

Some simple illustrations of Community Engagement around the world

1. Europe

(i) *Wales*

Community University of the Valleys Partnership

The Community University of the Valleys Partnership is a unique partnership between Universities and Community Organisations in South Wales. It works to bring learning closer to home, delivering courses at community venues and listening to learners and community workers to ensure opportunities meet the needs of all sections of the community.

It offers accessible options to gain university qualifications and improve skills for life and work. The University Partnership works with many rural and isolated communities, to develop innovative community based learning, from informal activities through to degree level study.

The origins of the CUV Partnership lie in the substantial and rapid re-structuring of the economy of South Wales in the 1980s. The decline of heavy industries such as coal and steel led to high levels of unemployment and to a labour market in which education, training and re-skilling opportunities were urgently required. A further key change in the local economy and social structure was the growing involvement of women in the labour market and in voluntary, cultural and political activity.

While extra-mural provision of a non-accredited and liberal arts nature had been provided for many years, throughout the region, the new context of the 1980's posed significant challenges. It was necessary to substantially change the nature and mode of delivery of such outreach work and to provide accessible learning opportunities of the type and level required by the labour market and demanded by local communities. CUV's roots are in the Miners' Strike and in the defeat of the miners. At the end of the strike the Dove Workshop was set up in 1985 at Banwen to offer learning opportunities for women who had been active during the strike. A partnership developed with the Department of Adult Continuing Education at the University of Wales Swansea.

Since the implementation of the original CUV Project at Banwen, the scope of the CUV Partnership has widened considerably, both in terms of range of provision and geographical spread. Higher learning opportunities are now available at a wide range of community learning centres. Four factors have been central to developments:

Key community organisations leading the partnership. The growth in community based organisations, focused on supporting the regeneration and development of communities, has been a key feature of social change in South Wales in recent years. Such community organisations have been instrumental in developing the CUV Partnership. Equal partnership between Higher Education Institutions and the Voluntary Sector is central to the strategy and enables the CUV partnership to be community led and responsive to the learning needs of local communities. Community Enterprises play a vital role in the partnership, representing the learning needs of individuals and communities and influencing the development of learning appropriate to communities.

Other Higher Education Institutions joining the partnership - These include University of Glamorgan, the Open University in Wales and University of Wales College Newport. The partnerships strategy for widening access to Higher Education through community based provision now extends across South Wales, from the Swansea, Neath and Amman Valleys in the West, to the central valleys of Rhondda Cynon Taff and Merthyr Tydfil through to the Gwent Valleys area.

Mainstreaming of continuing education provision within the Higher Education sector. This has led to redesign and new developments in short course provision and curricula. It has taken the sector from extra-mural provision, with no credits or certification to new modular courses, carrying credit points that can be used within the HE Credit Accumulation and Transfer System (CATS). Universities are now able to offer a wide range of short accredited courses for delivery within community locations. By taking a number of short courses, linked by subject matter, learners can gain Higher Education Certificates at Level One. These level one qualifications can then be used to contribute towards a full degree qualification, subject to curriculum compatibility. Part-time Degree Programmes are also available, offering greater flexibility to those with work or family commitments and have greatly contributed to widening access strategies.

Funding of non-award bearing learning. Higher Education Funding Council for Wales funding of non-accredited learning programmes has been a crucial element of CUV Partnership strategies aimed at widening access to learning. This development has enhanced access to under-represented adults, such as the long-term unemployed and has allowed greater flexibility in the design and development of learning programmes and delivery methods. It has stimulated development of innovative learning programmes suited to the needs of excluded individuals and groups that provide very important first steps learning opportunities that underpin access to higher learning progressions. The development should also be seen in the context of the changing nature of Higher Education within the UK. Over the past 15 years, there has been a massive expansion of students in Higher Education, together with a series of policies aimed at opening up the sector to mature age students, particularly targeting previously under-represented groups. We have also seen an increasing emphasis on the local and regional role of Higher Education Institutions in supporting economic and social regeneration. The CUV Partnership, therefore, reflects these shifts in UK wide policy and is a key vehicle in widening access to Higher Education and in contributing to the regeneration and development of communities in South Wales.

