

Executive summary

This discussion paper **explores the key issues and sets out options considered in developing proposals for a sector-wide approach to capturing and enhancing the impacts of Civic Universities**. It summarises the background research and issues that have led to the development of proposals for a Civic Framework, presented in the paper, **A framework for civic impact: a way to assess universities' activities and progress**, and available digitally to Members of the Civic University Network via the [Member's Area](#).

It considers how to develop what was initially described as a 'civic index', and has now evolved into the prototype Civic Framework (see Appendix 2), to capture and enhance the civic impacts within universities' localities. It is particularly concerned with the civic commitments made by HEIs – their collaborative work geared towards social gain at the civic level.

There are six parts to this report. First it addresses in broad terms the question of why we need a civic framework and what it should do. Second, it considers conceptualisations and definitions of the civic university. Third, it looks at the current context in which these conceptions are evolving. Next, it considers how ideas of the civic university may be operationalised. It then turns to the questions and challenges of measuring civic impact, before concluding with a section on possible ways forward in 'mapping the civic'. Finally, there is a summary of tools that have previously been developed to measure or assess the impact of higher education institutions, that have helped to inform the current proposals for a civic framework.

Section 1 introduces the work of the Civic University Network and sets the scene for discussion of a Civic Framework.

Section 2 addresses the question of why a Civic Framework is needed.

Section 3 traces the journey of 'civicness' from the notion of 'third mission' through to 'anchor institutions' and 'civic universities', examining how consideration of universities' role has been characterised. It highlights recent work by the Civic Universities Commission to develop four tests of the civic role, focusing on public participation, place, strategy and impact.

Section 4 considers the current HE policy context and challenges for civic universities in the UK. It situates the idea of the 'civic' in the context of initiatives such as the development of the Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF) and R&D Roadmap, but emphasises the distinctly outward-focused character of civic activities, framing impact in terms of benefits to society and locality rather than to HEIs.



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Section 5 discusses how ideas of the civic university have been (and may be) operationalised. It notes that while ideas of civic impact have tended to focus on economic effects, there is increasing interest in how universities may contribute to wider social objectives.

Section 6 examines how civic impact may be measured, looking at the various metrics that have been suggested in recent years. The paper highlights the need for a baseline test of whether a university has a civic mission. It argues that a Civic Framework should measure activities and improvement among universities that have identified themselves as civic institutions, rather than ranking performance across the higher education sector.

Section 7 considers which domains could be used to measure civic impact, comparing the priorities advanced by different commentators. It discusses which areas of activity have consistently been prioritised and which have been backgrounded or overlooked. It highlights the importance of identifying 'civicness' both in terms of locality and of activities.

The paper then outlines some priorities for next steps for HEIs in developing a Civic Framework. It suggests these should include clarifying the scale of the civic (its geographies); the scope of the civic (its activities) and its normative effects (its impetus to action). It highlights the need for these discussions to take place before selecting a set of indicators. A proposed tool which helps HEIs to reflect on and assess their own developmental learning against seven key civic domains is provided. Its approach, providing a matrix of progression levels mapped against domains of activity, is intended to drive a contextual benchmarking exercise for individual participating HEIs and provide a framework for peer challenge and learning.



1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The [Civic University Network](#) helps universities to re-shape their role and responsibility to their communities. It exists to support universities to develop and embed civic aspirations at an institutional level, as well as working with government and strategic partners to ensure that a university's geographic role and responsibility is used more effectively as an agent to drive positive societal change.
- 1.2 One way the Network will support the growing Civic University movement is by sharing best practice between participating universities and developing an approach to a peer review scheme so that universities can increase their civic impact. A 'civic index' – which has now evolved into a Civic Framework, removing implications that it should be a ranking scheme – was one of the recommendations of the Higher Education Policy Institute in its report, *Making Universities Matter* (HEPI, 2020).
- 1.3 This report is designed to inform discussions about how a set of indicators or measures of the good that universities do can be framed and operationalised. It offers initial suggestions about what should be assessed and why, and raises the question of how this might link to long-term strategic choices about the roles universities play in their locality and society. It aims to consider metrics or indicators as a spur to doing better rather than simply a snapshot of how universities are doing now.
- 1.4 The notion of the 'civic university' has a long genealogy, and is especially rooted in the land-grant universities of the US established under the Morrill Act of 1862, and the 'redbrick' universities established in the UK at the start of the 20th century. In both cases there was an understanding that the new institutions would directly contribute to the economic, intellectual and social development of their host localities.
- 1.5 Central to the notion of the civic university, therefore, is the question of **what higher education institutions are good for, rather than simply what they are good at** (Brink, 2018). This opens up a wider conversation about the contribution universities can or should make beyond the direct benefits of research, teaching and learning.
- 1.6 This paper explores the key issues and sets out some options for a sector-wide approach to capturing and enhancing civic impacts. It summarises salient issues highlighted through recent policy and practice developments, academic research and policy literature.
- 1.7 There are six parts to this report. First it addresses in broad terms the question of why we need a Civic Framework and what it should do. Second, it considers conceptualisations and definitions of the civic university. Third, it looks at the current context in which these conceptions are evolving. Next, it considers how ideas of the civic university may be operationalised. It then turns to the questions and challenges of measuring civic impact, before concluding with a section on possible ways forward in 'mapping the civic'. Finally there is a summary of tools that have previously been developed to measure or assess the impact of higher education institutions, that have helped to inform the work on a Civic Framework.



2.0 Why do we need a Civic Framework and what should it do?

- 2.1 A Civic Framework is needed for two reasons. First, it would help universities to build their civic commitment. It would provide the evidence to inform better practice through a system of peer review. Second, it provides a means of sharing and comparing between universities, contextualising their civic commitment by reporting on key data on different domains of activity. Some proposed data sources, along with the domains of activity, or presented in the prototype framework.
- 2.2 Civic commitment is not the same as public engagement, although public engagement usually contributes to it. Civic commitment refers to agreed collaboration geared towards social gain at the civic level. It is rooted in agreements to collaborate with key civic partners and institutions, such as local authorities, further education colleges, the NHS and other place-based agencies and organisations. These agreements relate to, and drive, operational activity and are not simply high-level statements of intent.
- 2.3 A Civic Framework would seek to capture universities' work in connecting, collaborating and contributing to long-term local partnerships designed to improve the prospects of places and the communities within them. It therefore needs to reflect the range of civic partners a university is engaging with, how their perspectives inform the university's work, and what activities arise from these inter-institutional relationships.
- 2.4 **A Civic Framework is not another ranking system.** Partners in the Civic University Network are clear that another league table is neither necessary nor desirable.
- 2.5 A Civic Framework is separate from a Civic University Agreement, which frames the relationships and civic activities of a particular institution. The framework seeks to support improvement across the higher education sector rather than within a specific locality. An institution need not have a Civic University Agreement in place to benefit from the peer support that participation in a Civic Framework could offer.

