



Civic Recipes:

How HEIs are framing their Civic activity

This briefing provides examples of how HEIs are going about defining the ingredients and ‘menu’ for their civic agreements and civic strategies. It is based on data gathered from a survey of Network members earlier in 2020. We expect to develop and expand this with help of network members.

We hope that it helps you think more clearly about the choices open to you in framing your civic work – and also points you to HEIs who you might want to connect with.

Framing the agreement and defining its focus

A key challenge is working out how to define the focus of your civic strategy. There are different ways of focusing this work. Typically, HEIs will consider the following:

A geographical lens	Deciding how to define sensible geographical boundaries around the work. This will be informed by a number of considerations – including whether you are working with other HEIs on an agreement; on existing local government boundaries etc.
A partnership / sectoral lens	Deciding on who your priority partners will be in your agreement. Do you want to work across multiple sectors, for instance, or to focus on a subset of sectors, for instance prioritising health and skills?
A thematic / challenge lens	Another useful way of focusing an agreement can be to identify key challenge areas, which partners / communities identify as priorities, and which align with expertise / assets in your HEI

Typically, HEIs are drawing on all of these lenses to frame their activity. We provide some examples later in this briefing.

Defining the ingredients

Although civic agreements / strategy may lead to an HEI investing in whole new areas of activity, for many HEIs a first step is to identify what they are already doing which makes a civic contribution, and to try to ensure more effective coordination and alignment across this activity. Typically, HEIs report that there are a thousand flowers blooming, but often the work is happening in disconnected pockets.

The table below describes two broad types of ‘ingredients’ typically incorporated in a civic agreement or strategy – **civic ‘behaviours’** (policies and practices related to its social and economic impact), and **civic ‘knowledge building’** (focusing education and research power on civic outcomes). HEIs typically will ‘pick and mix’ from these activities, and seek to develop a better coordinated and focused approach that is greater than the sum of its parts.

Civic behaviours

A civic strategy will look to achieve synergy across existing institutional policies (such as procurement, or estates), and to consider how the civic contribution of these can be enhanced, for instance by ensuring procurement practice better supports the local economy.

Civic knowledge building

Civic agreements and strategies are not just about enhancing an HEI’s ‘anchor’ role, as an employer, resource and investor in a city or region. They are also about maximising the intellectual contribution an HEI can make through its research, knowledge exchange and educational functions, and better tuning these to the needs and possibilities of its place.

They will seek to harness the knowledge-based contribution that an HEI can make by focusing its education and research power on local priorities, with a commitment to securing long term gains in skills, education, productivity, health, social cohesion, cultural engagement etc.

Typically, Civic strategies will ‘pick and mix’ from the following ingredients:

Civic behaviours – maximising the civic contribution of the HEI	
Internal facing policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EDI • Sustainability • Volunteering 	External-facing ‘Anchoring’ activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement • Community policies • Employment • Estates • Social Responsibility • Students as partners
Civic knowledge building – aligning research and teaching with local priorities	
Education and skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Widening Participation • Skills • Engaged Learning / Employability 	Research, Innovation and KE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research challenges • Knowledge exchange • Public engagement

The rest of this briefing offers snapshots, provided by network members, that illuminate how they are framing and focusing their civic strategies under these different headings.

Civic tests

A number of HEIs have also commented on how useful the four ‘civic tests’ are which were outlined in the UPP ‘**Truly Civic**’ report. These provide an additional ‘lens’ to clarify the purpose and focus of civic strategy:

Tests for a Civic University	
A public test <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can people talk about “our university” with pride and awareness? • Is civic activity aligned to public wants? • Are the views of local people reflected in either the formal governance or informal and communications structures and strategies of the university, including as regards the progress against the goals of the Civic University Agreement? 	A place test <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well are the university’s teaching programmes aligned with the structure and demands of the local labour market and likely developments in the coming years? • Which population is the university serving? How local, and how diverse (including in terms of age, gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation)?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are universities following a single national university model or are local variants being adopted?
<p>A strategic test</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can the university define where its civic boundaries are? What is the geographical area it is primarily focused on? • Is it clear how the university is linked to local/regional leadership in the area – including its graduates? • Does the university have a clear analysis and strategy? Can it use that analysis to explain/underpin why its global or national activities supports/strengthen its civic activity, and can it clearly articulate what outcomes, impacts and benefits it wants as a result of its strategy? 	<p>An impact test</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can the university measure the impact of its activity? • Has the university been thoughtful about how it works with other local universities and other institutions to maximise that impact?

<https://upp-foundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Civic-University-Commission-Final-Report.pdf>

Examples: framing the agreement and defining its focus

A geographical lens

We have compiled examples of how different HEIs are framing the geographical focus of their civic work. The table includes quotes from their survey responses, and from their websites.

A geographical lens	<p>Deciding how to define sensible geographical boundaries around the work. This will be informed by a number of considerations – including whether you are working with other HEIs on an agreement; on existing local government boundaries etc.</p>
A partnership / sectoral lens	<p>Deciding on who your priority partners will be in your agreement. Do you want to work across multiple sectors, for instance, or to focus on a subset of sectors, for instance prioritising health and skills?</p>
A thematic / challenge lens	<p>Another useful way of focusing an agreement can be to identify key challenge areas, which partners / communities identify as priorities, and which align with expertise / assets in your HEI</p>

Universities for Nottingham	<p>The University of Nottingham and Nottingham Trent University recently published a civic agreement with a range of partners</p> <p><i>‘The agreement sets out our joint plans for the future including what will be done to aid local recovery and renewal. The focus of the plan is not just Nottingham city, but the whole of Nottinghamshire’</i></p> <p>https://www.universitiesfornottingham.ac.uk/assets/downloads/Universities for Nottingham Civic Agreement 2020.pdf</p>
University of Portsmouth	<p>Portsmouth has a goal to become one of the UK’s leading Civic Universities.</p> <p><i>‘We will be recognised as setting a new benchmark for civic engagement through the positive differences we make across our region’.</i></p>

