



TALLOIRES  
NETWORK

**STRENGTHENING  
THE CIVIC ROLES AND  
SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES  
OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

*Building a Global Network*

**The Talloires Conference 2005**



# STRENGTHENING THE CIVIC ROLES AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF HIGHER EDUCATION

*Building a Global Network*



## A REPORT ON THE TALLOIRES CONFERENCE 2005

*Hosted by Tufts University*

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Jonathan M. Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service, Tufts University<sup>1</sup>  
in collaboration with Innovations in Civic Participation

### Report Writer

Helene Perold  
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<sup>1</sup> Tufts' University College of Citizenship and Public Service was renamed the Jonathan M. Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service on May 12, 2006





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Mission and Opportunities to Participate



# CONFERENCE ATTENDEES

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**Vice Chancellor Rupa Shah**  
SNDT Women's University of  
Mumbai  
*India*



**Tom Ehrlich, Senior Scholar**  
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**Director of Conferences and  
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Tufts University  
*United States of America*

## *Executive Summary*

# THE TALLOIRES CONFERENCE 2005



Convened by Tufts University President Lawrence S. Bacow, the Talloires Conference 2005 was the first international gathering of the heads of universities devoted to strengthening the civic roles and social responsibilities of higher education. Held in Talloires, France, on September 15-17, 2005, the meeting brought together 29 university presidents, rectors, and vice chancellors from 23 countries.

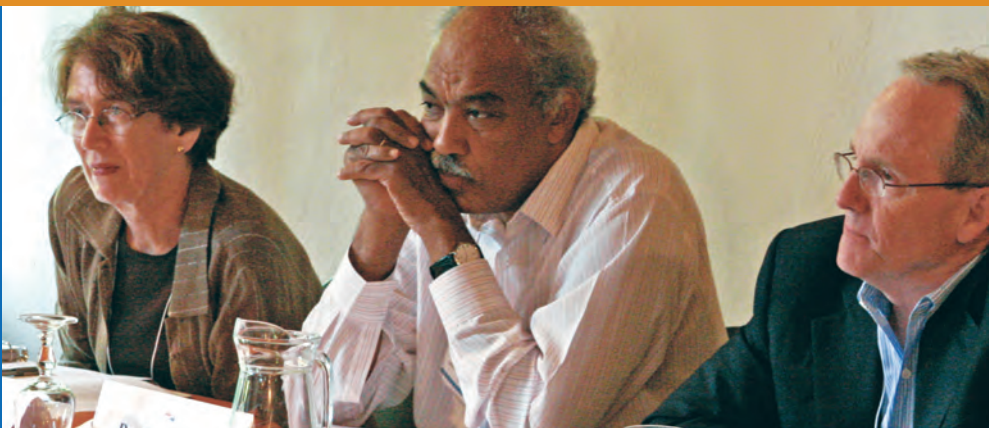
**“Our academic model supports the social commitment and civil engagement of the university based on promotion of social capital values.”**

*José Ignacio Moreno León  
Metropolitan University at Caracas  
Venezuela*

University civic engagement is a burgeoning movement that is rapidly reaching significant scale in both volume of activity and extent of impact, a scale far greater than is commonly understood even within the academic community. The movement focuses on educating responsible citizens and community leaders, and on mobilizing university resources to accelerate social and community development.

The Talloires Conference 2005 united and energized key leaders in this growing phenomenon. During three days of enthusiastic dialogue, conference participants exchanged information about work-in-progress at their individual institutions and shared their ambitious plans for the future. They debated how to tap the vast potential for social participation by the almost 100 million college and university students worldwide—a number that is expected to double by 2025. They reviewed alternative strategies and identified ways to work together in the years ahead.

This group of university leaders discussed critical questions facing the civic engagement movement. How to create and sustain the institutional frameworks



and university-community partnerships that encourage and recognize good practice in social service by students, faculty, staff and their community partners was a key theme of the discussions. They agreed on the importance of strengthening incentives to encourage faculty participation in civic engagement. They advocated developing national policies that will reinforce the ability of universities to make civic engagement a priority in their research and scholarship.

