



**Civic University**  
Network

## **The UK's Research and Development Roadmap: Consultation response from the Civic University Network**

**12 August 2020**

### **Overview**

The Government's UK Research and Development (R&D) Roadmap aims to ensure the UK is the best place in the world for scientists, researchers, and entrepreneurs to live and work. It aims to help power up our economic recovery and level up the UK.

They describe the roadmap *'as the start of a big conversation on what actions need to be taken and how. Over the coming months we will develop the proposals in our roadmap in a comprehensive R&D plan. This plan will only be effective if it is developed with people and organisations across the UK. We therefore welcome responses to the high-level questions outlined in this survey'*.

The consultation includes 8 questions:

1. How can we best increase knowledge and understanding through research, including by achieving bigger breakthroughs?
2. How can we maximise the economic, environmental, and societal impact of research through effective application of new knowledge?
3. How can we encourage innovation and ensure it is used to greatest effect, not just in our cutting-edge industries, but right across the economy and throughout our public services?
4. How can we attract, retain and develop talented and diverse people to R&D roles? How can we make R&D for everyone?
5. How should we ensure that R&D plays its fullest role in levelling up all over the UK?
6. How should we strengthen our research infrastructure and institutions in support of our vision?
7. How should we most effectively and safely collaborate with partners and networks around the globe?
8. How can we harness excitement about this vision, listen to a wider range of voices to ensure R&D is delivering for society, and inspire a whole new generation of scientists, researchers, technicians, engineers, and innovators?

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**Deadline:** 12 August 2020, <https://beisgovuk.citizenspace.com/innovation/r-and-d-survey/>

## 1. Raising our research ambitions

*Researchers are driven by curiosity – by a desire to ask fundamental questions about how the world works and why – and by a drive to solve problems at the intersection of knowledge and societal need. By supporting research, we advance the frontiers of knowledge, increasing our understanding of the world and of each other. We form global collaborations and alliances. We invent the highly disruptive new technologies which can transform the world around us, improving living standards and health outcomes. And we use these insights to tackle the greatest challenges facing the world – those that cross boundaries and impact on our whole society.*

*The unprecedented increase in public investment announced at the Budget signals a step change in our overall ambitions for UK research, and will enable us to push harder at the frontiers of knowledge, unlocking brilliant new technological breakthroughs and enabling applied research to create transformative benefits for government, businesses and communities right across the UK.*

### **1. HOW CAN WE BEST INCREASE KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING THROUGH RESEARCH, INCLUDING BY ACHIEVING BIGGER BREAKTHROUGHS?**

Please comment here (500 words max)

The [Civic University Network](#) supports universities to drive positive social change in their local communities. Over 100 universities have joined the network, which is hosted by Sheffield Hallam University, in partnership with the National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement and the Institute for Community Studies. In this response, we draw on the experience and ideas of our members to offer a range of policy interventions and levers that could help universities to realise their potential as anchor institutions in their localities.

We welcome the Roadmap's focus on place, and the ambition to see place-based considerations and community-level outcomes valued, incentivised, and championed through structural mechanisms and funding.

The closer universities, researchers and innovators are connected to our local communities, the stronger both the research community and our local communities become. The commitment to 'levelling up', the global imperative to address systemic economic, social, ecological and climate challenges, and the ambition to engage local leaders and communities in decision making requires a fresh approach. This includes new infrastructure, renewed capacity, and an encouraging culture for civic engagement both within and beyond the research community and its hallmark institutions. There is a need to look at what's working in engagement with multi-sector partners and local communities and invest in tried and tested approaches such as [the work of the Institute for Community Studies in priority-setting in partnership](#), and to scale this work up.

For research and innovation to fulfil its potential in addressing these challenges requires changing how we commission, incentivise and fund research. The 2019 UPP [Civic University Commission](#) provided a rallying call for this, spelling out a robust rationale for place-based working, and a set of practical commitments to enact this, including developing local strategic plans. An excellent example is the recently published [Civic Agreement in Nottingham](#), developed by the two universities in partnership with the city and laying out a long-term plan to align activities with local

priorities. The [Keele 'deals'](#) reflect a similar commitment to strategic place-based planning focused on economic growth, culture and health.

