# THE CAMBRIDGE HANDBOOK OF
# SERVICE LEARNING AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

*Edited by Corey Dolgon,*
*Tania D. Mitchell and Timothy K. Eatman*

# CAMBRIDGE
## UNIVERSITY PRESS

# 31 National, Regional, and Global Networks for University Community Engagement

Lorlene Hoyt and Amy Newcomb Rowe

## Introduction

University community engagement is a strategy for addressing pervasive challenges to civic life such as poverty, illiteracy, disease, and natural disaster. From Latin America to Asia to Sub-Saharan Africa, university administrators, faculty, staff, and students are working hand-in-hand with community-based organizations, governments, businesses, and philanthropies to improve civic life. Together, universities and communities in countries around the world are devising and implementing programs to shelter the homeless, tutor refugee children, provide HIV/AIDs education, and incubate small businesses (Hoyt, 2014; Hoyt & Hollister, 2014a). University community engagement represents a diverse array of approaches including volunteerism, service learning, extension, applied research, participatory action research, and engaged scholarship. Though the nomenclature associated with the different approaches to university community engagement varies significantly from one region of the world to the next (and within cities and nations), the similarity of practices, values, and vision is striking (Hoyt & Hollister, 2014a). In fact, university community engagement is increasingly viewed as a global, growing movement actively shaped and driven by millions participants who are organizing locally, nationally, regionally, and internationally.

## National, Regional, and Global Networks

A network of networks, the Talloires Network,[1] is the largest international network focused particularly on university community engagement.[2] Because it can be more effective for universities with shared social, cultural, and economic contexts to work together, the Talloires Network's Steering Committee[3] adopted a strategy of supporting and working in partnership with national and regional networks that focus on university community engagement (Hollister et al., 2012). Like the university community engagement programs located in cities and towns around the world, these national and regional partnerships aim to achieve mutual benefit. For example, the Talloires Network facilitates the creation and supports the growth of national and regional networks. And such networks help the Talloires network to expand the reach of its programs.

Table 31.1 *Networks for University Community Engagement (2015)*

| Network Name | Year Founded | Host Institution | Membership Strategy | Number of Members |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Campus Compact | 1985 | Independent research center | National and international members | 1100 |
| CLAYSS | 2002 | Independent research center | Support of regional leaders | 35 |
| Engagement Australia | 2004 | Southern Cross University | National members | 22 |
| Campus Engage | 2007 | Irish Universities Association | Funding of collaborative and national members | 17 |
| Ma'an Arab University Alliance | 2008 | The American University in Cairo | Regional and national members | 14 |
| South African Higher Education Community Engagement Forum (SAHECEF) | 2009 | University of the Free State | National members | 23 |
| Asia Engage | 2011 | Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia | National and international members | 76 |
| Pakistan Chapter of the Talloires Network | 2013 | National University of Sciences and Technology | National members | 52 |

Also, national and regional networks function as essential intermediaries, forging strong working ties with and supporting university community engagement in their respective regions; at the same time, the Talloires Network serves as a global hub by collecting and sharing information from and with national regional networks to elevate the visibility of university community engagement programs to create a concerted voice for the movement.

Talloires Network research shows that national and regional networks for university community engagement began in the Americas and that there is at least one such network in each region of the world.[4] The national and regional networks in order from oldest to newest are: Campus Compact, Centro Latinoamericano de Aprendizaje y Servicio Solidario (CLAYSS), Engagement Australia, Campus Engage, Ma'an Arab University Alliance, South African Higher Education Community Engagement Forum, Asia Engage, and the Pakistan Chapter of the Talloires Network. As shown in Table 31.1, the

majority of these networks are nascent, founded within this decade, and small, with fewer than one hundred members.[5]

Interestingly, such networks share a similar development trajectory. Often motivated in part by national higher education policy reform efforts and/ or socioeconomic crises, they typically begin with convening informally, receive direct funding or award, and move to greater organizational formality and structure by way of a founding conference. Several networks have successfully transitioned from a stage where they were managed by the founding leader and housed at an academic institution to a stage characterized by new leadership and greater organizational autonomy (Hoyt & Hollister, 2014a). Network mission statements are similar, pointing to the public purpose of universities and the importance of improving community life by way of mutually beneficial partnerships. Network activities vary, however. Most focus on exchange of experience; some provide professional training, generate resources to support university community engagement, and undertake strategic projects to inform national policy.