	<p>Promoting the city of Portsmouth is a key strategic goal for the university's civic work.</p> <p><i>'Through partnership work to advocate for Portsmouth's unique strengths and heritage as a city, we will champion our shared interests, support economic growth and make the city a destination of choice for people to live, work and visit'.</i></p> <p>https://www.port.ac.uk/about-us/our-ambition/our-strategy</p>
King's College London	<p>King's has a London strategy and it is our strategic ambition to be a civic university at the heart of London.</p> <p><i>'London is one of King's five strategic priorities. Our strategy is capital wide, while it also has a hyperlocal focus on King's home boroughs - Lambeth, Southwark & Westminster. This local framework is called #KingsLocal and was developed through consultation with our local communities'.</i></p> <p>https://www.kcl.ac.uk/aboutkings/strategy</p>
Swansea University	<p>Swansea has set a regional focus for its civic activity.</p> <p><i>'Responding to needs of regional industry and economy, bringing global and research benefits to the region, responding to needs of Welsh communities'</i></p>
UCL	<p>UCL published its London Framework in November 2020.</p> <p><i>'The London Framework is a core document setting out the key principles which define the purpose of UCL London. These principles outline how and why we engage with our audiences in London, as well as a way of working for UCL in London. In the Framework, we explore how we are governed, our delivery priorities and how we will measure our success'.</i></p> <p>https://www.ucl.ac.uk/london/what-we-do/london-framework</p>
Lancaster University	<p>Lancaster University has reaffirmed its commitment to the city of Lancaster by pledging to put the economy and quality of life in the local community as one of its top priorities.</p> <p><i>'We actively collaborate with local authorities, health sector, businesses, third sector, FE Colleges and our communities to develop research, education and engagement projects to improve local employment, address skills needs, drive economic growth, improve public health outcomes and strengthen our communities.'</i></p>

	<p>https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/news/lancaster-university-reaffirms-commitment-to-the-city</p> <p>Developing trusted relationships with civic partners, underpinned by formal agreements.</p> <p>Lancaster is involved in a number of formal agreements (e.g. MOUs, Strategic Alliances, Collaborative Frameworks) that aim to build collaborative working, understand need and/or progress specific projects to achieve positive outcomes.</p> <p>These include an MOU with Lancaster and Morecambe College https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/news/university-and-college-working-to-bring-opportunities-to-local-area and a Strategic Alliance with Blackburn and Darwen Council (see Leading Places programme) https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/news/articles/2017/lancaster-university-agrees-local-strategic-alliance/</p>
<p>The University of Gloucestershire</p>	<p>Gloucestershire Vision 2050</p> <p>The University of Gloucestershire were core partners in led an ambitious county-wide conversation to explore ideas and shape a long-term future vision for the county. Six ‘big ideas’ emerged and a concordat emerged, laying out the Vision 2050, which is now overseen by the Gloucestershire City Region Board on which the University is represented.</p> <p><i>‘The most distinctive feature of our civic approach has been our work developing a vision for the county of Gloucestershire in 2050.’</i></p> <p>https://glos2050.com/</p>
<p>Goldsmiths University</p>	<p>Goldsmiths University is a core partner in the Lewisham Deal</p> <p>This brings together a range of public sector partners, to tackle poverty and support growth in the borough.</p> <p>https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/community-support/the-lewisham-deal</p>
<p>Bishop Grosseteste University</p>	<p>Working with the University of Lincoln</p> <p>Bishop Grosseteste and Lincoln universities have come together to develop a Civic University Agreement in support of the City of Lincoln Council (see https://www.bishopg.ac.uk/news/lincoln-</p>

	<p>universities-pledge-to-support-city-through-civic-university-agreement): <i>‘intra-institutional partner-working that seeks to address civic challenges in a joined-up way’.</i></p>
University of Wolverhampton	<p>Working jointly with other HEIs in the West Midlands</p> <p>The University of Wolverhampton invests in partnership working through the creation of the West Midlands Combined Universities (a partnership between Wolverhampton, Birmingham City and Coventry Universities); and through partnerships with key organisations in each locality to work together for the good of the community, businesses and civil society: http://www.wmcu.ac.uk/</p>
University of Bristol	<p>A Global Civic University</p> <p><i>We aim to embed our civic mission across the University's research, teaching and professional services. This is demonstrated in our forthcoming University strategy, which will include a new pillar for Civic Engagement and Social Responsibility. Recent work includes a Memorandum of Understanding with Bristol City Council and the City Office as part of our collaboration to achieve the goals of Bristol's One City Plan, and a micro-campus at the Wellspring Settlement, to support civic engagement in East Bristol. Our local work is balanced with our global outlook and our aim to be a global civic university.</i></p> <p>http://www.bristol.ac.uk/news/2020/march/council-mou.htm </p>
University of Strathclyde	<p>A city wide MOU</p> <p>Strathclyde has developed a Glasgow-wide policy research MOU that includes all HEIs and FE Colleges.</p>
University of Exeter	<p>Regional engagement strategy</p> <p>Exeter is developing a regional engagement strategy which aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be embedded in, and representative of, our research and education excellence • Use our global reach to improve the international connectivity of our region • Be creative and innovative in working for the public good • Contribute to place-shaping and the vibrancy and cultural richness of our region • Provide ideas and solutions that will have economic, social and environmental impact

