons were actively involved with a number of Australian universities to develop conceptual roadmaps for engagement. The interest in engagement at the time was forged by the emergent 'knowledge economy' together with the UK's introduction of Third Stream funding linked to Knowledge Transfer. The socio-political climate was arguably vastly different to that to which we must now respond.

The emergence of a 'post-truth' era in tandem with the pervasive impact of decades of neo-liberal government policies demands re-imagining of what it means to be an 'engaged university'. It demands that we acknowledge the lack of trust in the academy and the ambiguous messages we generate re our 'public good' role. It also demands that we be cognisant of the dramatically changed nature of our university communities, in terms of the engagement of students and staff and our defining relationships with them. In an increasingly stratified sector these changing relationships have the potential to threaten our capacity to engage and to maintain the longevity of commitment for which we have historically been valued.

If we are now operating in a post-truth era this has the obvious effect of calling in to question the relevance of the academy and marginalising the very institutions that are at the centre of the knowledge economy. We need to address 'the fallen status of our collective search for truth' and meet the challenge of

positively influencing 'how our era will be described'. To do this we need to stretch our moral imagination beyond neo-liberal constructions.

Oxford Dictionaries declared 'post-truth' to be its 2016 word of the year, as did the *Gesellschaft für deutsche Sprache*. 'Post-truth', or postfaktisch, is defined as 'relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief'. The concept of post-truth has been in existence for the past decade, but Oxford Dictionaries mapped a spike in frequency in 2016 in the context of the EU referendum in the United Kingdom and the presidential election in the United States. The Dictionary notes that post-truth seems to have been first used in this meaning in a 1992 essay by the late Serbian-American playwright Steve Tesich in *The Nation* magazine with reference to the Iran-Contra scandal and the Persian Gulf War. Tesich observed that 'we, as a free people, have freely decided that we want to live in some post-truth world'. Ralph Keyes, *The Post-truth Era*, appeared in 2004.<sup>2</sup> At that time most of us were oblivious to the import and wide ranging repercussions of this development even though studying the post-truth world, agnotology, was an established field of study that had its roots in studies of cancer and the tobacco industry (Proctor 1995). With reference to the rise of agnotology Rose & Barros (2017) make an assertion that should be read as a challenge writ large to the contemporary academy:

*The overarching issue is the fallen status of our collective search for truth, in its many forms. It is no longer a positive attribute to seek out truth, determine biases, evaluate facts, or share knowledge.*<sup>3</sup>

Ironically the emergence of the concept of a 'post-truth' era was contemporaneous with that of the articulation of the changing place of the academy in the 'knowledge economy'. Professor Michael Gibbons and colleagues' *The New Production of Knowledge* (1994) was produced in a parallel universe but provided many clues to changes that would impact on the role and status of universities and academics as knowledge producers.

Many of us in the academy, thinking we were part of a social historical moment rather than a neo-liberal politico-intellectual movement (Nik-Khah, 2015: 57) were excited by the concept of universities at the centre of a new economy, immersed in the 'agora' in partnership with other producers of knowledge and respectful of community 'knowledges'<sup>4</sup>. We embraced the projected movement away from the production of knowledge within academic disciplines towards the application of knowledge to specific problems in specific contexts (Robertson, 2000: 90). We can see with hindsight that we should have been reflecting on the implications of the 'shift from intellectual coherence, which is being lost to the transdisciplinarity of this knowledge production...' (Gibbons, 1994: 83) raising the seemingly obvious questions: Who will produce? To what end? And who will be able to access this complex, transdisciplinary knowledge that lacks coherence and is increasingly contested?<sup>5</sup>



Furthermore while this new knowledge production was seen to be 'socially distributed and continuously expanding', (1994:14) we would have also been wise to revisit Drucker's reflections on the 20th century, his treatise on the rise of 'knowledge workers' (1957) and his observations re the displacement of industrial workers in the knowledge economy, even though his observations hauntingly reflect Mayo's (1922:159) belief that workers were incapable of developing the learning skills necessary for organised capitalism without elite leadership:<sup>6</sup>

*...the great majority of the new jobs require qualifications the industrial worker does not possess and is poorly equipped to acquire. They require a good deal of formal education and the ability to acquire and to apply theoretical and analytical knowledge. They require a different approach and a different mind-set. Above all, they require a habit of continuous learning. Displaced industrial workers cannot simply move into knowledge work or services the way farmers and domestic workers moved into industrial work. At the very least they have to change their basic attitudes, values and beliefs.*

(Drucker, 1994:6)

Whilst Drucker was right to observe that this move to a knowledge economy and the accompanying displacement of blue-collar workers had, at the turn of the century, not lead to 'radicalisation' as generally understood, it has more recently led to the emergence of transgressive, alternative right social movements pursuing agendas that have the potential to undermine the established social fabric as effectively as any radical revolutionary movement. As an aside one might also note that Drucker predicted that in the knowledge society 'for the first time in history, the possibility of leadership will be open to all.' (1994:9)

When Michael Gibbons outlined how he saw university engagement evolving in the knowledge economy of the 21st century he spoke of the joint production of socially robust knowledge with communities; the need for open, exploratory systems that are responsive to the growing complexity and uncertainty of the problems and issues that need to be addressed; the shift from the production of reliable knowledge to that of socially robust knowledge; and the development of a continuously shifting set of social relations in boundary spaces and transaction zones. He painted the picture of an exciting, even if challenging, scientific world with a nimble academy at its centre. He noted that such engagement will not be without tension, including that generated by the wider range of perspectives and opinions that need to be addressed when 'society speaks back'. He emphasised that this fuller participation in the agora also requires that universities make it clear that it is their intention to serve the public good—public good equated with not just the health of the economy (Gibbons 2005).

The ambiguity associated with the public good versus private/individual benefit of universities promulgated by the rhetoric of current government higher education and innovation policy is one source of tension in universities forging relationships with the communities with whom they interact. The displacement

of industrial workers and growing suspicion and mistrust of the academy and the knowledge it produces that inevitably impacts on community partnerships generates further tension and demands we revisit and revise our understanding of, and strategies for, 'engagement'.

'Post-truth' political phenomena have shaken our understanding of contemporary, participatory democracy. But the emergent 'politics of resentment' (Cramer 2016) has also generated renewed calls for the 'engagement' of academics, researchers and universities. Professor Carl-Heldin, Chairman of the Board of the Nobel Foundation, in his official welcome to the 2016 Nobel Prize Award Ceremony reminded his audience that:

*Leading politicians – both in Europe and the United States – are winning votes by denying knowledge and scientific truths. Populism is widespread and is reaping major political successes.*

*The grim truth is that we can no longer take it for granted that people believe in science, facts and knowledge.*

*...The twenty-first century has begun with a growing sense of fear, and there is concern that conflicts will characterise this century as well. But such a development is not pre-destined. It is our task to influence how our era will be described, and there is good reason to be hopeful. We see a growing interest among young people in seeking knowledge. And we see an ever increasing engagement in tackling major global challenges.<sup>7</sup>*

But in the rubric of the 'politics of resentment' we, the academy, run the risk of being cast as a privileged and oppressive part of the neo-liberal elite by the disenfranchised, especially the rural and non-metropolitan disenfranchised. Our cries that we do not represent the capitalist establishment ring hollow. We have unwittingly set the pre-conditions for 'an excessive distrust of good matters of fact'. (Latour, 2004:227)

In what might now be regarded as the halcyon days of the engaged university the Association of Commonwealth Universities produced a definition of engagement that became a mantra for many responsible for emerging 'engagement' portfolios:

*...strenuous, thoughtful, argumentative interaction with the non-university world in at least four spheres: setting universities' aims, purposes and priorities; relating teaching and learning to the wider world; the back-and-forth dialogue between researchers and practitioners; and taking on wider responsibilities as neighbours and citizens.*

(Bjarnason & Coldstream 2003: i)

Strenuous, thoughtful and argumentative interaction is attractive for those who consider themselves university thought leaders but such interaction demands willingness to interact with our communities on foundations of broad trust, mutual respect and good will. The imperative for engagement has never been stronger but the changed context and key conditions of the public good role of universities and student and staff engagement have radically altered over the past decade.

Professor Simon Marginson, following Murphy (2015), in his exploration of *Higher Education and the Common Good* (2016) asserts that after two decades of the Neo-Liberal Market Model:

*...higher education has become more business-like and competitive, more productive in volume terms and almost more certainly financially efficient, although there is no evidence that teaching is better or that the rate of fundamental discovery in research has quickened.*

(2016,220)

Increasing inequality in the Anglo-American world drives greater need but also creates new barriers to engagement. The challenge now is to rethink engagement as we grasp the significance of the post-truth era and the impact of neo-liberal government policies and funding regimes.

### ENGAGEMENT AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

In what seems a policy lifetime ago the engagement of universities and their communities received attention in the Australian government 2002 Ministerial Discussion Paper *Higher Education at the Crossroads* (Nelson, 2002). The Minister invited the university sector to provide input to the development of a 'Third Stream' funding model similar to that which had been introduced in the UK. A number of strategies were canvassed, including:

- Payment of a 'social premium' to universities to deliver community service obligations within their region;
- State governments to contribute to the cost of some activities on a fee-for-service basis; and
- Funding of community bodies to purchase the higher education services they need.

(IRU, 2005:2)

These issues were never resolved and Australia has not yet seen the equivalent of Third Stream funding which in the UK was introduced specifically to support HEIs to increase their capability to respond to the needs of business and the wider community and has now morphed into the Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF) standing at £601 Million 2011-2015.<sup>8</sup>

Even though the UK model was firmly grounded in the context of 'a neo-liberal market-facing agenda' that sought to encourage a culture of enterprise and entrepreneurialism and to generate commercial activities that would be of economic benefit to Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and the state (Clough & Bagley 2012: 178), Australian proposals were at pains to emphasise the public good over commercial imperatives.

The Innovative Research Universities group emphasised that:

It is important from the outset to emphasise that Third Stream funding is not only, or even primarily, for universities to undertake commercial work. While much discussion about Third Stream activity focuses on the commercial application of knowledge and capabilities, vast amounts of university knowledge are shared freely for the public good, resulting in

economic and social benefits. (IRU, 2005: 3)

### ENGAGEMENT IN A NEO-LIBERAL POLICY ENVIRONMENT

If we are now operating in a post-truth era this has the obvious effect of calling in to question the relevance of the academy and marginalising the very institutions that are at the centre of the knowledge economy. Neo-liberalism compounds this by offering

*...the artifice of market design where the competitive order of market relationships becomes the framework for social life in general. To establish this institutional design, neo-liberal doctrine uses the authority and sovereignty of the state against the very nature of the state as a political-legal container for social life.*

(Yeatman 2015:31)

The neo-liberal principle of restraining taxation and the resource base available to public institutions compromises the capacity of institutions to prioritise and fulfil their public good role. The impact on engagement is that when private good accruing to the individual student is believed to be ubiquitous and more obvious and credible than public good<sup>9</sup>, public spending is constrained and the public perception of the nature and role of universities is altered. This is particularly important in Australia, where the tax to GDP ratio is in the bottom 20 per cent of the 34 OECD developed economies even though surveys indicate that 80 per cent of Australians believe that the country is high- or mid-taxing (Hetherington, 2015:27).

Marginson argues that neo-liberal discourse has been influential in higher education policy and regulation through a focus on market reform though 'the full capitalist economic market remains fairly distant from real world practice' with universities 'remaining incompatible with the neo-liberal imaginary' (2016:220). The questions about higher education are: how far has it been remade along the lines of a capitalist market? And how far can it be remade? (2016: 217). The emergence of New Public Management (neo-liberal business models and market templates, bureaucratic control systems that emphasise audit and accountability, and transparency and individuation) and the Neo-Liberal Market Model fail to take in to account that knowledge is intrinsically public in form and teaching in higher education 'cannot be wholly marketised without thinning the knowledge component'. Marginson contends that the neo-liberal model also fails to take in to account the degree to which graduates are not rewarded in labour markets for knowledge but for private goods – vocational skills and certification, particularly from high status institutions, in tandem with the social and cultural capital they bring to, and enhance, in elite higher education institutions (2016:216-237).

Marginson documents the emergence of an increasingly stratified higher education system in the Anglo-American world (in contrast to the Nordic system) in which the beneficiaries are primarily those with social and political capital:

*Higher education provides a stratified structure of opportunity, from elite universities and high status professional degrees to the much larger number of mass education places with uncertain prospects. As every family knows, relative advantage is crucial, and students from affluent families tend to dominate the high value positions...*

(Marginson, 2016:286)

When the public face of universities is increasingly business-like and institutional success is measured in growth of student load, research productivity and associated revenue; when Vice-Chancellors' salary packages are publicly reported to be 'skyrocketing'<sup>10</sup>; when there is a significant presence of competitive marketing material on individual universities in the public arena; when prospective students, especially international students, are defined as a 'market' and current students as 'clients'; and when our proclivity to critique generates broad distrust of scientific facts, it becomes increasingly challenging to maintain the status of 'public good' institutions in the eyes of our students and our communities.

This is exacerbated by the fact that over the past 25 years commodification has permeated every aspect of higher education from the highly visible export of educational services, increases in student fees and the commercialisation of research, to the less visible 'outsourcing' of the services that underpin large and complex institutions, from cleaning to catering, student accommodation, IT, HR and what might be regarded as core business functions, student attraction, retention and support services.<sup>11</sup> Tutoring support is now even available through Uberversity.<sup>12</sup> Such changes have significant impact in outer-metropolitan, rural and remote communities when local producers and suppliers and local expertise may be by-passed for large corporate supply chains and the increasingly dominant metro-based consulting companies ready to sell anything from a new strategic plan to improved student retention together with new forms of incentivising and disciplining knowledge workers.

One might be tempted to argue that this is the realisation of a neo-liberal dream but if universities are central to the 'knowledge economy' is this commodification of every facet of our operations inevitable and what are the implications for engagement premised on public good?

In 2002, The World Bank published *Constructing Knowledge Societies: New Challenges for Tertiary Education*. In this report, as one might expect, the Bank argued that 'knowledge accumulation and application have become major factors in economic development and are, increasingly, at the core of a country's competitive advantage in the global economy' (The World Bank, 2002: xvii).

This report focused on how tertiary education contributes to capacity building in a country so that it can contribute to 'an increasingly knowledge-based world economy' and outlined policy options for tertiary education. It emphasizes the following trends:

- The emerging role of knowledge as a major driver of economic development.
- The appearance of new providers of tertiary education in a 'border-less-education environment'.
- The transformation of modes of delivery and organizational patterns in tertiary education as a result of the information and communications revolution.
- The rise of market forces in tertiary education and the emergence of a global market for advanced human capital.

(The World Bank, 2002: xix)

But the Bank also recognised the need for a balanced and comprehensive view of education as a holistic system which includes 'not only the human capital contribution of tertiary education but also its critical humanistic and social capital building dimensions and its role as an important global, human, public good'. (Dreyer, W. & Kouzmin, A. 2009)

Marginson echoes this imperative:

*...if capitalist markets are clearly unachievable in higher education, a more authentic modernisation reform agenda is needed in higher education, and one that is focused on public goods as well as private goods.*

(2016:251)

As a sector we have embraced the opportunity to be central to the knowledge economy. In *Academic Capitalism in the New Economy*, Slaughter and Rhoades (2004) emphasise that higher education institutions are in fact initiating academic capitalism. In other words, instead of the market forcing institutions into an environment of academic capitalism, universities and their faculty are actively seeking engagement with the market.

This is a scenario in which mass participation is leading to an increasing burden of cost slated back to the student; where 'education' morphs into training and credentialism accessed through bite-sized modules that can be 'effectively' delivered through for profit 'thin' and low cost private providers or business arms of universities that employ academic piece workers on casual and fixed-term contracts; where the embracing of Gibbons' Mode 2 research<sup>13</sup> leads to dependence on commercial imperatives and the pursuit of research outcomes that have the potential to be commercialised; and where research priorities are increasingly under government scrutiny and framed to support government policy and economic imperatives.

The risk is that the idea of the university as a place of advanced learning and critical thinking or of higher education as a 'public good' whose social mission is to reproduce national culture and serve the public interest, summed up in the now-anachronistic phrase 'education for citizenship' is being replaced by the narrower instrumental view of university knowledge as a personal investment and form of training. Within this new neo-liberal knowledge-economy paradigm, students have been

recast as 'rational, self-interested, choosers and consumers' who will drive up quality through exercising choice while education itself is increasingly being re-conceptualised 'as a commodity: something to be sold, traded and consumed'. (Shore, C. & Taitz, M. 2012)

## STUDENT AND STAFF ENGAGEMENT

We should not be surprised then, that Blackmore (2013) in her analysis of student and academic dissatisfaction notes that: students increasingly view education as a positional good and are highly instrumental in their choices; their future employment is precarious, one reliant upon building portfolio careers in which they package multiple skills; employers seek to recruit flexible and responsive workers with the capacity to communicate, possessing good interpersonal skills, confidence, intercultural competence, and competence in English language skills as well a workplace integrated learning experiences; they seek 'best fit' above and beyond academic results ; and universities seek to provide a distinctive educational experience in the production of these employability skills listed as graduate outcomes.