3.0 Conceptualising the civic university

- 3.1 Broadly, the idea of a civic mission or 'anchor' role summarises the impact of higher education in terms of economic geography. The Dearing Report (1997, p. 90), which viewed universities as central to a 'learning society', noted that universities 'make a significant economic contribution simply by their existence in a locality, whether or not they adopt an explicit mission to generate local or regional economic activity or to play a part in the cultural life of their locality or region'. Some universities see such impacts as a core purpose. This has frequently been framed in terms of a 'third mission' of economic development under the label of the 'entrepreneurial university' (Vorley and Nelles, 2008).



- 3.2 The focus may be a narrow one - concentrating on the impact of universities in terms of economic growth and regional development (Sanchez-Barrioluengo, 2014) - or a wider one that takes into account the social and cultural betterment of the geographies served by the institution. Unger and Polt (2017) summarise three versions of this approach that have been adopted internationally in the table below.

| Table 1 Complementary concepts of innovation system governance (Unger & Polt, 2017) | |
|---|--|
| Third mission [OECD, 2015] | Calls for an extended understanding of HEIs' mission, referring to their societal and cultural relevance and their role as providers of knowledge transfer and commercialisation activities. It has been taken up in government as well as institutional policies in many countries in recent years. |
| Entrepreneurial university [Etzkowitz, 1983; Etzkowitz et al., 2008; Foss and Gibson, 2015; Vorley and Nelles, 2008] | Whereas the “third mission” serves as a summarising term for an expansion of universities’ core missions, the concept of the entrepreneurial university prioritises the entrepreneurial activities of universities, mainly relying on their research activities, and second, a new management paradigm for the provision of universities’ tasks. |
| Triple helix [Etzkowitz, Leydesdorff, 2000; Leydesdorff, 2012; Ranga and Etzkowitz, 2013] | Highlights the importance of a systemic coordination of actors from the higher education and business sector with public authorities to contribute to innovations and knowledge-based growth. In its extended understanding, the “quadruple helix” also incorporates actors from the civil society, such as citizens, NGOs, consumer organisations, etc. |

- 3.3 Discussion of the civic university over the last two decades has recognised (to varying degrees) that a sole focus on economic growth, innovation and business support, and related metrics such as numbers of patents granted or spin-out companies formed, fail to take into account the full spectrum of universities’ social and cultural impacts and their scope for catalysing action to benefit the wider public.
- 3.4 In the United States, the development of the **‘anchor institution’ concept** has emphasised the social and cultural benefits of universities’ work and their role in addressing inequalities. Axelroth and Dubb (2010) argue that universities should think of themselves as having a threefold mission of education, research and acting as an anchor institution. An anchor institution mission ‘should involve the conscious



application of the long-term, place-based economic power of the institution, in combination with its human and intellectual resources, to better the long-term welfare of the community in which it resides' (p. 169). In the UK, work by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, based on a study of Leeds City Region, has considered how anchor institutions can use their spending power to support the inclusive growth agenda (Devins et al., 2017).

3.5 Sharpe's checklist of the characteristics of anchor institutions (2008) remains a helpful benchmark against which the growing list of organisations described as anchors might be judged. She asks (p. 5):

- Does it have a large stake and an important presence in your city and community?
- Does it have economic impacts on employment, revenue gathering, and spending patterns?
- Does it consume sizeable amounts of land?
- Does it have crucial relatively fixed assets and [is] not likely to relocate?
- Is it among the largest purchasers of goods and services in [its] region?
- Is it a job generator?
- Does it attract businesses and highly skilled individuals?
- Is it one of the largest employers, providing multilevel employment possibilities?
- Is it a centre of culture, learning and innovation with enormous human resources?

3.6 Work in the UK on the civic university adopts a broadly similar approach. Goddard and Kempton (2016) argue:

The civic university can be characterised by its ability to integrate its teaching, research and engagement with the outside world in such a way that each enhances the other without diminishing their quality. Research has socio-economic impact designed in from the start and teaching has a strong community involvement with the long term objective of widening participation in higher education and producing well rounded citizens as graduates. In terms of institutional structure there is a soft, flexible boundary between the university and society.

This integration between research, teaching and engagement needs to be achieved whilst maintaining the vitality of the university as a 'loosely coupled' institution.

3.7 Various approaches have been advanced that seek to encompass the totality of universities' impacts in the context of current global challenges. Caryannis and Campbell (2012) add a fourth and then a fifth helix to the 'triple helix' model, expanding



the tripartite government/business/higher education approach to embed these relationships in civil society and democratisation, and within the wider natural environment. However, as Riviezzo et al (2019) point out, there is still no consensus about what is meant by community engagement. Neither has much consideration been given within discourses of the civic university to HEIs' environmental impact until relatively recently, despite growing awareness of a climate and biodiversity emergency. The concept of 'future generations' (as encapsulated in Wales' Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015) has also largely remained on the margins of civic university thinking, although the Wales Centre for Public Policy has called for universities to be 'front and central' to delivering the Act's goals (Goddard and Hazelkorn, 2018).

3.8 More recently, the report of the Civic University Commission (UPP, 2019) describes a civic university as having 'a clear strategy, rooted in analysis, which explains what, why and how its activity adds up to a civic role'. It suggests that such roles should be self-defined by HEIs, but subject to four tests:

- A public test, covering participation, understanding of local needs and public pride in the institution
- A place test, covering alignment with local labour markets and serving diverse local populations
- A strategic test, covering HEIs' analysis of local needs, links with local leadership and definition of its geographies of interest
- An impact test, covering both how HEIs achieve impacts through relationships with other institutions, and how they measure the effects of their work

3.9 A significant feature of the concept of the civic university is that it is normative as well as descriptive. It promotes and assigns value to particular relationships between an institution and its place, and encourages deeper relationships between HEIs and wider society. As the Civic University Commission points out, not all universities should call themselves civic universities.

3.10 This is sometimes referred to as a 'mission' or 'purpose'. In the US, for example, Taylor and Luter (2013) argue:

Anchor institutions ... have a mission greater than just participating in the stabilization and development of communities, cities, towns, villages, and rural areas. This larger purpose is to play a vital role in the building of a better, more democratic, equitable and just society.