These eight national and regional networks for university community engagement are driven and shaped by societal values such as good citizenship, social responsibility, and social solidarity. In some regions of the world, such networks also face powerful forces that obstruct their progress. While their member universities are committed to community-collaborative teaching and research, participants inside and outside the academy sometimes face considerable challenges. Many universities are located in societies with significant political divisions, where a variety of groups forcefully oppose practices intended to increase economic participation for women and ethnic minorities, for example. Unstable or undemocratic contexts therefore present a range of risks to those who may advocate or participate in university community engagement programs. There are numerous nations where university community engagement is perceived as a threat to the government and other authorities (Hoyt & Hollister, 2014a). Some engaged universities that belong to national and regional networks for university community engagement therefore benefit by being part of a larger group. By joining with others, they gain not only influence and legitimacy, but also the requisite confidence and resources for furthering their work.

In their own national and regional contexts as well as together as part of a global movement, these eight networks are learning and working to improve civic life through a diverse and dynamic network of human relationships (Hoyt, 2013).

## Campus Compact

The US national network of engaged universities is Campus Compact,[6] founded in 1985. It was created in part to counter the perception of US universities as defenders of individualism and self-serving policies. The goal was to establish a common purpose of higher education with a focus on civic leadership, voter engagement, and a support network for educators. The founding presidents, from

Brown University, Georgetown University, and Stanford University, established support structures in their universities that allowed students and faculty to learn and practice the principles of community engagement. Campus Compact has more than 1100 institutions of higher education as members dedicated to promoting community service, community engagement, and service learning. As a sign of their commitment and institutional leadership, presidents are asked to sign the President's Declaration on the Civic Responsibility of Higher Education and pay annual membership fees.[7]

## Latin American Center for Service Learning

CLAYSS[8] is a nonprofit organization based in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The network has more than twenty universities and other collaborators, primarily in South America, that promote social responsibility and service learning. The network was created out of a tumultuous economic period between1998 and 2002 when unemployment rates were as high as 25 percent and civil unrest gripped the country. Amid the economic uncertainties, the state enacted the Federal Education Reform 1993 and created substantial changes in the government's role in education development and knowledge dissemination (Gvirtz & Larippa, 2004). In 1993, the Ministry of Education assumed responsibility for implementing policies to counteract the socioeconomic differences in the education system. Policies in the Social Education Plan included interventions aimed at improving the infrastructure of the poorest schools and universities. Moreover, the state reform explicitly stated the responsibility for higher education to provide training based in values, solidarity, and citizen participation. CLAYSS was formed as a way to confront the economic crisis and take advantage of the new state policies. It also offers economic support to institutions and community organizations that wish to create service learning projects. Economic support is made possible by a network of donors who are dedicated to the social development of the region. CLAYSS began in a small office staffed by volunteers. Determined to make a name for themselves, CLAYSS along with the Argentinian Ministry of Education organized an annual service learning seminar in 1997. Ten years on, it has grown to fifteen part-time employees and helped create the Ibero-American Network for Service Learning.

## Engagement Australia

Engagement Australia,[9] previously known as the Australian Universities Community Engagement Alliance (AUCEA), was founded in 2004 with initial support from the University of Western Sydney. In 2005, AUCEA was formalized as a nonprofit organization and supported by the Department of Education, Science and Training with a three-year Higher Education Innovation Program grant. Notable developments since the launch of the network are the *Australasian Journal of University Community Engagement*, a peer-reviewed,

biannual journal with a strong focus on research, theory, and practice, and a formally funded secretariat in 2009. After eight years, and in response to changes in the higher education sector, AUCEA changed its name to Engagement Australia in 2012. The new name reflects a broader agenda to incorporate individuals, businesses, industry, and community-based organizations that are committed to supporting the growth and culture of university community engagement. They have seen a greater ability for universities to connect with communities through the broadening of membership. Authentic relationships, networks, and partnerships that lead to mutual benefit and reciprocity while supporting its "core business" activity are key attributes of Engagement Australia. Today, its membership includes 70 percent of Australian universities as well as private colleges and academic and other professional members.

