



2nd European Conference on Service- Learning in Higher Education



TEFCE

Towards a European Framework for Community Engagement in Higher Education

PROJECT FUNDING



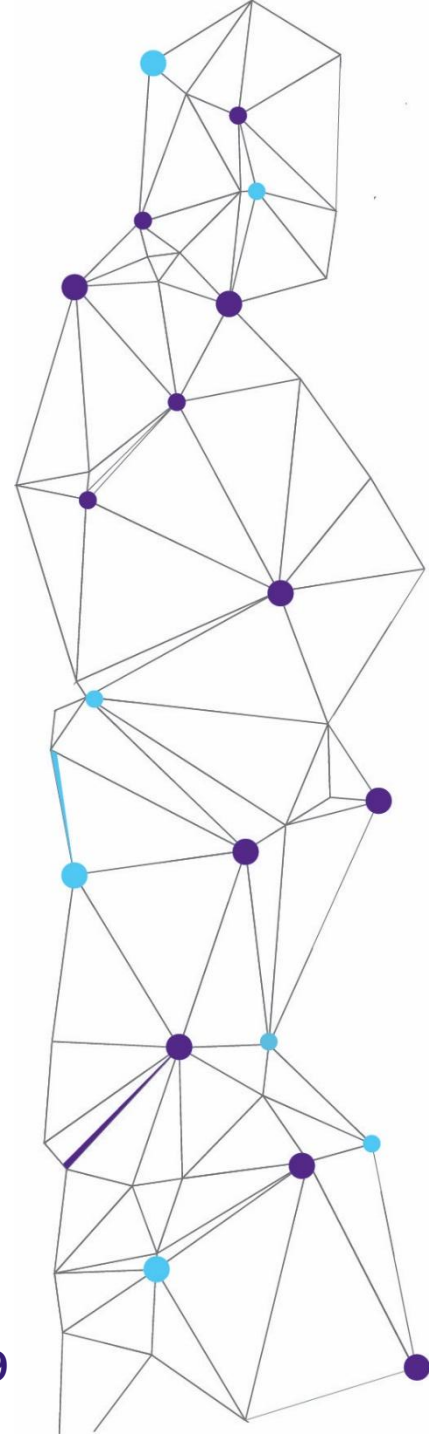
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GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA
Office for Cooperation with NGOs

Antwerp, 19-21 Sept 2019



(Re)emergence of the Community Engagement Agenda in European Higher Education - TEFCE PROJECT AND TOOLBOX

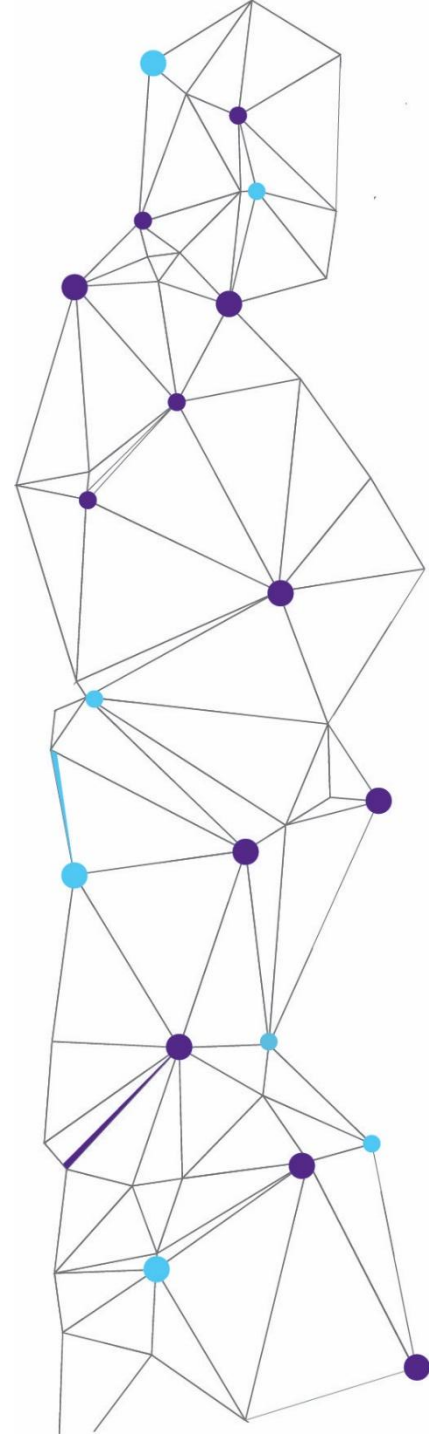
Bojana Čulum Ilić, Associate Professor - bculum@ffri.hr

University of Rijeka

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

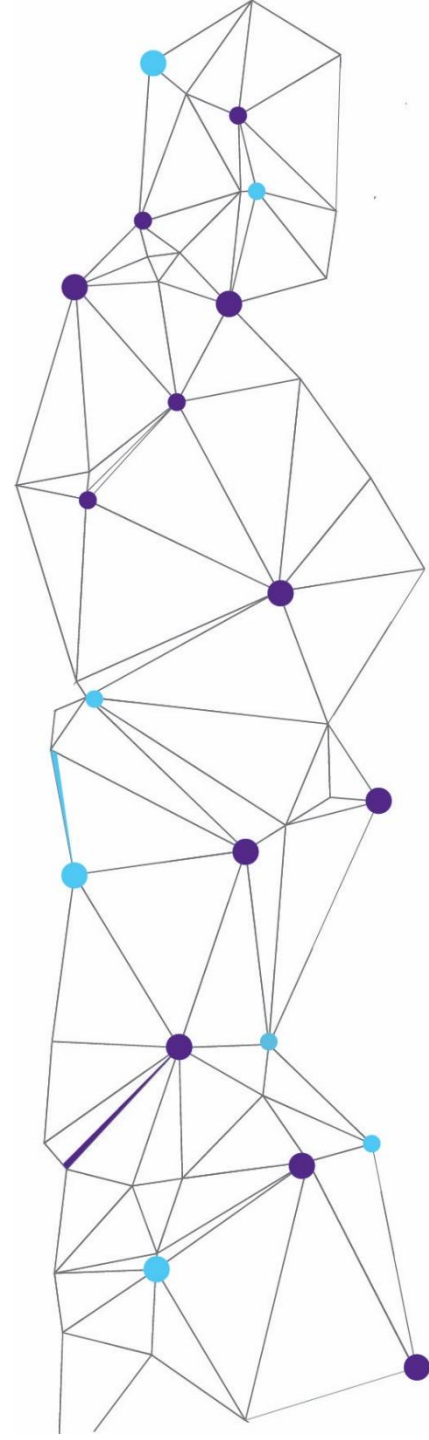
Department of Education

TEFCE expert team member



Bits & Bytes of the Background University Third Mission

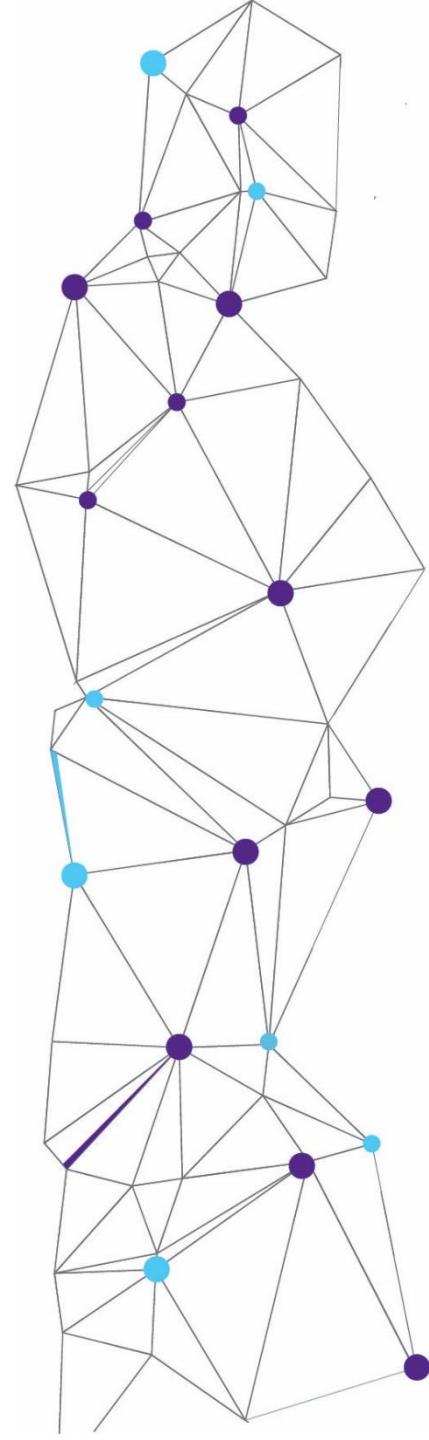
- third mission = the societal impact and relevance of universities
 - ... which has always been a mission of HE - But...there is increasing pressure on universities to 'prove' this to governments and society*
- since 1980s most policies on the third mission of HE have focused on the **economic significance and impact** of universities (innovation, entrepreneurship, business cooperation, labour market relevance, technology transfer) - contributions to *knowledge society*