Universities' response to the pandemic has highlighted our ability to mobilise to support our communities. UUK's #WeAreTogether campaign celebrates our contribution. Examples include the University of Newcastle's pivotal role in developing a cultural recovery and resilience plan for the North East; and the West Midlands Regional Economic Development Institute's work to analyse economic exposure to coronavirus, bringing together intelligence and working closely with civic partners.

Throughout this response, we represent activity from across the diverse range of universities within the Network, highlighting how a civic and place lens offers enormous opportunities and suggesting how this might be maximised including through:

- A systems approach (see Q3).
- Better alignment of funding (see Q6).
- A partnership approach from project design to completion of the final outputs and engagement (see Q2).
- Capacity for priority-setting in partnership with local communities.
- A differentiated approach based on location and context (see Q5).
- An evidence-informed approach including a clear articulation of local need with capability (see Q3&5).

## 2. The application of new knowledge

*Research is critically important in helping to address significant issues, such as healthy ageing, achieving net zero carbon emissions, and addressing climate change. Applied research plays a vital role in ensuring that resilience, efficiency and effectiveness of public services is improved, that healthcare outcomes are advanced, and that evidence is deployed to solve real world problems and address threats to our security.*

*This requires having a healthy and vibrant ecosystem of institutions in which researchers are free to follow their curiosity, to test radical new ideas, to tackle complex societal problems, and to form new connections, collaborations and networks. It requires a broad span of approaches, from people developing new theories and insights into natural phenomena and the application of research in technological and industrial settings, through to systems research to improve patient care or tackle the barriers to inclusivity in society.*

### **2. HOW CAN WE MAXIMISE THE ECONOMIC, ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIETAL IMPACT OF RESEARCH THROUGH EFFECTIVE APPLICATION OF NEW KNOWLEDGE?**

Please comment here (500 words max)

The Roadmap's call for a transformation in R&D is vital. Potential solutions already exist amongst our diverse membership, spanning specialist and rural institutions, universities who have

traditionally received little investment in R&D, and research intensives increasingly focused on their civic and public engagement.

All our members are committed to maximising the public benefit of knowledge – the challenge is that funding and policy has often made that difficult to achieve. The Roadmap provides the opportunity to address these barriers and scale up activity. Four things will help.

One is the commitment to **building the R&D capability of ALL HEIs** and addressing the concentration of resources in a small number of institutions and places, helping to level-up and build a stronger, more comprehensive and resilient HE system.

Despite receiving little funding for R&D, many of our members have developed effective projects which mobilise their expertise to meet local needs. Examples include Wrexham Glyndwr University and its Public Services Lab, Goldsmiths' Enterprise Hub which will support cultural and digital industries, and the consortium, led by Sheffield Hallam and including the University of Sheffield and the SCR Growth Hub, which enables SMEs to access a huge range of academic expertise, improving productivity and economic growth.

There is huge untapped potential which the Roadmap can help unlock by scaling up this kind of existing practice.

A second is the need to **invest more strategically in the whole innovation lifecycle**. Currently, Development and Application lose out to Research. Maximising the impact of research requires rebalancing investment, with more spent at the Development end (so research is focused on a real need and has strong user engagement) and more on Application (ensuring follow through to fully realise potential). Both ends of the process are people-intensive, requiring investment in relationship building and in engagement expertise. To ensure more user engagement in shaping research, we need to more equitably distribute funding to recompense people for their contributions or leverage external funding. AHRC's partnership with the Heritage Lottery Fund to develop hubs linked to commemoration of WW1 is an excellent example of the latter.

Universities already have the starting infrastructure and skills to deliver this 'whole lifecycle' approach. The proposed uplift in the R&D budget will allow this to be scaled up.