## Campus Engage

Like Campus Compact and CLAYSS, Campus Engage[10] emerged in response to trends and pressures in the higher education policy environment. The Universities Act for Ireland 1997 provided a foundation of the expansion of community engagement in higher education. By 2006 the Taoiseach (Prime Minister of Ireland) convened a task force on "active citizenship" that developed a set of recommendations about the civic life of Ireland. The task force produced two crucial recommendations for higher education: students' civic activities should be recognized and a network of universities should be formed to encourage greater levels of community engagement. The government then made funding available specifically for the purposes of forming and supporting a network: Campus Engage, a national network in Ireland to promote community engagement as a core function of higher education to impact the social and economic development of communities (Watson, Hollister, Stroud, & Babcock, 2011). This network with the help of the government carried out a number of first-ever initiatives including a national review of community engagement activities, an increase in student participation and volunteering opportunities, and the establishment of a formal National Campus Engage Network to support community engagement activities across higher education.

After the publication of *National Higher Education Strategy to 2030* (Hunt, 2011) steps were taken to broaden the institutional base of Campus Engage, moving from an initial start-up institutional phase of five universities[11] to a national network, currently working with seventeen universities, driven by a steering committee with representatives from across the higher education sector in Ireland. This new all-inclusive and action-oriented model was ratified at a national conference held at the Helix in December 2012. In June 2013, a national coordinator was appointed to act as a central manager for the activities of Campus Engage and to liaise with the Higher Education Authority of Ireland. The coordinator is based at the Irish Universities Association in Dublin. In June 2014, twenty-three higher education institution presidents came

together to sign a national charter to underscore their commitment to the civic and community engagement role and responsibilities of their institutions. The ceremony was accompanied by a roundtable on tracking and measuring community engagement impacts, and an international symposium (Hoyt & Hollister, 2014b).[12]

## Ma'an Arab University Alliance for Civic Engagement

Since the civilian uprisings in late 2010 and early 2011, the Middle East and North Africa have experienced unprecedented growth in university community engagement activities. Prior to this in 2008, the Gerhart Center for Philanthropy and Civic Engagement at the American University in Cairo convened a regional conference entitled "Tadamunn: Towards Civic Engagement in Arab Education."[13] Fifteen regional universities, from Sudan, Egypt, Lebanon, Tunisia, and Palestine, attended, including presidents, vice presidents, provosts, faculty members, and students gathering to discuss personal experiences, share new approaches, and explore challenges. "They discovered a high level of interest from people at universities across the region. Rather than wait for major public policy changes, participants expressed a belief that community engagement might be a way to substantially reform higher education from within" (Watson et al., 2011, p. 231). Shortly after in 2009, the Ma'an (which means "together") Arab University Alliance[14] was launched and the Gerhart Center began recruiting Egyptian national universities. A website in English and Arabic was created and populated with resources for university administrators and students. Later in 2009, the Alliance held an intensive four-day workshop for thirty instructors at a member institution in Lebanon. The training focused on methods of community-based learning, engaged scholarship, and building and sustaining partnerships. In 2013, the Ma'an Alliance convened the first Egyptian National workshop to launch a community of practice around university community engagement with six Egyptian universities. In 2014, fourteen university presidents and senior administrators met in Jordan to discuss university policy toward social responsibility and crafted joint mission and vision statements in Arabic.