By exchanging best practices and strategizing about common challenges, Talloires Conference participants sharpened their own plans and forged a consensus vision for the expanding international civic engagement movement of higher education.

## THE TALLOIRES DECLARATION AND GLOBAL NETWORK

At the conclusion of the Conference, participants signed The Talloires Declaration on the Civic Roles and Social Responsibilities of Higher Education, affirming their belief that all higher education institutions “bear a special obligation to contribute to the public good through educating students, expanding access to education, and the creation and timely application of new knowledge.” The Declaration states that higher education institutions have the responsibility to serve and strengthen the society of which they are part. Through research and scholarship, and the commitment of faculty, staff, and students, institutions are better placed to “create social capital, preparing students to contribute positively to local, national, and global communities.”

The group also established the Talloires Network, an international collective of individuals and institutions committed to achieving the goals outlined in the Declaration. The Network is open to all and can be easily accessed through its website at: <http://www.tufts.edu/talloiresnetwork>. Those who are interested in signing the Talloires Declaration or participating in this movement are encouraged to join this group in strengthening the civic roles and social responsibilities of higher education around the world.

**“When I started at my university, I was asked whether I subscribed to the Talloires Declaration on Environmental Sustainability. I didn’t know what it was, but I soon found out and today we do.”**

*Janice Reid  
University of Western Sydney  
Australia*



# INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

**Lawrence S. Bacow** President, Tufts University, United States of America

Welcome to the Talloires Conference on the civic engagement roles and responsibilities of higher education. Thank you for participating in this historic first international gathering of the heads of universities from around the world on this topic.

This fourth Talloires Conference continues a Tufts tradition of convening university leaders at the Tufts University European Center to address challenges of global significance. Each session examined opportunities to strengthen the role of institutions of higher education with respect to a pressing issue facing society. Previous Talloires Conferences have focused on Freedom of Expression (1981), Challenges of the Nuclear Age (1988), and Environmental Sustainability (1990). Each of these gatherings issued a Talloires Declaration that communicated recommendations about future university roles on the topic. These Declarations have been powerfully influential consensus visions for change.

Today we have a similar opportunity with respect to the civic engagement roles and social responsibilities of universities in all parts of the globe. Over the next three days we will share information about our current efforts to educate future generations of community leaders and to mobilize the resources of our institutions to strengthen social and community development. We also will compare notes about our respective policies and practices—debating the effectiveness of alternative strategies.

Our topic of civic engagement could not be more timely. As the higher education sector continues to expand dramatically around the world, the societal needs which our civic engagement activities address are increasing in equal if not greater measure. This means we can anticipate increased pressure on our institutions to apply their resources to these needs. In addition, the civic

engagement movement is showing the potential to approach critical mass; it is no longer isolated from the central mission of universities. Furthermore, there is increasing awareness of the effectiveness of civic work as the evidence of educational outcomes and community benefit mounts up. Together these factors represent an extraordinary opportunity for higher education to leverage its resources in order to build much-needed social capital in our respective societies.

In preparation for this historic conference each of you has provided extensive information about the civic activities of your university—how you define civic engagement, what programs you support, how these programs are organized, their scale and impacts, what challenges these efforts encounter and how you are addressing these obstacles, how your civic functions are funded, and finally your future plans and your interest in collaboration with other universities going forward. We have a unique chance to build upon this preparatory information to advance our common knowledge about each of these questions. Then, our ultimate opportunity will be to develop recommendations about the future civic engagement activities of higher education in all parts of the world.

Scholarly institutions are among some of the oldest institutions in our societies; while governments may come and go, universities and colleges remain. Therefore, universities bear special responsibilities for educating citizens in their role in civil society. We need to set an example through our actions, not only through our teaching and scholarship, but by how we live our own lives for others.