Yet it has been apparent for some time that for too many of our students, and disproportionately those from low socio-economic backgrounds, the experience of higher education is 'thin' and getting thinner (Bell, S. & Bentley, R. 2006; Marginson 2016). In the context of declining state support for higher education the turn of the last century saw a spate of works on the emergence of the 'entrepreneurial' university and the articulation of the concept of 'academic capitalism' (Slaughter & Leslie 1997). A number of the Australian works in this field offer astute predictive commentary on the inevitability of change driven by mass higher education. In 1988 the University of Sydney's Anthony Welsh, who has provided an ongoing critique of issues that attach to internationalisation of Australian higher education, observed that in the context of policies of 'education for all' and a move away from elitist to mass higher education 'this can only mean one thing: a constriction of opportunities for the less privileged, and a shift to resources towards the wealthier groups in society' (1988:387).

And ten years later Coaldrake & Steadman (1998) identified, well before we imagined the pervasive impact of the internet and social media on information dissemination, that it is not true that the university is the only type of institution capable of creating knowledge, providing access to knowledge, and fostering learning in students that enable them to use knowledge. They observed that traditional academic means of production were sustainable only 'while universities remained small and of only marginal relevance to the country'. Is it a consequence of being intertwined with an economic system, as David Kirp suggested (2003), rather than at the margins in an autonomous, supporting role?

Current policy settings generate not just economic questions around competition and institutional sustainability but profound moral questions around individual economic

versus societal good and equality as explicit values that have underpinned our higher educational aspirations. The 1990 national equity framework *A Fair Chance for All* (DEET, 1990) with its underlying premise and tag line 'Higher Education that's Within Everyone's Reach', having been briefly revived by the Bradley Review and the introduction of the Demand Driven System, is now under significant pressure (Harvey et al, 2016). We have a profound and enduring responsibility to ensure that not just equity and access for all remain an established part of the fabric of our sector, but that the scope and quality of the higher education experience is not just passively 'available' but is actively promoted. This is the foundation for an economically successful and cohesive society as well as the mechanism for individual social mobility and regional sustainability – even if it is a 'market distortion', or indeed not a market at all.

In Australia there are many positive changes that are a result of our moves towards mass higher education that theoretically enable enhanced engagement. Over recent decades universities have grown in size, scale and therefore capacity; the student population is increasingly diverse, representing a wider range of our communities; there is a higher proportion of mature age students who bring prior knowledge and valuable work experience into the academy; our student, particularly our post-graduate student, and staff populations are becoming more internationalised, which helps to forge bonds and partnerships based on shared knowledge and established relationships; we also have many more opportunities for students to be engaged in internship and mobility programs, such as through the New Colombo Plan.

But countering these positives is a perverse potentially negative impact of the changing nature of institutions and their relationship with students that is worthy of note. As many of us become 'thinner' institutions and our engagement with our students also becomes 'thin' all but the elite institutions begin to look more like the (generally very thin) private providers. If we are offering little more to our students than content and technical skills, and not doing very well at negotiating the 'delivery' of these to meet their needs, there are many and increasing options available to our students in the educational market place.

I often wonder whether our eyes have been wide shut to the profound changes that are taking place in our sector and the underlying ideological drivers. One of the areas where there is an eerie silence is that of employment practices and the future of the academy.

Josh Freedman in a memorable Forbes article (2014) posed the question: what do an NCAA football player, a student intern, a university janitor and a college lecturer have in common? The answer, none of them are regular employees of the universities where they perform their services. Freedman reminds us that contingent, sub-contracted employment has always existed, and practitioners and professional adjuncts have always been important contributors to tertiary education, but the change that has taken place over the past two decades is that casual staff and fixed-term contractors have replaced full-time faculty,

a theme explored in detail by education professor Adrianna Kezar of the University of Southern California under the Delphi Project<sup>14</sup>.

Over the past two decades concern has been expressed re the future and the aging profile of the Australian academic workforce. (Hugo 2005 & 2008; Hugo & Morris 2010) It is important to note however that this influential research and modelling fails to recognize the true crisis in the academic workforce as it is based on government data that does not adequately capture the size and scale of the casual academic workforce. The casual workforce is estimated on the basis of recent research that accessed de-identified UniSuper data to be up to 67,000 individuals—a greater number than the ‘tenured core’. Women form the majority of these staff (57%) and over half are 35 years or younger (May et al, 2013).

A critical quality of engagement is longevity. This is especially important in forging and maintaining international partnerships where ritualised, diplomatic relationship building may take years to generate mutual trust and then commitment to, and investment in, common interests. Universities have historically been very stable institutions peopled by significant numbers of staff who have had the expertise, time and commitment to seek and create opportunities and partnerships, to engage in relationship building and to ensure that all involved, from within the academy and from the community, understand and share common goals. Anyone who has worked in an outer metropolitan, regional or remote university is aware that universities are required to do a lot of things other providers are not and institutions must work to meet the often very high expectations of their communities.<sup>15</sup> They would also be aware that the many facets of engagement to meet community expectations are under intense pressure as students are increasingly part-time, in employment, and studying off-campus. Expectations of staff continue to expand yet an increasing proportion of the academic workforce is casual or employed on short term contracts. Contrary to popular perception the Australian research and university sectors are in fact increasingly players in the ‘gig economy’, with growing dependency on independent contractors, temporary workers or freelancers. The ‘gig’ economy may sound positive and innovative, but simply disguises the ‘contingent workforce’ to which it refers.

In Australia doctoral graduates and early career academics experience precarious work arrangements and, through a process of generational change, insecurity has replaced continuing or tenured employment. The post-doctoral world is now characterised by career uncertainty, low comparative salary levels, serial post-docs, multiple employers and a research funding pool that has not kept up with the growth of exceptionally highly qualified participants in the system. In a system that thrives on individual ‘sponsorship’ there are fewer mentor/sponsors for every early career researcher and national and global mobility are no longer a privilege but a necessity for success. Success is also deemed to be linked to commercialisation of research.

Older generations would say it has always been thus – academics, particularly those in the sciences, are expected to earn their salaries and cover their research costs through grants and consultancy. But the experience of the past bears little resemblance to the experience of younger generations today. Now the ‘gigs’ are often so short that half way through grant funded employment the researcher is distracted by the necessity of finding or generating the next ‘gig’.

All deserve equity and dignified livelihoods and if we are to achieve our goal to be a leading contributor to innovation we need to question whether the ‘gig’ economy we are currently embracing is appropriate, whether it will sustain our national ambitions as an innovator, and whether it will support the diversity upon which innovation thrives.<sup>16</sup>

We already see how cash-strapped universities find it difficult to support their academics financially while the academics produce scholarly papers and intellectual property that is then made freely available to others who work in institutions that are competing with each other to attract students and industry’s research dollars. Teaching focused positions and casualisation become the answer.

The critical question we need to pose is, in the knowledge economy, are we in fact contributing to the growth of an academic workforce of piece workers whilst failing to sustain the academy? Will this role become the preserve of the elite research intensive universities and what will the consequences be for diversity and quality within our sector? Will this need be served by the global rather than the regional academic workforce? How will the innovation driven by necessity in the nation’s periphery be translated back to the core? And what does engagement look like in this context?

So whilst the temptation is to suggest the framing of our role in the knowledge economy is a neo-liberal conspiracy, the reality may be that we have been deficient in exercising the ‘moral imagination’ that would sustainably accommodate mass participation in higher education in the knowledge economy. There is a pervasive need to recognize that neo-liberalism and human capital theory tell us only part of the story and do not always lead us to ask the right questions. Higher education as a vehicle for social transformation is not simply about acquisition of skills and credentials that accrue to the benefit of the individual. Institutions of higher education as collective entities build social, cultural, economic and political capital of benefit to their communities and regions (Watson et al 2011).

#### SHAPING A MORE AUTHENTIC ENGAGEMENT AGENDA

Universities have a new imperative to shape the future. We need to heed the advice of Bruno Latour, even if the military metaphor does not sit easily:

*To remain in the metaphorical atmosphere of the time, military experts constantly revise their strategic doctrines, their contingency plans, the size, direction and technology of their projectiles, their smart bombs, their missiles; I wonder why we, why we alone would be saved from those sorts of revisions. It does not seem to me that we have been as*

quick in academia, to prepare ourselves for new threats, new dangers, new tasks, new targets. Are we not like those mechanical toys that endlessly make the same gesture when everything else has changed around them? Would it not be terrible if we were training young kids—yes, young recruits, young cadets—for wars that are no longer possible, fighting enemies long gone, conquering territories that no longer exist, leaving them ill-equipped in the face of threats we had not anticipated, for which we are so thoroughly unprepared?

(2012:225)

Latour is not referring to the shallow template led exercises that institutional strategic planning often becomes. He is asking us to rethink purpose. In a post-truth era meaningful engagement based on mutual trust and clear signalling of who we are and what we represent, even if that is complex and contradictory, is critical. We must make it clear that it is our intention, as engaged institutions, to serve the public good, even if we are also, as one dimension of our role, engaged in commercial activity.

Anna Yeatman (2015) reminds us that:

*Neoliberal thinking rejects the political arts, and instead embraces technologies of quantification. Such thinking dispenses with a sense of history or place. It is given to a mathematical matrix of living in the now. There can be no prudential consideration of the consequences and implications of conduct for the future wellbeing of individuals, their families and communities.*

(2015:30)

To regain credibility and to ensure that our conduct is prudent there is a new imperative to pay attention to place based interaction and the knowledge generated through social and political history even though there are many pressures to do otherwise—How do we do what we do and whose knowledge, skills and services do we value? We need to reinforce the importance of our role as sites of diversity and link the role of that diversity with our capacity to innovate.

We need to ensure that our students are part of our engagement, which demands innovation to ensure we are inclusive of those who are not on campus and may be part of a geographically dispersed on-line community. We need to recognise the value of their prior knowledge and experience. We need a new scholarship of engagement cognisant of our changed students' relationship with us and the competing demands in their lives.

We must increasingly operate as global enterprises but we should ensure that we take our communities along on that global, multi-cultural journey. We need to generate mutual enthusiasm for new opportunities; understanding of what our international students and partnerships bring to us and the rich legacy they may leave; and understanding of how we can positively contribute globally—benefits that will invariably be most apparent in the longer term.

We should value our institutional longevity but also ensure

that that longevity does not just attach to buildings and campus infrastructure. Engaged staff and students are our most valuable resource and they need the time and support for relationship building, relationship maintenance and translation of knowledge into forms that are meaningful for a wider range of audiences. Staff also need time to engage in the reflection and review necessary to 'revise their strategic doctrines' in tandem with relevant professional accrediting organisations that have a significant investment in maintaining the status quo.

Just as there is a looming imperative for the broader society to question the impact of neo-liberal policy, we should critically examine the impact of neo-liberal framing of higher education policy, which has been mediated by equity and access agendas, but which is potentially entrenching a highly stratified sector that offers very different outcomes for students, depending on their individual circumstance and geographic location.

We should commit to ensuring that engagement is at the centre of reframed and inclusive innovation agendas. To do otherwise in a post-truth world, we now know means we leave communities behind and their disenfranchisement has the potential to prevent major challenges being addressed and important and inclusive social policies realised.

Above all we need to address 'the fallen status of our collective search for truth'. We need to interrogate the foundations of our epistemology and the language we use to communicate and disseminate knowledge. We need to be on 'transmit as well as receive' but we will have to work to develop relationships of trust if we are to do that effectively and credibly. To again draw on Anna Yeatman's wisdom:

*When conduct is oriented in terms of market principles it becomes instrumental: everything, the earth, things, other creatures and human beings themselves are valued only so far as they can be turned into means of producing profit. We are sleepwalking toward catastrophe unless we are able to rethink this way of thinking and the way of being it informs.*

(2015:6)

Re-imagined engagement has the potential to provide a framework for universities and communities to dramatically change their 'ways of being' to ensure that we meet the challenge of positively influencing 'how our era will be described'.

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## (Endnotes)

1. Our German colleagues also select an 'un-word' of the year. For 2016 this was Volksverräter(in) traitor of the people which has strong Nazi connotations <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-38571487>
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5. Latour (2004) even identifies artificially maintained scientific uncertainty as a 'brownlash', expressing his concern that he 'intended to emancipate the public from prematurely naturalized objective facts' but fears he may have been 'foolishly mistaken'. (2014:226-227)
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13. Problem oriented, cross-disciplinary applied research that is 'more socially accountable and reflexive' (Gibbons 1997: 3)
14. <http://www.uscrossier.org/pullias/research/projects/delphi/general-resources/academic-publications/>
15. Interestingly Marginson (2016) does not discuss the regional impact of universities in terms of their contribution to the 'common good'. This impact has profound economic, social and cultural dimensions. See Watson et al 2011.
16. The concept of the 'gig economy' in higher education referred to here was explored in Bell, S. (2016) 'The gig economy is no way for scientists to live', *Higher Education Supplement*, *The Australian*, 17 February 2016.





Adrian Collette is the Vice-Principal (Engagement) at The University of Melbourne, a role he has held since 2013. Previously, Adrian was Chief Executive Officer of Opera Australia (OA) for 16 years. OA is Australia's national opera company and is also the country's largest performing arts company. Before joining Opera Australia, Adrian

was Managing Director of Reed Books, a division of Reed Elsevier, a company at which he worked for 10 years. Adrian became a Member in the Order of Australia for services to the Arts in 2008. Adrian attended Trinity Grammar School, Kew. He holds a Bachelor of Arts with first class honours from La Trobe University and a Master of Arts from the University of Melbourne. He tutored in English Literature at both La Trobe University and the University of Melbourne. Adrian also performed regularly as a singer with the Victoria State Opera and was a member of their Young Artist Program. He is a Board member of the Australia Council for the Arts; Chair of the Australia Council's Major Performing Arts Panel; a Board member of the Committee for Melbourne and a Life Member of Live Performance Australia. He was also a Member of the Victorian Council for the Arts and a Trustee of Sydney Grammar School for 6 years.

## INTERVIEW

### BEYOND THE 3RD STREAM

**T: You have argued that deep engagement is central to the aspirations of leading research institutions like The University of Melbourne (UoM). Can you expand on this?**

AC: Engagement, as I encountered it, both through discussion here at UoM and in many published ambitions of universities generally, was framed as a kind of 'third stream' activity. Relationships are built with the best of intentions with external stakeholders in industry and community, particularly with those who could benefit from the knowledge transfer of a university's scholarship. However it struck me that this kind of third stream thinking was never really going to embed a practice of deep engagement, particularly within a research-intensive university like UoM. For example, despite the fact that our Vice-Chancellor pointed to engagement as fundamental to the university's purpose for well over a decade, he would be the first to agree that the University had not come up with a strategic narrative around engagement as part of our core purpose. So, to cut a long process of consultation very short, the conceptual shift that occurred to us was to see engagement as fundamental to the university's academic mission: that scholarship could be designed to have direct benefits to our community or, indeed, respond to community needs and challenges. Colleagues at Michigan State University, for example, talk about 'scholarship in' and 'scholarship out:' they are clear about the fact that they engage through academic curiosity, and such engagement is not inconsistent with academic, peer-reviewed publication. But engaged scholarship, whether in medicine, engineering or the arts, also creates significant public value. In a nutshell, engagement has to be part of the academic mission, or it will always languish as a marginal, if very well intentioned activity.

**T: How has engagement informed The University of Melbourne's new strategic plan?**

AC: Our Engagement @ Melbourne strategy directly supports UoM's over-arching Growing Esteem strategy. For example, it forms part of our strategic response to a very fast-changing operating and policy environment. We work in an increasingly disrupted environment in which knowledge is being freely transferred around the world. And much excellent research is created outside the traditional university. We must collaborate to be at the forefront of knowledge creation, and therefore take the lead in creating new forms of collaborative partnerships, whether with commercial industry or NGOs. And in our increasingly competitive funding environment, we will need to demonstrate our broader relevance just as much as our excellence – to government and the taxpayer that helps fund our endeavour.