## South African Higher Education Community Engagement Forum

In South Africa, the 1997 "White Paper on Higher Education" (DOE, 1997) mandated that universities be more responsive to society's needs. To jump-start community engagement in South African universities after the adoption of the White Paper, the Ford Foundation invested in the development of the Community Higher Education Service Partnerships project, which created an initial network of seven universities. This partnership evolved into a broader forum with government and other institutions of higher education. When the partnership ended, staff at many South African universities felt there was a need for a community engagement forum. In 2008, faculty and staff at the University of

the Free State held a conference that led to the launch of the South African Higher Education Community Engagement Forum (SAHECEF)[15] in 2009. At present, all twenty-three public universities in South Africa are members. After the conference, the newly appointed board was constituted and established primary objectives of the network. One university in particular, the University of Western Cape, was instrumental in launching the group and liaising with ministries and national councils. As a national network, five academic working groups manage branding, advocacy, and fundraising activities. To ensure ongoing and substantial departure from a past when African universities prevented student exposure to progressive ideas and to support engaged university faculty, SAHECEF organizes annual workshops, colloquia, and symposia.

## AsiaEngage

Asia has several strong higher education networks, among them the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Asia-Pacific Community-University Engagement Network, the Society for Participatory Research in Asia, and the Service Learning Asia Network. Founded in 2011, AsiaEngage[16] was formed through the Universiti Kebangsaan, Malaysia's Office of Industry and Community Partnerships in Kuala Lumpur.[17] Financial support from member universities as well as Malaysia's Ministry of Education enabled AsiaEngage to grow substantially in a short time, bringing membership to seventy-six Asian universities in twenty countries. With a focus on business development and public-private partnerships, AsiaEngage was created to foster "mutually beneficial partnerships between the research, education and volunteerism of higher education."[18] A key tenet of the network is their understanding of the university's role in uniting community and university to collaboratively solve societal problems. In May 2011, the Asian networks hosted the second ASEAN University Network Regional Forum on University Social Responsibility and Sustainability, which brought together 137 academics, civil society activists, and representatives from industry and community organizations to share experiences and best practices in community engagement. In addition, AsiaEngage serves its members by researching and developing methods to measure the social impact of university community engagement and offering rewards for excellent practice.

## Pakistan Chapter of the Talloires Network

Recently, Pakistani universities have shown remarkable growth in civic participation and social responsibility, as evidenced by an increase in response to disaster relief.[19] A leader in the region is the National University of Sciences and Technology, located in Islamabad and founder of the Pakistan Chapter of the Talloires Network (PCTN).[20] Launched in 2013 with thirty-five member universities, the Pakistan Chapter has grown to fifty-three member universities across the country. PCTN aims to support Pakistani universities'

"indispensable role in community development" (ComPact, 2014). The impetus for the national network was a compulsory two-credit undergraduate course at the National University of Sciences and Technology, supported by a small group of faculty. The course, based on basic religious values of charity and giving, focuses on lessons in humanitarianism, patriotism, and community service and requires off-campus community projects. Quickly following the launch in 2013, the network established a steering committee of six Pakistani university presidents committed to social responsibility and poverty alleviation. PCTN reports that "often times regional partnerships are born out of relationships between people with common goals and interests, but who are in distinctly different circumstances" (ComPact, 2014). The Pakistan Chapter publishes a biyearly newsletter of community engagement activities, holds an annual conference to discuss action plans on various engagement areas for universities and their youth, presents awards for outstanding community engagement projects, and arranges cross-disciplinary trainings in community engagement for faculty and students.

## Future Directions

These networks play a vital role in bolstering the efforts of university administrators, faculty, staff, and students working in collaboration with community-based organizations, governments, businesses, and philanthropies to address local issues. Their accomplishments as well as their challenges offer lessons learned for future networks and those in earlier stages of development. Moving forward, however, they can and should focus attention on fostering South-North dialogue and collaboration.

Currently, the practice and the academic literature on university community engagement is dominated by the perspectives of scholars in the Global North (McIlrath 2012; Tapia, 2014; Watson et al., 2011). As a result, the collective wisdom and innovative strategies nurtured for more than a century throughout the Global South are not well known or readily available to the North.