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate closely with our regional partners and stakeholders • Support engagement with, and equality of opportunities for people of all genders, ethnicities and abilities. <p>LINK</p>
City University, London	<p><i>“We have an executive lead who has established a Task and Finish Group to oversee finalising our Civic Engagement Strategy. The group is made up of approx. 25 members of staff from across all our Schools and Professional Services to ensure varied expertise and influence.</i></p> <p><i>This group is focusing on our scope as an anchor institution (hyper-local to local, national to global etc), as well as our priority projects to deliver maximum positive benefit in line with our strengths and community need, and a focus on strengthening partnerships in the community (including identifying potential co-signatories for the CUA).</i></p> <p><i>We are focusing on activities which are already taking place across the institution and in the community in order to harness this enthusiasm and build on existing community links rather than looking to create lots of new activities which may not address local challenges. We are working with the local authority and community groups to make sure we are up to date with what those challenges are.”</i></p>
University of Warwick	<p><i>“Our approach to civic universities is to embed our role within a wider partnerships of local anchor institutions, aligning mission and activities to coordinate and focus our collective power. Overall there is a clear agreement within our partnership on the need and the benefits from this approach. There is also clear recognition of the role and contribution of the University. The main challenge is on identifying the focused activity required in response to the post-Covid recovery”.</i></p>
University of Sheffield	<p>The University’s strategy about its role in the Sheffield City Region (SCR) is embedded within the innovation pillar of the University’s vision. The University uses its anchor institution role and world-leading research, innovation and education as a catalyst for the region’s social, cultural, sustainable and economic development.</p>



<p>Sheffield Hallam University</p>	<p><i>“Hallam’s Transforming Lives strategy sets out a clear strategic aim to be a university at the heart of its region. The university already has a strong track record of meaningful, constructive and impactful activity across the region, and on the national and international stage.</i></p> <p><i>Through a wide range of activities, we contribute to the development of the Sheffield City region, and the region’s ambition to become a high-skilled, high growth area.</i></p> <p><i>For Sheffield Hallam, civic engagement needs to be hardwired into the fabric of our institutional culture and outlook. We are proudly a university of place, and our vision is to help make this ambition a reality – embedding civic aspirations at an institutional level, as well as working with government and strategic partners to ensure that the university’s geographic role and responsibility is used more effectively as an agent to drive positive societal change. We believe this is particularly important given the economic and social challenge presented by Covid-19, where our role as an anchor institution in our region will be critical to recovery.”</i></p>
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A partnership / sectoral lens

Many HEIs also define their civic activity in terms of priority sectors.

<p>A geographical lens</p>	<p>Deciding how to define sensible geographical boundaries around the work. This will be informed by a number of considerations – including whether you are working with other HEIs on an agreement; on existing local government boundaries etc.</p>
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<p>A thematic / challenge lens</p>	<p>Another useful way of focusing an agreement can be to identify key challenge areas, which partners / communities identify as priorities, and which align with expertise / assets in your HEI</p>

<p>Keele University</p>	<p><i>“The Civic University agreements we've put in place with local partners are branded the Keele Deals. All four Deals (the three agreed and the forthcoming Keele Deal Recovery) build on established relationships and generally are shaped over several months by exploring and formalising already identified needs and priorities (alongside additional workshop activity to provide input for less powerful voices).</i></p> <p><i>We are about to launch our fourth Keele Deal (Keele Deal Recovery), with three local authorities, two healthcare trusts and the voluntary and community sector umbrella organisations. It covers eight areas, including innovation and enterprise, health and wellbeing, digital, social inclusion food security and more.</i></p> <p><i>If there has been any barrier over the years it has been around the understanding among local partners of the importance of innovation in driving economic growth. That's something we've worked hard on with local partners and is no longer an issue”.</i></p> <p>https://www.keele.ac.uk/business/keeledeals/</p>
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Examples of work with specific sectors

<p>Local authorities and business community</p>	<p>University of Exeter <i>We have strong, established relationships with our local authorities and have strengths in local economic impact and business support.</i></p> <p>Lancaster University Working with LEPs, Local authorities, businesses to drive economic regeneration and access government funding for regional development, e.g. NW Coastal Arc SIA http://www.northwestcoastalarc.net/ ; Borderlands Growth Deal; Health Innovation Campus https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/health-innovation/what-we-do/</p> <p>Queen Mary University of London Queen Mary staff contribute to several Tower Hamlets Council groups (e.g. the VP for Policy & Strategic Partnerships is a member of the Tower Hamlets Partners Executive Group), which in turn links Queen Mary strategically to the work of other East London organisations, such as Barts NHS Trust and Canary Wharf Group.</p> <p>King’s College London With King’s home boroughs of Lambeth, Southwark and Westminster, King’s identified four areas do to do even more to serve, support and sustain their local communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education & attainment: ensuring everyone can aim high and reach their full potential • Business & enterprise: supporting the development of thriving local economies while creating opportunities for all • Community resilience: strengthening communities and helping them develop solutions to the problems they face • Health & wellbeing: improving the health and wellbeing of our communities through local partnership. <p>To deliver on this goal, King’s are building stronger relationships with local authorities and working side by side with local organisations and community leaders to develop collaborative approaches to shared challenges.</p>
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	<p>Bespoke statements of intent with our local boroughs identify areas for collaboration informed by their ambitions and King’s strengths.</p>
<p>SMEs and social enterprises</p>	<p>University of Birmingham - STEM and SME support programmes. A programme that supports SMEs within Greater Birmingham and Solihull to adopt low carbon energy technologies and applications, which is to be rolled out across the region: https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/news/latest/2020/03/university-of-birmingham-extends-low-carbon-innovation-support-for-smes.aspx</p> <p>Aston University Centre for Ethnic Minority Entrepreneurship (CREME) Supports ethnic minority led businesses with leading-edge expertise. CREME has transformed the 'perceptions' of ethnic minority entrepreneurs by working with business policy-makers and influential organisations to engage collaboratively with overlooked or disregarded business communities. E.g. recent publication for FSB ‘Unlocking Opportunity’ - the value of ethnic minority firms to UK economic activity and enterprise report which highlights the importance of EMBs to the UK economy and was discussed in Parliament. https://www.enterpriseresearch.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Unlocking-Opportunity_FSB-Report-.2020.pdf.</p> <p>During COVID-19 Prof Monder Ram ran sessions with Citizens UK and their member local social enterprises to support them through the crisis making sure they were aware of Government support and how to access it. https://www2.aston.ac.uk/aston-business-school/research/research-centres/CREME</p> <p>Centre for Growth Aston Business School’s Centre for Growth runs programmes for SMEs to help them to grow and scale: https://www2.aston.ac.uk/aston-business-school/business/centre-for-growth During the COVID-19 pandemic they launched a series of podcasts with local businesses to provide support: https://www2.aston.ac.uk/aston-business-school/podcast</p>