**T: Is it easy to define who your community is?**

AC: When I arrived at UoM some four years ago, I noticed we were engaged in almost countless ways with almost countless institutions. There is no shortage of engagement activity at universities! But the reason we need a narrative and a strategy is to steer our efforts and our resources, over time, to those areas we need to invest in most; areas that are strategically important to us, and where we might do the most good. Place-based partnerships provide a good example. For many years UoM has had a significant presence in the Goulburn Valley, in the north of Victoria, most particularly through our vet and agricultural college and through a medical centre. This area has suffered many economic and social challenges over the past two decades. Now, as our sense of being an engaged university intensifies, we are organising our efforts in this area to ensure great impact. We now have four faculties actively involved in the area: undertaking vital research in agriculture and veterinary practice; or our medical faculty undertaking an NHMRC-funded study in chronic disease and access to health care. Our Graduate School of Education is rolling out its world leading MTeach program, helping to build both the quality of teaching and actively building pathways to UoM and other higher-ed institutions. And the Melbourne Business School is working on the City of Shepparton's brand, particularly around its aspirations for the Shepparton Art Museum. By focussing on this place-based engagement program, we can foster a multi-disciplinary, scholarly response that builds lasting public value. So it's very important that we understand our institution's strategic priorities; otherwise we will just try to be all things to all people. For us, through our Engagement @ Melbourne strategy, we talk about three things essentially: engaged research that links directly to our research priorities; about engaged students, so that each of our academic divisions prioritise engaging their students with the broader community, whether through internships, global mobility or volunteering for example; and we have identified six, university-wide key engagement programs which we think are vital to our interests, but also programs which can create transformational social and economic value.

Another example of a key place-based engagement program is our desire to engage deeply with our city, Melbourne, of which we are a part. One manifestation of our strategy is through our cultural program. We have significant partnerships with the National Gallery of Victoria, the Melbourne Recital Centre

and the State Library of Victoria to name but three. These partnerships are based around areas of common research interest and student opportunity. The sweet spot for us in all this is trying to create research outcomes as well as student enrichment. And these partnerships help make you part of the city and make scholarship accessible. The NGV, the State Library, the Melbourne Museum, the University of Melbourne – we are all ‘anchor institutions’; we employ thousands of people and directly affect the lives of many more, so there is much to be gained when we collaborate.

And speaking of ‘anchor institutions,’ we notice that many organisations working directly for community benefit and public policy development are increasingly part of our broader precinct. Whether leading think tanks like the Grattan Institute; or the Melbourne School of Government and the Australian and New Zealand School of Government; the Melbourne Institute or major NGOs like the Red Cross and OXFAM; increasingly the broader precinct is enriched by leading, publicly spirited, not-for-profit organisations. So one enticing question here is whether the truly engaged collaborative opportunities of such co-location could be greater than the sum of our parts, particularly around policy development and community challenges?

**T: In the UK successive governments (notably, the Blair/Brown governments) introduced and continued significant third stream funding for Higher Education Institutions which transformed economic regions as well as changed how businesses and universities work together. Are there lessons here for Australia?**

AC: Yes, I think we have much to learn from the UK experience. When I first started working on UoM’s engagement agenda I sometimes encountered a kind of suspicion about engagement having to be called out as a priority for research. ‘We believe in pure discovery or basic research as the purpose of university endeavour. This is where our value lies!’ I would hear such claims frequently. But when we talked to some fine universities and institutions in the UK, they could remember this kind of tension when prompted. However, partly because their behaviour had changed in response to fundamental shifts in competitive government grants, the conversation had moved on – had matured if you like – to be far more comprehensive about the fundamental aims of university research. English universities embraced ambitious basic research, ambitious applied research, and discovered that the two could be closely interrelated. In Australia, we are only just starting to talk about ‘impact’ and how we measure both engagement and impact as part of the competitive grants process.

I think we should also look to some of the engaged American universities, which in a way I found most instructive because they have been driven by an engagement agenda as long as they have been in existence. Many of them were born out of a passion to bring benefit to broader society through scholarship; exactly the kind of thing we are now talking about. Many US universities are also built on philanthropy, and philanthropists tend to demand socially beneficial outcomes. Philanthropic interests drive deep engagement. But because we have a much higher reliance on the public purse, many academics and universities will be motivated by a different set of priorities. Now we see the environment changing here, quite sharply; and the debate about whether government will demand greater impact as an incentive for funding is over. The

debate now is not about whether, but about how engagement and impact will be evaluated.

**T: UoM has made the strategic decision to establish a VPE portfolio to drive forward its engagement agenda. Which key areas of focus does this Senior Office include as similar portfolios often vary in their constituency among Australian universities?**

AC: One very important part of our engagement program focuses on industry engagement. In the enterprise space, people can get obsessed about the potential for commercialisation, which of-course is very important. But there are a whole lot of relationships we are developing with industry that are more fundamental and more important. So, we have taken the step now of appointing a Vice-Principal (Enterprise), Doron Ben-Meir, to really focus resources and strategic leadership on how we work more effectively internationally as well as locally with industry. It is a very big part of our engagement plans, and it doesn’t take long to understand what the incentive is for universities and what the value created might be for industry and government.

Under the broader engagement portfolio here we have our leading community programs; our Indigenous programs, including the second iteration of our Reconciliation Action Plan; our very valuable collections, which includes the University Librarian being part of our portfolio and also responsible for collections policy; and our strategically important cultural programs, including our partnerships with other important institutions. We also host our cross-faculty Engagement Academic Leadership Committee, comprised of Associate Deans, Engagement, which encourages both alignment and broader understanding within academic divisions of our university-wide priorities.

Very importantly, University Marketing and Communications is part of the Engagement portfolio at UoM, which is vital to promoting a deeper understanding of the University’s purpose, both externally and internally!

**T: You seem to be arguing that there are real and significant benefits for Australian universities in strategically aligning their marketing and communications operation under the broader umbrella of engagement?**

AC: If we want to change or enhance UoM’s brand and reputation over time, or build a brand or create an identity for the University that goes to deep relevance as well as deep excellence, it makes compelling sense for Marketing and Communications to be part of the broader engagement effort.

Tellingly, a couple of years ago when we undertook an extensive research exercise while developing our new brand identity, it became clear that people knew that UoM is ranked number ‘1’ in Australia. That message seemed clear. That said, ‘number 1’ will not win the hearts and minds of people. It is just not a narrative that runs very deeply. So when we asked people: ‘why do you think we are number 1?’ there was frustratingly little knowledge – even amongst our alumni – of what this might mean. For example, surprisingly few people recognised universities like UoM are very big and very important research organisations. Most thought we were here to teach and to foster future employability.

So much of our marketing and communication effort over the past two years has been to position UoM as a place where interdisciplinarity thrives, and shine a light very brightly on the community benefits of deep research. We have to build this narrative over years – it is not a stop-start game. But if the strategic value of engagement is to embed the University in much more concrete ways within our community, then it is vital that that is carried through all of our marketing, our communications, and our broader public affairs.

**T: Do you see the traditional model of a university campus changing towards a more co-located model?**

AC: Even if it calls for very deep investment, I think this might be the single most practical way to foster a culture of engagement between universities, industry and community. A nice example here is the rapidly emerging arts precinct in Melbourne. Melbourne is very fortunate to have an identifiable Arts precinct, which comprises the Victorian College of the Arts, the Arts Centre, the Melbourne Recital Centre, the Melbourne Theatre Company, the Melbourne Symphony, the Australian Ballet, Opera Australia and many other arts organisations. So when UoM decided to invest in a new Conservatorium, there was absolutely no choice that it had to be moved from our Parkville precinct to the Southbank arts precinct – so our students, researchers and teachers, both from the VCA and the Conservatorium, would be co-located with their professional peers. (I believe over 50% of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra's musicians actually teach at our Conservatorium.)

And probably the greatest example we have in Australia of an engaged academic division is of course UoM's faculty of Medical, Dental and Health Sciences, which is inextricably linked to many of Australia's leading hospitals and major research institutes, with extensive post-doc studies and professional joint appointments, right here in the Parkville precinct. The results of co-location give the country one of the finest medical precincts – in research and medical practice – in the world. An ultimate example of what we call 'public value.'

**T: In attempting to advance leading edge engagement strategies around co-location as a future model for universities is there a management risk of being left with an implementation gap between rhetoric and reality? If so, how can universities address this issue?**

AC: The gap between rhetoric and reality can only be addressed if engagement is seen as a strategic response to the emerging environment, whether national or international, and vitally respected as part of our academic mission. For example, there is terrific work being led here by academic colleagues to reposition how engagement is seen as part of an academic career. In the past it has been very much about rewarding research, rewarding teaching, and acknowledging engagement as a good but relatively modest contribution to an academic career. (How often I heard in the past that only senior academics could 'afford the luxury of engaging. The rest of us are too busy applying for grants and writing articles for Nature!') Now, engagement is positioned as an outcome of one's academic scholarship, and if you can point to the public value that is created through your research and, indeed, through your teaching, then it will be influential in the way your career can be framed and to the way it can progress.

**T: Are there any parallels between your previous role as CEO of Opera Australia and your current role as VPE, UoM?**

AC: I think many of the issues are surprisingly similar. True, Opera Australia is a hundred-million-dollar organisation whereas UoM is a huge and complex environment, but both are committed to excellence, are committed to elite performance, and also committed to being relevant to their communities. Essentially what we did for well over a decade at Opera Australia was to harness the extraordinary talent and skill available to an opera company – and Opera Australia is one of the largest opera companies in the world which attracts the most talented musicians, the most talented conductors, designers, technicians, crafts people – and ask what, with all this commitment to excellence and access to talented professionals, can we do with all these skills to be as relevant and useful as possible to the broader community, most of whom might never set foot inside the Sydney Opera House or the Melbourne Arts Centre? So we started what is still the biggest regional touring program in Australia; we started education programs, internship programs and experimented across media platforms. This wasn't called 'engagement' at that time, but it was absolutely a strategic response to taking an elite art form, able to command the best talents that this and other countries had to offer, and make sure we created much greater community benefit. What we noticed very quickly was that sponsors, philanthropists and governments were attracted to all the ways we were trying to make music making and great theatrical and technical practice enrich the lives of many communities – largely through participation. We could all have a debate about repertoire, or what great opera is or is not, or which soprano should be cast, or what the balance of programming at the Sydney Opera House should be. But what created real growth in the company, and gave tremendous opportunities to artists by the way, was the ambition we had of being relevant to a much broader community.

**T: Any final words of advice for those of us involved in advancing the engagement agenda?**

AC: I think I would end where I began: that for research-intensive universities, engagement has to be fundamental to our academic mission. I would add that the time has come to share our knowledge in this space, and build a national narrative about engaged scholarship in this country. Recently, I had a terrific discussion with the VC of UNSW, Professor Ian Jacobs, about programs they are developing internationally, clearly based on a public value agenda. At UoM we are shaping a twenty-year program supported by Atlantic Philanthropies, the Atlantic Fellows for Social Equity, which is based on a partnership model with the University of Auckland, QUT, UQ, Jawun, the Kaiela Institute, The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Health Service, the Brotherhood of St Laurence, the Business Council of Australia and the Australian Government, that will foster transformative leadership informed by deep indigenous knowledge and practice. Collaboration and shared understanding across national and international borders will be key to creating public value.



Dr. Lina Dostilio is a nationally-recognized leader within the movement to connect colleges and universities with their local communities and to advance the civic purposes of higher education. She is currently the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Community Engagement Centers at the University of Pittsburgh. Her research as a scholar-

administrator has focused on multi-sector partnership development and the evolution of the community engagement profession within higher education. Lina is currently the Scholar in Residence directing the Campus Compact's Project on the Community Engagement Professional, a national research project staffed by 19 research fellows across the country that has produced, *The Community Engagement Professional in Higher Education: A Competency Model for an Emerging Field* (Stylus Publishing, 2017) and *The Community Engagement Professional Guidebook* (Stylus Publishing, Forthcoming). She was the lead facilitator for the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification Peer Development Network, an effort of the Eastern Regional Campus Compact to prepare more than 110 campuses seeking the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement in 2015. Lina has also served as past-chair of the Board of Directors of the International Association for Research on Service-Learning and Community Engagement and is on the editorial board of the *International Journal for Research on Service-Learning and Community Engagement* and *Metropolitan Universities*. She frequently consults with universities that seek to institutionalize civic engagement, build their community engagement infrastructure, and to develop innovative partnership models. Lina was previously the Director of the Center for Community-Engaged Teaching and Research at Duquesne University. In this capacity, she facilitated teaching and research collaborations that involved university stakeholders in public problem solving across an array of social and environmental issues. Under her leadership, Duquesne University's approach to community engagement evolved into a refined strategy of community-engaged teaching and research as a core priority of the University.

## NEIGHBOURHOOD-EMPLACED CENTERS: A TREND WITHIN AMERICAN URBAN COMMUNITY-UNIVERSITY ENGAGEMENT

Urban institutions seeking to engage their local communities and invigorate research and education through application to contemporary regional challenges employ a range of geographically focused engagement frameworks. The University of Pittsburgh is among them. As a premier urban-located university, holding the Carnegie Foundation's highest research classification, the University has chosen to focus on building community strength as one of its strategic priorities. Pittsburgh is a post-industrial American city that has seen marked renewal through an innovation economy focused on information technology, healthcare, engineering, energy, higher education, and manufacturing (Burning Point Technologies, 2016). Despite international recognition for this economic turnaround, significant disparity remains an issue among city residents' economic opportunities, particularly along racial lines (Center on Race and Social Problems, 2015a) and among the vitality of the city's neighbourhoods (Center on Race and Social Problems, 2015b). As part of the University's strategy to engage its communities through its role as an anchor

institution, economic contributor, and agent of innovation and knowledge creation, it has set about developing a series of neighbourhood-based community engagement centers to coordinate, link, and maximize its engagements within those neighbourhoods. In doing so, it joins the ranks of a number of universities seeking a hyperlocal expression for engagement activities.

Using a place-based neighbourhood approach necessitates structural, physical, and—perhaps most importantly—paradigm shifts, particularly those that institutions use to guide community engagement. As a means to document this trend within American higher education and to serve as an orienting piece for our efforts at the University of Pittsburgh, this essay situates the neighbourhood centers approach in the larger national effort to clarify, define, and develop operational frameworks for community engagement among American postsecondary institutions, especially among urban research universities. This essay presents three geographically focused engagement frameworks: Stewardship of Place, Anchor Institution Mission, and Metropolitan University. Then, the concept of place as a sociological concept is introduced as a way of considering the distinction between being *in* a place (place-based) and being *of* a place (emplaced). Four diverse examples of neighbourhood-emplaced centers are presented.

The essay concludes with a discussion of the paradigmatic shifts that arise from these theoretical concepts and practical examples. These shifts include prioritizing community development theories and principles as planning frameworks; adopting democratic civic engagement as the animating paradigm for neighbourhood-emplaced teaching, learning, and research; and building the capacities of stakeholders involved in neighbourhood-emplaced spaces to operate as boundary spanners.

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### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND GEOGRAPHICALLY FOCUSED FRAMEWORKS

Efforts to clarify, define, and develop operational frameworks for community engagement among American postsecondary institutions and the national associations that support them have intensified within the past fifteen years. Among these efforts, two have heavily influenced the ways institutions define, operationalize, and organize themselves to engage with communities and how they understand the substantive contributions of community engagement to their core activities of teaching, learning, and research: The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching's Community Engagement Classification and the Association of American Colleges and Universities and U.S. Department of Education's work on civic learning and democracy's future.

#### Carnegie Foundation Community Engagement Classification

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, the national body that categorizes and classifies accredited institutions of higher learning, added the elective Community

Engagement Classification in 2006 to recognize markers of quality practice across community-engaged institutions. The development of the classification framework established a robust definition and core principles for community engagement, stating:

*Community engagement [is] 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.*

(Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2006)

To successfully earn the Community Engagement Classification, institutions must demonstrate that community engagement is pervasive across the institution's expressions of its mission, learning environments, research and knowledge production activity, and interactions with its external communities. Applicants must describe how they measure the impact of their engagement efforts on the community's perception of the institution, as well as their impact on faculty, students, the institution, and communities with which they engage. They also describe how the findings of their impact evaluations are used to improve the institution's approach to community engagement. Further, applicants must demonstrate how engagement is fostered through institutional policies and practices (such as dedicated infrastructure, staffing, budget, faculty reward and recognition, and institutional messaging). The foundation's explicit attention to contexts of partnership and reciprocity orient community engagement in highly collaborative and responsive ways. The result of the Community Engagement Classification is a breakthrough in having a widely accepted definition of community engagement and its principles. The framework has prompted American institutions, especially research-intensive institutions, to consider the infrastructure, policies, leadership commitments, and practices that will best foster community engagement to the standard and quality expected by the Carnegie Foundation classification instrument.