3.11 Goddard et al (2016) set out seven characteristics of a civic university:

- A sense of purpose: 'It strives to ensure that its cumulative impact on society as a whole is greater than the sum of the parts of its individual activities. It does this by making an explicit link to the wider social and economic domain, which may be expressed as an aspiration to tackle societal challenges or specific problems, be they global or local...'



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- Active engagement with the wider world
 - Holistic approach to engagement
 - A strong sense of place
 - Investment in impact beyond the academy
 - Transparency and accountability
 - Innovative methods of communicating with publics and stakeholders
- 3.12 Some frame the civic mission specifically as one of addressing social inequalities. The [Coalition of Urban Serving Universities](#) in the United States declares that ‘USU institutions seek to create sustainable, affordable, and innovative urban communities free of poverty and inequitable growth as measured by reduction in gaps across economic, social, environment, education, and health outcomes across its learners and residents.’
- 3.13 In summary, there is a distinction between ideas of (a) the ‘third mission’ and ‘entrepreneurial university’ which focus on how universities enable business success; (b) the ‘anchor institution’ approach which generally focuses on universities’ economic contributions to their host localities, especially in terms of reducing inequalities; and (c) ‘civic university’ approaches which extend beyond economic impact to look at the contribution universities make to their localities in terms of enriching society as a whole in partnership with place-based institutions. In practice these concepts have fuzzy boundaries and there is much overlap between them. This highlights the need for the Civic University Network to balance conceptual clarity with the flexibility for individual universities to identify and delineate the civic spheres in which they operate. Measures of impact need to respect distinctiveness but at the same time provide a meaningful tool for peer learning.

4.0 Contextualising the civic university

- 4.1 The civic university is seen both as a long-term normative concept – an expression of purpose and mission – and as an appropriate response to current challenges. In the UK context, these challenges involve recent debates about the value (to society generally, and the public purse in particular) of higher education; the relevance of qualifications to social and economic needs; and the marketisation of tertiary education. But there are also more far-reaching challenges that will need to be addressed if current thinking on civic universities is to have long-term impact. These include, among other challenges:
- climate change and the quest for carbon neutrality by 2050
 - the accelerating degradation of the natural environment, with a 13% loss of bioabundance since 1970 and 15% of more than 8,000 UK species threatened with extinction (State of Nature Partnership 2019)



- demographic change in terms of ageing and the spatial distribution of the population;
 - public health challenges, brought into sharp focus by Covid-19; and
 - deepening social inequalities, highlighted by (but by no means limited to) the racial injustices exposed by the Black Lives Matter movement, growing food insecurity and precarious housing conditions.
- 4.2 Taken together, these raise urgent questions about what kind of economy will be sustainable and equitable as we move towards the mid-21st century.
- 4.3 The question posed with increased urgency is how universities can be part of an effective response to these challenges, both now and for future generations. The immediate crisis of Covid-19 during 2020-21 has shown many of the benefits that UK universities can bring, but it has also exposed their own vulnerabilities. Universities have made enormous efforts to continue serving their students, research partners and communities during Covid-19. But through global economic recession and intense pressures on public spending the effects of the pandemic will inevitably contribute to even greater interrogation of the role, purpose and value for money of higher education institutions.
- 4.4 The Civic University Commission's report (UPP 2019) highlighted additional changes that pose challenges for HEIs. Globally and within the UK, labour markets are changing. Higher education is a growing field in previously under-served countries. Economic strength is shifting from Europe to Asia. Digital technologies and automation are likely to make many traditional roles obsolete.
- 4.5 In the UK, 'place' has been marginalised in higher education policy for many years, and universities too have tended to focus on their global standing more than their local reputations. The Brexit referendum in 2016 and subsequent political and cultural ramifications for the UK have highlighted, among other things, an apparent suspicion of 'experts' and a divide between academic opinion and the views and experiences of the wider public. These challenges to universities have been underlined as student populations become more diverse and conscious of the personal costs of higher education.
- 4.6 Against this backdrop are some immediate policy challenges bearing on universities' social impact. Prominent among these are their role in addressing skills gaps and reducing labour market disadvantage, highlighted by the government's recent response to the Augar Review (Department for Education, 2019); the need to better measure and value universities' knowledge exchange work, which is being taken forward through the Knowledge Exchange Framework (Research England, n.d.) and accompanying Knowledge Exchange Concordat; and the development of an R&D Roadmap for England (HM Government 2020), supported by an R&D Place Strategy in line with the government's agenda of 'levelling up' disadvantaged places.
- 4.7 The government skills strategy promised in response to the Augar Review suggests there will be an increasing emphasis on partnership between further and higher education, and increasing demands for flexibility in learning and teaching, moving away



from the traditional three or four-year full-time undergraduate experience. This is likely to focus attention on longer-term relationships with students and further education providers, potentially strengthening the links between HEIs and their localities. But it is being developed against a backdrop of significant cuts in FE capacity in recent years.

4.8 The Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF), while also in a test phase, is more developed. The first iteration of the KEF will assess universities based on the strength of seven areas of activity:

- Research partnerships
- Working with business
- Working with the public and third sectors
- Skills, enterprise and entrepreneurship
- IP and commercialisation
- Local growth and regeneration
- Public and community engagement (optional in round 1 of KEF)

The last two of these activities will be assessed on the basis of narratives provided by universities rather than quantitative metrics. While they align with the interests of civic universities to some extent, they do not necessarily provide a driver for greater civic engagement.