	<p>University of Lancaster Lancaster is recognised as a national exemplar in driving SME innovation-led growth. We have supported over 10,000 SMEs, creating/safeguarding more than 16,000 jobs, thereby achieving significant economic and social impact regionally and nationally over the last 20 years. In 2019, an independent economic evaluation of our business innovation collaboration programmes funded through European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) shows every £1 of ESIF funding returns £18.52 of additional economic benefit.</p>
<p>Arts and culture</p>	<p>University of Exeter Exeter Culture is an established umbrella organisation which is managed from the University and aims to improve the resilience and ambition of Exeter’s arts and cultural sector by creating new local, national and international connections. https://exeterculture.com/</p> <p>University of Southampton The University has prioritised building resilience and rejuvenating a sense of pride in place through Arts and Culture. Key initiatives are a Southampton City of Culture Bid 2025; Southampton, Connecting Cultures; and Southampton Cultural Education Partnership.</p> <p>University of Birmingham Cultural collections and public engagement is a major focus for the university. https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/culture/index.aspx</p>

A thematic lens

A number of HEIs have identified themes or ‘challenges’ to focus their civic activity.

<p>A geographical lens</p>	<p>Deciding how to define sensible geographical boundaries around the work. This will be informed by a number of considerations – including whether you are working with other HEIs on an agreement; on existing local government boundaries etc.</p>
<p>A partnership / sectoral lens</p>	<p>Deciding on who your priority partners will be in your agreement. Do you want to work across multiple sectors, for instance, or to focus on a subset of sectors, for instance prioritising health and skills?</p>
<p>A thematic / challenge lens</p>	<p>Another useful way of focusing an agreement can be to identify key challenge areas, which partners / communities identify as priorities, and which align with expertise / assets in your HEI</p>

<p>Aston University</p>	<p>Aston’s proposed core civic themes are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and wellbeing • Education & Employment • Sustainable Socially Inclusive Prosperity • Environment • Justice <p>https://www2.aston.ac.uk/news/?aston-university-pledges-commitment-to-the-local-community</p>
<p>University of Aberdeen</p>	<p><i>‘Our approach is driven through the delivery of our Aberdeen 2040 Strategy, within a framework of four strategic themes (Inclusive, Interdisciplinary, International and Sustainable) and five interdisciplinary challenges (Health, nutrition and wellbeing; Social inclusion and cultural diversity, Energy transition, Data and artificial intelligence and Environment and biodiversity)’.</i></p> <p>https://www.abdn.ac.uk/2040/</p>
<p>Universities for Nottingham</p>	<p>At the end of July 2020, the Universities for Nottingham joint Civic Agreement was signed, this has 5 themes - Health and Well-being, Sustainability, Economic Prosperity, Education, 'Unlocking the Universities'. (https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/news/uks-first-civic-agreement)</p>

Liverpool John Moores University	<i>The core elements of our civic approach are around Health and community. This will become clearer however, once we develop our CUA.</i>
Staffordshire University	Staffordshire’s ‘Connected Communities’ framework articulates how the multiple elements of the university’s activity and engagement add value and deliver impact. https://www.staffs.ac.uk/research/collaborate/connected-communities
London Metropolitan University	<p>London Met is on a mission to tackle the inequalities facing London, to improve people’s lives and to deliver social justice. They are bringing their academic expertise to co-design solutions to the social challenges which disproportionately affect the communities that the university serves, through the London Met Lab.</p> <p>They have identified 6 challenge areas. For each, Challenge Champions are on hand to undertake research projects, provide practical support and share their expertise to help find new and innovative ways to respond to the needs of the city.</p> <p>The six challenge areas are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Crime ● Discrimination ● Environment ● Health improvement ● Poverty and deprivation ● Social wealth <p>https://www.londonmet.ac.uk/about/london-met-lab/</p>
Royal Agricultural University	<i>“We have a specific interest in developing civic activity linked to local agriculture and food policy”</i>
The University of Sheffield	<p>The University of Sheffield Regional Engagement Work Programme has been designed in partnership with stakeholders in order to meet their strategic priorities. The four main themes of the work programme are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Delivering innovation to improve productivity ● Sustainable development of the region ● Improving the region’s health and wellbeing outcomes ● Enhancing the cultural vibrancy of the region