Out of necessity, in most cases, universities in the Global South orient themselves more frequently and directly to the local issues in their communities; the societal demand for institutional engagement is higher in the South than in the North. In the South, university heads as well as faculty, staff, and students feel, in many cases, a moral imperative to work in partnership with nearby communities to develop the skills and knowledge needed to solve pressing societal problems (Hoyt & Newcomb Rowe, 2014). And unlike their counterparts in the North, who in large part focus on the development of student skill-building and individual returns, universities in the Global South are principally focused on social returns (Bawa, 2007). The North would benefit from a more vigorous exchange of ideas and best practices with the South.

For the foreseeable future, leaders of national and regional networks for university community engagement will continue to meet face to face and

virtually to share information, contribute to each other's activities, and collaboratively advance shared priorities and projects. The Talloires Network and other global networks for university community engagement facilitate such meetings and activities for the purpose of furthering our common cause: strengthening the civic roles and social responsibilities of universities.

## References

Bawa, A. C. (2007). Rethinking the place of community-based engagement at universities. In L. McIlrath and I. Mac Labhrainn (Eds.), *Higher education and civic engagement: International perspectives* (pp. 55–63). Hampshire and Burlington: Ashgate.

Campus Compact. (2012). Creating a culture of assessment: 2012 annual member survey. Retrieved from cwww.compact.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Campus-Compact-2012-Statistics.pdf.

Campus Compact. (2013). *Creating a Culture of assessment: 2012 Campus Compact Annual Member Survey*. Boston: Campus Compact.

ComPact Newsletter. (2014, fall). *Pakistan's institutions of higher education impacting community through PCTN*. Islamabad, Pakistan: Pakistan Chapter of the Talloires Network. Retrieved from www.nust.edu.pk/pctn/Pages/Download_Details.aspx?DocID=17&category=PCTN%20Newsletter.

Cuthill, M. (2014). The nexus between knowledge, engagement and higher education in Australia: Responding to the complex challenges of our time. *Higher Education in the World, GUNi Series*, *5*, 207–210.

Department of Education (DOE) (1997). *Education white paper 3: A programme for the transformation of higher education*. Pretoria, Department of Education, pp. 1–50. Retrieved from www.che.ac.za/sites/default/files/publications/White_Paper3.pdf.

Goddard, J., & Puukka, J. (2008). The engagement of higher education institutions in regional development: An overview of the opportunities and challenges. *Higher Education Management and Policy*, *20*(2), 1–30.

Gvirtz, S., & Larripa, S. (2004). Profiles of educational assessment systems worldwide. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice*, *11*(3), 349–364.

Hefferan, M., & Wardner, P. (July 2013). University engagement, more than a front window. Paper presented at the Tenth Engagement Australia Annual Conference: Next Steps: Co-producing Knowledge for Social Impact, Melbourne, Australia.

Hollister, R. M., Pollock, J. P., Gearan, M., Reid, J., Stroud, S., & Babcock, E. (2012). The Talloires Network: A global coalition of engaged universities. *Journal of Higher Education Outreach & Engagement*, *16*(4), 81–102.

Hoyt, L. (2014). University civic engagement: A global perspective. In *Higher Education Exchange*. Dayton, OH: Kettering Foundation.

Hoyt, L. (Ed.). (2013). *Transforming cities and minds through the scholarship of engagement: Economy, equity, and environment*. Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press.

Hoyt, L., & Hollister, R. (2014a). Moving beyond the ivory tower: The expanding global movement of engaged universities. In B. Hall & R. Tandon (Eds.), *Knowledge*,

*engagement and higher education: Contributing to social change* (pp. 129–139). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Hoyt, L., & Hollister, R. (2014b). Strategies for advancing global trends in university civic engagement. *All Ireland Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, 6(1), 1691–1710.

Hoyt, L., & Newcomb Rowe, A. (2014). Leaders in the civic engagement movement. Unpublished manuscript. Retrieved from http://talloiresnetwork.tufts.edu/blog/2015/03/19/the-leaders-of-our-network-lcem-series/.

Hunt, C. (2011). National strategy for higher education to 2030. Dublin, Ireland: Government Publications Office Department of Education and Skills, pp. 1–130. Retrieved from www.hea.ie/sites/default/files/national_strategy_for_higher_education_2030.pdf.