(ii) *England*

Widening Participation (WP) has been the mandated community and diversity policy context across the UK's tertiary education sector for nearly 10 years. It has seen the development of a range of programmatic and discrete project interventions. Significant funding exists, both from the UK Government and the European Union, to support and embed universities in their communities.

The following provides a snapshot of those Institutions that are willingly delivering WP with great success.

(a) University of Bradford

Engaging parents/carers in higher education

The University of Bradford developed the Understanding School module in 2004. The aim of the module was to engage parents /guardians in the education of their children by providing clear information about the National Curriculum, their roles and responsibilities as parents of school aged children and generally contribute to the raising of educational attainment in Bradford.

Grey Panther Project

The **Grey Panther Project** aims to support men over 45 years of age who have been unemployed for over 6 months and want to re-assess their futures - whether this is to get back to work, change careers or re-think their life choices generally. The project seeks to provide customised solutions through tutor-led group work, mutual support and the opportunity to undertake recognised higher level skills courses of study. The Grey Panther Project specifically addresses the issue of barriers to the labour market through providing an integrated, structured pathway combining study with guidance and careers advice.

(b) University of Greenwich

Foundation Degrees

Foundation Degrees are targeted at those people who are employed and want to progress in their line of work; employed but want to change career; a school or college leaver looking for a work-related qualification to launch a career; and those not currently in employment and seeking a way into work with prospects. They are delivered through a network of community-based Further Education Colleges (TAFE equivalent). Foundations Degrees combine study with work-based learning and practical work experience and are equivalent to the first two years of an honours degree or a Higher National Diploma (HND). They are the first new kind of degree for over 100 years. Thousands of people have studied for foundation degrees since they were established in 2001. In 2005-06 there were nearly 47,000 foundation degree students, half studying part-time.

(c) University of Tübingen

The innovative Kinder-Uni (Children's University), programme at the University of Tübingen in Germany is a series of lectures designed to interest kids in studying science. Each lecture features one question aimed at a target audience of 8-12 year olds. This unique model has inspired other educational institutions and there are now approximately 70 similar programmes across Germany and neighbouring countries with the best lectures being published in book format. The lecture series has tackled questions such as "Why do volcanoes erupt?" and "Why don't the stars fall from the sky?" and even attracted a Nobel Prize winner who posed the demanding question "Why is one not allowed to clone human beings?" Children find the lectures fun, interesting and challenging, while at the same time stimulating their interest in disciplines such as astronomy, philosophy and archaeology.

(d) University of Utrecht, Netherlands

Located in the heart of the Netherlands, Utrecht University is firmly founded on tradition. Utrecht University, which celebrates its 370th anniversary, has developed into one of Europe's largest and most prominent institutes of research and education. Utrecht University offers the broadest spectrum of disciplines available in the Netherlands, innovative research and liaises with universities and research centres all over the world. At Utrecht University, in both teaching and research, quality is always the key.

In August 2004, Deputy Minister Rutte of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science officially opened the new Junior College Utrecht (JCU), a unique two-year programme for pupils in the 5th year of their pre-university education with an above-average interest in science. Selected pupils are given science lessons at the University campus two days a week. The Junior College is an initiative of Utrecht University and 12 partner schools in the Utrecht region. The first group of 25 pupils started this selective programme in 2004. Teachers from pre-university education schools and Utrecht University contribute to the development and implementation of this education programme. The JCU serves as a centre for expertise and development for improving the transition from pre-university to university education and plays an important role in reforming science education at a national level.

2. North America*(i) United States*

As US central cities faltered in the late 60s and 70s, universities frequently became state operated with a deeper mandate to transform their neighbourhoods. Now, the role of both public and private universities in inner city renewal is well recognized by every level of US government. As universities take on aggressive urban missions, they have also become the catalyst and incubators for the new knowledge economy (Blakely 2004).

(a) University of Massachusetts

UMass Dartmouth has many distinctive centers, partnerships, and programs that demonstrate its commitment to the community and its leadership in addressing contemporary issues.

- **South Coast Connect**

Connect is a partnership of public higher education institutions in southeastern Massachusetts : Bridgewater State College, Bristol Community College, Cape Cod Community College, Massachusetts Maritime Academy, Massasoit Community College, and the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth.