4.9 The metrics chosen for the first iteration of the KEF focus largely on income received from external partners (business, public and third sectors) as an indicator of engagement, although they also include some recognition of the time committed to public and community engagement by academic staff. The chosen metrics are detailed in Table 2:

| Table 2 Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF) metrics | |
|---|---|
| Research partnerships are measured in terms of cash contribution to collaborative research as a proportion of public funding | |
| Working with business is measured by: | HE-BCI (Higher Education Business-Community Interaction survey) contract research income with non-SME business, normalised for institution size by HEI income |
| | HE-BCI contract research income with SME business, normalised for institution size by HEI income |
| | HE-BCI consultancy and facilities and equipment income with non-SME business, normalised for institution size by HEI income |



| | |
|---|--|
| | HE-BCI consultancy and facilities and equipment income with SME business, normalised for institution size by HEI income |
| Working with the public and third sector is measured by: | HE-BCI contract research income with the public and third sector, normalised for institution size by HEI income |
| | HE-BCI consultancy and facilities and equipment income with the public and third sector, normalised for institution size by HEI income |
| Skills, enterprise and entrepreneurship is measured by: | HE-BCI CPD/continuing education income, normalised for institution size by HEI income |
| | HE-BCI CPD/continuing education learner days delivered, normalised for institution size by HEI income |
| Local growth and regeneration is measured in terms of regeneration and development income from all sources, normalised for institution size by income | |
| IP and commercialisation is measured in terms of estimated current turnover of all active firms by active spin-out | |
| Public and community engagement is given a provisional score based on self-assessment developed with the National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE). There will be an optional narrative submission to Research England. | |

4.10 The Knowledge Exchange Concordat offers some additional nudges in the direction of civic commitment, encouraging HEIs to promote knowledge exchange through eight guiding principles, covering:

- Universities' mission
- Policies
- Engagement
- Working transparently and ethically
- Capacity building (within universities, rather than within localities)
- Recognition and rewards
- Continuous improvement
- Evaluating success

4.11 The R&D Roadmap, while embryonic, emphasises the importance of place and could also potentially support the development of civic university policies and agreements. Beyond the headline commitment of raising spending on R&D to 2.4% of GDP by 2027 it promises a 'place strategy' to support the levelling-up agenda, spreading research funding beyond the 'golden triangle' of London, Oxford and Cambridge. This will be



supported by a ministerial R&D place advisory group. The strategy was originally promised in autumn 2020 following the spending review, although following the cancellation of the autumn budget the spending review became an interim exercise covering only 12 months. Questions have also been raised about the likely effectiveness of attempts to 'level up' left-behind regions by reallocating R&D spending: the Centre for Cities (Enenkel 2020) recently argued that such hopes could be hampered because of the limited 'innovative capacity' of particular locations, meaning that R&D investment might not translate into business benefits.

- 4.12 Work by the Office for Students (OfS) on widening access and participation complements these agendas. HEIs are expected to show how they will improve equality of opportunity for underrepresented groups in higher education, and if they want to increase their fees their plans must be approved by the Director for Fair Access and Participation. Details of the OfS policies and guidance on widening access and participation are at: <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/access-and-participation-plans/>
- 4.13 The Civic University Commission has proposed a £500m pot of funding specifically to promote universities' civic engagement with 'a focus on disadvantaged places and areas where the civic role can have a particular impact' (UPP, 2019). Such a fund could facilitate deep engagement with institutions and communities in order to develop meaningful indicators of universities' contributions and inform the long-term future of their civic work.

5.0 Operationalising the civic university

- 5.1 While much work has been done to promote and explain the idea of the civic university, there is less clarity on how individual institutions might put it into effect. In part this is because, as acknowledged by the Civic University Commission, each institution will have its own mission, priorities and relationships with localities. At the same time the Commission warns that 'civic' must be more than a label: it must be possible to distinguish civic universities from those that are not civic.
- 5.2 Historically, a set of distinctive activities has been associated with the civic or anchor mission. Discussion has focused in particular on universities' economic impacts. These are often couched in terms of support for business and enterprise, especially at a regional scale. Benneworth (2019) argues: 'Universities' main role is as a connection point to global knowledge resources in ways that make that knowledge more easily available to local partners.' Others see economic impacts more in terms of direct employment and supporting local supply chains through procurement (e.g. Centre for Local Economic Strategies, 2019, Devins et al., 2017). The Civic University Commission notes: 'The impact of being a good employer will resonate across local labour markets. All universities should pay the Living Wage to all their employees.' CLES (2019) suggests such support should include working with locally-rooted community businesses that reinvest their earnings in the locality.



- 5.3 Alongside support for business, there is a growing view that universities have a specific mission to raise attainment and skills within their local populations. The Civic University Commission asserts that ‘while civic agreements must be decided locally, we would be surprised if adult education did not form a core plank of the majority of agreements and make up one of the biggest shifts in university behaviour.’ This may include contributing to areas of skill shortage or supporting key workforce groups such as healthcare staff (Frostick, 2016).
- 5.4 But there is also recognition that the civic mission may be put into effect through contributions to local regeneration and public engagement (as highlighted by the KEF); cultural input (Riviezzo et al., 2019), strategic foresight (Goddard, 2018) and place-based leadership (Hambleton, 2018). This public engagement work can take a wide variety of forms, including festivals and cultural events, support for neighbourhood-based initiatives in disadvantaged communities, and engagement activities undertaken during the course of research projects. However, there are questions over the impact these activities have beyond the realm of those who are already engaged with HEIs, including isolated or minority communities and those from diverse ethnic backgrounds. Recent research commissioned by the UPP Foundation (2020) highlights the limitations of this engagement: its study of post-industrial towns found that one third of respondents had never visited their local university, even though more than half (59%) believed universities should play a greater role in the local economy. There is currently no consensus about what combination or balance of activities distinguishes the ‘civic university’ from one that is simply fulfilling its core role as a higher education institution. The UPP Foundation report recommended that universities should focus in particular on supporting town centre regeneration; jobs and economic localism; boosting local educational attainment; supporting local innovation and R&D; and supporting the NHS.

6.0 Measuring the civic university

- 6.1 Given the diverse ways that civic missions are conceptualised and operationalised, it is clear that league tables or assessments of universities’ economic impact currently fail to capture either the breadth or the depth of universities’ civic engagement. For example, without detracting from their considerable achievements, much of the work on the economic impact of universities could be described as defensive (asserting the value of universities’ contribution in making a case for government support) or promotional (seeking competitive advantage in a higher education marketplace). An example of the latter approach might include the ‘entrepreneurial impact ranking’ of UK universities (Octopus Ventures, 2019) which focuses on ‘universities’ capacity to produce quality, investor-ready spinout companies’.
- 6.2 These assessments clearly serve a specific purpose. As valuable as they may be, however, there have been relatively few attempts to assess universities’ civic engagement on a broader basis. The Carnegie Engagement Framework is a notable exception. This has run in the United States since 2006 and is now being piloted in