### Civic learning and democracy's future

The second major stimulus was the work undertaken by the Association of American Colleges and Universities and the U.S. Department of Education to articulate the critical role of postsecondary education in the development of each new generation of citizens' civic capacities and the future of democracy. This work resulted in a landmark report, *A Crucible Moment: College Learning and Democracy's Future* (Musil & Hampshire, 2012). The report advocated for the intentional preparation of informed, engaged citizens and recognized the central role postsecondary education plays in that endeavour. It provided evidence that students involved in civic learning opportunities have greater persistence through and completion of their baccalaureate degrees, graduate with skills necessary for future employment, and develop habits of social responsibility and civic participation. It further called upon

institutions to reclaim their civic and democratic missions and to embrace civic partnerships locally, nationally, and globally. The report advanced a schematic of the knowledge, skills, values, and collective actions embedded within civic learning and democratic engagement. In doing so, it offered institutions a framework of student learning relevant across the diversity of disciplines and parsed the interrelated facets of a civic-minded campus. These facets include a civic ethos governing campus life, civic literacy as a goal for every student, civic inquiry integrated within the majors and general education, and civic action as a lifelong practice.

### Geographically focused frameworks

The Carnegie Classification and the attention paid to civic learning and democracy deeply influenced institutional attempts to organize and orient community engagement. Geographically focused approaches to community engagement became particularly relevant as a means to focus partnership work and its underlying infrastructure (key to the Carnegie Classification) and to focus the institution's attention to the civic concerns of its region as a means to inform students' civic learning and active participation in civically focused engagement across a spectrum of activity types.

Three frameworks employ geography as a focusing lens among the approaches to community-university engagement within the United States: stewardship of place, anchor institutions, and metropolitan universities. These are not mutually exclusive, for example, the Metropolitan Universities Declaration (Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities, 2004) describes attending to both stewardship of place and anchor institution work as goals among its metropolitan university members. Nor are the institutional approaches found within each framework identical, but they provide ways to organize the collective commitments and strategies used to engage with a locality. Each frame is influenced by the identities of those institutions typically associated with the frame (e.g. comprehensive institutions are typically associated with Stewards of Place and research intensives are typically associated with Anchor Institution), but they are instructive to a wide variety of institutions. Collectively, their roots are based in the fundamental idea of urban engagement as a strategic and scholarly role of an urban-located university.

More than half of all U.S. postsecondary institutions are located within the country's urban cores (Axelroth Hodges & Dubb, 2012; Harkavy & Zuckerman, 1999). Understanding the changes and conditions within American cities is key to realizing how postsecondary institutions might best be involved in their continued revitalization. According to Murphy and Cunningham's (2003) review of urban development and community power, American cities and their residents experienced drastic economic and social changes during the last century, fuelled by industrialization, the Great Depression, and World War II's employment economy. They explain that 1949 brought federal legislation that offered financial help to cities and neighbourhoods that created plans for modernization, including neighbourhood renewal planning and anti-poverty

programs. According to Murphy and Cunningham, corporate economic interests combined with the hopes of local "political entrepreneurs" (:18) to leverage this federal funding for massive urban redevelopment, expanding large business and institutional footprints while gentrifying those neighbourhoods closest to the downtown core.

*These efforts devastated low-income families, particularly African Americans, because they destroyed poor black communities, challenged veteran neighbourhood stakeholders, displaced inner-city employers, and demolished affordable housing. ...many programs, scattered across the nation, resulted in multi-block demolition that drove masses of people into public housing while cleared land was used for condominium and corporate headquarters or, even more unsettling, was left fallow.*

(Murphy & Cunningham, 2003:18)

From the 1960s onward, postsecondary institutions were witness to the economic and social distress rising within American urban areas (Axelroth Hodges & Dubb, 2012; Brownell, 1995). In many instances, neighbourhoods surrounding these institutions became increasingly blighted, victims of higher crime, and their residents experienced deep poverty, racial injustice, lack of access to quality education and health services, and family instability. At the same time, institutions were increasingly surrounded by a resurgence of local community coalitions realizing their collective power (Murphy & Cunningham, 2003). Over time, urban institutions were catalysed (whether through a desire to enact their civic missions or by neighbours requesting their partnership in addressing economic and social challenges) to join the efforts to revitalize the nation's urban core. In part, this interest and investment was fostered through programs such as the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Outreach Partnership Centers (COPC) grants. Launched in 1994, the COPC program was intended "to create enduring partnerships between academic institutions and communities in order to build capacity for more effective responses to the needs and problems of distressed neighbourhoods and to enhance the research and teaching capacity of participating colleges and universities" (Vidal, Nye, Walker, et al., 2002:1-4). Between 1994 and 2005, the COPC program distributed more than \$76 million dollars to urban institutions that then matched those grants on a 1:1 basis (Office of University of Partnerships, 2017). In addition to COPC (and in many ways based upon it), university-focused associations such as the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities, and Anchor Institution Task Force fostered a series of geographically focused frameworks to direct institutional efforts toward their involvement in their urban communities.

### Stewardship of place

The stewardship of place framework was authored by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities

(AASCU) and is focused on operationalizing the work of *publicly engaged institutions*. Public colleges and universities typically are subject to the control of publicly elected or appointed officials and get major financial support from public funds (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.). The stewardship of place framework, first articulated in the 2002 *Stepping Forward as Stewards of Place*, entreats publicly engaged institutions to "function as learners as well as teachers in tackling the myriad . . . opportunities and issues facing our communities and regions" (Elmendorf, Reindl, & Williams, 2002:5). The stewardship of place framework was developed as a way for AASCU to think of the purpose and role of regional comprehensive universities as distinct from community colleges or research universities (Mahaffey, 2015).

Within the stewardship of place framework, public engagement is place related, interactive with communities, and mutually beneficial. Disparate institutional efforts are integrated within a larger institutional strategy for engagement. With regard to its place-related nature, the publicly engaged institution has a heightened sense of its locality. Despite acknowledging the ways in which the institution interacts at the national and global levels, a publicly engaged institution understands that it is fundamentally linked with the communities and region in which it is situated and pursues its "worldview in a way that has meaning to the institution's neighbours, who can be its most consistent and reliable advocates" (Elmendorf et al., 2002:9).

The 2002 report outlined a vision of stewardship of place, but did not offer concrete avenues or domains of that work. Given the progress in quality practices and principles that developed around community engagement across higher education, in 2014 AASCU issued a new report, *Becoming a Steward of Place: Four Areas of Institutional Focus* (Domagal-Goldman, Dunfee, Jackson, & Stearns, 2014), which outlined four ways institutions could implement stewardship of place: 1) civic engagement, 2) work with P-12 schools, 3) economic development, and 4) internationalization. AASCU offered a companion report that sought to understand the ways in which these four domains had been implemented by AASCU member institutions that had achieved the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification. A place-related characterization of public engagement was demonstrated across the institutions studied. Campuses were found to focus primarily on improving P-12 schooling and community access to continuing education; economic development inclusive of hiring, contracting, purchasing, local investments, workforce readiness, tech transfer, and business and enterprise incubators; consideration of local and regional contexts within institutional strategic planning; and making tangible investments and initiating partnerships with local and regional nongovernmental organizations, parks/recreation facilities, and infrastructure projects (Saltmarsh, O'Meara et al., 2014).

### Anchor institution

Among research intensive universities, a complementary orientation toward place-related engagement developed as

anchor institution work, sometimes expressed as an anchor institution mission. Advocates of the anchor institution framework position it as distinct from generic community engagement. They characterize community engagement as a broad frame for partnerships and problem solving that can be performed at any scale and without specific geographical targets for engagement, while the anchor institution mission is described as engagement through place-based partnerships and economic development focused on an institution's immediate geographic location such as its neighbourhood, city, and region (Axelroth Hodges & Dubb, 2012). The markers of anchor institution work include partnership development and organized economic development through the institution's role as a major regional purchaser, employer, workforce developer, real estate developer, incubator, and network builder (Hahn, Coonerty, & Peaslee 2010; Initiative for a Competitive Inner City and CEOs for Cities, 2003).

Responding to worsening urban conditions from the 1960s to 1990s, respected public figures and scholars called upon urban universities to fulfill their core academic missions through "serious engagement with the problems of their host communities" (Taylor & Luter, 2013:3). These institutions were seen as influential economic generators through their purchasing and hiring power and potential partners in addressing their cities' distress through locally relevant research. Medical facilities also began to be recognized for similar contributions. In 1999, Harkavy and Zuckerman coined this pairing the "Eds and Meds" (:1), stating such kinds of institutions were significant assets to struggling cities but were often overlooked. In the 2000s, awareness grew among regional leaders that other kinds of organizations—for example, large place-committed corporations—could be seen as assets fixed geographically and thus motivated to participate in revitalization work. In 2001, an Aspen Institution study named the immobile infrastructurally invested entities "anchor institutions" (Fulbright-Anderson, Auspos, & Anderson, 2001:1). Postsecondary institutions began to see themselves as one of a number of invested partners in a locality and the powerful possibilities that existed in banding together with other sector partners, or what Nancy Cantor (2015:9) called "place-based barn-raisings." Similar to the concept's spread across sectors, the once urban concept of anchor institutions soon spread into various geographies: cities, regions, rural, etc. It is a concept of engagement that has also spread beyond the U.S. (Goddard, Coombes, Kempton, & Vallance, 2014).

An anchor institution's immobility is its primary motivation for making a positive impact on its local community. The conditions and vibrancy of the surrounding community significantly influence the numbers of faculty and students who wish to make the institution their home, and the degree to which an institution can find opportunities locally to advance innovation, knowledge production and deploy knowledge transfer activities. "Enlightened self interest" (Taylor & Luter, 2013:3) leads anchor institutions to become active in urban renewal projects. Anchor institutions can be counted on to prioritize local and regional innovation and knowledge creation;

help employers prosper and grow through knowledge transfer; participate in community revitalization; and intentionally contribute to the region's educated population (Shaffer & Wright, 2010), often in response to regional workforce opportunities and needs.

Institutions that embrace the anchor role do so not only to support organizational thriving. They also embrace the identity out of a sense of mission. An anchor mission is realized through commitments to a "social-purpose mission (democracy, equity, social and racial justice, place and community)" that allow it to "build democratic, mutually beneficial and sustainable relationships with its host community, thereby enabling it to become a *change agent* and engine of socioeconomic development" (emphasis in original) (Taylor & Luter, 2013:7). Anchor institutions sustain their involvement when they receive a return on their investment, often through a coupling of social responsibility and self-interest. According to Taylor and Luter (2013), location is a strong influencer of whether an anchor adopts its social purpose mission, and points to distressed urban locations as most likely to support the full anchor rationale: organizational thriving and a social-purpose mission.

Axelroth Hodges and Dubb (2012) examined 10 anchor institutions and found three approaches or roles that significantly influence the way the anchor mission is realized. Some institutions play the role of facilitator, in which they have few or no commitments to a specific locality but are generally responsive to community needs, and prioritize the teaching and learning mission of the institution. Other institutions play the role of leader, in which they focus on comprehensive and specific neighbourhood revitalization through academic and non-academic work. Often, this approach is used when the campus is directly adjacent to an urban area that has significant economic and social distress. As a response, the institution seeks to revitalize and renew the area. Within this approach, the community is beneficiary of the institution's community development work. Still other institutions play the role of convener, brokering community development processes with networks of community collaborators. Conveners will often work in communities that are not adjacent to campus, bringing both their educational contributions as well as economic development to bear.

### Metropolitan universities

Similar to the other frameworks, a metropolitan university also presents a way of engaging locally, but the nuance of the metropolitan university framework is that attention is paid to the entire metropolitan region and not a narrow sub-area. This regional attention creates a difficulty: the demands of a metropolitan region are multifaceted and numerous. The metropolitan university identifies mutual interests and collaborations spanning the urban core, well-to-do urban villages, and suburban areas; between resident, legislative, corporate, and nongovernmental organizational constituencies; and across the range of the polity's interests (Brownell, 1995).

American universities that assert their purpose, or "essential

rationale," to be their relationship with their surrounding metropolitan region and whose commitments to engagement permeate the whole institution are considered metropolitan universities (Hathaway, Mulhollan, & White, 1990:12-13). Within the metropolitan university framework a distinction is made between "metropolitan universities" and those institutions that are located within a metropolitan area or that enrol a substantial/majority segment of students from the metropolitan region but that do not form sustained, reciprocal engagements with their cities (Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities, 2004).

Much like anchor institutions, the metropolitan university embraces a dual mission to provide students with rich learning experiences while strengthening the metropolitan region through community building efforts (Allen, Prange, Smith-Howell, Woods, & Reed, 2016). Hathaway et al. (1995:11) explain:

*By choosing to fit into the metropolitan university model, a university accepts the added obligation to extend its resources to the surrounding region, to provide leadership in addressing regional needs, and to work cooperatively with the region's schools, municipalities, businesses, industries, and the many other institutions and organizations in the public and private sectors. By accepting this mission, a university affirms that it not only accepts the academic and scholarly obligations and responsibilities incumbent upon all excellent universities but that it intends to extend the expertise and energies of the university to the metropolitan region in somewhat the same way that land-grant institutions served the agricultural society during the nineteenth century.*

The three frameworks are similar and often work in concert within a single institution's efforts to engage its local communities, but differ in the range of geographies engaged and the specificity of the strategies entailed. This is certainly the case at the University of Pittsburgh, where we have embraced the ethos of stewardship in our host neighbourhood of Oakland; qualify as a metropolitan university and as such attend to issues of the Southwestern Pennsylvania region; and are viewed as an anchor institution within the city as one of its four largest employers, a significant purchasing agent, and a community-engaged institution. The University is now choosing a deliberate neighbourhood approach to better link and leverage our localized community engagement activities. Axelroth Hodges and Dubb (2012) note that some institutions see themselves *within* a broader community, of which they may engage some areas or none at all. Other institutions see themselves as *part of* the community, recognizing their shared futures. The historical relationship between the locale and the institution greatly influences the type of engagements that are possible. For example, within stewardship of place, there is an emphasis on having a place-related focus as one of the four characteristics of a publicly engaged institution but there is an implicit distinction between place-related and place-based (Elmendorf et al., 2002). Within anchor institution work, depending on the role the institution takes, such as the leader role, the university can heavily determine the way the place will evolve, to as great an extent as changing the very nature of the place to become university-centric. Referred to

as university cities (Shapiro, 2015), these environments tend to cluster innovation, business, culture, and amenities tightly around a research university. These distinctions are interesting to consider as we explore an emerging practice of *emplaced* engagement strategies.

## PLACE

What is meant by *emplaced* engagement and how does this change the intellectual and applied practice of community engagement? Place is not a marker of a particular kind of community engagement work (e.g., one form of community engagement is focused on place, whereas another is not) but rather can inform an institutional paradigm or orientation in which community engagement efforts are informed by a sense of place; they honour that engagements are *emplaced*, and as a result reflect the context, setting, and meaning made of that setting by those who live, work, and seek to influence that location. Thomas Gieryn (2000), a sociologist who studies place, argues that "place is not merely a setting or backdrop, but an agentic player in the game—a force with detectable and independent effects" (:466). He goes on to explain that the consideration of place is more than a "bundle of analytic variables" such as demographic characteristics of a location (racial proportions, unemployment rates, etc.). In his view, place is an interaction among a geographic location, its physicality (the material forms, whether natural or built, found there and the social processes that happen through them), and the meaning and value that is "interpreted, narrated, perceived, felt, understood, and imagined" there (:465).

### Of a place: Emplaced

The acts of narrating, perceiving, feeling, and understanding the meaning of place (Gieryn, 2000) are done among people who have an interest or a shared concern of a place. This is often the domain of neighbours, whose lives are entangled with the place. Paul Pribbenow, President of Augsburg College, associated a commitment to place with becoming a neighbor in his essay, "Generosity and Faithfulness: A Meditation on Why Place Matters for Higher Education," saying, "place demands our presence as a neighbour" (Pribbenow, 2015:8). Being a neighbor typically means one is *of a place*, distinct from being *in a place* (which may be time- or involvement-limited). Nancy Cantor, a prolific postsecondary leader and community engagement champion, pointedly challenges American higher education to be "citizens of a place, not on the sidelines studying it" (emphasis added) (Cantor & Englot, 2015:75). She goes on to describe how, during her time at Syracuse University, as part of efforts to express its anchor institution mission within the city of Syracuse's Near West Side, residents orally and visually narrated their lives and communities to faculty, students, and staff. The acts of interpreting, imagining, feeling, and understanding built trust and shared concern between Syracuse University and Near West Side residents. "As these narratives accumulated . . . we got new eyes" (Cantor, 2011:7).