	<p>Alongside these main themes there are four cross-cutting themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving talent development and retention • Enhancing the city and region’s physical environment • Supporting social inclusion and community capacity building • The University as a trusted civic partner.
<p>The University of Leeds</p>	<p><i>“There is a variety of civic activity that goes on across the University under the badge of 'civic' - from our sustainability team that works with our students to make sure they integrate well with the local community, to our major initiatives such as the Leeds Innovation District which sees us work with the council, NHS and other HEIs to support the creation of a new district in the city centre to support innovation and help create jobs. Our public engagement team also delivers outreach programmes to help open up the university to the local community, whilst we have researchers who work closely with Leeds City Council to offer support and expertise to solve real life problems in the city. The Head of Public Affairs is tasked with bringing all of this together and also promote the University locally and to central government as a civic university”.</i></p>
<p>University of Sussex</p>	<p><i>“We will be able to confirm our future approach once we have finalised our agreement. However our current approach is based on a number of factors including (but not limited to) widening participation and the levelling out agenda; economic regeneration and contribution; innovation and entrepreneurship and student experience and community participation”.</i></p>
<p>University of Warwick</p>	<p>Our civic work is focused on engagement with other local anchor institutions to determine shared priorities and align collective power in consultation with local communities, with the following priorities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Enterprise and Economy: This is critical and should be the initial focus, covering recovery and reset/reinvention and ensuring that economic recovery is felt by all parts of society. b. Health and Wellbeing: covering the immediate impacts of Covid (including isolation and mental health) but also longer-term systemic issues such as social care and health inequalities across communities. c. Improving educational outcomes and attainment: Ensuring that changes are made in the light of Covid-19 to ensure there is no

	<p>lasting impact e.g. on disadvantaged groups, young people etc and that we emerge stronger.</p> <p>d. Cultural and Creative Economy: Ensuring the successful delivery and legacy of City of Culture and supporting the long-term growth of our cultural and creative economy.</p> <p>e. Building resilient communities: Covid-19 has highlighted where community infrastructure is strong and resilient but also where it needs to be strengthened. This could include (i) sustaining and systemising the right volunteering schemes; (ii) identifying the most affected communities and targeting our resources (e.g. we are working to build community capacity in Canley, will progress Foleshill and are planning to build partnerships in Nuneaton); (iii) more collective approaches to community support.</p> <p>f. Connectivity and Sustainability: Accelerating digital connectivity (infrastructure, innovative applications and skills), future mobility and sustainable solutions will be critical.</p> <p>g. Engagement and Inspiration: recovering from covid-19 (and the uncertainty) will require a strong engagement programme for people both around possibilities for their own future and the future of their community. It will also require a strong external narrative for the city and region. We will create one narrative and genuinely engage with the local community collectively.</p>
<p>Sheffield Hallam University</p>	<p>One our our key initiatives is 'South Yorkshire Futures', a sector-leading social mobility programme. It aims to secure sustained improvements across the education sector, with a focus on raising the attainment and aspirations of young people in our region across all age groups. It is the biggest university-led programme of its kind in the country.</p> <p>Since 2017, we have built strong partnerships with our colleagues in local authorities and the education sector, including the diverse Early Years sector. We have in our region and created a clear, shared vision which has underpinned the range of work we have undertaken and has also brought an additional £2.2million in funding for Early Years' services in South Yorkshire.</p>

Examples: defining the ingredients

Typically, Civic strategies will ‘pick and mix’ from the following ingredients:

Civic behaviours – maximising the civic contribution of the HEI	
Internal facing policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EDI • Sustainability • Volunteering 	External-facing ‘Anchoring’ activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement • Community policies • Employment • Estates • Social Responsibility • Students as partners
Civic knowledge building – aligning research and teaching with local priorities	
Education and skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Widening Participation • Skills • Engaged Learning / Employability 	Research, Innovation and KE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research challenges • Knowledge exchange • Public engagement

Below, we list examples of how different HEIs are focusing their work in these different areas.

Civic behaviours: internal facing policies

EDI	<p>University of Bristol Our ambitious Diversify initiative provides a range of measures to improve representation of marginalised groups in our workforce. Programmes have been developed with local partners and aim to attract, develop and retain talented individuals from different backgrounds and heritages, contributing to our diverse and inclusive University community. http://www.bristol.ac.uk/inclusion/diversify-your-workforce/</p> <p>City University, London We are focusing on the link between Civic and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) which is significant and recognition of such is increasing. i.e. WP, inequalities in access etc</p>
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<p>Sustainability</p>	<p>University of Southampton Supporting the Green City Charter of which the University is a partner. This sits alongside the development of our Environment and Sustainability Strategy, recognising the University’s role as an anchor institution that is environmentally conscious, leading by innovation and example.</p> <p>St Andrews University <i>We have a strong bottom up Climate Change activity group</i> https://www.transitionsta.org/</p>
<p>Volunteering</p>	<p>University of Portsmouth Students and staff work in partnership with the community to significantly enhance the social, cultural and economic life of the city. These collaborations contribute opportunities for students to develop the characteristics of our Graduate Hallmark.</p> <p>Queen Mary University of London Queen Mary hosts a student-led pro-bono social impact consultancy (SKETCH), bringing together initiatives such as our Legal Advice Centre for local residents, businesses and third sector organisations, and a QConsult programme connecting students to London businesses and charities through mini consultancy projects.</p> <p>Lancaster University Lancaster facilitates staff to represent the University and contribute time and expertise on external boards, community groups, etc., e.g. Communities Together, Chamber of Commerce, BID, FE Colleges, NHS Trusts</p> <p>University of Birmingham Birmingham’s Pro Bono Group (PBG) was established to provide legal advice services to vulnerable members of the community whilst enhancing students’ skills and experience of law in the real world.</p> <p>University of Southampton: Campaign for Southampton The University is in the planning phase of a significant fundraising and engagement initiative. This will be a galvanising opportunity to unite staff, students, alumni and friends to generate hundreds of thousands of volunteering hours directly benefitting people and services in our region, and celebrate our commitment to civic partners and the communities we serve.</p>