Bits & Bytes of the Background

University Third Mission

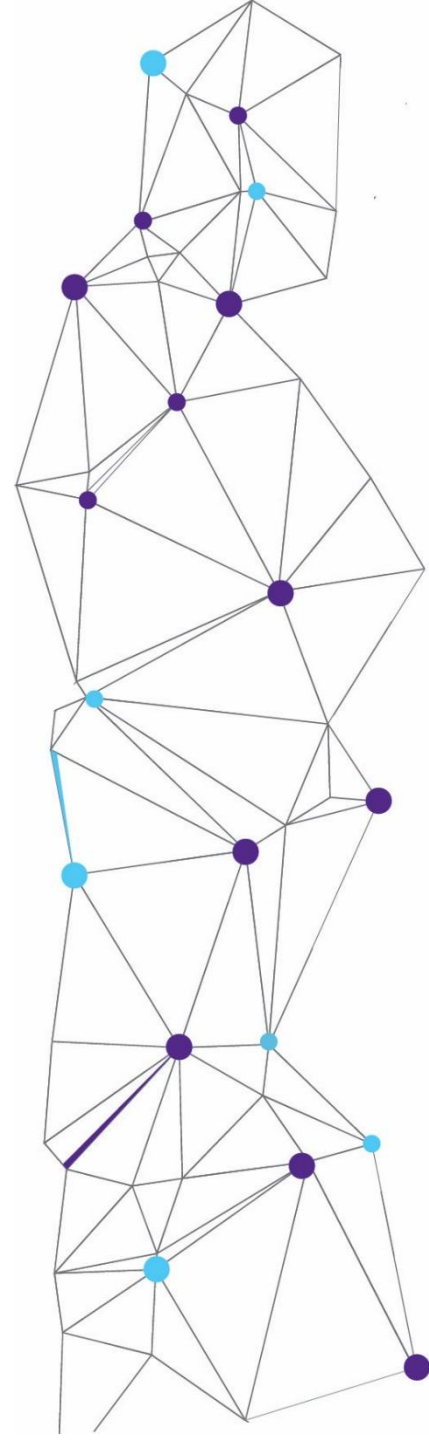
- multiple priorities and pressure - universities are expected to address research excellence and technology transfer, leaving little incentive to pursue (true / authentic?) community engagement
- **TEFCE starting point:** the need to rebalance the societal contributions of universities, by promoting *community engagement* of universities



(Re)emergence of the Community Engagement Agenda in European Higher Education?

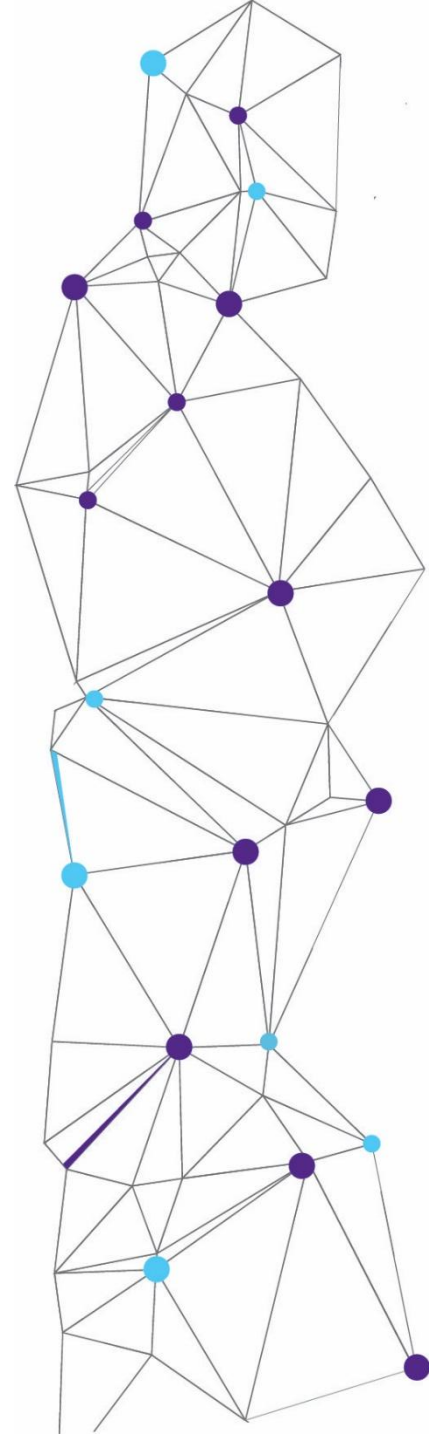
Community engagement as a policy priority in (European) HE area?

European Commission's Renewed Agenda for Higher Education (2017)



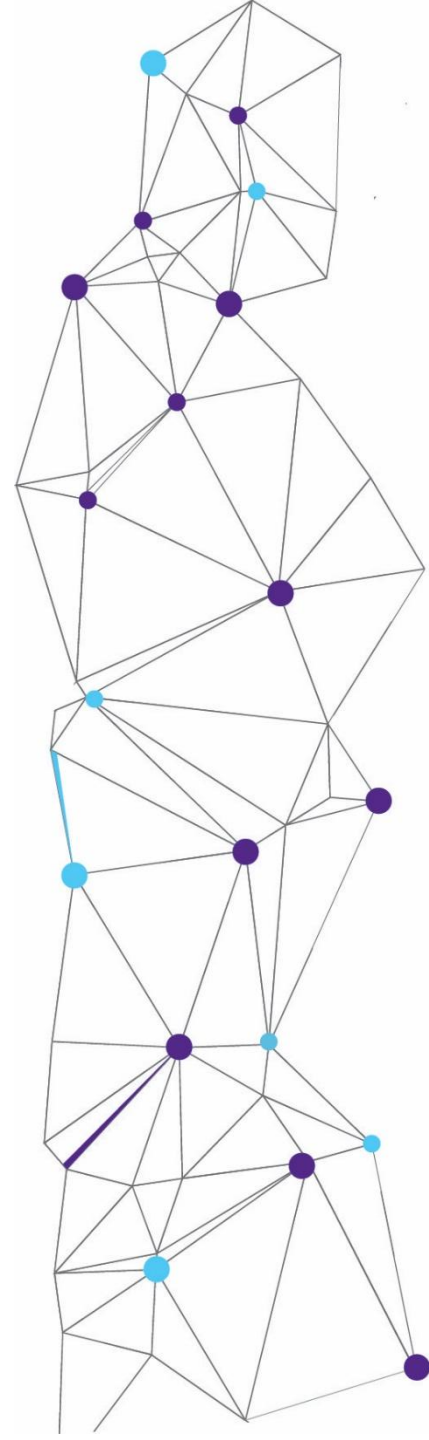
European Commission's Renewed Agenda for Higher Education (2017) - "civic university"

"Higher education must play its part in facing up to Europe's social and democratic challenges and should engage by integrating local, regional and societal issues into curricula, involving the local community in teaching and research projects, providing adult learning and communicating and building links with local communities."