If place is agentic (Gieryn, 2000), then postsecondary institutions that take the posture of neighbor are affected and influenced by the evolving and contested realities of that place. The collaborations and work done in the place, if valuable, also become *of the place*—become *emplaced*—reflecting the histories and realities of the place. These histories and realities are not fixed. They are contextualized within an ever-changing socio-



political environment of the place (Hynie, MacNevin, Prescod, Rieder, & Schwartzentruber, 2016). Strategies and projects are not so easily imported from a different community-university locale without significant tailoring. For example, Irma McClaurin, former executive director of the University of Minnesota's Urban Research Outreach/Engagement Center (UROC) said, "We can't just replicate the university's Research and Outreach centers that serve rural Minnesota. . . . We're truly trying to establish a partnership where we can be good neighbours" (Axelroth Hodges & Dubb, 2012:97).

One of the characteristics of neighbours is that their shared concern about a place is bound up in their physical tie to it, which elongates and grounds their commitments to the place. Universities are also seeking to elongate and ground their emplacement through different ways of establishing physical roots in communities, one of which is "hyperlocal" engagement (Britton & Aires, 2014:66). Within the next section, the idea of hyperlocal and emplaced engagement will be explored through the use of shared spaces and neighbourhood presence.

### NEIGHBOURHOOD-EMPLACED CENTERS

The neighbourhood space approach to engagement is one strategy that can be used within an institution's portfolio of anchor, metropolitan, and stewardship of place efforts. For some institutions, such as those occupying a convening role (Axelroth Hodges & Dubb, 2012), it becomes a way to realize their anchor missions despite having campuses in stable or fairly well-to-do parts of the urban core. For others, it signals that, despite having a large campus adjoining the neighbourhood, the institution is making efforts to fit within the scale and fabric of the neighbourhood separate and apart from campus life. Regardless of geographic proximity to the neighbourhood being engaged, this approach of focus on place also serves to focus the intellectual involvement of faculty, staff, and students in their engagement with communities.

The inhabitation of physical space within a neighbourhood demands a long-term presence and commitment that unplaced engagement efforts do not always feel. "Understanding how we share space calls attention to (and aids in moving away from) transactional or episodic work toward sustained work with measurable results" (Barajas, 2016:2). A number of examples are presented below.<sup>1</sup>

#### Drexel University, Dornsife Center for Neighbourhood Partnerships

Drexel University founded the Dornsife Center for Neighbourhood Partnerships as one strategy within its bold civic engagement vision that is largely based on anchor institution work. As part of this work, Drexel was participating as a stakeholder in local community planning processes. Within those processes, neighbours expressed a need to have more integrated and constructive relationships with the University and to move beyond what had been a contentious relationship (Britton & Aires, 2014). They also wanted to have better access to collaborative problem-solvers and saw Drexel as a key partner in achieving their communities' priorities. The result was undertaking a two-year stakeholder planning process that would lead to the Dornsife Center, a hub for neighbourhood-university engagement. Using the Future Search planning process (Weisbord & Janoff, 2010), the

past, present, and desired future of the relationship between neighbourhoods and university was laid out in consensus-building discussion (Britton & Aires, 2014). Through these conversations, a distilled set of priorities was identified: income disparity, low educational attainment, health disparities, fresh food access, homeownership, and racism and the legacy of segregation. The neighbourhood-embedded facility is a community gathering space that provides opportunities for collaborative work on identified priorities, supports academic engagement across all of Drexel's colleges and schools, and has programming specific to the desires of the neighbours in that area. The Dornsife Center hosts monthly community dinners and is governed by a stakeholder advisory council (Britton & Aires, 2014).

#### University of Minnesota, University Research Outreach/Engagement Center

When the University of Minnesota began to reinvigorate its land-grant, one strategy was to develop deeper partnerships with the local urban area, a new urban vision for engagement that included a center within the Northside neighbourhood (Axelroth Hodges & Dubb, 2012). The Northside community expressed concern and protested the University's efforts, fearing that UMN would be exploiting the neighbourhood for research purposes. Over the next five years, a difficult community-university dialogue ensued that Barajas and Martin (2016:51-52) describe as discussing "research, race, knowledge production, ownership and intellectual property, exploitation, experimentation on black children, and claims of past broken promises and lack of trust." The initial focus of the center was changed, as was its initial location, but the vision for having a neighbourhood and urban extension presence was retained. With these changes came a more participatory approach to planning the center, eventually named the University Research Outreach/Engagement Center (UROC). Two years of "listening" via focus groups, conversations, and interviews culminated in a two-day conference and established a mission for UROC (Barajas & Martin, 2016), a triple focus on education, health, and community and economic development (Axelroth Hodges & Dubb, 2012), and an epistemology of community-driven knowledge. Eventually UROC developed a triple focus on education, health, and community and economic development (Axelroth Hodges & Dubb, 2012), but also an epistemology of community-driven knowledge production that prioritized action, consideration of many ways of knowing, mutual benefit, and value for community assets (Barajas & Martin, 2016).

#### University of Utah, Hartland Partnership Center

In the early 2000s, the University of Utah initiated a greater focus on civic engagement and community-university partnerships. Through more than 250 interviews with leaders and residents of Salt Lake City's Westside neighbourhood, the University learned of important community priorities, specifically that a physical center for engagement in Westside was needed to ensure *sustainability and credibility* of the initiative (University of Utah, 2017a). The University Neighbourhood Partners (UNP) office opened in 2003 in a residential house in the Westside neighbourhood. In 2004, the UNP Hartland Partnership Center opened in an apartment complex in Westside. In 2012 it relocated to a 10,000-sq. ft. building adjacent to the apartment complex. Its mission was to serve

as an educational and community center (University of Utah, 2017b) for immigrant and refugee families living in Westside. The predominant work of the center is to offer adult and youth programming, much of which is geared toward the realities of an immigrant population, through an asset-based and co-designed approach that is carried out by Westside residents and university personnel (Mileski, Mohamed, & Hunter, 2014). Members of the Hartland Resident Committee act as advisors to the center and often speak to University of Utah classes. They receive stipends in recognition of their leadership of the initiative. "Rather than creating programs for community members, engaging them in program development creates more effective involvement and contribution from community members" (:147). Through this process, the primary paradigm of the center is capacity building.

### York University, York U-TD Community Engagement Centre

York University's main campus borders Toronto's Jane-Finch/Black Creek neighbourhood, an area that has been stigmatized as having high crime, gunplay, and drugs. It also has a history of rich civic activism and has undergone planning efforts to build neighbourhood capacity and improve education and employment rates (Hynie et al., 2016). In 2006, York received a ten-year gift from the TD Financial Group to coordinate the university's engagement in the neighbourhood. York established a working group to conduct an internal and external consultation process that reported community and university stakeholder beliefs about the purpose, structure, and operations of a neighbourhood-based center. The report laid out recommendations for physical space, executive staff qualities, programming, and the principles or ethical commitments that would guide a center's work (York University, 2007). This process resulted in the York U-TD Community Engagement Centre, a storefront center that works with units across the university to engage teaching, research, and resource sharing with the neighbourhood (York University, 2017). The storefront presence within a repurposed strip mall also houses Seneca College's Yorkgate campus (a technical school specializing in vocational preparation), a community health center, and a youth-serving program center. This proximity to vocational and community programming maximizes York's ability to leverage partnerships and participate in collaborative programming (Hynie et al., 2016).

In 2013, five years into the existence of the center, residents, community organization staff, university stakeholders, and community organizers came together for a conference that was initiated due to concerns that York and the Jane-Finch/Black Creek neighbourhood continued to wrestle with a belief that the processes and products of community-focused research were inequitable; stigma and stereotypes of the neighbourhood endured among university stakeholders; engagement practices and structures unintentionally marginalized community voice; and despite the existence of the center, York University was still largely inaccessible to neighbourhood residents. The conference created opportunities to dialogue about "social justice, equitable research practices, race and power relations in order to establish alternative practices that address the

needs of the community and university" (Narain & Kumar, 2013:3).

## DISCUSSION

As introduced earlier, taking a hyperlocal or neighbourhood focus has both physical and paradigmatic implications for the work done there. Barajas and Martin (2016) explain this as attending to both the physical and epistemological natures of the space. Though the physical footprint of these efforts is vital to their success, and much can be learned from how a particular ethos for engagement is established through the aesthetic and built environment of such centers, the paradigmatic aspect of neighbourhood-emplaced work is critical to understand. The examples provided by the Dornisife Center, Hartland Center, UROC, and York U-TD Community Engagement Centre illustrate that university efforts to be of a community, or *emplaced*, are not successful without attending to the collaborative and participatory development of their structures, activities, and purposes. Through participatory planning processes and community-university listening sessions, these exemplars acknowledged and addressed the socio-political context (Hynie et al., 2016), historic community-university relationship (Axelroth Hodges & Dubb, 2012), and the interactions among geography, physicality, and the meaning and value by those of that place (Gieryn, 2000).

A subtle differentiator between these efforts and other geographically focused engagement efforts is the degree to which they operate on the scale of the neighbourhood and as part of its fabric. In doing so, the exemplars may represent a shift from a university-centered way of engaging communities to the university joining the neighbourhood ecosystem at play within community development efforts. The notion of locating the university within an ecosystem (as contrasted with the institution being centered) has been explored as it relates to collaborative knowledge generation (Saltmarsh, Hartley, & Clayton, 2009) and within partnerships (Daynes, Howell, & Lindsay, 2003). The metaphor is useful. It describes an orientation and positionality that goes beyond co-determined work to being a part of an existing array of networks, leaders, and initiatives seeking community development while still retaining an institutional agenda and interest, just as any other community organization within the ecosystem does. Joining the ecosystem of community development points to the need to embrace community development theories and frameworks; orient teaching, learning, research, service and creative activity engaged in the neighbourhood in democratic and civic ways; and build the boundary-spanning capacity of university stakeholders collaborating in these spaces.

### Community development

While community-campus engagement frameworks are built on multidisciplinary theoretical roots (including learning theories, civic and citizen participation theories, organizational development theories, and so forth), Stoecker, Beckman, and Min (2010) point to a lack of familiarity with community development theories and frameworks within community-campus engagement practice and scholarship.

For institutions that aspire to neighbourhood emplaced engagements, reference to and application of community development theories along with community-campus engagement theories and frameworks is important because it appropriately orients the institution's positionality and efforts within neighbourhood-based work. This application of theory quickly leads the postsecondary institution to realize its appropriate role within existing localized, participatory community planning processes and the need to align neighbourhood-emplaced activities with existing community planning goals. It quickly leads the postsecondary institution to realize its appropriate role within existing localized, participatory community planning processes and the need to align neighbourhood-emplaced activities with existing community planning goals. Upon consideration of community development theory and frameworks, the institution quickly realizes its role is not to become the leader, but may best be expressed as learner, supporter, partner, and perhaps even as a participant within community development planning processes if welcomed by the community. Acquiring a community development sensibility may also allow an institution to determine which community processes with which to ally. For example, those processes that prioritize community leadership, broad participation, and civic goals would be more desirable than those that serve economic and political interests outside of the neighbourhood, such as those witnessed during the 1950s and 1960s eras of urban redevelopment.

Community development theories are eclectic in nature and are often derived from first-hand experience (Cook, 1994).

*Thus, [community development theory] has taken on the appearance of a jumble of definitions and theoretical bits and pieces being constantly arranged, modified and re-arranged. However, this maze of mental activity and images is not haphazard. It revolves around, and is anchored in, a core of coherent definitions and propositions."*

(Cook, 1994, para. 10)

This section presents a summary overview of the definitions and propositions of community development, including its goals, participatory nature, constituent planning processes, and underpinning values that are particularly relevant for neighbourhood emplaced engagement strategies.

Though community development has come to refer to broad notions of community (Phillips & Pittman, 2009) (such as regional, rural, urban, etc.), it is a framework and pursuit found within urban neighbourhoods to bring about change (Warren, 1970). At a neighbourhood level, community development is influenced by the specific attributes of the neighbourhood setting, which according to Luter (2016) include the physical or built environment (forms an existing visual state); people (those who live, work, influence, or have responsibility for shaping the neighbourhood); organizational network (the web of formal and informal organizations that have a stake in the neighbourhood); institutional network (supportive services

found within the neighbourhood); neighbourhood economy (opportunities for residents to participate in the exchange of goods and services in both formal and informal ways); and neighbourhood proximities and access (ease of access to other city services and institutions, private and public).

The emphasis on local action, or the vision and action that emerges from within the community, is one of the most important aspects of community development for postsecondary institutions to understand. Rothman (1995) draws attention to participatory and indigenous leadership involved in this sort of community intervention by referring to it as "locality development" (:28), saying:

*This approach presupposes that community change should be pursued through broad participation by a wide spectrum of people at the local community level in determining goals and taking civic action. . . . Leadership is drawn from within [the community], and direction and control are in the hands of local people."*

(Rothman, 1995:28-29)

As a result, community development is both a process (Rothman, 1995) and an outcome (Phillips & Pittman, 2009). The process of community development builds community competency, social integration (Rothman, 1995), and social capital (Mattessich & Monsey, 2004). The outcome of community development is various forms of community improvement including changes to the physical or built environment, natural environment, or cultural, political, economic, and social conditions (Phillips & Pittman, 2009). As early as the 1950s, community development's multifaceted nature was noted as a "process designed to create conditions of economic and social progress for the whole community with its active participation and the fullest possible reliance on the community's initiative" (United Nations, 1955, in Rothman, 1995).

Theories of community development are based on the interplay of community systems and human behaviours: through community planning processes that both build and are resourced by social capital, consensually defined goals are chosen by community members that will likely improve the community's physical, environmental, cultural, social, political, and economic realities. In an atmosphere of mutual support, the members of the community work together to realize these goals, often marshaling resources found within and outside of the community (Murphy & Cunningham, 2003).

It is within this context that neighbourhood-emplaced centers operate. Thus, if a university seeks to establish a neighbourhood-emplaced center, the implicit assumption is that it will acknowledge and participate in the community development processes at play and align its contributions to the community development outcomes sought (social, physical, and economic development). This may come in the form of the institution taking the role of citizen, participating in community planning processes, or seeking opportunities to contribute social capital and resources that align with the

community's consensually defined goals for improvement. Within each of the exemplar centers offered in this essay, the institutions were highly responsive to (and almost always participated in) the planning processes of the neighbourhood. Much of their programming is directly aligned to the community development outcomes/goals established through those planning processes.

### Democratic civic engagement

In addition to recognizing that neighbourhood emplaced efforts must complement a neighbourhood's community development efforts, these initiatives also look forward to future collective actions that can be taken in partnership with neighbourhood residents. Following Cook's (1994) argument that community development theory prioritizes systemic, integrated, democratic processes of civic participation, the sort of community engagement (across teaching, research, economic development, and creative activities) appropriate in neighbourhood-emplaced efforts would likewise have these qualities. Democratic civic engagement does just this. It is a framework of community-campus engagement that embraces democratic notions of "inclusiveness, participation, task sharing, lay participation, reciprocity in public problem solving, and an equality of respect for the knowledge and experience that everyone contributes to education and community building" (Saltmarsh, Hartley, & Clayton, 2009:6).

Participation and inclusion (of the university in the community development ecosystem and of the community within the university's development of engagement agendas and public problem-solving pursuits) are central to the concept of democratic civic engagement. Each concept makes its own contribution to the framework. Within a community-development or community-organizing frame, differences among definitions of "participation" are typically explained by the degree to which power and decision making are shared, with more authentic forms of participation being marked by higher degrees of shared decision making (Arnstein, 1969; Cornwall & Jewkes, 1995). Spaces of participation are influenced by the power relations among the entities seeking to collaborate there (Cornwall, 2002, Davies et al., 2016). Inclusion, on the other hand, points to the degree that a process or culture is changed to embrace the contributions and participation of those who would be involved. Co-production of engaged spaces fosters accessibility for those who would otherwise be excluded from the endeavour (Davies, et al., 2016), thus leading to an inclusive stance.

Perhaps the most defining aspect of democratic civic engagement is its emphasis on the *civic purposes* of shared public problem solving and engagement. This emphasis stands in contrast with the typical institutional agenda of public service activities. Saltmarsh, Hartley, & Clayton (2009:6) explain:

*To paraphrase Dewey, mere activity in a community does not constitute civic engagement. Civic engagement defined by processes and purpose has a particular meaning in higher education and is*

*associated with implications for institutional change.*

*The processes of engagement refer to the way in which those on campus—administrators, academics, staff, and students—relate to those outside the campus. Purpose refers specifically to enhancing a public culture of democracy on and off campus and alleviating public problems through democratic means.*

The example provided by the York U-TD Community Engagement Centre provides a vibrant illustration of the distinction between activity in a community and democratic civic engagement. Despite having five operational years as a neighbourhood center offering a multitude of services and facilitating numerous research projects, the community concerns about exploitative research, entrenched stereotypes, and lack of a co-constructed process and purpose animating the center hampered its ability to engage stakeholders productively and equitably in addressing public problems.