Civic Behaviours - External-facing ‘Anchoring’ activity

<p>Procurement</p>	<p>University of Northampton The University has been recognised for its work in this area by Big Society Capital https://www.northampton.ac.uk/news/universitys-social-impact-credentials-recognised/ The university has also produced, in collaboration with Universities UK, a procurement handbook which outlines how universities, and other organisations, can support social value through their work https://www.northampton.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/HEI-procurement-handbook.pdf).</p> <p>King’s College London King’s Socially Responsible Procurement Policy aims to deliver social value through our supply chain and to make sure that our suppliers provide their goods and services in ways that do not harm people or places – but instead positively benefit both.</p> <p>The policy includes an imperative to support businesses based in our home boroughs of Southwark, Lambeth and Westminster.</p>
<p>Community policies</p>	<p>Falmouth University Falmouth’s civic activity is primarily focused on community engagement in terms of local elected representatives, community access to the campus, and measuring economic impact on the local area. This is in addition to well established fair access and outreach activities aimed at school pupils.</p> <p>St Andrews University St Andrews has recently launched a University Community Fund https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/community/community-fund/</p> <p>Winchester’s Flourishing Communities framework The University of Winchester undertook a two year consultation as part of their community impact strategy. This framework is the result – focused on seven features of a flourishing community. These features now focus and guide their civic strategy. https://www.winchester.ac.uk/media/content-assets/documents/Flourishing-Communities-Brochure.pdf</p>

	<p>Solent University’s Civic charter</p> <p>Solent’s Civic Charter was launched in Autumn 2019 to help the University in further strengthening its role in the community. https://www.solent.ac.uk/work-with-us/community</p> <p>University of Portsmouth</p> <p>A priority of the university is to develop opportunities for shared community and employer use of the institution’s talent, resources, special collections and activities</p>
Employment	<p>Queen Mary University of London</p> <p>Queen Mary was the first accredited university to pay the Living Wage and is a founding partner of the Living Wage Foundation. They are a member of Citizens UK, who are partners on a social change teaching module in the School of Politics, alongside supporting Queen Mary to engage locally in east London.</p>
Estates / campus development	<p>A number of HEIs have civic developments linked to the development of new buildings or areas of campus, or even to whole new campuses</p> <p>Imperial College</p> <p>Imperial’s White City campus is bringing together scientific researchers, corporate partners, entrepreneurs and the local community to co-exist and co-create on an unprecedented scale, and turning cutting-edge scientific research into real-world benefits for society. http://www.imperial.ac.uk/white-city-campus/</p> <p>University of Birmingham</p> <p>The Exchange is going to breathe new life into the former Municipal Bank in Centenary Square. The city centre site will become the home for a diverse range of activities for all people in Birmingham and beyond to get involved with. https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/university/building/the-exchange.aspx</p>
Social responsibility	<p>University of Portsmouth</p> <p>The university seeks to promote diversity and inclusiveness in their community through engagement and leadership in initiatives including the Armed Forces Covenant, Portsmouth City of Sanctuary and Portsmouth Pride.</p>

Cardiff Metropolitan University

Priorities for the university are that 'our community is involved in, and recognises our efforts in championing creativity, diversity, freedom and innovation; and that our community has confidence that we will, through the creation of trusted partnerships, work with them to effect educational transformation, research with impact, sustainable economic growth, social cohesion, and health and wellbeing'. The university's ambition is that their community can talk about 'our university with pride and awareness.

University of Derby

Community/Public Engagement is a key part of Derby's civic approach - through events (including an annual Community Fun Day), volunteering and sponsorship

Aston University

Partnership with Aston Villa including Villa Vision

Aston University invests in a partnership with Aston Villa including its Charitable Foundation to work together to support the local community. The flagship programme is Villa Vision which involves going into local schools to conduct eye health awareness workshops, vision screening, eye testing and dispensing of glasses where needed.

<https://www.avfc.co.uk/News/2019/09/27/aston-villa-renew-partnership-with-aston-university>

<https://www.avfc.co.uk/foundation/community-engagement/villa-vision>

<https://www2.aston.ac.uk/news/?aston-researchers-call-on-the-public-to-join-citizen-science-research>

University of Wolverhampton

As an anchor institution the University of Wolverhampton plays strategic and catalytic roles through its investment in place, employment of people, social positioning, HE provision, etc. and is a vital instrument for social change in its locality.

Its strapline is the University of Opportunity and, as such, it is committed to providing opportunity in every way it can. Its civic approach is embedded in its DNA. In addition to commitment to mainstream education, research and business engagement, it has a specific profile that means that it has to operate in a different way to other universities. Approximately half of the University's student population are adults and it attracts over 75% of its students from within a 25 mile radius.

	<p>York St John University A key platform the university’s civic activity is the newly established Institute of Social Justice https://www.yorksj.ac.uk/research/institute-of-social-justice/</p>
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Civic knowledge building: Education and skills

<p>A number of HEIs are developing civic activity through participatory approaches to learning</p>	<p>University of Exeter Community engaged research and learning is a growing area for us and we have an increasing number of projects of collaborations across the disciplines, partnering with organisations across the region.</p> <p>King’s College London Through mutually beneficial relationships with local communities, King’s are developing collaborative approaches to shared challenges. King’s Civic Challenge exemplifies this approach as it brings together teams of students, staff and local charities to work together to co-create solutions to some of the challenges our communities face.</p> <p>Cardiff Metropolitan University One of the university’s key initiatives is Open Campus: http://www.cardiffmet.ac.uk/celebrate/Pages/CESP-open-campus.aspx (student community placements)</p> <p>Wolverhampton Innovation to address some of the challenging and persistent problems facing communities including co-creation of the Wolverhampton City Learning Region UNESCO initiative with City of Wolverhampton Council and core learning providers to put learning at the economic and social development of the city for residents which also run the Learning Festival for the city : https://www.wlv.ac.uk/about-us/widening-participation/centre-for-lifelong-learning/wolverhampton-city-learning-region/</p>
<p>Skills strategy / employability</p>	<p>King’s College London London as a living classroom – King’s work with partners in London to develop formal and informal learning opportunities for students that integrate London into their experience and help them to develop the skills and networks that will support them in their future careers.</p>