- Australia, Canada and Ireland. This voluntary framework focuses on documentation and data collection on universities' 'institutional mission, identity and commitments', specifically in relation to community engagement. Assessment takes place on a five-year cycle and 361 campuses have achieved the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement. The framework is designed as a quality improvement and self-assessment tool and 'requires substantial effort invested by participating institutions' (College & University Engagement Initiative, n.d.).
- 6.3 In the UK, the work of the National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE) offers higher education institutions tools to measure and improve their performance. The EDGE tool (see <https://www.publicengagement.ac.uk/support-engagement/strategy-and-planning/edge-tool>) focuses on embedding public engagement across HEIs' activities, enabling universities to examine their mission and purpose, how they support staff to encourage public engagement, and their involvement of the public and students in shaping their approaches to engagement. However, as earlier work by NCCPE makes clear, there are challenges in evaluating and auditing universities' work. Its report on [Auditing, Benchmarking and Evaluating Public Engagement](#) (Hart, Northmore and Gerhardt, n.d.) offers a summary of the different purposes an index of public engagement might serve, along with suggested indicators.
- 6.4 Recent work on community engagement at a European scale (Benneworth et al., 2018) highlights the importance of moving beyond approaches to engagement that are seen mainly to benefit universities themselves, but also notes slow progress in recent decades. It puts forward a series of recommendations for a prototype framework to define and promote community engagement at a European level. This has been taken forward through the European Commission-funded TEFCE project (Towards a European Framework for Community Engagement in Higher Education) which seeks to synthesise and promote best practice in community engagement across Europe. It has produced a 'toolbox' for institutional self-reflection, available at: <https://www.tefce.eu/toolbox>
- 6.5 Times Higher Education ranks 768 universities from 85 countries according to their performance against the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The methodology is outlined in an [article](#) on the THE website. It measures four areas of activity: research (based on published papers in the Elsevier database), stewardship, outreach and teaching. Universities must submit data on SDG17 (partnerships to achieve the SDGs) and are also measured on the highest-scoring of three of the remaining SDGs.
- 6.6 More recently, the Nous Group has prepared an international study on 'university engagement and global league tables' commissioned by the universities of Chicago and Melbourne and Kings College London (Douglas et al 2020). The study aims 'to harness the influence of global rankings to better recognise university engagement, by exploring the possibility of incorporating engagement metrics into global league tables', while recognising that there is currently no consensus on how to measure and compare engagement across the sector.
- 6.7 The Nous report is guided by an explicit theory of change: that by incentivising five areas of behaviour change, universities will increase their engagement activity. As a



consequence universities will generate greater public benefit, improved research outcomes, and more benefits to partners, as well as improving their own standing and attractiveness to students by rising up the league tables. The framework outlined in the report seeks to encourage:

- Leadership buy-in. The university's senior management endorse engagement activities and engagement is a priority in the university's leadership structure.
- Communities and universities value each other's contributions. The university and its community have a mutually beneficial relationship.
- Resource allocation decisions. The university is committed (financially and otherwise) to engagement and to its community.
- Reward and recognition. There are incentives for staff, faculty, and students to participate in engagement activities.
- Curriculum and research. Engagement is embedded in the university's core business of teaching and research.

6.8 Eight indicators have been selected to measure performance. These are:

- University commitment to engagement
- Community opinion of the university
- Student access
- Volunteering
- Research reach outside academic journals
- Community Engaged Learning within curriculum
- Socially-responsible purchasing
- Carbon footprint

6.9 The aim of the Nous project is not to devise a new set of rankings but to incorporate engagement into existing global rankings, on the basis that existing metrics fail to measure the full extent of universities' impact. There is a recognition that by engaging with existing league tables there is a risk of entrenching biases, but the project is presented as an attempt to guide the evolution of these league tables.

6.10 The premise of the Nous report is that universities are already undertaking significant engagement work but this is not sufficiently recognised within global rankings. The Civic University Network, by contrast, is more explicitly focused on identifying universities that have a specifically civic orientation and encouraging them to develop this mission. As the UPP Foundation [commented](#) in response to the Nous report: 'A truly civic university focuses on the needs of its community and region. It is important these local factors drive the activities of a civic university, not the benchmarks or indicators in a ranking'. This aligns with the idea of the 'quadruple/quintuple helix' in that the focus is not just on measuring the totality of activities but on coordinating the work of different actors.



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Network

- 6.11 A concept of civic mission that is outward-looking and actor-focused rather than activity-focused would suggest that any Civic University Index should involve some sort of baseline test of whether a university has a civic mission and which actors have helped to shape it. A Civic Framework would seek to assess activities and improvement within this group rather than ranking performance across the higher education sector.

7.0 Mapping the civic: questions and suggestions

- 7.1 Table 1 below shows how different authors and organisations have articulated their priorities for measuring civic impact over the last decade and a half. It highlights themes or indicators specifically identified as priorities or areas of focus. This does not mean that others are unimportant, but it reveals where greatest attention has been directed. The table is illustrative - it does not seek to map every attempt to consider universities' civic impacts.

Table 1: Perspectives on civic activity

| Domain | Suggested tests | Civic University Commission | Knowledge Exchange Framework | R&D roadmap (tbc) | Nous group 2020 | College & University Engagement Initiative | THE impact rankings | Goddard et al 2016 | Anchor institutions (Sharpe 2008) |
|----------------------|---|-----------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|--|---------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <i>Institutional</i> | Engaged with local leadership | | | | | | | | |
| | Inter-sectoral partnership | | | | | | | | |
| | links with other HEIs | | | | | | | | |
| | working with business | | | | | | | | |
| | Metrics and peer learning | | | | | | | | |
| | Articulation of mission | | | | | | | | |
| | Transparency and accountability | | | | | | | | |
| | Internal resourcing | | | | | | | | |
| | Communication | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Economic</i> | Employment | | | | | | | | |
| | Spending & procurement | | | | | | | | |
| | Entrepreneurship & investment | | | | | | | | |
| | Scale (inc supply chains) | | | | | | | | |
| | IP and commercialisation | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Social</i> | Stake/presence in community | | | | | | | | |
| | Cultural impact | | | | | | | | |
| | Community participation/engagement | | (optional) | | | | | | |
| | Local growth and regeneration | | | | | | | | |
| | Widening participation/outreach | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Physical</i> | Fixed assets | | | | | | | | |
| | Sense of place/ Identification of 'the local' | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Intellectual</i> | Research | | | | | | | | |
| | teaching | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Environmental</i> | Climate change | | | | | | | | |
| | bioabundance | | | | | | | | |
| | Resource stewardship | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Generational</i> | Long-term (intergenerational) approach | | | | | | | | |