This overview of the *Connect* partnership and some of its principal activities depicts the ongoing collaboration among the five colleges, and the invaluable contributions of the partnership to the quality of life in southeastern Massachusetts.

Individually and together, the *Connect* schools are working with and for each one of this region's elementary and secondary school systems, all of its municipal governments, most of the area's public and non-profit agencies, and a growing number of businesses, large and small.

All five *Connect* colleges are deeply involved in initiatives that stimulate and boost the economic life of the region. The multipronged effort is accomplished through a variety of educational programs and direct collaboration with public and private groups and institutions.

- Massasoit Community College annually works with Bridgewater State, Massachusetts Tech Prep, the Brockton-area Youth Council, area businesses, and high schools on a program to bridge the gap between education and employment. Through the program, small teams of high school and college educators participate in workplace activities, and the insights gained help shape relevant, contemporary curricula.
- Bristol Community College's "Women in Technology" venture, 62 percent of the 300-plus women who have participated in the program have entered engineering and technology careers. The College works with the Bristol Tech Prep Consortium to tap women engineers and technicians who offer mentoring and direction at local businesses.
- Bridgewater State College's Institute for Regional Development joins forces with municipalities and non-profit agencies to tackle issues and concerns through applied research, training, and technical assistance. In 2003, more than 350 employees from 60 organizations received training through the Institute.

- UMass Dartmouth's Advanced Technology & Manufacturing Center provides cutting-edge technological knowledge and assistance for people and businesses whose high tech visions need a nurturing environment. Eight start-up tech venture companies are housed in the Fall River facility, with more expected in 2004. Faculty offer their expertise to industries conducting research; students have the chance to work with their professors on substantive research projects; and the center's programs foster the exchange of ideas and technical know-how.

(b) Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut

Since 1996, Trinity has invested more than \$7 million of its endowment to develop a neighbourhood revitalization initiative targeted on a 15-square-block area surrounding the college. The centrepiece is The Learning Corridor, a 16-acre educational complex that will house an elementary school, middle school, and a high school educational centre. Trinity's investment has leveraged tens of millions in dollars in support from government at all levels, corporations, foundations and alumni.

(c) Eastern Washington University, Washington USA

Eastern Washington University is a regional comprehensive university based in a small town 20 miles from a regional urban center. Although only four blocks from campus, the historic downtown area of Cheney has suffered years of decline and out-migration of businesses to the edge of town in suburban-style malls, leaving the small historic downtown to decline.

The University includes an urban planning program, and works with City and University officials, business leaders, and citizens to address this problem. The nonprofit community-based organization, Pathways to Progress, was actually formed specifically to implement the revitalization of Main Street Cheney, and all partners joined in efforts to revitalize the historic downtown, including renewing the link between downtown and the campus. Through this effort Eastern Washington University moved beyond its traditional role as academic institution into an "engaged university," bringing real community problems not just to one class, but to coordinated class and development partnerships to address problems over an initial three-year period, now in the eighth year of operation.

(d) Tennessee State University

Friendship Community Outreach Centre, Nashville

When the Friendship Mission decided to move its congregation Tennessee State University stepped in to breath new life to the aging chapel at the heart of a deprived Nashville community. Now, the former church building houses Friendship Community Outreach Center (FCOC), which provides clinical and therapeutic services to children between the ages of 8 and 13 who have been victims or witnesses of crime. The center also runs afterschool and summer enrichment programs that help a combined total of 100 local youngsters improve their academic skills so they can succeed in school.

(ii) Canada

Memorial University – Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada

Frontier College: Students for Literacy @ MUN celebrated its 10th anniversary of doing educational outreach work in the St. John's area. Since 1996, the group has been partnering with organizations such as community centres, junior high schools and boys and girls clubs to help support the learning needs of the community through group and one-on-one tutoring. This year, Memorial partnered with nine community groups including MacMorran Community Centre, the Association for New Canadians, Froude Avenue Community and Centre and the Community Youth Network. Tutors visit the centres spending individual time with learners. Currently, the Memorial group has about 60 members who are studying everything from political science and education to neuroscience and dietetics. They each share a passion of helping others.