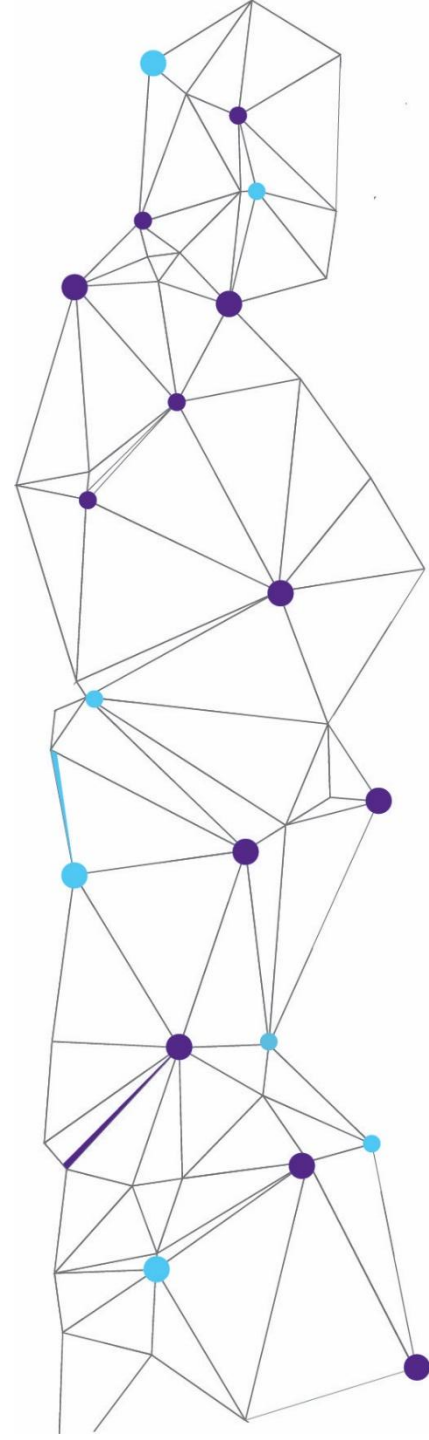
European Commission's Renewed Agenda for Higher Education (2017)

- Breaking down barriers between higher education and the rest of society can help students develop their social and civic competences
- Well-organised voluntary and community work can be a particularly effective way to help students develop their wider practical experience and skills



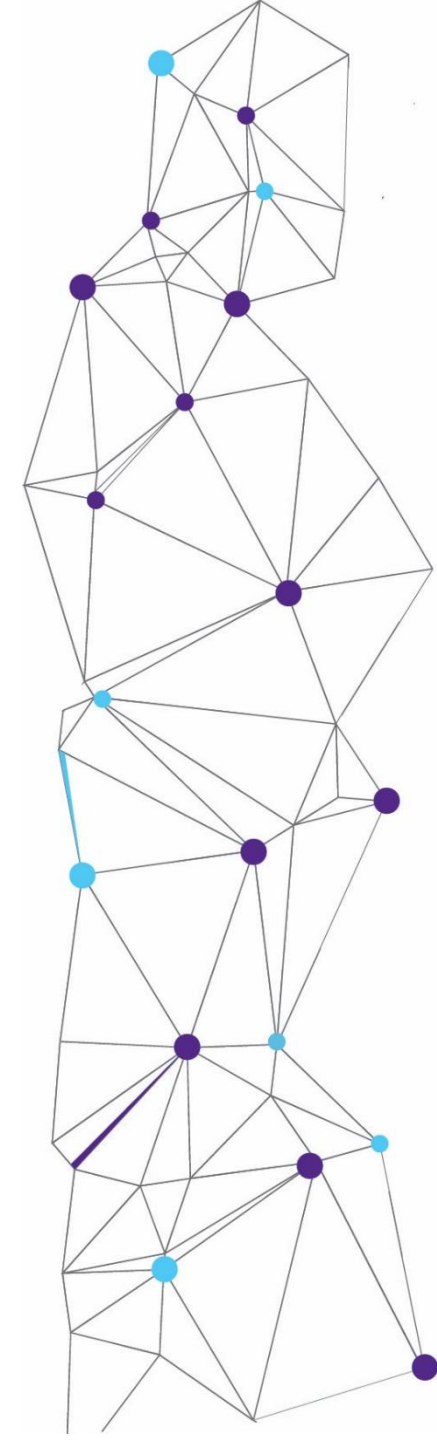
European Commission's Renewed Agenda for Higher Education (2017)

- HEIs should be engaged in the development of their cities and regions - contributing to development strategies, cooperation with businesses, the public and voluntary sectors, supporting public dialogue about societal issues
- Outreach beyond the academic community in local languages should be incentivised and rewarded, including as part of career development
- ...



Challenge(s) of CE “measurement”

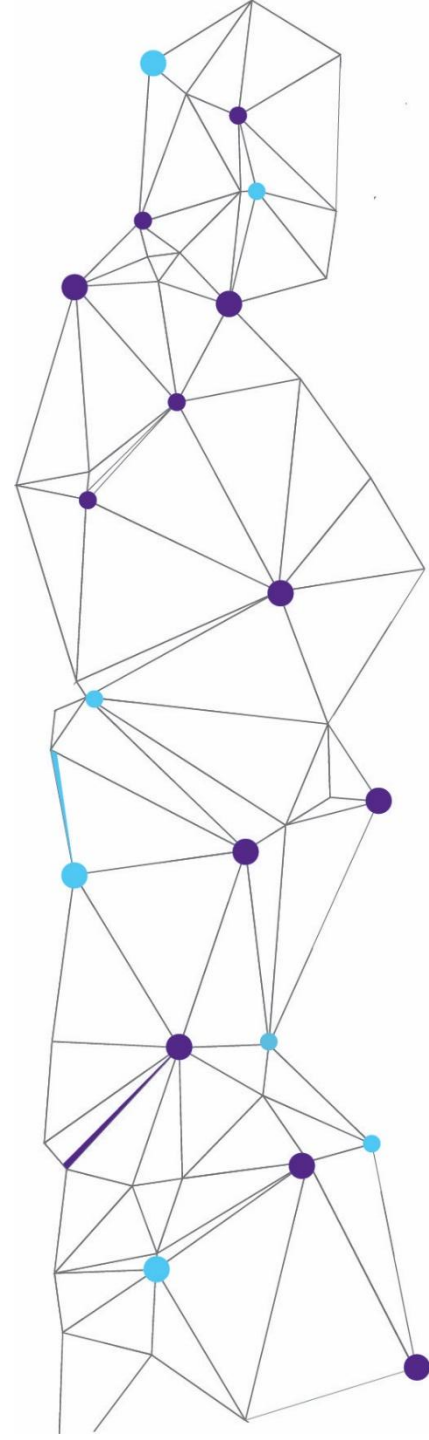
- university is not a homogenous, ideal-type institution - its performance can not be easily steered centrally and reduced to a score
- CE is difficult to manage and measure
- NO ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach to CE
- CE is always **context-specific** with range of objectives, activities, outcomes and stakeholders
- CE is resistant to being measured - most attempts to externally assess community engagement have had limited success and uptake
- ...



Challenge(s) of CE “measurement”

Disadvantages and limits of the existing (NPM) self-assessment tools:

- more ‘top-down’ than ‘bottom-up’
- do not focus on outcomes or impact
- do not provide a clear platform for including community perspectives in the process
- focused on competitive comparisons of performance through quantitative indicators
- ...