During our next three days together we can learn from each other and create new ideas and approaches. Our great diversity can stimulate both mutual learning and help us to develop new ways to support one another. We hope that multiple relationships will emerge from this dialogue, as well as the beginning of an ongoing network, a web of relationships that we can use for continuing action and joint action. We will aim to articulate a Declaration to guide both our individual and collective efforts, a Declaration which twenty years from now can serve as a benchmark for university-based civic engagement.

**“As the higher education sector continues to expand dramatically around the world, the societal needs which our civic engagement activities address are increasing in equal if not greater measure.”**

*Lawrence S. Bacow  
Tufts University  
United States of America*

# THE TALLOIRES DECLARATION

## ON THE CIVIC ROLES AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF HIGHER EDUCATION

In this century of change, we note with optimism that access to university education is increasing, that one-half of the students enrolled in institutions of higher education live in developing nations, and that the number of university students worldwide is expected to double between 2000 and 2025. The potential for social participation by students young and old, now and in the years to come, is massive. The extent to which this potential can be realized will depend on universities worldwide mobilizing students, faculty, staff, and citizens in programs of mutual benefit.

We are dedicated to strengthening the civic role and social responsibility of our institutions. We pledge to promote shared and universal human values, and the engagement by our institutions within our communities and with our global neighbors. We urge the one hundred million university students, and the many millions of faculty, staff, alumni, and members of governing bodies throughout the world to join us in these initiatives.

We believe that higher education institutions exist to serve and strengthen the society of which they are part. Through the learning, values, and commitment of faculty, staff, and students, our institutions create social capital, preparing students to contribute positively to local, national, and global communities. Universities have the responsibility to foster in faculty, staff, and students a sense of social responsibility and a commitment to the social good, which, we believe, is central to the success of a democratic and just society.

Some of our universities and colleges are older than the nations in which they are located; others are young and emerging; but all bear a special obligation to contribute to the public good, through educating students, expanding access to education, and the creation and timely application of new knowledge. Our institutions recognize that we do not exist in isolation from society, nor from the communities in which we are located. Instead, we carry a unique obligation to listen, understand, and contribute to social transformation and development. Higher education must extend itself for the good of society to embrace communities near and far. In doing so, we will promote our core missions of teaching, research, and service.

The university should use the processes of education and research to respond to, serve, and strengthen its communities for local and global citizenship. The university has a responsibility to participate actively in the democratic process and to empower those who are less privileged. Our institutions must strive to build a culture of reflection and action by faculty, staff, and students that infuses all learning and inquiry.







### **THEREFORE, WE AGREE TO:**

- Expand civic engagement and social responsibility programs in an ethical manner, through teaching, research, and public service.
- Embed public responsibility through personal example and the policies and practices of our higher education institutions.
- Create institutional frameworks for the encouragement, reward, and recognition of good practice in social service by students, faculty, staff, and their community partners.
- Ensure that the standards of excellence, critical debate, scholarly research, and peer judgment are applied as rigorously to community engagement as they are to other forms of university endeavor.
- Foster partnerships between universities and communities to enhance economic opportunity, empower individuals and groups, increase mutual understanding, and strengthen the relevance, reach, and responsiveness of university education and research.
- Raise awareness within government, business, media, charitable, not-for-profit and international organizations about contributions of higher education to social advancement and wellbeing. Specifically, establish partnerships with government to strengthen policies that support higher education's civic and socially responsible efforts. Collaborate with other sectors in order to magnify impacts and sustain social and economic gains for our communities.

- Establish partnerships with primary and secondary schools, and other institutions of further and higher education, so that education for active citizenship becomes an integral part of learning at all levels of society and stages of life.
- Document and disseminate examples of university work that benefit communities and the lives of their members.
- Support and encourage international, regional, and national academic associations in their efforts to strengthen university civic engagement efforts and create scholarly recognition of service and action in teaching and research.
- Speak out on issues of civic importance in our communities.
- Establish a steering committee and international networks of higher education institutions to inform and support all their efforts to carry out this Declaration.