A third is **encouraging more collaboration**. Many of the current incentives pit universities against each other and encourage them to develop projects in isolation. This makes it harder to achieve joined-up, strategic planning that puts societal benefit first. Despite this, there are many examples of our members working in partnership to realise place-based outcomes. One example is the Yorkshire & Humber Academic Health Science Network, NHS Confederation and Yorkshire Universities [partnership](#) to tackle increasing socio-economic inequalities and boost health outcomes. Framing funding calls around local social challenges and building in incentives for collaboration not competition is a practical way to realise place-based outcomes.

Finally, HE policy has tended to **put R&D and skills funding in different boxes**. We address this challenge in Q5.

### 3. Driving up innovation

*Innovation is the process by which ideas are turned into economic growth – where discoveries are translated into new products, services and jobs, creating positive change in businesses, public services, government and wider society. The UK is ranked 5th in the Global Innovation Index 2019 and in the top 10 best countries worldwide to start, locate and scale a business. We already attract significant venture capital – at a level that exceeds that of Germany, France and Sweden combined. We are home to 77 unicorns (start-ups valued over US \$1bn), more than a third of the total across Europe and Israel. And yet, we underperform in innovation compared to research.*

*We need to do more to make the most of our world-class research base and to increase the productivity of UK businesses all over the UK. We need to ensure our excellence in discovery research, design, engineering, data science, and creative arts translates into commercial applications – increasing the productivity of our existing industries and creating new growth opportunities for the UK. The UK has lower levels of R&D activity by businesses compared to our competitor nations, and that investment is focussed on large investors in a few sectors.*

### 3. HOW CAN WE ENCOURAGE INNOVATION AND ENSURE IT IS USED TO GREATEST EFFECT, NOT JUST IN OUR CUTTING-EDGE INDUSTRIES, BUT RIGHT ACROSS THE ECONOMY AND THROUGHOUT OUR PUBLIC SERVICES?

Please comment here (500 words max)

[The Civic University Commission](#) sought to unpick this challenge and it animates the work of the network. We would highlight three fundamental considerations:

Firstly, we need to **incentivise long-term, strategic planning involving multiple partners**. This needs to look at places in-the-round and as complex systems, and to develop place-sensitive solutions.

**Civic Agreements** provide a possible platform for such an approach. They foreground the need for robust, systematic social and economic intelligence to inform planning, similar to the approach taken with Science and Innovation Audits, building an evidence base and a shared narrative to mobilise collaboration.

This detailed planning then needs to translate into action. There are many examples of how programmes have emerged following a process of evidence gathering, citizen involvement, and co-design. Working in this way provides an opportunity to align R&D funding with other investment. UCLAN's £35m [Engineering Innovation Centre](#) reflects how universities can work with regional stakeholders to access devolved funding and respond to the challenges in the Roadmap. Kingston University worked with the LA, the BID and GLA to [develop Re-imagining Kingston Town Centre's Spaces and Places](#), a public realm strategy to enable community groups to take projects forward.

Secondly, we must take an **inclusive view of how economic, health, cultural and environmental outcomes interact and are interdependent**. Pursuing economic recovery in isolation mitigates against our goal of building thriving places which balance the different outcomes. The Roadmap identifies many problems that arise from complex social/human factors. Tackling these requires cross-disciplinary working in a responsive and engaged fashion and taking account of how

challenges link to different geographies. Civic agreements are a means of driving demand-led R&D where commissioning and funding better connects with the local communities and institutions.

**Foregrounding place-based outcomes and community involvement** in funding can rapidly accelerate this. Network members have participated in UKRI's Enhancing Place-Based Public Engagement programme, which funded projects and partnerships driven by a community's need focused in the most deprived areas of the UK. This has pump primed innovative approaches and allowed for existing high-quality activity to be scaled up.

Finally, we need to **reset our approach from supplying knowledge, to being increasingly demand-led**, as the University of Winchester has through its Flourishing Communities research. Investing in more purposeful and robust evaluation is a vital part of this. Requiring evaluation and a stronger user voice in funding applications and providing the opportunity to cost-in resources would incentivise this. ICS's co-created [Research Agenda for Communities](#) is an example of a demand-led research agenda.