Typical Measurement & Assessment Tools In HE



Guidelines
Standards
Indicators
Targets

Accrediting
Auditing
Benchmarking
Evaluating
Ranking

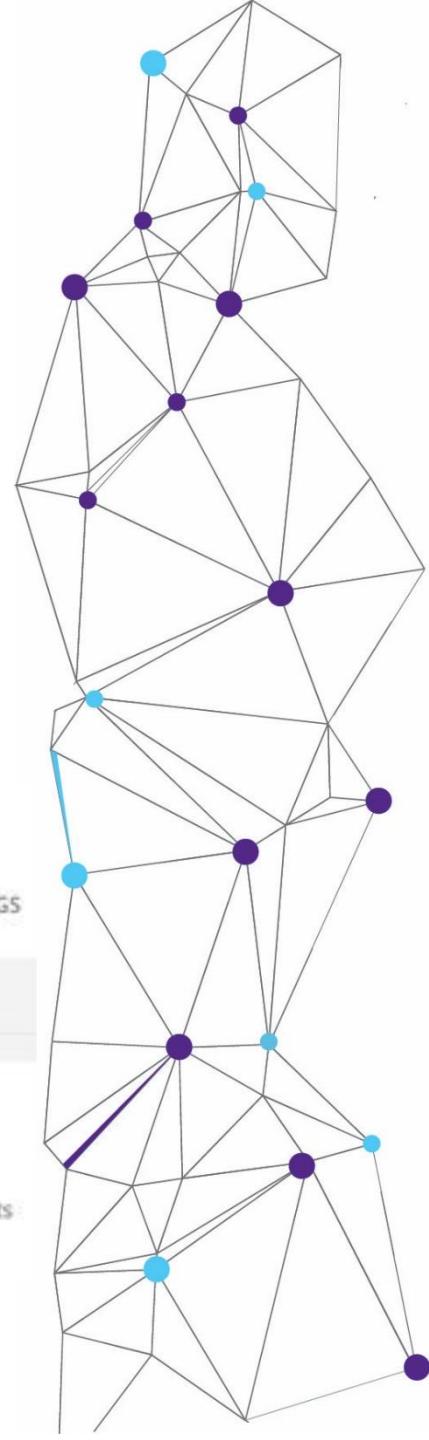


PROFESSIONAL JOBS SUMMITS RANKINGS

THE developing ranking based on Sustainable Development Goals

New league table will be first to measure global universities' success in delivering on UN targets

September 6, 2018

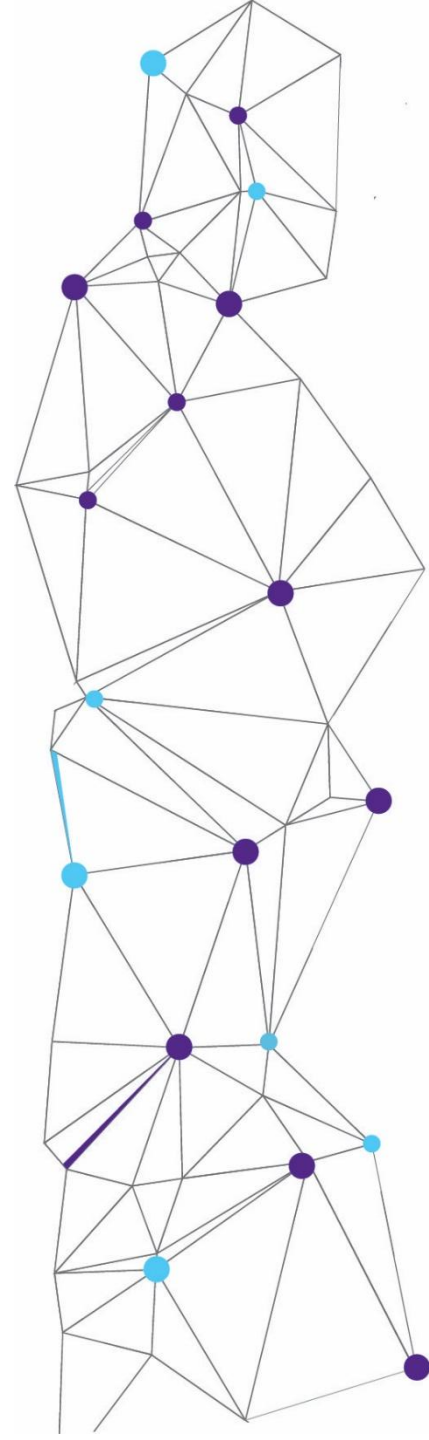


The TEFCE Approach?

Not scoring, benchmarking or ranking!

Not a self-assessment, either!

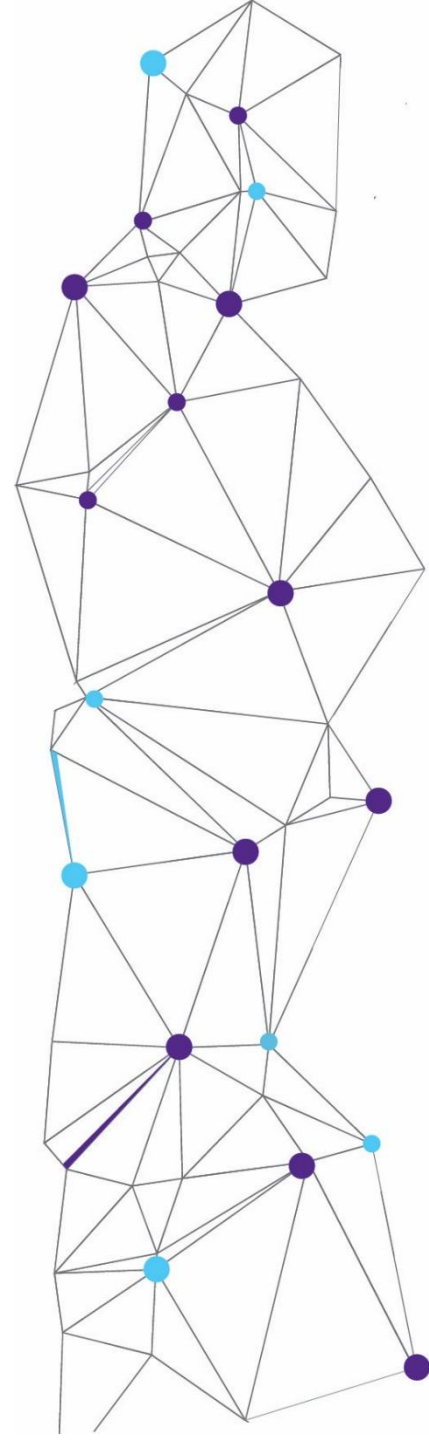
Learning journey and development!



Why TEFCE and What Do We Want?

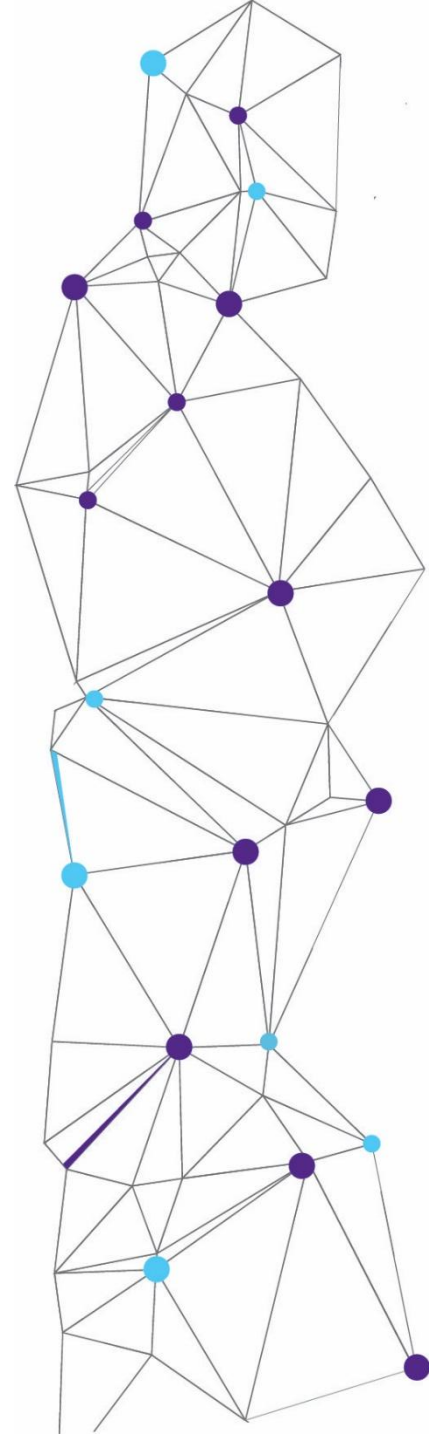
TEFCE project acknowledges the **complexity** of community engagement and the **diversity** of university-community contexts.