University of West London

The university is very focused on employability, so their civic focus is more around building aspiration, social mobility, and supporting skills development (particularly in response to anticipated impacts on employments from Covid-19)

University of Derby

A key focus is the wider skills agenda - supporting the county/region to plug the skills gap, with an emphasis on public services (allied healthcare professions/nursing/teaching/policing)

Lancaster University

Lancaster has an MOU with Lancaster and Morecambe College
<https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/news/university-and-college-working-to-bring-opportunities-to-local-area>

NTU

NTU is working in close collaboration with stakeholders across the Mansfield and Ashfield area, a Programme of change has been co-developed and delivery is now underway across six themes of activity. The themes are: economic prosperity; culture; community participation; research and funding; improving educational outcomes; higher education.

As part of this Programme; NTU has established a new Higher Education Hub in Mansfield, this is in partnership with Vision West Notts College enabling the provision of foundation degrees and integrated FE/HE pathways to support the current and future skills needs of the area: [HE in Mansfield](#)

University of Wolverhampton

Investment in its locality through employment and infrastructure developments to enhance education and employment opportunities for residents such as initiative to train all the health care providers needed in the region.

Commitment to lifelong learning starting with Children's University through to formal, informal and non-formal learning opportunities for adults of all ages both in work and not in work

<https://www.wlv.ac.uk/about-us/activities-for-schools-and-colleges/childrens-university/>

	<p>Distributed learning provision through the creation of regional learning centres in key locations to address broad challenges facing different communities such as low aspirations, higher skills challenges and increased local opportunities for HE progression: https://www.wlv.ac.uk/uctelford/</p> <p>St Andrews University St Andrews has a successful lifelong learning programme https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/subjects/study-options/lifelong-learning/ and is a University of Sanctuary https://news.st-andrews.ac.uk/archive/university-awarded-sanctuary-status-to-support-refugees/ and working with the town to explore City of Sanctuary opportunities.</p>
<p>Widening access and outreach</p>	<p>Aston University: Social Mobility Aston has a long history of being committed to social mobility. Aston’s student population reflects the diversity of the city. In 2018/19, 67.5% of the total Aston student population came from an ethnic minority background compared to the national average of 24.3% [from Heidi+ based on HESA data]. Aston university is ranked first for value added (The Guardian University Guide 2020) which means that out of every university in the country their students are more likely to achieve over and above their potential. https://www2.aston.ac.uk/news/releases/2012/november/higher-education-and-social-mobility</p> <p>University of Derby A key focus is widening access and outreach - to raise aspirations and support social mobility https://www.derby.ac.uk/departments/widening-access/ Their Vice-Chancellor is Chair of the Derby Opportunity Area.</p> <p>King’s College London King’s is a civic minded university that seeks to educate a diverse community of learners all with individual voices and experiences so that they can achieve to their greatest potential. Widening participation to higher education in turn makes King’s and the wider world a better place. King’s is the first whole-university strategic partner of Citizens UK, which empowers communities to act together for power, social justice and the common good.</p> <p>University of Bedfordshire All elements of Bedfordshire’s civic ambitions stem from their widening participation mission. The fact that they are embedded within the town</p>

	<p>centre and our teaching and research and existing KE activity fundamentally support this type of agenda is vital. It's very important that this is seen as an extension of their core focus, rather than an additional bolt-on activity</p>
<p>Students as Partners</p>	<p>Newcastle University Newcastle University is working with other HEIs and partners in the city on a 'Students and partners' programme:</p> <p><i>"With more than 50,000 higher education students in Newcastle's three institutions, the partnership between city and students is a key part of Collaborative Newcastle . It sets out how Newcastle City Council, the NHS, Newcastle University, Northumbria University and Newcastle College will work together to support higher education students to live, study, work and thrive in Newcastle .</i></p> <p><i>Our aim is for students of all backgrounds and cultures to have a positive experience whilst living, studying and working in the city and wider region; for our communities to have a positive experience of living and working alongside our students; and for the city and region to benefit from the skills, knowledge, experience and diversity that students bring".</i></p> <p>You can find out more about the programme here: https://collaborativenewcastle.vanillabeancreative.com/growth-and-prosperity/</p>