Research funders can accelerate this by valuing the involvement of civic leaders and citizens. UKRI and government could invest in systematic intelligence gathering and deliberation in setting research priorities, potentially in partnership with universities.

One suggestion is establishing regional Civic Engagement Advisory Panels to keep Research Councils informed of civic and place-based needs and opportunities, informed by regular national surveys to gauge the needs and expectations of civic leaders and citizens.

#### 4. Inspiring and enabling talented people and teams

*To achieve our ambitions for UK science, research, and innovation, we must be world-leading in the way that we inspire and enable talented people. This means being the best place in the world for attracting, training, and retaining diverse, talented people and teams across the whole spectrum – from excellent scientists, researchers, engineers and technicians, through to entrepreneurs, business leaders and investors.*

#### 4. HOW CAN WE ATTRACT, RETAIN AND DEVELOP TALENTED AND DIVERSE PEOPLE TO R&D ROLES? HOW CAN WE MAKE R&D FOR EVERYONE?

Please comment here (500 words max)

The Roadmap provides a welcome opportunity to develop a more holistic approach to R&D and Skills – which have typically been funded and incentivised through separate schemes and government departments. Starting from a 'place' perspective, it is obvious that the R&D performance of a city and region is intimately connected to the pipeline of talent and to the civic capability of that place. Suggestions of how to scale up this work from our network include:

##### **Pipelines into research ecosystem**

- Funding for newer HEIs to set up **place-based Doctoral Training Centres** linked to local and regional needs.

- More focus on **access to, and participation within postgraduate study** of historically underrepresented and disadvantaged students.

#### **Opening up pathways through community engagement**

- Universities have an important role to play in the **outreach, education and engagement activities** that spread awareness of the careers and opportunities available within R&D.

#### **Career pathways for staff in knowledge exchange**

- R&D relies heavily on skilled professionals to maximise its chances of success – but their contribution is often under-valued. Research centres now employ a wide range of skilled professionals in these roles, from experts in technology transfer, Patient Involvement leads to Public Engagement Professionals. However, many of these staff are on short term contracts, with limited long-term prospects or progression into leadership roles. They also often operate in ‘silos’ within their institutions. This requires urgent attention, to better balance sector capability.

#### **A place-based approach to R&D education**

- A R&D People Investment Strategy that captures education, from primary through to tertiary, workforce/talent development through on-going CPD and essential reskilling and retraining (during periods of change and/or economic downturns), with investment in a comprehensive programme of education to embed concepts and understanding of R&D innovation in future workforce and connect educational investment from primary to level 8 and beyond.
- Reduction of cost of CPD to individuals and SMEs through a training deal for cities/towns/regions, incentivising organisations to invest in CPD and people development.
- Investment in R&D People Development funding for regional distribution through LEPs (competitively) for training providers to upskill employees across the private (including SMEs) and public sector (including hospitals and universities). Academic researchers and small business owners alike to be trained in all aspects of R&D and innovation.
- Equality and inclusion should be a key part of the criteria for funding distribution with training providers to be local/regionally based.

#### **Building talent through levelling up**

There is likely to be a positive relationship between levelling up and a more diverse ecosystem for R&D talent. Addressing existing spatial inequalities and encouraging a wider geographical spread, with less concentration of resource, will open up opportunities for people who are less able to move or commute long distances. Given that those from the most disadvantaged backgrounds are known to be the least geographically mobile, there is a significant opportunity to nurture a more diverse talent base working across a more spatially dispersed sector. This outcome should be explicitly encouraged and incentivised.