In addition to fostering more reciprocal and equitable community relationships, democratic civic engagement enables the kinds of research, teaching, and involvement that are mission-critical aspects of modern postsecondary institutions. Research, innovation, and knowledge production that are underpinned by the principles of democratic civic engagement have the capacity to produce knowledge that honours a diversity of expertise (lived, indigenous, academic, practice, etc.) with the potential to affect—immediately and longer term—the pressing challenges experienced nationally and locally. Reciprocal knowledge production (Hoyt, 2011) bridges the worlds of practice and theory, enhancing the relevance of scholarship. In a scarce research-funding climate, evidence of relevance, impact, and applicability is vital to the work of research institutions. With regard to teaching and learning, students who are well prepared for, and actively involved in, collaborative public problem solving have opportunities to acquire and practice civic skills and abilities that are fundamental to a well-educated citizenry and of critical interest to future employers. These skills and abilities include knowing how their own identities inform their assumptions, values, and responsibilities to others; learning various methods for influencing change; gaining practice with critical inquiry, analysis, and reasoning; gathering and evaluating multiple sources of evidence and diverse perspectives; developing empathy, open mindedness, and ethical integrity; and practicing public problem solving, collaboration, deliberation, and compromise (Musil & Hampshire, 2012).

### Boundary-spanning capacity

The civic capacities necessary to earn trust and credibility; align one's teaching, research, creative activity, and contributions to the goals of the neighbourhood; and act in inclusive and participatory ways are not necessarily the same as those required of work done inside the culture of higher education. These capacities represent boundary spanning, or the ability to build relationships that navigate and knit together the cultures and practices of community and campus in order to achieve collaborative goals. Building the boundary-spanning

capacity of those involved in the engagement enterprise is critical to its success and sustainability. Neighbourhood-emplaced centers have a range of stakeholders, be they center directors, participating faculty and researchers, supportive staff, student leaders, or community members that need to have the capacity to work in boundary-spanning ways. Weerts & Sandmann (2010) described university stakeholders who operate as boundary spanners as:

*[P]rimarily responsible for interacting with constituents outside their organization. These spanners negotiate power and balance between the organization and external agents to achieve mutual objectives, and they also represent the perceptions, expectations, and ideas of each side to the other.*

(:638)

Rose (2014) described community members who operate as boundary spanners within community-university engagements as often being formal organizational leaders who use their organizational affiliations and networks to gain visibility of opportunities, community changes, and available resources to further engagement. Within the Rose study, the community boundary spanners who participated were communicative visionaries that held trust and credibility across the organizational and cultural boundaries they worked (2014).

Neighbourhood-emplaced work is, itself, a boundary-spanning notion of engagement infrastructure. Davies et al. say that "[i]t is also important to ensure that those we are working with are also able to operate on an equal basis within the different spaces in which we choose to meet, are able to understand the significance of closed, invited or claimed spaces, and the dynamics of hidden or invisible power in the relationships we develop together" (Davies et al., 2016:13).

Though the community members, faculty, staff, and students who are engaging one another might be predisposed to collaboration and may position themselves to have a vantage point from which to make connections among constituencies, these are likely insufficient qualities unless accompanied by other capacities associated with boundary spanning. These include sharing and translating the expectations and perspectives among different campus and community cultures and stakeholders; attending to power dynamics at play between neighbourhood and campus stakeholders while helping the effort achieve mutually defined goals; familiarity with campus and community culture; facility with civically oriented pedagogies and research methods; and knowledge of how to participate in community development processes and have efforts be informed by such processes. Such capacities can and need to be built within those working in neighbourhood-emplaced spaces. Dedicating resources and programming to faculty development, student orientations, community partner orientations, advisory board trainings, and the like is critical to the sustainability and success of the neighbourhood-emplaced engagement strategy.

## CONCLUSION

As the anchor institution framework implies, the University of Pittsburgh is acting out of enlightened self-interest. Developing neighbourhood-based centers provides us with opportunities to advance the frontiers of knowledge through pioneering research, build community strength, and prepare our students to lead lives of impact (University of Pittsburgh, 2016). Through the centers, the University will engage with diverse groups, creating inclusive and strong community partnerships that will help us leverage community expertise that in turn can shape research agendas and students' educational experiences. As a state-related institution, the centers are another way we demonstrate our value as a regional asset, contributing to the region's revitalization, particularly within neighbourhoods close to the University campus. Creating a series of neighbourhood-based centers is a means to harness urban engagement as a strategic and scholarly endeavour. Neighbourhood-based engagement contributes to our vitality and strength as a premier urban-located research institution as well as to our civic mission, one that we share with all institutions of higher education.

As we move forward with our plans at the University of Pittsburgh to establish neighbourhood-emplaced centers of engagement, looking to the examples of our peers, the lessons they have learned, and balancing that wisdom with the agentic influence of our specific neighbourhoods will be key in our success. Perhaps most importantly, the paradigms we embrace as guiding principles for the development of our centers will shape the degree to which they reflect emplaced notions of neighbourhood engagement.

From the practical examples explored here as well as the understanding gained by examining community development theory, democratic civic engagement, and the concept of boundary spanners, we draw three key insights. First, neighbourhood-emplaced engagement that occurs at the scale of a neighbourhood and as part of its fabric reflects and responds to the neighbourhood's community development processes and is designed through planning undertaken collaboratively by community and university stakeholders. Second, the activities that take place within these centers (such as student engagement, community-engaged teaching, and community-engaged research) ought to be developed under the rubric of democratic civic engagement, which fundamentally focuses efforts on civic issues important to the neighbourhood and steers their implementation in inclusive, participatory ways. Finally, those stakeholders who work through the centers ought to have capacities as boundary spanners, an identity and set of qualities that need to be intentionally cultivated as part of the center programming and infrastructure. Our communities deserve no less.

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### (Endnotes)

1 These are just a few examples we identified that could be models for what we are seeking to undertake at the University of Pittsburgh. Our criteria included placement within the neighborhood setting, co-location of many kinds of university engagement activities, and robust partnership orientation. There are other examples of shared space centers (such as Barbara Weitz Community Center at the University of Nebraska, Omaha, among others) and neighborhood-based partnership programs (such as the Community University Partnership Programme at the University of Brighton, UK, among others) that are excellent examples of shared space and programming efforts.





Jan is a highly regarded social entrepreneur, innovator, influencer and author who has spent the past 25 years growing Australia's youth, social enterprise and innovation sectors. In 2012 she was named Australia's inaugural Australian Financial Review and Westpac Woman of Influence; in 2014 she received the Doctor of

Letters (honoris causa) from the University of Sydney; and was awarded membership to the Order of Australia in 2000. She is the author of *Every Childhood Lasts a Lifetime* (1996) and *The Future Chasers* (2014). Jan is the CEO of the Foundation for Young Australians and YLab, the global youth futures lab. Her lifelong mission is to unleash the potential of young people to lead positive change in the world.

## CEO's VIEWPOINT

### ENGAGING FUTURES

**the next gen and implications for the higher education engagement agenda.**

Each successive generation has its own character and distinctiveness, and forms of knowledge and learning evolve to meet new needs and demands. Here, Dr. Jan Owen discusses the findings of the Foundation for Young Australian's (FYA) most recent report the *New Work Mindset*, calling upon universities to offer new learning experiences to students in order to equip the next generation of young people to rethink the world, make change and create a better future. The report signals a paradigm shift is needed by educators concerned with preparing young people for the future of work if young Australians are able to survive and thrive in the new work order. By understanding the skills and capabilities that will be most portable and in demand in the new economy, universities can work to equip their students for the future of work more effectively.

#### **The new work mindset**

The *New Work Mindset* is the latest report in the New Work Order series from The Foundation for Young Australians (FYA). The report show us that we need to shift our mindset towards how we approach our working lives. This means shifting our focus from jobs to skills and understanding the skills that will be most portable and in demand in the new economy, young people can work to equip themselves with the right portfolio of skills and capabilities.

#### **New job 'clusters' emerging in Australia**

In the *New Work Mindset* we analysed more than 2.7 million job advertisements using a new methodology which looked at the skills requested for each job and how similar they are to skills requested for other jobs.

Our analysis reveals 7 new job clusters in the Australian economy where the required technical and enterprise skills are closely related and more portable than previously thought. The jobs clusters include The Generators, The Artisans, The Carers, The Informers, The Technologists, The Designers and The Coordinators.

#### **Skills and capabilities that young people will need in the economy**

Instead of training for a particular occupation or working area for life it is estimated that the average 15 year old will have 17 different jobs over 5 different careers. This uncertain and rapidly changing world of work young people need a portfolio of skills that allow them to be more portable and able to navigate more complex transitions and pathways.

**the average 15 year old will have 17 different jobs over 5 different careers**

The *New Work Mindset* tells us that skills and capabilities are more portable that we realise. In fact, when a person trains or works 1 job, they acquire skills that will help them get 13 other jobs.

Previous research by FYA, *The New Basics*, highlights that in addition to technical skills, young people will need transferable enterprise skills. The results showed that since 2013 the demand for digital skills has increased by more than 200%, critical thinking by more than 150%, and creativity by more than 60% and presentation skills by 25%.

In order to navigate the changing world of work, young people will also require career management skills - to understand the specific skills and capabilities required to enable them to move around a job cluster.

#### **How should universities respond**

The *New Work Mindset* continues our national conversation on how to reconceptualise the future of work and how we prepare our younger generations. We believe our existing systems including careers education, curricula, courses and career information need to focusing on building a portfolio of applicable skills and capabilities. Universities and other tertiary education providers will be required to transform the design of learning experiences. There is also an opportunity to support young people to build a relevant portfolio of skills and capabilities. Understanding the 7 job clusters will be key to navigating labour market shifts and transitions.

**Since 2013 the demand for digital skills has increased by more than 200%, critical thinking by more than 150%, creativity by more than 60% and presentation skills by 25%**

The skills and capabilities required for the new work order can be built into our education and training systems in a number of ways to support, engage and prepare young people.

This could include:

- Designing learning to reflect the way skills and capabilities are utilised in real world scenarios;
- Rethinking teaching methods to teach young people in ways they want to learn through experience, immersion and with peers;
- Partnering with employers and industry to expose students to opportunities where they can develop experience that will help them secure the enterprise skills required to succeed in the future of work.

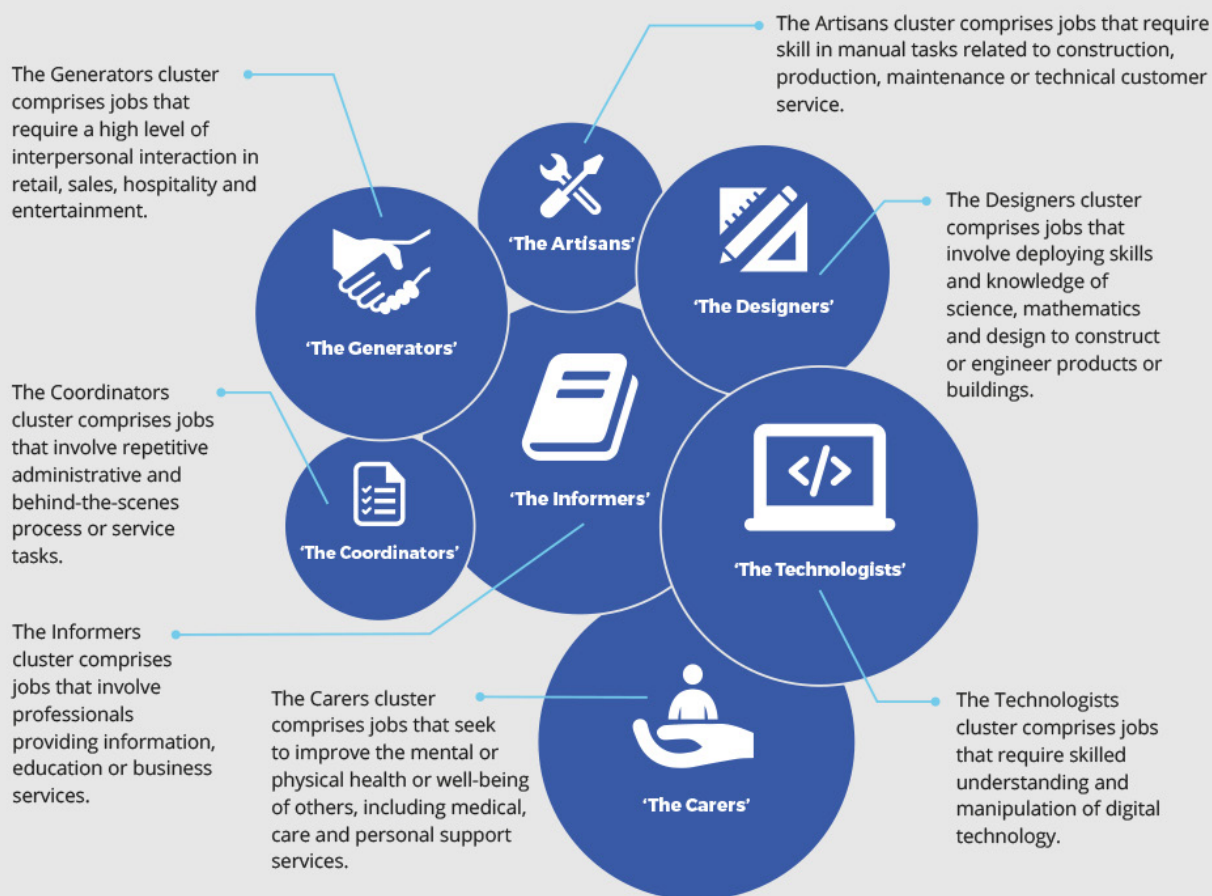
As FYA's report, the New Work Order highlights, the world of work is already in a massive transition to a more global, technology driven, flexible economy. To support our young people in this less predictable future, our education and training systems must reflect and engage with this change, helping young people to build a portfolio of skills and capabilities.

FYA sees a significant opportunity to sure up our nation's future by investing in the next generation and backing them to create the kind of world they want to live in. Core to this will be generations of enterprising young people who are job creators, not only job seekers. We all need to embrace a new mindset towards how we approach our working lives and our existing systems need to shift. A collaborative approach from educators, policy makers, industry and students is essential to ensure young people not only survive but thrive in the new work order.

## There are 7 new job clusters in Australia

There are more than 1,000 different occupations in Australia. This might seem like a bewildering choice for a young person starting their career, but actually many of these jobs are related in the sense that they involve similar skills, day-to-day tasks and work environments (some of which are surprising).

By using a first-time methodology for analysing millions of job advertisements, these occupations can actually be grouped into just 7 'clusters of work':





Professor Martin Betts is the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Engagement) at Griffith University. He oversees a diverse and growing engagement agenda at Griffith University spanning student, staff, alumni, donor and industry stakeholders. The University is a major partner of the 2018 Commonwealth Games, and between 2014-2016

has trebled its total fundraising income. In September 2016 the new Be Remarkable positioning campaign for the University was unveiled, signalling a fresh approach to student recruitment and stakeholder engagement. Professor Betts led the creation of interactive Red Zones at the Nathan and Gold Coast campuses which have attracted more than 60,000 visitors. He also chairs the University's Equity Committee and is a Male Champion of Change.



Amanda Briggs has over 20 years experience working in and around Australian Universities and currently holds the position of Industry Partnerships and Projects Officer in the Office of Deputy Vice Chancellor (Engagement) at Griffith University. Previously Amanda has held roles in industry funded research groups

and business development roles in SME enterprises. Amanda has a Graduate Certificate in Communications and qualifications in change management, communications, marketing and creative industries.

At the same time, Universities are faced with declining graduate employment statistics. As highlighted in the preceding CEO Viewpoint by Jan Owen, industry are now expecting graduates to have increased critical thinking, emotional intelligence and team working capability as well as academic qualifications; with a view to reducing the latency between the start of employment and production of real value.

Many Australian Universities are responding by considering graduate employability and entrepreneurial skills as strategic imperatives; addressed in part by the creation of innovation centres, precincts and innovation districts. These spaces enable students, academics, businesses, industry and entrepreneurs to collide, network and collaborate, exchanging ideas, skills and advice by virtue of proximity.