Consistencies

- 7.2 There are some obvious consistencies in terms of the areas of impact considered important, both in the UK and internationally. Institutional partnerships and links at a local level are fundamental to any assessment of civic impact, and are included in almost all the approaches listed. The THE impact rankings are an exception because they use the UN Sustainable Development Goals as a starting point and have an international focus. Sharpe's work on anchor institutions in the US, on the other hand, considers the work of universities as independent actors within their localities rather than as part of a matrix of governance, which may reflect the greater autonomy enjoyed by American universities.
- 7.3 Economic impacts are generally considered central to universities' civic role. These are both direct (employment and commercialisation) and indirect (for example, through procurement and supply chain support).
- 7.4 Similarly, there is a consistent assumption that a civic commitment is concerned with social engagement and community participation, including outreach and widening access to higher education. Such engagement can take a host of forms and there is no obvious consensus on what forms of social engagement should be measured and how they should be balanced against each other. There is a question here about whether arts and cultural engagement, for example, should be disaggregated from work on (for example) poverty and health inequalities in order to generate a clearer picture of impact. There also needs to be clarity on where a university's cultural contribution constitutes **civic** action that has a lasting impact on place, as opposed to ad-hoc public engagement and involvement.
- 7.5 Much of the work on civic impacts also places universities' intellectual capital at the heart of civic engagement: universities make a difference through their day to day work of teaching and research. This raises the issue of whether there is anything about teaching and research that makes some universities more 'civic' than others - what would a distinctly civic curriculum or research focus look like? If it is not possible to define this, it may make more sense to exclude this domain from any civic metrics and treat it as an underpinning framework.

Absences

- 7.6 There are some notable absences, or backgrounding, within existing work on civic impacts. The focus on the use of universities' physical assets has faded since some of the early work in the US on anchor institutions. Given the significant investment by



universities in real estate in recent years and its direct and indirect impacts on communities, perhaps attention should be directed more critically to universities' property policies and investment plans. Knock-on effects should also be considered, including the development of student accommodation by commercial enterprises and the positive and negative impacts on neighbourhoods and local economies, including challenges of gentrification and blight.

- 7.7 Perhaps more significantly, limited attention has been paid to universities' environmental impacts as a factor in their civic roles. While there has been significant work on this by external bodies (for example, by [EAUC](#)), this remains disconnected from the civic university agenda. Given the role of university researchers in drawing attention to the unfolding climate crisis and seeking to inform public policy, and given the physical impacts of universities on biodiversity and carbon emissions within their own localities, there is an argument for foregrounding environmental issues within any measure of 'civicness'.
- 7.8 A third issue that is backgrounded in current discussions of civic action is that of time. Universities, even given the recent expansion of higher education and formation of new institutions, are generally long-lived organisations that have an impact within their communities over generations. Their investments now have effects for decades to come, even if the visions and priorities associated with individual vice-chancellors come and go. There is therefore a question of how intergenerational impacts might be recognised within any civic metrics, in order to encourage universities to consider the likely impacts of their work beyond the confines of planning and budgetary cycles.
- 7.9 Attention also needs to be paid to universities' role as advocates for their regions with external audiences, including government departments, investors and international organisations. Thought should be given to how to recognise this work when assessing civic activity, without diluting the place-based focus.

Locating the civic

- 7.10 The domains of civic impact listed in Table 1 highlight the question of scale. Universities' impact in terms of the Sustainable Development Goals, for example, could be international in scope but have no discernible effects on the locality in which the university is situated. Similarly, there is nothing intrinsic in knowledge exchange or R&D that requires the local to be a major factor in measuring its effects. 'Civicness' could thus be considered as an orientation: a civic university will choose to judge its performance in terms of local impacts in addition to other measures of effectiveness.



- 7.11 The 'local' is likely to vary according to a university's situation, history and priorities. But there are some obvious bounding factors. One is the scale at which other public institutions engage with their publics. In the UK the local authority provides the most recognisable boundaries within which citizens exercise their democratic rights and services are provided to the population. The city or town could also be a scale to consider because it presents a physical assemblage within which universities exert material impacts, purchasing or disposing of land and buildings and providing opportunities for the businesses that service their estates.
- 7.12 Other boundaries are less obviously civic. The neighbourhood or electoral ward is too small a scale: universities will straddle several, even if they do not work across an entire local authority area. The region or sub-region potentially encompasses several universities (as well as overlapping forms of governance including combined authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships). Here, as well as in large cities, there is the issue of whether more than one university can be a 'civic university' within the same locality. How might the overlapping civic impacts of neighbouring universities be assessed?
- 7.13 These questions call for further discussion. However, there would seem to be a strong argument for considering civic impacts at local authority scale, given municipalities' democratic mandate, institutional networks, and connections with community life through service provision, representation, spatial planning and recognisable local identity. At the same time it should be recognised that many universities will operate across two or more local authorities, while others may only relate to part of a local authority area.

Prioritising the civic

- 7.14 The domains listed in Table 1 suggest a set of possible priorities that could be used to measure universities' civicness. As discussed above, research and teaching may be better considered as underpinning all aspects of universities' civic work, rather than as civic activities in themselves.
- 7.15 Of the domains listed, all except the generational domain relate directly to place and can be analysed at a local level, even if the impacts may also be felt well beyond universities' own locations. Generational impacts may be felt within a place but can only be measured in retrospect: in terms of civic metrics, what can be assessed is universities' ability or willingness to consider the interests of future generations within their strategies and decisions. This would suggest that generational impact could be considered as an aspect of universities' institutional engagement.



- 7.16 This would then leave five major domains of activity: **institutional, economic, social, physical, and environmental**. In the prototype Civic Framework, two further domains (which could be considered as sub-categories of the social) have been added: **cultural, and health and wellbeing**. These domains, and progress in undertaking civic activities within them, can be mapped against the Sustainable Development Goals and the Knowledge Exchange Concordat, but with a stronger place-based focus. There is also a discussion to be had about how environmental and physical impacts might be considered in order to prevent environmental questions becoming relegated to secondary concerns within universities' estates and facilities management operations.