TEFCE aspires to foster a **learning journey** for universities towards **transformational** forms of **engagement**, rather than being a measurement and ranking exercise.



Community Engagement as a Mutually Beneficial Cooperation - TEFCE Perspective

- Universities developing relationships with their wider communities in order to address societal needs, in a way that is mutually beneficial...
 - ... even though each side may benefit in a different way
 - ... and with an emphasis on those communities with fewer resources



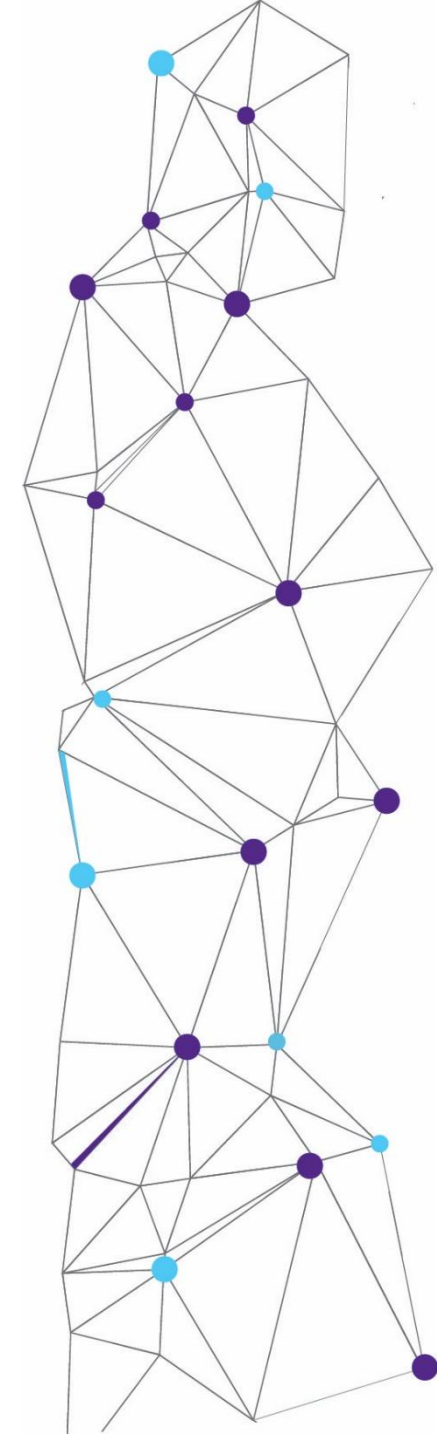
**INFORMS, SHAPES,
ENRICHES AND EMPOWERS**



**Community
engagement**



**INFORMS, SHAPES,
ENRICHES AND EMPOWERS**

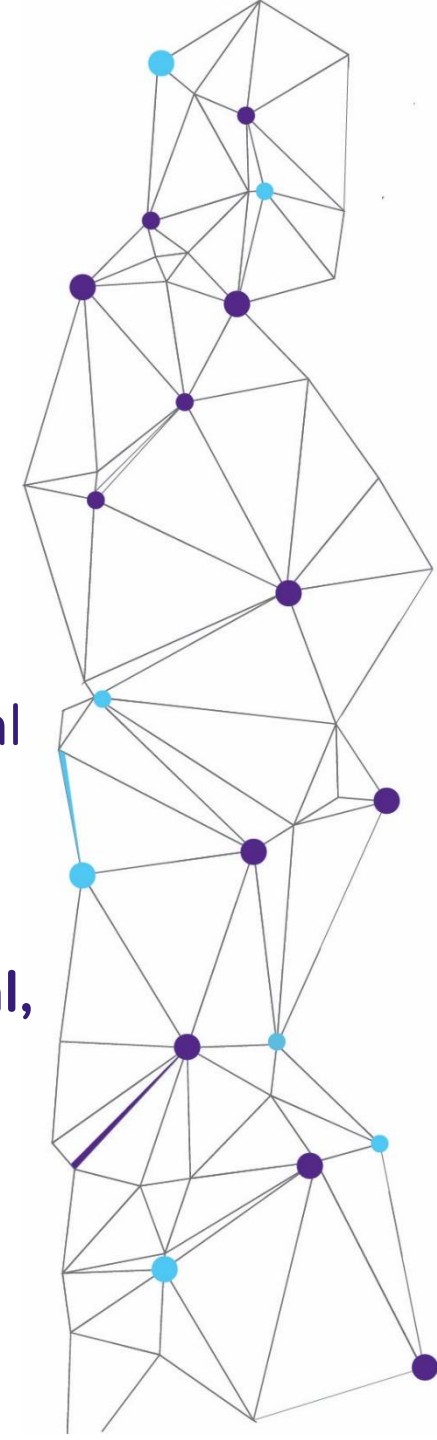


Clarifying the 'community'

External groups or organisations that do not have the resources to engage easily with universities, e.g.

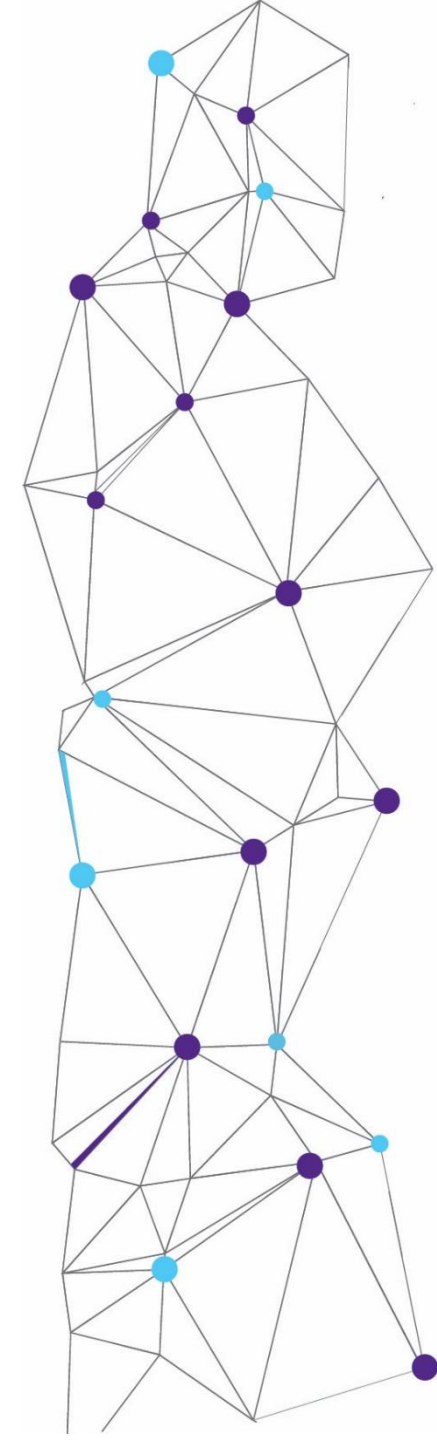
- NGOs
- social enterprises
- cultural organisations
- kindergartens, schools, museums, hospitals
- local governments
- citizens

- not too strict about this definition
- while technology transfer would not count as community engagement, engagement with businesses or central government can bring non-economic benefits to the community
- community engagement can have **local, regional, national and international dimensions**
- communities of place, identity and interests