To date an analysis of the various engagement models that Australian universities have employed in embracing innovation and knowledge spaces is yet to be completed. This paper explores the engagement models used by some universities in developing and maintaining their innovation spaces. A number of established university innovation centres, precinct and district partners were interviewed with the view to identify the relative strengths and challenges of the variety of chosen engagement partnerships.

The findings are that there is no one size fits all approach to innovation. However, there are some common elements that were considered irreplaceable in terms of success including: independent governance structures; executive level sponsorship in founding partner organisations, and long term plans with quick wins.

## AN ANALYSIS OF EXISTING PARTNERSHIP ENGAGEMENTS FOR AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITIES AND INNOVATION SPACES

Silicon Valley represents a model of success to most governments as they strive to incentivise the generation of enterprises, jobs and high growth firms in the knowledge economy. As a region, Silicon Valley has successfully fostered numerous highly successful technology companies; based on a clustering of entrepreneurs, venture capital, universities supplying talented employees and valued research, and a grid of social and technical networks (Shavinina, 2015). Indeed, renowned management strategist Michael Porter is quoted in 2008 as saying that "America urgently needs a coherent economic strategy based in large part upon our strengths in innovation, entrepreneurship and higher education" (Porter & Rivkin, 2012).

In Australia, all levels of Government have evolved funding and policy initiatives closer to a framework which rewards increased collaboration between entrepreneurs, business and universities. Their focus is to develop an ecosystem that fosters the skills, talent and jobs of note in the knowledge economy. By 2025, our economy will need another 3.8 million skilled graduates to be able to meet the demands of the new 'knowledge economy' (Universities Australia, 2016). Facilitating the development or attracting the right talent to Australia is paramount to our economic development.

### INTRODUCTION

The development of university innovation centres, precincts and districts has enjoyed increased popularity in Australia within the 21st century. As public institutions of education and research, universities have long been the gatekeepers of innovations; their role cemented in the economic landscape as the initiators of new ideas. More recently technological innovations have developed at a speed quicker than many universities have been able to keep pace with. These developments, and the scope and impact of technological innovations as economic drivers, have caused many to question the role of universities in innovation, and how best to translate university innovations to industry, jobs and the economy.

Many universities, in Australia, as has been seen internationally, have established dedicated innovation precincts, collision spaces and physical infrastructure to encourage the meeting of researchers, industry, students and government. Throughout Australia, university based innovation precincts have enjoyed increased popularity since 2000 (Figure 1).

This follows an international trend where innovation districts are recreated with strong "research-oriented anchor institutions, high-growth firms, and tech and creative start-ups co-located in well-designed, amenity-rich residential and commercial environments" (Research Triangle Park, 2017). These districts seek to offer a mix of retail, residential and

## No. of new Australian university-based innovation spaces established

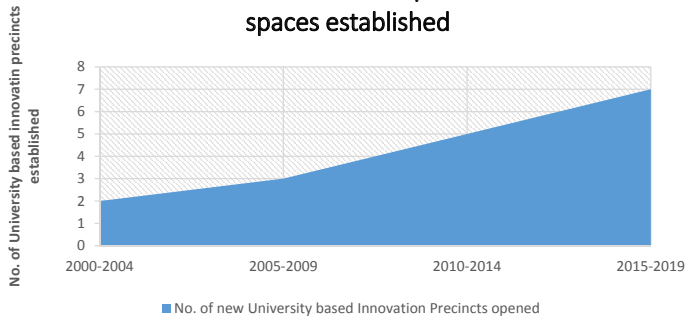


Figure 1: Number of new Australian university-based innovation precincts established  
source: ATN Network, 2017 accessed at <https://www.atn.edu.au/about-us/innovation/>

commercial opportunities connected by transit, fibre and social networks. Kutz and Wagner (2014) go further in exploring three types of emerging innovation districts: those emerging near anchor institutions such as universities; those emerging from disused industrial or commercial spaces and those created from transforming traditional science and technology parks (Research Triangle Park, 2017). There are numerous examples of all three forms in America, from Cambridge Innovation Centre and Boston Innovation District to Research Triangle Park in Raleigh-Durham. Research Triangle Park, founded in 1959 successfully transformed a seasonally agricultural economy in North Carolina to a high tech centre and home for IBM, Chemstrand – the developers of AstroTurf – and some 200 other telecommunications, biotechnology, pharmaceutical, environmental sciences and micro-electronics companies (Research Triangle Park, 2017).

On the other side of the Atlantic, at the same time, the University of Cambridge founded "The Cambridge Cluster" to link the "brains of Cambridge University" with industry (University of Cambridge, 2017). These connections were accelerated in 1970 by the development of Cambridge Science Park, resulting in a region today considered Europe's largest technology cluster, employing 58,000 people in more than 4300 knowledge intensive firms (Cambridge University, 2017). Cambridge as an anchor tenant to the district has played a pivotal role in the cluster's success either through its people, ideas, enterprise accelerator, innovation centre and technology park. The result for Cambridge is "more than 1,000 IP licensing, consultancy and equity contracts under management by Cambridge Enterprise" (Cambridge University, 2017).

More recently Innovate UK have launched a series of not-for-profit physical collision spaces between businesses and researchers and academic communities (Catapult, 2017). Catapult Centres specialise in different areas of technology including cell and gene therapy, compound semiconductor applications, energy systems, future cities, high value manufacturing, medicine discovery, offshore renewable energy, precision medicine satellite applications and transport systems; but provide the facilities to work collaborative on late-stage research and development (Catapult, 2017). Catapult centres are established as companies limited by guarantee with their own boards and management team, and funded via a mix of competitively earned commercial funding and core Innovate UK investment. Since 2015, the Catapult Centres have delivered 636 academic collaborations, supported 2850 SME's, delivered 2473 industry collaborations and worked across 24 countries around the world (Catapult, 2017).

The trend for Australian universities to invest and partner in the development of innovation centres, precincts and districts is relatively new compared to America and the UK.

This trend has been fuelled by the 2015 Australian Government's National Innovation and Science Agenda (NISA) (Australian Government, 2015). The Agenda focussed on four pillars:

1. Culture and capital – tax incentives aimed at creating a culture of entrepreneurialism, risk taking and start-ups;
2. Collaboration – changed funding to incentivise research performed in collaboration with industry;
3. Talent and Skills – support for domestic Australian students to embrace digital skills, and changed visas to attract more entrepreneurial and research talent from overseas;
4. Government as an exemplar – making data available to the public and making it easier for start-ups and innovative small businesses to do business with the government.

At a state level, the Advance Queensland program is aimed at reinvigorating science and innovation, incentivising university-industry collaboration that translates results and ideas into commercial realities. It seeks to build on natural advantages via dedicated industry roadmaps, and helping to raise profile as an attractive investment destination (Queensland Government, 2017).

State and federal governments have simultaneously created a policy environment that strongly rewards the translation of collaborative industry based university research activity to commercial enterprise. Coupled with these policy and funding changes is a new focus for the national research evaluation framework – ERA – to measure the societal benefit and impact of research outcomes (Australian Research Council, 2015). For universities this is a massive cultural change from the old mantra of "publish or perish" to "collaborate or crumble" (Kneist, 2015).

Although a number of university-based innovation centres, precincts and districts were conceived and established before the introduction of both NISA and Advance Queensland, the ability to for these centres to gain momentum and quick results has been markedly improved by the changed economic and environmental context of recent years.

Many university innovation centres, precincts and districts share similar objectives including the creation of collision spaces between industry and researchers for commercialisation of IP, incubators for new businesses as an economic driver in the knowledge economy, opportunities for staff and student learning, student internships and graduate employability. In an era that increasingly seeks graduates with industry ready skills, universities are looking to merge their role as knowledge gatekeepers together with being experience providers – supporting students to progress via a series of simulated and real world practical learning experiences.

Many universities have responded by providing entrepreneurship lectures, units and capstone courses to equip students for the emerging work environment. A

smaller number have made the investment to fund dedicated centres, precincts and districts of innovation, where industry, researchers and students are co-located with commercial amenity. Together with the aims identified above, university based innovation spaces are physical and virtual networks designed to increase connection, collaboration and the development of talent and skills, as targeted by NISA. As collision spaces for industry, researchers and academics, university-based innovation spaces enable the commercialisation of ideas from research, a key outcome of the Advance Queensland program.

Most university based innovation spaces within Australia are not developed solely by universities. Most facilities have been established as a partnership between a number of organisations including government, industry and communities, in a collaborative governance and funding structure. This paper explores the engagement models used by universities in developing and maintaining their innovation spaces. Data from number of established university innovation centres, precinct and district partners were analysed to identify the relative strengths and challenges of various types of engagement partnerships.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Participant observation and in-depth interviews were conducted with senior personnel responsible for the engagement partnerships of three large Australian university-based innovation districts. The districts represented a cross section of the marketplace including one of Australia's largest innovation districts, one of Australia's oldest innovation centres, and an innovation network that partnered with four universities and two additional national research and development organisations.

Interviews were also conducted with two innovation district partners including a large multinational telecommunications company and one of Australia's longest and largest technology park organisations regarding the commercial objectives of innovation district investment; and the challenges with working with universities in translating research into commercial realities.

The interviews asked a series of questions about the formation and objectives of the partnership, governance and reporting and relative benefits and challenges of the chosen partnership. Open ended questions sought to identify how mature the partnership was, together with whether the results of the innovation district were deemed to be 'on track' with the project plan and stated objectives.

Observations were drawn from an industry-led national roundtable discussion on university-based innovation districts. Seven universities from Melbourne, New South Wales, Canberra and Queensland were represented at the roundtable together with five government representatives and two industry representatives. The roundtable discussion focussed on the elements of successful innovation districts including planning, measuring success and vision setting. Added to this data, a multi-campus case study of Griffith University is also included in the research.

Content analysis of interview transcripts, notes, plans and

strategies sought to identify the strengths of the chosen engagement partnership, challenges to determine some common elements of success.

## PARTNERSHIP MODELS: UNIVERSITY-GOVERNMENT

Partnering with government has the benefit of aligning two key public institutions as economic drivers, working collaboratively to foster and accelerate commercialisation of new innovations. This partnership, although challenging to develop due to respective regulations and processes, is the most popular within Australia. 68% of the identified university innovation precincts partner with governments at either the local, state or federal level.

Governments have primarily played a funding and governance role in these partnerships, providing seed funding for the establishment of dedicated facilities and programs with the view that the centres will be self-sustaining after the initial start-up phase. Kutz and Wagner (2014) have identified a variety of other roles that governments could play, and some international examples, to assist with the impact that innovation districts can make as economic drivers (Kutz and Wagner, 2014). These roles include the provision of tax incentives for commercial investment, relaxation of zoning and land development assistance, provision of transit and telecommunications infrastructure to support the district and direction of education budgets to assist with human capital development (Cambridge University, 2017). In Australia the provision of this type of governmental assistance has been limited.

The Federal Government has a number of tax incentives in NISA aimed at stimulating investment in the innovation ecosystem and the Gold Coast City Council has provided investment incentives to stimulate commercial opportunities at the Gold Coast Health and Knowledge Precinct – a precinct to be developed in 2019 on the 2018 Commonwealth Games site in conjunction with the Queensland State Government and Griffith University.

Despite the popularity of this approach, based on the recent appetite of governments to invest, this type of partnership provides some unique challenges. Typically, government funding is provided on a limited term basis, and is subject to the impact of elections and in certain circumstances, the time investment in applying for government funding is burdensome, fragmented and obstructive (Davies, 2015). Cambridge Innovation Precinct (Cambridge University, 2017) and Research Triangle Park in Raleigh-Durham (Research Triangle Park, 2017) have changed the economy of districts significantly but over a 60-year timeframe. Yearly or bi-yearly funding, or funding on election cycles, is often not sufficient for the impact desired by government partners. These challenges severely impact the sustainability of innovation precincts, that often seek longer term partnerships to develop momentum, reputation and attract large scale investment for commercial and equity investors.

Governments are also known to be risk adverse. Their responsibility to be good stewards of public monies, and to show return on their investment, is critical during election cycles. This is different however to sharing financial incentives

to the broadest group of people when it comes to stimulating entrepreneurial ventures that will drive economic growth and jobs. There is evidence that merely incentivising more entrepreneurs (and students) to start new companies is not the most effective means to stimulate economic growth (Scott, 2009). Rather, policy makers should "support commercially viable R&D projects at small companies" (Catapult, 2017). Government and university partnership in funding innovation and collision spaces to facilitate the meeting of researchers with seasoned entrepreneurs is therefore a quintessential first step to this targeted support.

## UNIVERSITY-CORPORATE

A number of other universities are developing innovation spaces in partnership with corporate partners either with or without the involvement of government. Corporate partners tend to be large national or multinational players in telecommunications, finance and health industries including Optus, National Australia Bank, AMP, Johnson & Johnson, Siemens, Santos, PwC to name a few. Many large companies are in periods of transformation, facing disruption based on technology, personalisation and the speed of change (Johnson, 2016). These corporations are hungry to seed, adopt and embed new innovations to maintain their relevance and create a culture of intrapreneurship via colocation and exposure to entrepreneurs and a robust innovation ecosystem (Altringer, 2013). Partnering with universities, students, start-ups and entrepreneurs in an innovation space is a physical way for large corporates to access new talent and ideas.

Co-branding of corporate education and short course programs and sponsorship of university engagement activities are key benefits for corporate partners seeking to leverage the relationship with credible universities. These programs enable internal capability and skills training together with market positioning as thought-leaders in specific industry areas, for example the Optus Macquarie University Cyber Security Hub (Dodd, 2016). This co-investment of \$10 million will provide executive education and short course training, degree courses, research, consultancy services to corporate and government clients. Optus plan to use the centre to build internal skills whilst Macquarie University benefit from an industry partner to ensure relevancy and applicability of their programs. The partnership provides both organisations with the capacity to influence policy and with public branding and positioning.

Corporate partners however are also clear about their need to gain a return on their investment. Securing additional procurement opportunities from university and other innovation district partners is often key to their decision to invest. Facilitating procurement arrangements is often challenging for innovation districts looking to attract high calibre corporate partners. It often means taking a long term view and challenging current practices.

Corporate partners are also a rich source of student placements and graduate employment, they have valuable insights and input into course curriculum design and bring relevance to university course content via guest lectures and the setting of practical problems with access to data. Corporate partners also have large networks and often international connections to assist with scaling ventures.

The Australian economy however has relatively few large-scale research-intensive industries for universities to partner with. Small to medium enterprises make up over 55% of industry value added to the GDP in 2013-14 (ABS, 2014) and provide 70% of private sector employment (Holden, 2016). This is significantly smaller than the American economy. The capacity of corporate investment in Australia is therefore limited in scale.

Cultural challenges between universities and corporates have also made collaborations challenging due to diverging motives, cultures and lack of trust (Jonsson et al, 2015). Commercial revenue imperatives are more familiar to Australian universities in recent times. However, the value of societal benefit still features heavily in most academic's modus operandi. Resolving these differences is often the challenge to successfully realise potential from linkage and commercial research projects.

## OBSERVATIONS

"There's no one size fits all approach to innovation districts" (Interviewee 4, 2017). However, there were some common elements that were considered important in terms of successfully achieving the set objectives for university-based innovation spaces included:

- 1. Independent governance structures**  
Governance was found to be a key element in the success of all university innovation spaces interviewed, the important element being agility – being able to move quickly, adapt and iterate as required "especially in the first year of operation" (Interviewee 5, 2017). Independent and balanced boards, able to act with agility, were central to the spaces ability to respond to its complex constituents (Kutz and Wagner, 2014). Many boards provide one spot for each founding partner however a board structure balanced against the objectives for the space is perhaps more appropriate. Finding members with the ability to span industry and university cultures, structures and objectives is also critical.
- 2. Executive level sponsorship in founding partner organisations**  
Alignment of values and objectives is paramount for successful partnerships. Although most partnerships are founded on personal relationships with key stakeholders within the organisation (Kutz and Wagner, 2014; Interviewee 5, 2017), development of networked connections between partner organisations is critical to the continued success of the project.
- 3. Long term plan with quick wins**  
Attraction of long term investment is also important. Those innovation spaces backed by revenue streams – either retail or commercial rent, property or endowment assets, or equity positions in high growth firms – have financial buffers to increase their risk profiles. Education is the core business of a university – and expenditure is measured against its return in fulfilling this core mandate (Interviewee 1, 2017). How the university's involvement in an innovation space further advances its ability to educate is a critical question to answer (Interviewee 1, 2017).

## CASE STUDY:

### Griffith University

In under 50 years Griffith University has grown to be within the top 50 universities under 50 years old; ranked in the top 3% of Universities worldwide and ranked 5 stars for graduate employability (Griffith University, 2017a).