## 5. Levelling up R&D across the UK

*The UK's research and innovation system has remarkable strengths right across the UK. From precision medicine in Glasgow to marine innovation in the Western Gateway, from compound semiconductors in South Wales, to future food processing in the Midlands and eco-Innovation in the North West Coastal Arc, the UK has centres of excellence in research and innovation across the country. At a local level R&D investment can transform areas by acting as a driving force for social innovation, local growth and improved productivity.*

*To unlock these benefits in more areas of the UK, we should do more to build on a wider range of R&D strengths. We should also do more to enable places all over the UK to thrive and to fulfil their potential in R&D.*

### 5. HOW SHOULD WE ENSURE THAT R&D PLAYS ITS FULLEST ROLE IN LEVELLING UP ALL OVER THE UK?

Please comment here (500 words max)

#### **Strength in diversity**

The Civic University Network represents a diverse set of institutions. To achieve the necessary scale of change required in levelling up, policy must prioritise engagement with a broad range of institutions. We highlight the contribution of all universities, especially those who are smaller, more specialist and less research-intensive and whose voices have historically had less prominence within policy debates. These universities have an important role in reaching places that other universities and mechanisms cannot, working collaboratively with civil society and local communities who have a wealth of experience and knowledge to contribute to the R&D system.

#### **An evidence-informed approach**

Levelling up policy must be evidence-based and formed from a granular understanding of local economy and skills challenges which will differ widely across the country. At the heart of the civic university agenda is the recognition that strategy must be deeply invested in, responsive to and reflective of the specific needs of the local place. This ranges from understanding the demographics and perceptions of our communities and businesses and the extent to which there is a history of, or infrastructure for, engagement on which to build.

Civic university agreements are tools through which universities can build this evidence base and offer a rich approach to community engagement which we endorse, but there are also other methods. An evidence-informed approach might also take the form of an audit, building on and learning from the experience of the Science and Innovation Audits (SIAs).

This evidence-informed approach, with its substantial input from civic institutions and community leaders, would aim to ensure funding was allocated to the most local pressing needs, aligned to regional opportunities for good growth. The goal would be to facilitate collaboration between businesses, universities, LAs, LEAs and wider stakeholders to map the specific strengths of our areas, and identify mechanisms to realise their full economic potential and boost productivity, thus driving successful programmes and bringing in investment for new programmes and centres to disseminate knowledge, provide opportunities for local growth and high-quality jobs, and grow



the reputation and health and sustainability of their regions (Scotland and English Midlands are models of successful practice).

### **A place-sensitive approach**

It is essential that the absorptive capacity of different regions is better understood and that bidding/assessment criteria are sensitive to this. Some regions are characterised by more innovative and research active firms. Other regions need to undertake capacity building to stimulate a more innovative culture; this should be recognised and accommodated through structural and funding mechanisms.

A levelling-up approach must involve a nuanced and flexible approach to place. This means widening the focus from regional inequalities (although these remain stark and require immediate, sustained, and significant focus) to recognise that localised inequalities can be masked by a broad geographic focus. There are other important lenses to examine inequalities such as considering coastal, rural, and inner-city places as well as places where small pockets of deprivation are masked by the broader wealth of the area.

## **6. Developing world-leading infrastructure and institutions**

*Our future success in R&D will rely on a diverse network of infrastructure: internationally competitive, high-quality, and accessible facilities, resources, data and services.*

*The UK is home to over 500 nationally and internationally significant research and innovation infrastructures, providing us with a breadth of expertise across sectors.*

*We need to take a flexible approach to supporting research infrastructure to deliver better value for money and keep assets continuously maintained and cutting-edge. Higher quality infrastructure will help attract and retain the best staff and create a more vibrant research environment.*

### **6. HOW SHOULD WE STRENGTHEN OUR RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE AND INSTITUTIONS IN SUPPORT OF OUR VISION?**

Please comment here (500 words max)

Place is a key focus in the Industrial Strategy and the UKRI strategic prospectus. To deliver against this and the 2.4% target, regional strengths must be harnessed and cultivated. To achieve the government's ambitious spending commitments and transformational change, **place-based funding** should be substantially increased. Proposals include:

- A replacement for EU structural funds.
- Significantly increasing place-based funding levers, such as the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, the Connecting Capability Fund, the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund, the Strength in Places Fund, and ensuring alignment between these.
- More effectively deploying HEIF to incentivise place-based collaborations and lowering thresholds so smaller and less research-intensive universities can access funding.
- Greater alignment of place-based funding with the Prosperity Fund and associated innovation themes and local investment plans for strengthening growth.