Research, Innovation and KE

<p>Research Challenge focus: a number of HEIs mobilise their civic ambitions through a focus on research challenges</p>	<p>University of Bath and B&NES Council launch “Our Shared Future” The initiative will bring together skills, knowledge and expertise from across the city to explore possibilities and address challenges in Bath and the region.</p> <p>King’s College London London as a living laboratory - Through collaborations with other universities and with London’s businesses, agencies, institutions, policy makers and practitioners, we ensure that our research is informed by London and that it delivers benefits to the capital and the communities around us.</p> <p>Lancaster University Research- and education-led civic engagement activity - working with partners to innovate and co-create programmes of activity which build capability/capacity and improve outcomes for communities. For example, the Beyond Imagination E3 research project https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/lica/beyond-imagination/. A key element of this work involves co-designing improved population health by working across the NHS, local health partnerships and public sector to establish a ‘social movement’ for a healthier life. As an early initiative of this, working with Blackburn and Lancaster Councils, the project is planning to create a taxonomy of demographic data across the region establishing a strong baseline from which research and other interventions can be measured. Another example is the 'Connecting Kids' project, initiated by Lancaster University in collaboration with Eden Project North and a range of local education providers and businesses, to help to connect vulnerable children with education during the the first Covid-19 lockdown in 2020. Over £130k was raised through the University’s fundraising team to support the project, which includes the provision of over 500 laptops, internet access, over 2,000 activity packs, learning resources and mentoring support provided by University students. The project will be evaluated in line with Widening Participation evaluation models.</p> <p>London Metropolitan University Through our civic network, we are on a mission to tackle the inequalities facing London, to improve people’s lives and to deliver social justice. Along with our staff, students and partners, we are bringing our academic expertise to co-design solutions to the social challenges which disproportionately affect the communities that we serve.</p>
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	<p>We have named this area of Civic engagement - The London Met Labs: Empowering London and we are working with local partners, undertaking research projects, providing practical support including clinics and sharing our expertise so that together, we can find new and innovative ways to respond to the needs of the city in six crucial areas:</p> <p>1. Crime 2. Poverty and deprivation 3. Environment 4. Social Wealth 5. Discrimination 6. Health Improvement</p> <p>https://www.londonmet.ac.uk/about/london-met-lab/</p>
<p>KE focus: Meeting local / regional needs, building capability</p>	<p>University of Hull We currently have lots of activities that can be deemed as relating to our civic role, for example Aura - https://aura-innovation.co.uk/ - a partnership driving improvements in the offshore wind and wider energy industries; or in the development of the ARK National Flood Resilience Centre which enables simulation to support training and research into flood resilience https://www.floodinnovation.co.uk. Both are excellent examples of using issues that affect our own place but which have applications on a global basis.</p> <p>University of Derby Knowledge exchange, skills, funding support and research - part of the Derby Economic Recovery Taskforce, representation on boards across the city/county (D2N2/LEP/Midlands Engine) - https://www.derby.ac.uk/business-services/</p> <p>Aston University Energy and Bioproducts Research Institute Uses cutting edge research to supporting a diverse range of local businesses to convert waste to energy. https://www2.aston.ac.uk/eas/research/groups/ebri</p> <p>Birmingham – WMREDI Research Centre https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/news/latest/2020/02/wm-redi-launched-in-birmingham-to-support-inclusive-economic-growth-across-the-uk.aspx</p> <p>CLES, local wealth building and community support https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/business/research/research-projects/city-redi/local-wealth-building-in-birmingham-and-beyond-a-new-economic-mainstream.aspx</p>

	<p>Newcastle University Newcastle is developing a Policy and Evidence Hub to bring together evidence and expertise to inform policy decisions and measure impact going forward:</p> <p><i>“There is significant research activity happening in the region - in our four universities but also within other public, private and third sector organisations - often with a focus on the complex economic, social, environmental and health challenges we face. But connecting the research and evidence base to the policy making process has significant challenges. Complex problems often require inputs from research across a diverse range of disciplines and may need to inform a number of policy areas to have impact, which presents significant coordination issues. Converting, translating and joining up evidence into useful materials for policy-makers requires additional resource and capacity beyond the scope of most research projects. At a very practical level, navigating the research landscape is time-consuming and difficult, often depending on personal knowledge and relationships, which experience shows can lead to valuable evidence falling between the cracks.</i></p> <p><i>So there are significant benefits and opportunities for the region if we can (better) coordinate the diverse range of data and evidence we generate to address collective challenges or opportunities and help inform policy making”.</i></p>
<p>Public Engagement</p>	<p>Lancaster University Civic/community engagement programme to raise awareness of research and education activity and impact, bring it to life for the public, support public involvement with research and gather views (e.g. the University's public events programme; the 'Lancaster Exchange' - an interactive, annual public meeting which helps to inform our civic role and provides an opportunity for the University to engage directly with our local community and for a wide range of stakeholders and attendees to discuss the development of the University, as well as the contribution it can make to the wider community and regional economy: https://portal.lancaster.ac.uk/intranet/news/article/the-lancaster-exchange-returns-in-2020; community perception surveys and consultations.</p>

Queen Mary University of London

Queen Mary has a Centre for Public Engagement, designed to enable staff and students to connect with and learn from communities outside of academia. Through grants and support, many Queen Mary staff have built vital local connections. Examples include the Festival of Communities (a 2-day festival attended by around 3500 local residents) or the Student Union's Community Sport programme designed to improve social cohesion between students and local residents

(<https://qmsu.org/communitysport>). The university has an Arts & Culture programme, which includes engagement with local artists and music outreach, and a science centre - Centre of the Cell - for school children, which was the first science centre in the world to be located in working biomedical research laboratories.

University of Aberdeen

Our approach is driven through the delivery of our Aberdeen 2040 Strategy, within a framework of four strategic themes (Inclusive, Interdisciplinary, International and Sustainable) and five interdisciplinary challenges (Health, nutrition and wellbeing; Social inclusion and cultural diversity, Energy transition, Data and artificial intelligence and Environment and biodiversity). This work is underpinned by long established public engagement in research activities, alongside a variety of community engagement initiatives delivered via schools and institutes.

St Andrews University

We have a strong Public Engagement with Research Team

<https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/research/support/public-engagement/>

Many researchers have built up relationships with community local groups or influencers including patient groups, or facility stakeholders. These activities are primarily bi-directional supporting both the research and other stakeholder needs.

Please get in touch if you would like to add examples to this briefing document.

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About the Civic University Network

The Civic University Network builds on the 2018 UPP Foundation Civic University Commission which challenged universities to re-shape their role and responsibility to their communities to realise their potential as drivers of a new civic agenda.

Our vision for the Civic University Network is to help make this ambition a reality – supporting 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.



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