Next steps

- 7.17 A credible Civic Framework needs to do three things.
1. It should offer an indication of the **geographic scale of civic commitment**. Civic commitment cannot simply be a container for every impact a university has beyond its institutional walls. While all boundaries are artificial, there needs to be a shared understanding of the spatial scale that 'civic' relates to.
 2. It should also offer a delineation of the **scope of the civic**. Which dimensions of activity can be construed as civic? The list in the table offers some pointers. But the table does not encompass the motivation for activity. Should a distinction be made between the actions that universities undertake in order to pursue their own objectives, and those that have a wider societal focus? Is there an acceptable way to distinguish between the two? These questions must be addressed, even if they cannot be resolved. There should also be some agreement about what lies beyond the bounds of the civic. This will not be straightforward. Student recruitment, for example, is not an activity universities undertake because of its civic impacts, but it is likely to be in the civic interest for universities to be successful in their recruitment strategies and to achieve wider participation in higher education.
 3. A Civic Framework also needs to provide an **impetus to civic action**. This requires a commitment by universities to take action to improve their performance over time. So, any metrics or indicators need to measure progress as well as reporting the current position. There will need to be a commitment to annual measurement of progress, and to a process of reflection and action. One metric to consider might be a measure of the seniority of staff involved in civic activity, and the proportion of their time they commit to it.



- 7.18 To make progress on this, there must first be a broad consensus within each institution about the scale and scope of civic activity and the best ways to incentivise action. This could be done through an iterative process of reflection (such as Delphi panels) to settle on the best indicators of civic activity.
- 7.19 The next stage is to devise appropriate metrics or indicators for each domain. These should measure both the breadth and depth of activity, and the extent of progress over time. Tools such as the [Outcomes Star](#), which is based on a series of Likert scales, offer one approach that can provide an easily understandable snapshot of complex areas of activity. ‘Traffic light’ systems are also easily communicated. In both cases their credibility and utility depend on the quality of the underlying data. It is important to ensure that the metrics complement but do not duplicate the KEF metrics outlined above in paragraph 3.8. **In particular, they should focus on understanding what universities contribute to their localities and stakeholders, rather than understanding engagement in terms of what external relationships contribute to universities.**
- 7.20 The third stage is to develop the current prototype of the Civic Framework (see Appendix 2), using the suggested indicators as a starting point and refining them in the light of experience. Without this detailed work, there is a risk that the Civic Framework will not be respected by peers or external partners and will be easy to ignore because few institutions sign up to it.
- 7.21 The Local Government Association has developed an approach to peer review that could be helpful in taking the work on a Civic Framework forward. ‘Peer challenge’ (see Appendix for details) focuses on five ‘key lines of enquiry’ in order to drive forward improvement processes. All of these could potentially be translated from local government to the higher education sector. The key lines of enquiry are:
- i) Understanding of the local place and priority setting
 - ii) Leadership of place
 - iii) Financial planning and viability
 - iv) Organisational leadership and governance
 - v) Capacity to deliver

Appendix 1: Useful tools and frameworks

The following list of approaches to measuring university impact may be helpful as institutions take forward the current work on the Civic Framework. They are listed not as recommended approaches but as examples of relevant previous or parallel work.

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| <p>Peer challenge Local Government Association</p> | <p>The Local Government Association’s peer challenge approach is detailed at: https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/peer%20challenges%20-%20LGA%20Corporate%20Peer%20challenge%20Offer%20Booklet%20-%20June%202017.pdf</p> |
| <p>Public engagement National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement</p> | <p>The EDGE self-assessment tool developed by the National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement is based on learning from the Beacons for Public Engagement in the UK. An introduction to the tool is at: https://www.publicengagement.ac.uk/support-engagement/strategy-and-planning/edge-tool/introducing-edge-tool</p> |
| <p>Community engagement EC TEFCE project</p> | <p>The European Commission-funded TEFCE project (Towards a European Framework for Community Engagement in Higher Education) seeks to synthesise and promote best practice in community engagement across Europe. It has produced a ‘toolbox’ for institutional self-reflection, available at: https://www.tefce.eu/toolbox</p> |
| <p>Inclusive growth Joseph Rowntree Foundation</p> | <p>The Joseph Rowntree Foundation has developed a Progression Framework to help organisations measure and improve their performance as inclusive anchor institutions. It covers five domains: employment, procurement, property, service deliver and corporate behaviours. See https://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/documents/s181576/4%20Anchor%20Institution%20Progression%20Framework%20Toolkit.pdf</p> |
| <p>Collaboration Collective Impact Forum</p> | <p>The Collective Impact Forum in the US has developed principles and tools to encourage collaboration between organisations to promote social change. See https://www.collectiveimpactforum.org/what-collective-impact</p> |
| <p>Institutional context Carnegie Classifications</p> | <p>The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education describes itself as the leading framework for recognising and describing institutional diversity in US higher education. An optional classification on community engagement has been</p> |



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| | developed, hosted by the Swearer Center at Brown University. See https://carnegieclassifications.iu.edu |
| Sustainable development Times Higher Education Impact Rankings | The THE Impact Rankings, based on performance against the UN Sustainable Development Goals, are introduced at: https://www.timeshighereducation.com/impact-rankings-2020-methodology |
| Environmental Sustainability Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges (EAUC) | EAUC has produced a ‘sustainability leadership scorecard’ for universities and colleges designed to track institutions’ environmental performance. See https://www.eauc.org.uk/sustainability_leadership_scorecard |
| Environmental Sustainability Climate Commission for Higher and Further Education Students and Leaders | The Climate Commission, supported by EAUC, the Association of Colleges, GuildHE and Universities UK, has produced a Climate Action Toolkit . See https://www.eauc.org.uk/climate action toolkit |
| Economic development EC Smart Specialisation Handbook | The Smart Specialisation Handbook provides advice for managers working towards the EU development priority of ‘smart specialisation’, explaining how to form closer partnerships with HEIs: https://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/-/higher-education-for-smart-specialisation-a-handbook |
| Regional growth EC Directorate General Regional Policy | Similarly, the EU’s Regional Policy directorate has produced a practical guide on connecting universities to regional growth: https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/presentation/universities2011/universities2011_en.pdf |
| Innovation and entrepreneurialism HEInnovate | HEInnovate is a self-assessment tool produced by the European Commission and OECD that universities can use to assess whether they are promoting the development of an entrepreneurial culture: https://heinnovate.eu/en |

Appendix 2: A prototype Civic Framework

The suggested matrix below sets out (left hand column) seven potential domains of universities' civic commitment. It aims to encourage a comprehensive approach to HEIs' civic activities.

The top row sets out six suggested domains of progression. These are mapped in the second row against the principles of the Knowledge Exchange Concordat, contextualising civic commitment within UK higher education policy, and in the third row against the challenge areas detailed by the Civic University Commission.