3. Middle East and Asia

(i) **University of Bethlehem**

Institute for Community Participation

The Institute for Community Partnership (ICP), originally known as the Business Development Center (BDC), was founded in 1989 as one of the community-service extension units of Bethlehem University. Since its establishment the BDC has been working on enhancing and developing the Palestinian Business Sector capacity and assisting with the development of innovative ideas for individuals, groups and organizations involved in economic activities; empowering target groups with entrepreneurial, managerial, and technical skills.

In 1998, the center adopted a new mandate to become the Institute for Community Partnership(ICP). The ICP is an integral semi-autonomous unit of Bethlehem University which undertook the responsibility of strengthening the ties between the University and the Palestinian community; to enriching and developing the entire Palestinian community through identifying emerging needs, communicating research results to assist in policy and decision making at local and national levels; to benefiting from community wisdom by enriching students and faculty knowledge and skills through organized interaction with reality; to advance development of business enterprises; to providing opportunities for adult education, second-chance education, extra-mural education, and extension education; to foster professional development by the provision of opportunities for Continuing education and access to expertise and research facilities; to organize and run social, cultural and educational activities as well as local and international conferences.

ICP has extensive working experience in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Over 12000 Palestinians, women and men of different age groups working in a wide range of professions, have benefited from its various Training, Consultation and Organizational Development services, that addressed among others the following areas: Enterprise Development and Promotion, Managerial and Administrative Skills, Youth Empowerment Programs, Communication & Office Management Skills, Digital Media Education, Tourism Management, Women Empowerment Programs, Specialized Computer Skills, Language Skills, for the marginalized youth, women, individuals with special needs, refugees and the three main sectors: Private, Public and NGOs.

(ii) **University of Central Asia, Republic of Tajikistan**

UCA was founded in 2000 by the governments of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan, and His Highness the Aga Khan. It is the world's first internationally chartered institution of higher education. The International Treaty and Charter establishing this secular and private University was signed by His Highness the Aga Khan and the Presidents of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan, ratified by the respective parliaments and registered with the United Nations. The Presidents are the Patrons and

His Highness the Aga Khan is the Founding Patron and Chancellor of UCA. UCA is a private, independent, self-governing institution which will be governed by an independent Board of Trustees and led by a Rector. It will have three campuses of equal size and stature in each of the founding countries. Currently, the Director General of UCA is in charge of operations and planning at the Central Administration office in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic.

The School of Professional and Continuing Education (SPCE)

The School of Professional and Continuing Education (SPCE) is Central Asia's first provider of formal, university-based, non-degree educational programmes, offering vocational, professional development and personal improvement opportunities to youth and adults. Established in 2006, SPCE is UCA's first operational academic programme, and has the mission of fostering economic development. It does this by responding to trends and needs in the local economies of the communities in which it operates and offering courses that improve employment and income generating opportunities for youth and adults, and professional development opportunities for mid-career professionals. By building vocational skills and professional competencies, SPCE will encourage entrepreneurship in the region and stimulate economic development.

SPCE has programmes in:

- *Enterprise Development and Management*: for entrepreneurs to start and improve small enterprises or for professionals in finance and management who need to upgrade their qualifications.
- *Information Technology and New Media*: For current and prospective IT professionals as well as business management and administration staff seeking to upgrade their skills.
- *Applied Languages*: For entrepreneurs, students and professionals seeking higher competencies in English, Russian, and Chinese for specific purposes, such as business or education.
- *Public and Social Sector Management*: For policy administrators, public officials and managers in education, government and public health.
- *Vocational Education and Training*: For those seeking to acquire skills and experienced skilled workers looking to upgrade skills and qualifications. Vocational courses that are or will be offered include carpentry, construction, painting and plastering.
- *Post-Graduate Preparatory Programmes*: For undergraduate and graduate students seeking to enhance their analytical and critical thinking skills for future study.
- *Professional Development*: For mid-career public servants and other professionals seeking knowledge or skills in a format less demanding and more flexible than full-time study. Professional development courses that are or will be offered include accounting, language for specific purposes, computers and information technology, small business management, and tourism planning and development.
- *Personal Development and Improvement*: For those interested in short-term courses teaching best practices in leadership, critical thinking, problem solving, decision-making and other skills to address the social and economic needs of their communities.