Ibrahim, B. (2014). The role of higher education in societal transformation in Arab states. In B. Hall & R. Tandon (Eds.), *Knowledge, engagement and higher education: Contributing to social change* (pp. 166–178). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

McIlrath, L., Lyons, A., & Munck, R. (2012). *Higher education and civic engagement: Comparative perspectives*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Preece J., Ntseane, P. G., Modise, O. M., & Osborne, M. (2012). *Community engagement in African universities: Perspectives, prospects and challenges*. Leicester, UK: NIACE.

Rhodes, N. (1997). Campus Compact: The project for public and community service. *Journal of Public Service and Outreach*, 2(1), 56–61.

Saltmarsh, J., & Hartley, M. (2011). To serve a larger purpose. In J. Saltmarsh & M. Hartley (Eds.), *"To serve a larger purpose": Engagement for democracy and the transformation of higher education* (pp. 1–13). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Stevens, M. (2003). Thomas Ehrlich: The interview by Maggie Stevens. Retrieved September 12, 2014, from https://blogs.libraries.indiana.edu/iubarchives/2014/07/18/c501/.

Tapia, M. N. (2004). Civic service in South America. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, *33*, 148–166.

Tapia, M. N. (2014). The engaged university in Latin America and the Caribbean. In B. Hall & R. Tandon (Eds.), *Knowledge, engagement and higher education: Contributing to social change* (pp. 271–285). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Watson, D., Hollister, R., Stroud, S., & Babcock, E. (2011). *The engaged university: International perspectives on civic engagement*. New York: Routledge.

## Notes

1 The Talloires Network was established by a group of twenty-nine presidents, vice-chancellors, and rectors in September 2005. In Talloires, France, they drafted and co-signed the Talloires Declaration on the Civic Roles and Social Responsibilities of Higher Education and launched a network to support collaborative action. Today, the network has 350 member universities in seventy-five countries.

2 Other significant global higher education associations that support university engagement include the Association of African Universities, Association of Commonwealth Universities, Global Alliance for Community Engaged Research, Global University Network on Innovation, Innovations for Civic Participation,

International Association of Universities, International Consortium for Higher Education, Civic Responsibility and Democracy, Kettering Foundation, Living Knowledge Network, Participatory Research in Asia, Pascal International Observatory, and the University Social Responsibility Network. These networks are Talloires Network global partners.

3  Current Steering Committee Co-Chairs are Tufts University President Tony Monaco and University of Pretoria Vice-Chancellor Cheryl de la Rey. Members serve three-year terms.

4  Regions are defined according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and include North America, Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa, Asia Pacific, Europe, and the Arab region.

5  Other national and regional networks for university civic engagement include the Canadian Alliance for Community Service-Learning (2001), Service-Learning Asia Network (2009), and Spanish Service-Learning Network (2010).

6  http://www.compact.org.

7  More on Campus Compact is available in Chapter 32 of this volume.

8  www.clayss.org.ar.

9  www.engagementaustralia.org.au.

10  www.campusengage.ie.

11  National University of Ireland, Galway and Maynooth, University of Limerick, University College Dublin, and Dublin City University.

12  Going forward, Campus Engage continues to secure European funding for national and international projects such as Tawasol, which supports university community engagement in Jordan and Lebanon.

13  "Tadamunn" is translated as "solidarity" in Arabic.

14  www1.aucegypt.edu/maan.

15  www.sahecef.ac.za.

16  www.asiaengage.org.

17  AsiaEngage represents the merging of three existing networks: Asia-Talloires Network of Industry and Community Engaged Universities (ATNEU), ASEAN University Network (AUN) – Thematic Network on University Social Responsibility and Sustainability (AUN-USR&S), and ASEAN Youth Volunteer Programme (AYVP).

18  http://asiaengage.org/v2/about-asiaengage/.

19  http://www.nust.edu.pk/pctn.

20  http://www.nust.edu.pk/pctn.