The matrix also sets out some overarching questions. More detailed versions of these, with suggested indicators, are available for each domain of activity in the [full digital version of the prototype](#), or the [full document version of the prototype](#). The domains are mapped against the Sustainable Development Goals in the fuller version, showing how civic activity can be placed within a recognisable international framework.

| Progress levels | 1) Mapping: where are we now? | 2) Partnering: where do we want to go, and with whom? | 3) Agreeing: who will do what, and when? | 4) Resourcing: how are activities supported? | 5) Evaluating: how are we doing? | 6) Learning: What will we change, and how? |
|--|----------------------------------|--|---|--|--|---|
| Relevant KE Concordat principles | Mission Policies Engagement | Engagement Policies Transparency Capacity building | Engagement Capacity building Policies | Capacity building Policies Recognition and rewards | Evaluating success Continuous improvement | Evaluating success Continuous improvement |
| Civic University Agreement challenge areas | Data and intelligence gathering | Consultation and co-creation | Agreeing focus Striking agreements Governance and risk Delivering outcomes | Resourcing the process Delivering outcomes | Evaluation and learning Governance and risk | Evaluation and learning Governance and risk Delivering outcomes |

| Progress levels | 1) Mapping: where are we now? | 2) Partnering: where do we want to go, and with whom? | 3) Agreeing: who will do what, and when? | 4) Resourcing: how are activities supported? | 5) Evaluating: how are we doing? | 6) Learning: What will we change, and how? |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|--|--|--|---|
| Domains | Core questions and potential indicators | | | | | |
| Social impact | Key questions: How do we want our university to bridge and reduce social divides and improve the quality of life of our communities, including the most disadvantaged? How can our university help our places move from ‘functioning’ to ‘flourishing’? What part can our students play in this? | | | | | |
| | We know how well our workforce and student intake reflects local populations, and the extent of our community and public engagement. | We are working with partners to create a shared vision of a flourishing society, with full involvement of all our communities. | Within our own institution, we have action plans for change in line with our shared priorities. | We have set aside resources to support our public engagement and can show how this will benefit marginalised and excluded groups. | We are measuring our social impact and we have worked with local communities to make sure our indicators are meaningful to them. | We capture and share learning across our university and with key partners, and identify areas for improvement. |
| Environment, climate and biodiversity | Key questions: How could our university play a leading role in mitigating and adapting to climate change, reversing biodiversity loss, and educating students for sustainability? How will it influence environmental behaviours throughout our city or region? | | | | | |
| | We can fully account for our carbon emissions and we measure progress on carbon reduction. We have done an environmental and biodiversity audit of our estate. We know what we waste. | We engage with local partners to create a shared vision of a sustainable locality and university. We are working with our suppliers, staff and students to improve our environmental impacts. | We have agreed priority targets for improvement and consulted our partners and the wider community on their needs and aspirations. | We have identified resources to support our environmental ambitions. We support staff and students in modelling the environmental behaviours we want to encourage (such as active travel). | We measure the wider environmental footprint of the university within and beyond our locality. We hold ourselves to account by publicising our performance and inviting suggestions for improvement. | We are implementing education for sustainable development across the curriculum. We share our learning with peers and use our academic expertise to support our partners in improving our local places. |

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|----------------------------------|--|--|--|---|---|---|
| Health and wellbeing | Key questions: How does our institution support the health and wellbeing of our localities and communities? What does a flourishing community look like to us? | | | | | |
| | We are aware of the health characteristics of our communities, staff and students, and know how our activities impact on them. | We partner with healthcare organisations and communities to promote local wellbeing. | We have targets for beneficial impact on our communities' wellbeing and we are working with partners to take appropriate action. | We have identified resources to support our communities' wellbeing. We take time to listen and value communities' knowledge and experience. | Our priorities are informed by local communities, public health teams and healthcare organisations. We know what we can do differently and what impact it can make. | We are listening to our communities to understand what wellbeing means for them and adjusting our activities and priorities in response. |
| Our cultural contribution | Key questions: How does our university celebrate and enrich the cultural life of our localities and communities? How do we create vibrant, creative and playful places? | | | | | |
| | We know what contribution we make to local cultural life. We have mapped this against local demographics and identified gaps and opportunities. | We engage with a wide range of local cultural organisations. We ensure local communities are welcomed and included in our events and activities. | We have identified priorities for support and know which communities we need to work with more (including our own staff and students). | We promote and fund events and activities that enrich and celebrate the cultural life of our localities, and support staff and students to do this. | We have asked our communities what they think of the activities we support and have listened to their views. | We actively consider how our activities can be better. In doing so we value and learn from the expertise and knowledge within our localities. |
| Economic impact | Key questions: How could our university's work create more prosperous places and address and reduce economic inequality? What impacts is it having now? Can we articulate and promote a coherent vision of a flourishing local economy in partnership with local stakeholders? | | | | | |
| | We know our economic footprint and our impact on local communities and the lives of our learners. | We have joint economic strategies with local partners, which reflect our shared priorities. | We have agreed indicators of progress, with achievable targets for change. | We are using our employment and spending power to support our local economy and people. | We have agreed economic impact targets and we are measuring progress on reducing inequalities. | We review our impacts with key partners, including the groups most affected by inequalities. |

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| Estates, facilities and placemaking | Key questions: How can our facilities be used for the benefit of the whole community? Do all members of the community feel welcome? How do our facilities set the standard for placemaking and sustainability in our city or region? How can our digital infrastructure benefit our communities? | | | | | |
| | We have agreed design, quality, environmental and accessibility standards and benchmark our estates management against the best in our class. We know who uses our buildings and spaces, how and when. | We work with local communities and planning authorities to ensure our estates meet their needs and aspirations. We are open and transparent in our plans and developments. | We work with civic partners to ensure our estates management supports our civic ambitions. We have agreed priorities for action and improvement. | Our design, procurement, maintenance and management practices support an open and inclusive attitude and we are making our estate suitable for community uses as well as for our staff and students. | We work with peer organisations to critique and improve our practices. We invite local communities to tell us how we can do better. | We review the use and development of our estates to ensure they support our civic mission. |
| Institutional strategy and leadership | Key questions: How will top-level governance and strategies at our institution reflect our civic commitment to ensure we make the difference we want? Which partners are we working with and to what ends, and what are their priorities? What would it look like if our civic priorities were embedded throughout our core activities of teaching, learning and research? | | | | | |
| | We have drafted, consulted on and approved a Civic University Agreement. | We know the number, remit and make-up of the partnerships we're involved in. | We have committed to SMART targets within civic strategies and agreements. | We have identified resources to support the civic agenda. | We regularly monitor and evaluate the effects of our civic strategies, and review them with peers. | Our senior staff are involved in civic peer networks or communities of practice. |

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