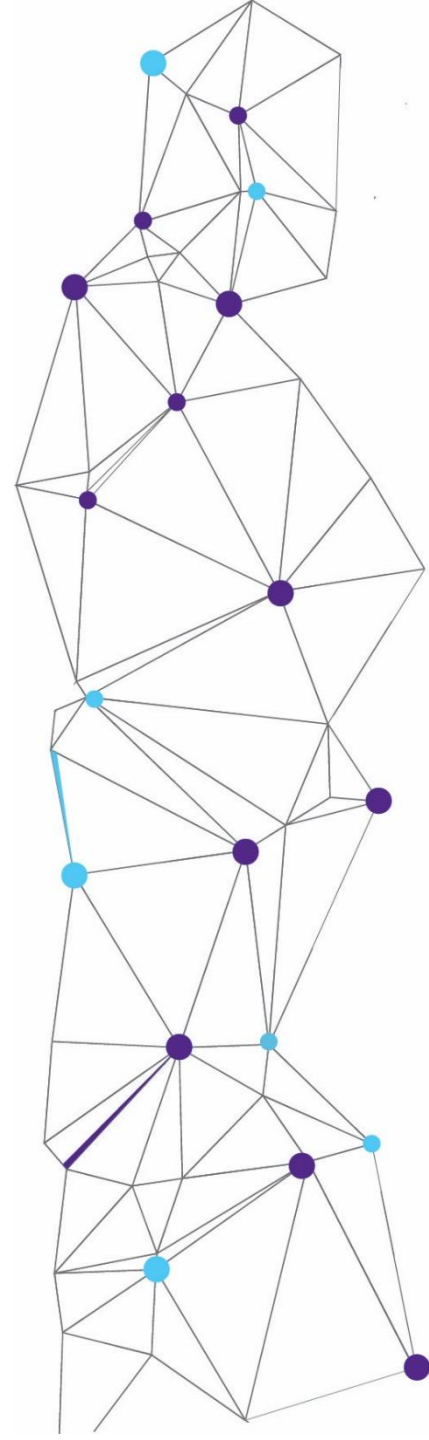
Being a community-engaged university ...

1	... does not imply that community engagement is necessarily the primary goal or mission of the university	... implies that community engagement is considered as one of the university's key goals or missions
2	... is not necessarily dependent on having a “top-down” university management strategy for community engagement	... implies having a range of “bottom-up” community engagement activities in place. Supportive leadership is important to consolidate these efforts.
3	... does not imply conforming to “one-size-fits-all” guidelines that prescribe a specific community-engagement activities	... implies carrying out community engagement activities that depend entirely on context.



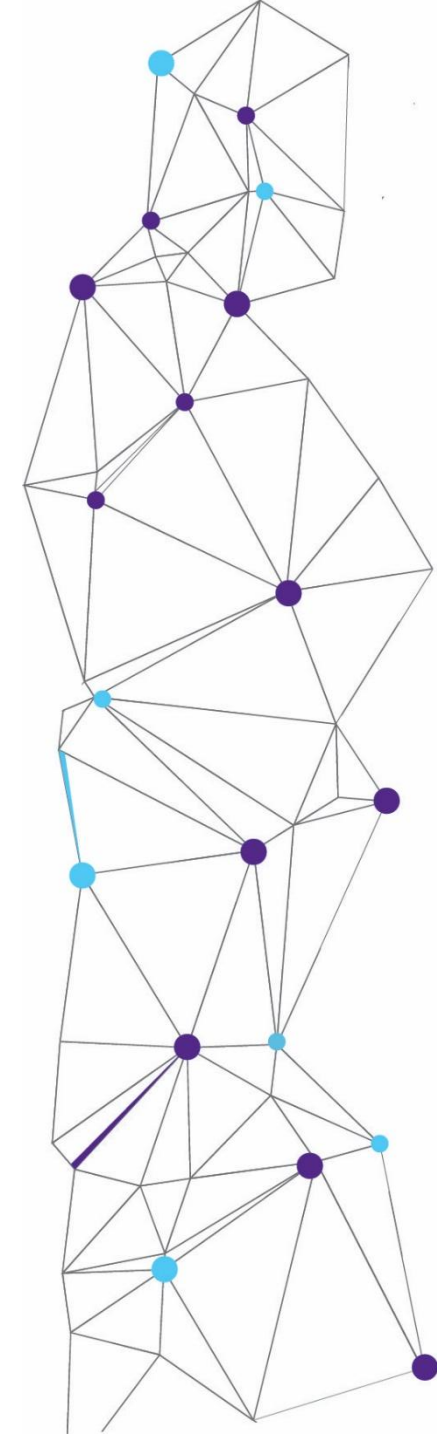
Being a community-engaged university ...

4	... does not imply that community engagement can (or should) be carried out equally in different disciplines.	... implies that community engagement activities are carried out in a variety of ways in different disciplines. Academics ultimately retain the autonomy to determine how to organise their community engagement activities.
5	... does not imply that university activities that are not community-engaged are of less value.	... implies that the community-engaged activities bring additional value to the university and its communities.
6	... cannot be measured quantitatively, and hence is not institutionally comparable.	... can be determined individually and qualitatively based on the collection of evidence and based on a structured reflection



The TEFCE Toolbox: 4 Principles

1. Authenticity of engagement	2. Empowerment of individuals
<p>The Toolbox's interpretative framework differentiates authentic community engagement (that provides the community with a meaningful role and tangible benefits) from instrumental and 'pseudo' engagement.</p>	<p>The Toolbox aims to recognise and award value for different kinds of individual efforts and results in community engagement, thus encouraging universities to develop empowering environments for individuals at the university.</p>
3. Bottom-up NOT top-down steering	4. Learning journey rather than benchmarking
<p>The Toolbox is based on mapping stories of practitioners (rather than on best practices selected by senior management) and providing both university staff and the community with a say in the process.</p>	<p>The Toolbox results in a <u>qualitative</u> discovery of good practices, a <u>critical reflection</u> on strengths and areas to improve, achieved through a <u>collaborative learning process</u>.</p>





DIMENSION I. TEACHING AND LEARNING

The university has study programmes that include content about societal needs that are specific to the university's external communities and that include a community-based learning component for students.

DIMENSION II. RESEARCH

The university has research projects about societal needs of external communities and collaborative/participatory research projects which are implemented in cooperation with community groups.

DIMENSION III. SERVICE/ KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

University staff use their knowledge to contribute to debates on matters of interest to the community, to support community organisations, to build their capacity, and have a positive impact on the community.

DIMENSION IV. STUDENTS

Students deliver their own community engagement activities through student organisations or initiatives, and the university supports them.

DIMENSION V. MANAGEMENT (communication and partnerships)

The university has partnerships with community groups, and makes its both its facilities/services and the results of its research, teaching and other activities open and accessible to the public

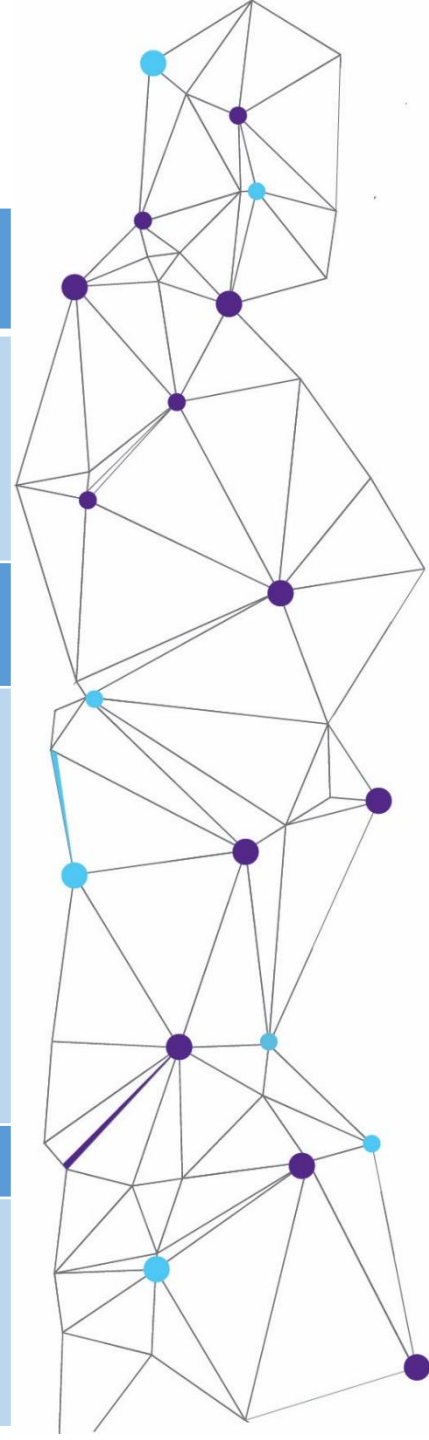
DIMENSION VI. MANAGEMENT (policies and support structures)

University policies recognise and acknowledge achievements in community engagement through staff development processes (e.g recruitment, tenure, promotion, awards).