- The Prosperity Fund could be spent first in areas of high deprivation where there is local civic and institutional leadership.
- Extending R&D tax credits beyond STEM to boost creative industries.

### **Funding the establishment of partnerships**

The capacity required to build trust and relationships cannot be underestimated. There is a need to engage beyond the 'usual' suspects and to build space to explore key challenges collectively with partners from all backgrounds. Investment should fund early partnership development to foster genuine engagement and co-creation.

Long term funding is essential, recognising that it takes time to embed deep sustaining partnerships.

### **Funding mechanisms**

Access to funding is competitive and time consuming. Learning from how research funding has been allocated during the pandemic, funders should continue to instigate more streamlined routes.

Broader funding calls which encourage interdisciplinary engagement and lighter touch applications will support increased innovation in areas of lower R&D investments and will benefit smaller and less research-intensive universities without existing infrastructure.

If a network's remit is to engage with a 'hard-to-reach' community, then additional time building trust must be factored into its development.

Efficient networks need capacity to 'sandpit' ideas. The grant criteria must be cognisant of the skills and expertise of the partners and their diverse backgrounds.

To achieve an effective place-based ecosystem, partners such as local government need incentives to work with their local university with this reflected in call documentation and bid criteria.

### **Recognising difference**

It is vital that realism is applied to how quickly increasing investment in R&D will deliver results, particularly in areas which have traditionally received little investment. It takes a long time to build the requisite skills, collaborative infrastructure and trust to deliver. Funding must be sensitive to the maturity and assets of different places.

An example from our network that illustrates how it takes time to build productive relationships is the University of Portsmouth who have been in partnership with Portsmouth Hospitals Trust for 10 years and only last year built a civic agenda into the contract. Three joint clinical chairs were created in areas of mutual strength that are place based (around local health needs) and work together to achieve Portsmouth University Hospitals NHS Trust, bringing significant benefits to patients, students and colleagues in the local community.

## 7. Being at the forefront of global collaboration

*Research and innovation are inherently global, and international collaboration and mobility of talent are associated with more impactful research. The UK's leading researchers and innovators want to collaborate with the best talent in the world, in the best facilities in the world, regardless of borders. These international collaborations lead to new advances and discoveries, pushing the frontiers of knowledge faster and further. They underpin the UK's position as a world-leading knowledge economy and support trade, investment, diplomacy, defence, and security.*

### 7. HOW SHOULD WE MOST EFFECTIVELY AND SAFELY COLLABORATE WITH PARTNERS AND NETWORKS AROUND THE GLOBE?

Please comment here (500 words max)

Universities offer a vital link between our local and national and global communities and partners, a hugely important component for thriving places.

We must not allow our global vision and ambitions (while remaining essential) to eclipse our local vision and ambition. It is essential that local and global networks and partners are valued on an equal footing and are not only viewed as competing or opposing forces.

Indeed, there is an important interplay between the two and fundamentally, many of the underlying themes for collaborative working whether this is physically near or far from our centre remain the same. For the global, as with our local networks and partners, we must adopt and sustain an open, engaged, and sensitive approach informed by co-creation and the needs of all our communities.

For example, Queen Mary University London's Peoples Palace Projects has fostered community needs-led partnerships in both Burkina Faso (relating to AIDS/HIV education) and Brazil (working with indigenous people) over the last twenty years.

<https://peoplespalaceprojects.org.uk/en/about/>

It is also vital that UK HEIs work together to maximise our global connections. The Civic University Network provides an excellent mechanism to help facilitate this. It is likely that Covid-19 will surface a new array of collaborative tools and techniques for global research collaboration and exchange that might also be relevant for local collaboration. We must ensure that such learnings are shared widely within and amongst universities, so we can collectively benefit from emerging best practice.