We commit ourselves to the civic engagement of our institutions and to that end we establish the Talloires Network, with an open electronic space for the exchange of ideas and understandings and for fostering collective action.

We invite others to join in this Declaration and to collaborate in our civic work.

*Adopted on September 17, 2005,  
by the Talloires Conference participants.*



**“There is a range of universities, like mine, that must be included in this Declaration. Distance education students are vast in number, are not tied to a university location, and are likely to span all age groups. Their life experience and work experience means they have much to share and much to contribute to the community engagement agenda.”**

*Brenda Gourley  
The Open University  
United Kingdom*

## THE TALLOIRES DECLARATIONS

The Talloires Declaration on Civic Engagement is the fourth in a series of declarations made since 1981 by university leaders who came together at the Tufts University European Center in the village of Talloires, France, to address issues of global significance. The Declarations have catalyzed institutions of higher education to strengthen action on challenges facing society.

### 1981 Freedom of Expression

The first declaration titled “A Constructive Approach to a Global Information Order” was signed by 63 delegates on 17 May 1981. It emerged from a two-day conference called “Voices of Freedom” that was organized by Tufts University in cooperation with the World Press Freedom Committee. Motivated in large measure by attempts to curb media freedom, leaders expressed their deep concern about “a growing tendency in many countries and international bodies to put government interests above those of the individual, particularly in regard to information” and pledged to expand the free flow of information worldwide.

### 1988 Challenges of the Nuclear Age

The 1988 Declaration is titled “The Responsibility of Universities in the Nuclear Age.” It held that in an environment plagued by war, hunger, injustice, and suffering, universities have a fundamental responsibility to increase understanding of the risks of the nuclear age. Planned and initiated by the presidents of Tufts University and Tokai University (Japan), and attended by 45 university presidents, the conference affirmed the university leaders’ commitment to supporting “research and teaching programs of peace and conflict issues with special emphasis on disarmament, negotiation, and conflict resolution.”

### 1990 Environmental Sustainability

In 1990 an international conference on “The Role of Universities in Environmental Management and Sustainable Development” produced the first official statement made by university leaders on the issue of environmental sustainability. Initially signed by 22 university leaders, subsequently the Declaration has been signed by 300 heads of higher education institutions. It includes a ten-point action plan for incorporating environmental literacy and sustainability in university teaching and practice. It declares that universities have a major role in the education, research, policy formation, and information exchange necessary “to address the unprecedented scale and speed of environmental pollution and degradation, and the depletion of natural resources.”



## 2005 Civic and Social Engagement

The 2005 Talloires Conference, attended by 29 university leaders, produced the “Talloires Declaration on the Civic Roles and Social Responsibilities of Higher Education.” The universities present affirmed their belief that all higher education institutions “bear a special obligation to contribute to the public good, through educating students, expanding access to education, and the creation and timely application of new knowledge.” The Declaration states that higher education institutions have the responsibility to serve and strengthen the society of which they are part. Through research and scholarship, and the commitment of faculty, staff, and students, institutions are better placed to “create social capital, preparing students to contribute positively to local, national, and global communities.”

### Shaping the Talloires Declaration on the civic roles and social responsibilities of higher education

Leading the drafting of the Declaration, Tom Ehrlich, senior scholar at Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, said that “a declaration is a consensus document and needs to capture your comments as fully as possible. It is a set of specific proposals that are broad enough to be widely applicable, but specific enough to have some traction for implementation.”

The goal of the Declaration is two-fold: to set high standards for the civic engagement roles and social responsibilities of universities, and to set out specific proposals on how universities can increase the impact of their civic engagement activities.

Lawrence Bacow, president of Tufts University, stressed the need for the Declaration to reflect the input of all the university leaders present. “We need to be careful that this document not only reflects the understandings and vocabulary we are using here, but that others also can understand and adopt it in their own way. It must be accessible to colleagues elsewhere.”