The university commits itself to community engagement through its mission/strategy, supportive structures and funding.

DIMENSION VII. SUPPORTIVE PEERS

Academic staff supportive of their university undertaking community-engaged learning, and there are prominent academic influencers / mavens advancing community engagement.



Dimension 1 - Teaching & Learning

The university has study programmes or courses to respond to societal needs that are specific to the university's context and its external communities.

Description - goal, main activities and target groups; how both the university and community benefit from this practice?

The university facilitates the participation of external community representatives in the teaching and learning process (in a curricular or extra - curricular context).

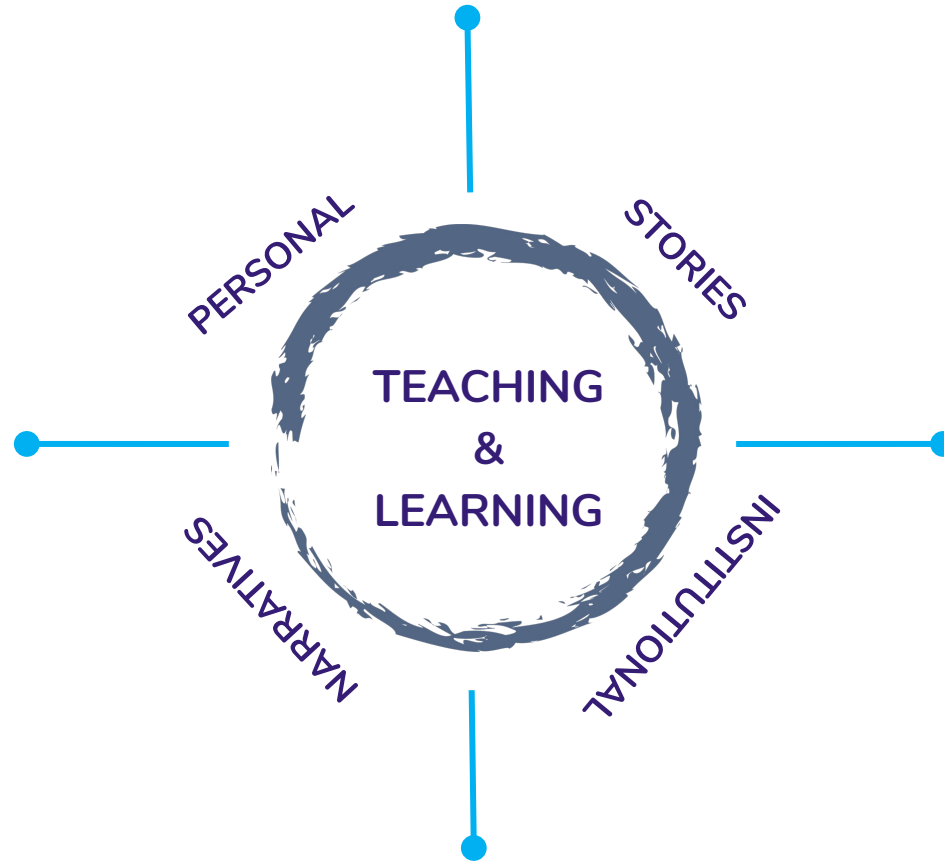
How do partners/ collaborators from the community support and value this practice?

The university has study programmes or courses that are created, reviewed or evaluated in consultation/cooperation with the university's external communities.

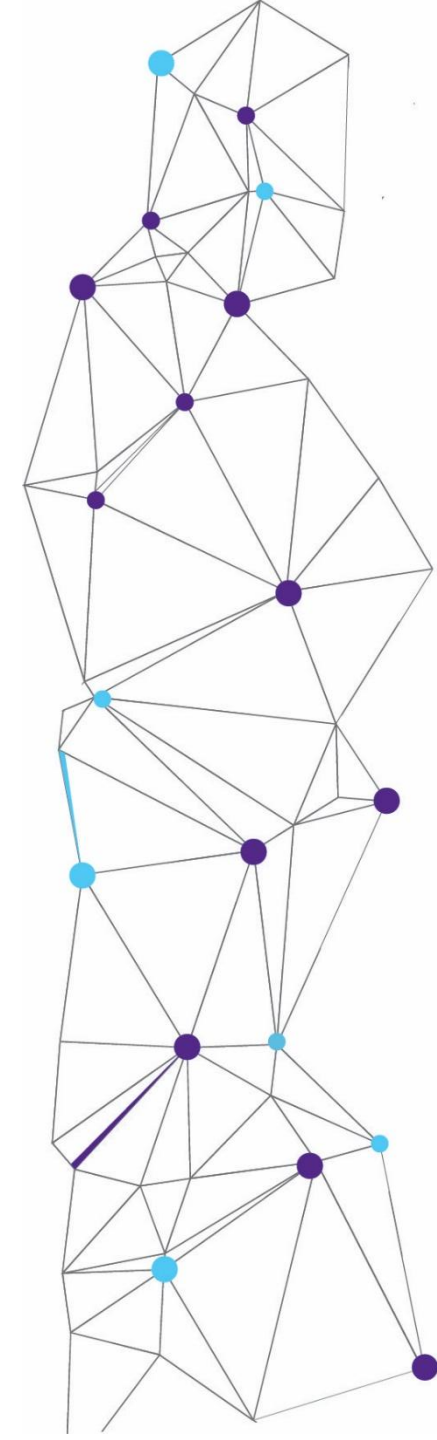
How is the community with which you engage involved in the implementation of this practice?

The university has study programmes or courses that include a community-based learning component for students.

How does the university support this community-engaged practice?



Type of engagement	Heatmap level					Heatmap criterion
	Red	Orange	Yellow	Light Green	Dark Green	
Authenticity of engagement						<i>(sub-dimensions)</i>
Societal needs addressed						<i>From business needs to needs of vulnerable groups</i>
Communities engaged with						<i>From businesses and highly-structured organisations to hard-to-reach groups</i>
Institutional spread						<i>From one department to university-wide</i>
Institutional sustainability						<i>From short-term projects to embedded/continual activities.</i>

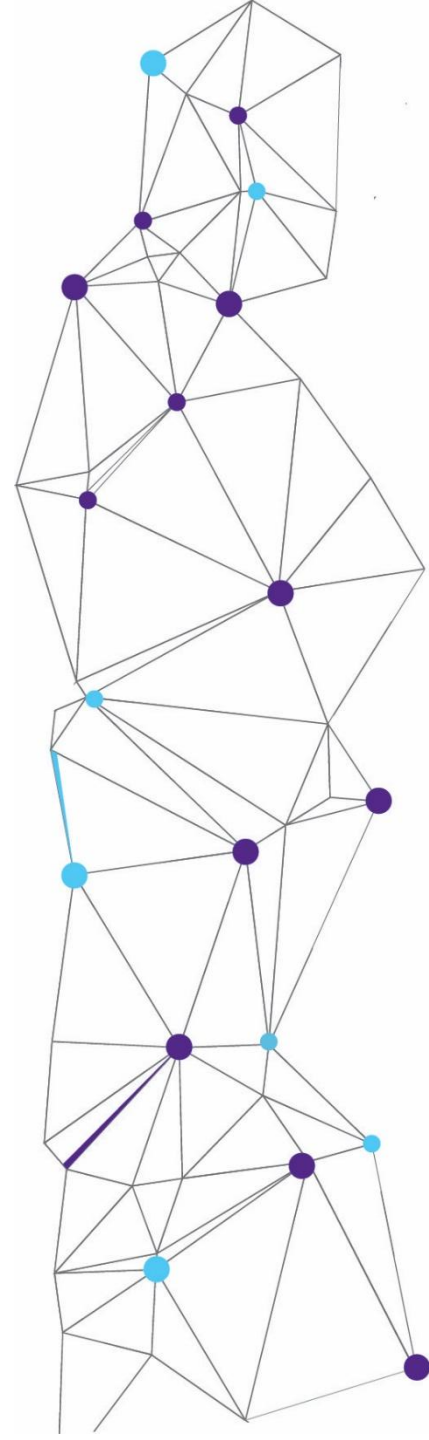


Benefits of the TEFCE Toolbox How We See Them :)

Demonstrating the value that the university brings to communities, as well as the value that community engagement brings to university.