With over 50,000 students on 5 campuses within South East Queensland and online, Griffith is a peri-urban university that enjoys co-location to many major shopping, sport, commercial and health precincts. It also enjoys strong industry and community linkages, led by an ambitious engagement plan (Griffith University, 2015) to help improve the performance, enhance the reputation of research and teaching and learning activities.

Moreover, the engagement plan lays the foundation for internal cultural change, refocuses engagement activities by embracing the application of knowledge and knowledge transfer with external partners, typically framed by the search for collaborative responses to grand challenges.

Griffith University's innovation journey is reflective of international trends and embodies the diverse value and values of its many campuses and the communities in which they are set. With many innovation programs, student challenges and workshops happening throughout the academic groups, advancement of innovation spaces will see Griffith explore all three types of innovation districts: disused commercial, industrial and retail spaces, traditional science and technology parks, and dedicated spaces anchored by the university.

### Gold Coast Health and Knowledge Precinct (GCHKP)

The GCHKP is a partnership between Queensland State Government through Economic Development Queensland, Gold Coast City Council, Gold Coast University Hospital, the Gold Coast Private Hospital and Griffith University (Gold Coast City Council, 2017). It is planned for completion in 2019 on 200 hectares that is already home to Gold Coast University Hospital, world-class health research at Griffith University and the Gold Coast Private Hospital. The site will repurpose the \$550 million Commonwealth Games Village and result in a new permanent mixed-use residential community with more than 1200 dwellings.

The aims of the GCHKP include strengthening and diversifying the Gold Coast economy; creating jobs by attracting businesses from a range of industry sectors; supporting the growth of new health, IT and knowledge-based businesses; attracting investment; stimulating knowledge, information and technology sharing between Griffith University researchers and commercial enterprise and attracting talent such as internationally recognised researchers, clinicians and collaborators (Gold Coast City Council, 2017).

The precinct will be home to the Advanced Design and Manufacturing Institute, Asia Pacific Medical Training Hub and the Griffith Institute for Glycomics, a world-leader in the development of next generation drugs and vaccines to fight diseases of global impact.

The precinct enjoys a number of government benefits including tax incentives, building charge discounts, priority status for accelerated development and targeted investment and trade

opportunities via Austrade. Government partners (local, state and federal) are providing a number of financial and non-financial benefits to the precinct development and success.

The partnership between Griffith University and the Gold Coast University Hospital has been developed over a long period of time and includes many student placements, colocation of staff, sharing of knowledge and joint research. The partnership in the GCHKP will build from this trusted partnership to include the private hospital.

As an anchor research institute, Griffith University will accelerate its reputation as world-leading medical research and development hub. Griffith is known for developing the first needle free vaccine for Strep A, uncovering the history of Aboriginal Australians in a world first genomic study and for the 2017 Australian of the Year, Professor Alan Mackay-Sim, whose research on how nerve cells in the nose regenerate pioneered the way to safely apply the same regenerative process to damaged spinal cords (Griffith University, 2017b). Other researchers are winning plaudits for their work seeking new therapies in the fight against cancer and infectious and neurological diseases.

Griffith's medical research strength has taken considerable investment and time to develop. It is with this background that Griffith becomes an anchor education institution to the GCHKP to further develop its research, its ability to share knowledge with GCHKP partners and commercialise its IP and innovations to increase the impact this knowledge can make for society.

### GLO@Logan

Griffith's campus at Logan is located half way between Brisbane and the Gold Coast on the M1 corridor. The campus is smaller in size, course offerings and services a diverse student cohort, many first in family to attend university, from low socio-economic environments or from international backgrounds. The partnership between Griffith Logan Campus and the Logan City Council is strong and well aligned. The Logan City Council has been pivotal in a number of cultural change projects including the Logan Together Project – a partnership between local, state and federal governments, the Logan Hospital and Griffith Logan Campus aimed at using data driven strategies to intervene between 0-8 to change the trajectory of lives and the community in a first collective impact intervention of its kind in Australia (Logan Together, 2015).

The GLO@Logan campus will open in 2017, after a successful year of entrepreneurial events and programs aimed at garnering community and industry support for start-ups and small business acceleration in the region. The facility will be housed in a recommissioned industrial space for students, community and enterprise to co-locate and undertake program and education on enterprise, entrepreneurship and innovation.

Co-investment in a broader program of innovation hubs and activities is also being sought where Griffith Logan Campus will facilitate a number of outreach programs within the Logan and Redland City Council areas. These programs will assist the university with industry connections, reputation and student attraction – all key drivers for the university. RDA and State Government and commercial support will assist to enable programs to scale, increasing their impact in changing the economic mix of the regions.

## Griffith University / Brisbane Technology Park partnership

Brisbane Technology Park is the largest and most prestigious business park in Queensland, and home to over 170 local and national companies, employs 5,500 people with a further 45,000sqm in prime office space to be delivered in next ten years (BTP Info, 2017). It is located under 6 kilometres from Griffith University's Nathan Campus which accommodates over 14,000 students.

This emerging partnership will strengthen the education expertise of Griffith University to delivery accelerator and entrepreneurship programs for Brisbane Technology Park tenants together with further graduate programs and short courses in leadership and business management. The park will facilitate student internships and graduate employment opportunities and plans for colocation of students and staff in collision spaces, retail and urban mixed spaces and though networking and joint events. The partnership seeks to harness the assets and strength of each partner by working collaboratively to increase the commercial nexus, human talent and connection between entrepreneur and researcher that exists within the district, but had previously been unexposed.

As can be seen, Griffith University is exploring all three types of innovation districts as articulated by the Brookings Institute (Kutz and Wagner, 2014), driven predominately by the nature and demographic mix of both students and researchers at each of its campuses. It is seeking to deepen industry connections as a result of developing and sustaining its involvement in innovation districts for the primary goals of student experience (internships and graduate employment), knowledge sharing and commercialisation of research.

## CONCLUSION

Breaking down the barriers between universities and industry is critical for student attraction, retention, graduate employability and building a culture of relevance for university staff and programs. Engagement models that facilitate long term, co-invested partnerships are central to a sustainable innovation precinct enabling university researchers to collaborate with industry. This collaboration is a valuable input measure to the innovation processes that drive economic development in the knowledge economy.

As governments seek to stimulate economic development and jobs in the knowledge economy, targeting incentives on the translation and commercialisation of research by seasoned entrepreneurs is a wiser investment than wholesale incentivising start-ups (Catapult, 2017). Government levers of tax incentives, land and zoning leniencies and provision of transit and telecommunications infrastructure to support precincts are often underutilised in the development of economic regions in Australia.

Corporate investment is a valued partnership to the innovation space adding a rich source of experience and relevance. There are many benefits both for corporates and for universities in a deep multi-faceted partnership that involves the exchange of student talent, industry placements, short courses, internal capability development and consulting are exchanged for guest lecturing, industry advise on curriculum and industry workshops, collaborative research projects and co-branding of programs into the corporate and government marketplace.

Developing the depth and scale of investment into university based research and development and venture capital within Australia that is enjoyed in America would assist to facilitate the translation of research and innovation into commercial reality.

Based on the success of Silicon Valley clustering entrepreneurs, venture capital, universities supplying talented employees and valued research and a grid of social and technical networks (Shavinina, 2015), universities around the world are leading the expansion of their knowledge into innovation districts. The changing commercial and policy environments that surround universities are making it easier and timely for collaboration to occur – either in the innovation space – or more likely over a drink at a local retail option. The mix of retail, commercial and education spaces supported by transit, fibre and social networking can be either created; or overlaid over the existing infrastructure.

If it is timely for America to urgently develop a "coherent economic strategy based in large part upon our strengths in innovation, entrepreneurship and higher education" (Porter and Rivkin, 2012), then the development and maturity of Australian university-based innovation centres, precincts and districts is also timely to address the impending skills gap of graduates able to meet the demands of the new 'knowledge economy'.

## FURTHER RESEARCH

This paper sought to explore the engagement models used by universities in developing and maintaining their innovation spaces with a view to identifying popular models of engagement, their strengths and challenges and to draw some common elements of success, if possible. The paper used a Australian context, a market that is relatively immature in university-industry collaboration in innovation spaces, when compared to the United States of America and the United Kingdom.

Further enquiry into university-based innovation districts from the perspective of industry, governments and participants – students, tenants and entrepreneurs - would add value to the research. Additionally, comparing the strengths and effectiveness of university-based innovation spaces to commercially operated innovation spaces would also prove insightful.

Evaluating the impact of university-based innovation districts to the local, regional and national economy; to development of industry ready tertiary qualified graduates and to university-industry collaboration in the form of consulting, linkage and other research grants would also add value to the literature.



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Professor Greg Craven AO is a lawyer, and academic, and has been Vice-Chancellor and President of Australian Catholic University (ACU) since 2008. He is an expert in public law, and a regular contributor to public debate. Professor Craven formerly was a Reader in Law at the University of Melbourne and served as Crown Counsel

to the Victorian Government from 1992 to 1995. Before joining ACU, he was Foundation Dean and Professor of Law at the University of Notre Dame Australia, and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Strategy and Planning) at Curtin University of Technology in Western Australia. He also served as Executive Director of the John Curtin Institute of Public Policy. Professor Craven has published numerous books and articles, mainly in the field of constitutional law and constitutional history. He is a regular columnist for The Australian newspaper. Professor Craven has served on a wide range of public bodies. He chaired the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group and was Deputy Chair of the COAG Reform Council. He currently is a member of the Commonwealth Higher Education Standards Panel (HESP) and the Lead Vice-Chancellor for Universities Australia on Quality and Regulation. Within the Australian Catholic community, Professor Craven is a member of the National Catholic Education Commission and the Truth Justice and Healing Council. Under Professor Craven's leadership, ACU has grown from 18,000 students to 32,000 students, dramatically increased its research standing and opened a major campus in Rome. It is the largest Catholic university in the English-speaking world. Professor Craven is a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Law and was appointed by Pope Francis as a Knight Grand Cross of the Order of St Gregory the Great in 2015 and as a Consultor to the Holy See's Congregation for Catholic Education in 2016. In the 2017 Australia Day Honours List Professor Craven was named an Officer in the General Division of the Order of Australia.

## VC'S VIEWPOINT

### THE IMPORTANCE OF ACU'S COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

There are many starting points and emphases for university engagement, all of which are surely valid. However, the Australian Catholic University is one with a distinctive approach and ethos. A faith based university that is open to all faiths and those of no faith can lead to the best of human values of concern for the less well-off, for tolerance, for understanding and the search for truth and justice and respect for the dignity of all human beings. This is not easy in a 'liberalised and marketised' world however it is worth the struggle to make it so as part of University engagement. Under Professor Craven's leadership, ACU has doubled in size from 18,000 students to 36,000 students, dramatically increased its research standing and opened a major campus in Rome. It is recognized as the largest Catholic university in the English-speaking world and it places at its heart engagement with its communities through impact and empathy.

At ACU, community engagement is a core part of our curriculum and puts into practice our Mission of commitment to the pursuit of knowledge, the dignity of the human person and the common good. Community engagement aims to create positive change within our world by working with vulnerable people in our local neighborhoods and internationally.

In 2006 we founded the Institute for Advancing Community Engagement (IACE), based on the vision of advancing

engagement with communities as a fundamental ministry of the Catholic Church and of the mission of ACU as a Catholic University. IACE expresses a vision for Catholic social teaching that encourages students, staff, alumni and the wider community to support the dignity, education, health and wellbeing of all people, particularly the most vulnerable, and to protect our world and its resources. Through IACE, ACU has developed a number of community engagement programs, both in Australia and internationally.

*We must take the time to connect with one another, help one another and offer our support to the most vulnerable amongst us.*

Clemente Australia is a ground-breaking program that provides people experiencing multiple disadvantages, including poverty and homelessness, with the opportunity to undertake tertiary study. Founded on Earl Shorris's Clemente Program in the USA, Clemente Australia is now in its 13th year and aims to reconnect vulnerable people with mainstream society. The program offers university level education in community locations with small class sizes. It is offered in partnership with community agencies, providing participants with social support while they undertake their studies.

Often the opportunity to make a difference is right on our own door step. ACU's Strathfield, Melbourne and Banyo campuses are all located within communities where a large percentage of school students speak a language other than English at home. Through our Homework Support Program ACU students assist primary and secondary school students with homework and learning, while at the same time developing strong friendships. While the primary and high school students receive both academic and social support, our own students benefit by gaining valuable teaching experience working with children from diverse cultural backgrounds.

But we're not just reaching out to the community at home. ACU has a world view and our community engagement work is happening internationally too. Through our Barefoot Nurses program in the districts of Bacau and Ainaro in Timor-Leste, ACU's IACE and Health Sciences staff and students support the development of basic medical skills for health workers in remote villages. The program provides training for wound and injury care within communities that are a long distance from hospitals.

Since 2010 staff and students from the School of Exercise Science have been using football as a way of bringing together disengaged young people from villages in Timor-Leste through the Future in Youth (FIY) program. The community has flourished through participating in FIY. Competitions for both male and female teams under the guidance of Timorese adult coaches have provided valuable professional development and organisational skills to all.

These are just some examples of the wonderful community engagement work we are doing here at ACU. The benefits of such programs are far-reaching for participating staff, students and, of course, those we reach out to. Our community engagement is just another sign of our commitment as a University that, through their teaching, learning and research, all of our students and staff apply their skills and knowledge for the common good.

It is vital that we invest in our communities in order for them to flourish. From the local communities where we live, the communities where we work and the broader Australian community, to the international community we are all a part of. We must take the time to connect with one another, help one another and offer our support to the most vulnerable amongst us.



# THE CORE

## AN ACU EDUCATION IS MORE THAN A DEGREE. IT'S MORE THAN A RITE OF PASSAGE, OR A SET OF PRACTICAL SKILLS.

**An Australian Catholic University (ACU) education is learning to look at the world through a new perspective, with empathy and confidence. It's learning to lead, and to listen. It's challenging stereotypes, and having the courage to make an impact.**

The University's Core Curriculum lies at the heart of this transformation. It's a key part of every ACU student's education – giving them time to reflect on a life well lived, and consider ways we can change the world by applying the principles of Catholic Social Teaching.

These principles are relevant to us all.

They are about the dignity of the human person.

They are about solidarity – belonging to one human family regardless of race or religion.

They are about the common good – everyone should have access to what they need to live a fulfilling life.

They are about participation – we all have the right to take part in decisions that affect our lives.

They are about the vulnerable – caring for the underprivileged is everyone's concern.

And they are about stewardship of the earth – it's our collective responsibility to care for the world and its resources.

Seeing the world through these principles will change the way our students look at those around them, the way they practice their future profession, and the way they make personal and professional decisions throughout their lives.

The Core at ACU is made up of two units, and a community engagement unit.

There's even the chance to complete a unit overseas – in cities such as Rome, London, Beijing, Paris or New York.

The Core is unique to ACU. It gives students an edge with employers, who recognise in our graduates a sense of curiosity, a defined creativity, and an ability to engage with the world in a meaningful way.

[acu.edu.au/thecore](http://acu.edu.au/thecore)

## ENGAGEMENT: THE NEXT THOUSAND YEARS ARE CRUCIAL!

Universities are amongst the longest living institutions in our culture and society - a thousand years of learning, scholarship, research, disputation, scientific endeavour and recent mass access to higher education on a global scale have endowed us with 'riches' beyond avarice. Yet the modern university is expected to be many different and contradictory things. It is expected to be an innovator in learning and knowledge; collegial in its dealings with its staff and its partners yet competitive in an increasingly marketised and monetised world; caring in its concern for people yet entrepreneurial in its business dealings; it is expected to be both a public institution and a private organisation and it is almost always both a local and an internationalised institution. This wide array of university roles and identities does not imply that it is in any sense isolated from its community!

Community is one of the longings of our century. In spite of all the definitional problems associated with it in relation to higher education, it retains a powerful charge and seems to offer a framework of meaning for modern life. *Engagement: the next thousand years are crucial!* explores the 'Big' issues facing engaged universities such as action on poverty, the marginalisation of young people, the impact of new technologies and the need for democratic engagement. It covers a variety of emergent themes such as the 'strategic intent' of many of our best Australian universities that are going 'beyond the 3rd stream.' It rejuvenates conceptual roadmaps and pathways that lead toward democratic engagement - now more necessary to travel than ever before in our 'post-truth era.' And it provides fresh insight into leading edge practical models of university engagement with society such as place-based learning arenas, neighbourhood-emplaced spaces and newly formed collaborative innovation precincts, to name but a few.

Universities are diverse institutions and to cope with the changing future offered by the next millennium they will have to play a fully developed role in the emerging civil society; a society that on a global scale is faced with a series of problems and issues. This journal provides a platform for this dialogue.