



How is The Open University promoting civic engagement?

"Illiteracy is an injustice and we can do something about it. Our students think so and so do we." With these words the [Vice-Chancellor](#) of The Open University opened our Strategic Forum on Literacy to celebrate International Literacy Day 2007.



Speakers at The OU Strategic Forum on Literacy

The Talloires Network

The OU is an active member of the [Talloires Network](#), committed to promoting civic engagement and social responsibility. Our mission is "to promote educational opportunity and social justice by providing high-quality university education to all who wish to realise their ambitions and fulfil their potential."

Strategic forum on literacy

At our strategic forum on literacy we brought together representatives from national skills agencies, voluntary organisations, our Student Association and the University's staff. The Director General of UNESCO couldn't join us in person, so he sent us a video message of support. Here's a link to a [webcast](#) of the event.

As a result of connections made at the forum we are now working in partnership with The National Literacy Trust, Changemakers and UNESCO.

In partnership with the National Literacy Trust

2008 is the National Year of Reading and the [The National Literacy Trust](#) has £1 million of government funding to spend. We'll be working with the NLT to encourage our staff, students and alumni to get involved with the Family Reading Campaign, Reading Connects and asking dads to become reading champions.

In partnership with Changemakers

The Open University is exploring the possibilities of virtual reading volunteering with [Changemakers](#). This is an idea that resonates with our teaching and learning approach at The Open University and would make volunteering possible for many more of our staff, students and alumni.

In partnership with UNESCO

The Open University will be working with the NLT to encourage more universities in the UK to join in with [UNESCO's](#) Education for All programme.

Beyond literacy

Our commitment to civic engagement goes beyond literacy. The Open University is committed to engaging with communities with low participation in higher education, encouraging individuals to discover in themselves the ability to study for an [Open University](#) degree.