Supporting intrinsic motivation of community-engaged staff, students and external partners by recognising and showcasing good practices.

Basis for planning improvements to the universities' mutually beneficial community engagement activities.



See our first publication and policy brief on: www.tefce.eu



MAPPING AND CRITICAL SYNTHESIS OF CURRENT STATE-OF-THE-ART ON COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Paul Bennenworth, Bojana Čulum, Thomas Farnell, Frans Kaiser,
Marco Seeber, Ninoslav Ščukanec, Hans Vossensteyn & Don Westerheijden

PROJECT FUNDING



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POLICY BRIEF #1: DECEMBER 2018

POLICY BRIEF

A European Framework for Community Engagement in Higher Education: Why and How?

KEY MESSAGES

- Community engagement is emerging as a policy priority in higher education, reflecting increasing pressure on universities to demonstrate how they deliver public benefits.
- Community engagement is about mutually beneficial cooperation between universities and their wider communities, with an emphasis on communities with fewer resources.
- Universities are under pressure to address other priorities such as research excellence and technology transfer, leaving little incentive to pursue community engagement.
- Community engagement is difficult to manage and measure, due to its range of activities and stakeholders.
- With the (re)emergence of the community engagement agenda, there is a need to develop a framework for community engagement in higher education to support universities in institutionalising their cooperation with the wider community and to inform policy-makers on the value of such engagement.
- Although accountability tools in higher education have so far focused on competitive comparisons of performance through quantitative indicators, there is gradual move away from such tools.
- The new framework that will be developed through the TEFCE project will acknowledge the complexity of community engagement and the diversity of university-community contexts. It will foster a learning journey for universities towards transformational forms of engagement, rather than being a measurement and ranking exercise.

1. INTRODUCTION

This policy brief presents the conclusions of the publication *Mapping and Critical Synthesis of Current State-of-the-Art on Community Engagement in Higher Education*, by Paul Bennenworth, Bojana Čulum, Thomas Farnell, Frans Kaiser, Marco Seeber, Ninoslav Ščukanec Schmidt, Hans Vossensteyn and Don Westerheijden. The publication is issued as a part of the TEFCE project, whose objective is to develop innovative policy tools for supporting, monitoring and assessing the community engagement of universities.

2. BACKGROUND

Community engagement has emerged as a priority in the European Commission's *Renewed Agenda for Higher Education*. While actions that link the university with broader society are not a novelty, community engagement in higher education is a new way of articulating and structuring how higher education interacts with the wider world.¹ The Commission's *Renewed Agenda* emphasises that 'higher education must play its part in facing up to Europe's social and democratic challenges' and should engage 'by integrating local, regional and societal issues into curricula, involving the local community in teaching and research projects, providing adult learning and communicating and building links with local communities.'²

Universities are under increasing pressure to demonstrate how they deliver public benefits. The increased emphasis on community engagement in higher education can also be understood as a critical response to the predominance of university engagement with business.³ Additionally, with the dominance of research excellence as a priority in higher education, many universities have failed to develop infrastructures to translate the knowledge they produce into tangible benefits for the wider community.

PROJECT FUNDING

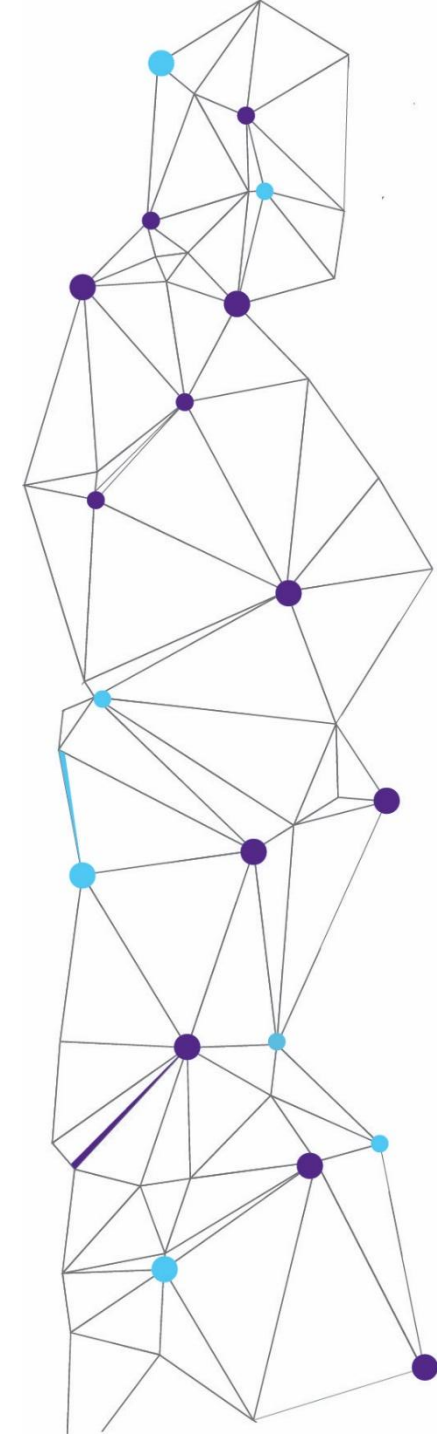


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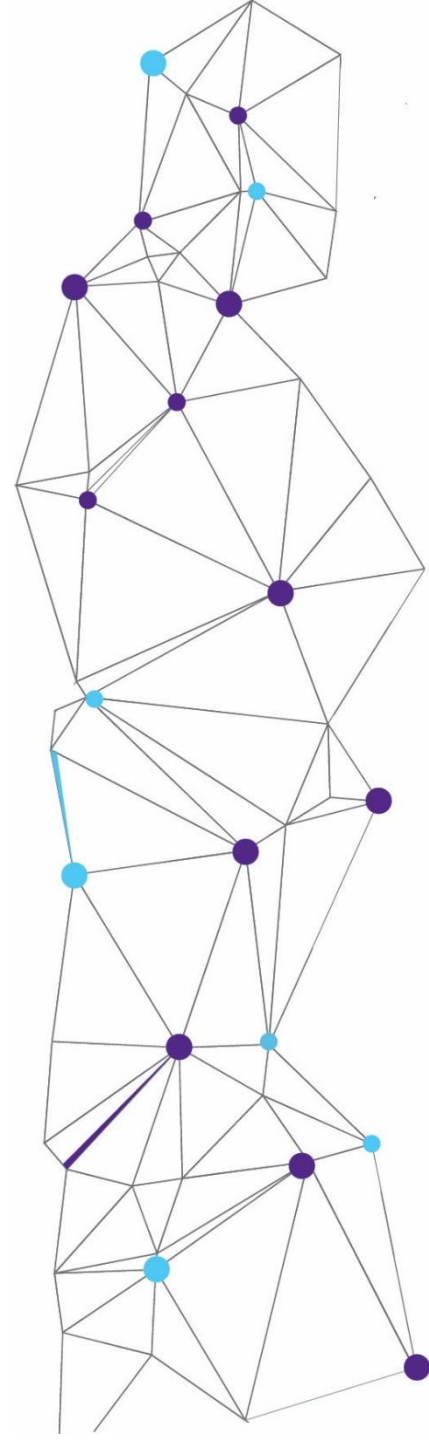


TEFCE

**Towards a European Framework for
Community Engagement in Higher Education**

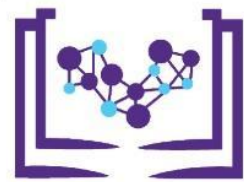
Thank You for Your Attention!

Questions...Comments...Critiques...
more than welcome :)





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Towards a European Framework for
Community Engagement in Higher Education

- ? Is there a European concept of community engagement in HE?
- ? What is actually a true / authentic community engagement (in the European context)?
 - ? WIIFM? - What's In It For "Me"? :)
- ? Interested in piloting TEFCE Toolbox at your University?