Proposals from our members include:

- Ensuring a replacement for EU structural funds.
- Ensuring a growth in the GCRF international funding.

It is worth noting that there are a number of global networks committed to civic and place-based engagement, including the Talloires Network of which many UK HEIs are members; the Anchor institution Task force in the US; and the Engage community that is coordinated by the Association of Commonwealth Universities

Another important development is the increasing focus by many universities on the UN Sustainable Development Goals to frame and evaluate their civic engagement. The goals emphasise the inter-connection of the local and the global. Examples include the THE impact awards, and the KCL and University of Melbourne and University of Sydney [project](#) to develop new indicators of HE performance.

## 8. Harnessing excitement about our vision

*Our mission is to inspire and enable people from all backgrounds and experiences to engage and contribute to research and innovation and show that science is for everyone. We will nurture the whole system of innovation that will improve lives, services and businesses right around the UK and beyond – creating a fairer, healthier, more prosperous and more resilient society. And we will celebrate our successes far and wide, showcasing our strengths, and promoting the UK as a destination for talent and investment, and a partner of choice.*

### 8. HOW CAN WE HARNESS EXCITEMENT ABOUT THIS VISION, LISTEN TO A WIDER RANGE OF VOICES TO ENSURE R&D IS DELIVERING FOR SOCIETY, AND INSPIRE A WHOLE NEW GENERATION OF SCIENTISTS, RESEARCHERS, TECHNICIANS, ENGINEERS, AND INNOVATORS?

Please comment here (500 words max)

To feel inspired, people need to see how they have influenced change so civic leaders and citizens must be valued for their contributions and given equity. This engagement must extend from the early stages of project design to communication of impact to fully engage and inspire excitement and agency. Our network members are increasingly embedding these principles in how they work. It is important that government and UKRI take a similar approach and build in much more deliberation as they shape new calls.

As a network, we strongly endorse the submission by our partner, NCCPE. Our members have highlighted the Centre's expertise in supporting engagement capability and leadership. We particularly highlight their response to this question.

It is important to capitalise on the strength and exponential potential of the creative industries and the education institutions that support it. As well as driving economic growth across the UK, our creative and cultural sectors bring communities together, employ millions and are at the heart of our soft power. These are the industries of the future: highly innovative, resistant to automation and integral to our cultural identity and the nation's mental health.

We offer the following case studies from our network:

- The **AHRC First World War Engagement Centres** (2014-2019) brought the University sector together with the National Lottery Heritage Fund and a wide-range of third-sector public and community organisations, to devise local, diverse and co-produced responses to the legacies of the First World War. Local organisations benefitted from mentoring, public exposure and sharing of resources, while universities benefitted from the opportunity to generate new, unique knowledge with their local communities. This generated new audiences for university research.
- **Queen Mary's [Children's Health in London and Luton](#)** study is investigating the effectiveness of the Ultra-Low Emission Zone in London to improve air quality and the lung health of children. The team delivered an award-winning Pollution Solution workshop to over 9,500

children. Over 3,400 children have decided to participate, ensuring that lung development can be measured at the same time as studying air pollution levels near schools.

- As the centrepiece to the Sheffield Olympic Legacy Park, **Sheffield Hallam's Advanced Wellbeing Research Centre** is dedicated to improving the population's health and wellbeing through innovations that help people move. Following investment from DHSC and the EDF, the AWRC provides business, industry and the public sector with world-class research and design capability through state-of-the-art, indoor and outdoor laboratories. The AWRC sits in one of the most deprived areas of Sheffield, acting as an agent of local regeneration. It facilitates co-produced innovations through partnerships with industry, local communities, local authorities, charities and the health and technology sectors.

We are delighted to offer the Civic University Network as a platform for UKRI/BEIS for **onward engagement** on the role of universities in developing the place-based agenda. We look forward to using our convening powers to maximise the reach, effectiveness, diversity and quality of engagement in the development of the Roadmap. Please contact [Natalie Day](#) to discuss further.