**“It is very refreshing and welcome to have such an inspirational document that talks about doing good. We are helping our students, learning from them, developing them, and it is an integrated partnership process rather than a one-way process.”**

*Sir Roderick Floud  
London Metropolitan University  
United Kingdom*

## *Civic Engagement*

# A GLOBAL MOVEMENT

**Robert M. Hollister**, Dean and Pierre and Pamela Omidyar Professor, Jonathan M. Tisch  
College of Citizenship and Public Service, Tufts University, United States of America

University civic engagement is today a real movement, a trend that is taking off. It is a movement still in the early stages of development, that is characterized by immense diversity, and also by extraordinary vision and common approaches being taken in very different contexts. This is the overarching message that emerges from the preconference survey of civic engagement among universities participating in the conference.

My presentation is based on responses by 25 universities from 24 countries across five regions: Africa, Asia, Australia, North America, and South America. The survey represents universities that are involved in civic engagement and who agreed to participate in this Talloires discussion, and is thus not based on a random sample.



The survey results indicate that civic engagement is reaching significant scale in terms of volume of activity and extent of impact, a scale far greater than is commonly understood even within the academic community.

Although in some countries the environment is hostile towards universities actively embracing civic engagement, the results show that in the long run the obstacles are surmountable. University leaders could thus use the conference as a launching pad to shape the future of civic engagement in their respective countries.

## MAJOR THEMES

Seven themes emerge from the preconference survey. They define civic engagement, its programmatic mix, how it is organized, the extent and impacts of these activities, the challenges universities face, information about how the programs are funded and future plans.

### **Civic engagement means educating citizens and creating social capital**

Civic engagement has two key purposes: educating responsible citizens and community leaders, and contributing to social and community development. Generally the participants emphasize efforts to alleviate poverty and improve

**“Civic engagement is reaching significant scale in terms of volume of activity and extent of impact, a scale far greater than is commonly understood even within the academic community.”**

*Robert M. Hollister  
Tufts University  
United States of America*





**“We should talk of students engaging themselves for a lifelong commitment to bettering the community. This could be better defined in terms of being preventive rather than curative; it should not be enforced or be a weight for them.”**

*Rupa Shah  
SNDT  
Women's University of Mumbai  
India*

public health. A great deal of activity focuses on building the capacity of nonstudent groups such as the staff of nongovernmental organizations and local government personnel. One of the university leaders from South America summed up civic engagement: “Civic engagement in our institution is about the promotion of democracy through the development of citizenship participation and social capital construction.”

What is driving the civic engagement of universities? While many respondents cite values such as democracy, social justice, the struggle against oppression, and academic excellence, the value of social responsibility is the greatest influence.

### **Organizational structure**

Universities have established a variety of organizational arrangements around civic engagement. While over half the respondents have specific structures in place to oversee this work, many of them do not have such structures in place. The overall picture is one of the organizational structure that is in flux.

### **Motivated by the needs of society**

On the whole universities have adopted a demand-driven approach to their civic engagement programs. Perhaps this point is obvious, but the universal reality is that the pressing needs of societies shape these efforts.

### **Amazing scale and impacts**

Contrary to the perception that universities have accorded civic engagement low priority, a wide array of programs and projects undertaken by faculty and students indicates high energy and enthusiasm for the drive for engagement. The institutions demonstrate a diverse range of civic engagement initiatives, some of which have been fully integrated with curricula.



The percentage of students participating in civic engagement and the percentage of faculty participating are far greater than one would assume. This impressive scale presents an opportunity to build awareness of and support for the global civic engagement movement.

Many of these university leaders report over 50 percent of students participating in civic engagement activities. Some register extraordinary levels of civic activity at over 75 percent of students, including Ahfad University for Women in Sudan, Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University in Indonesia, the University for Development Studies in Ghana, the University of Havana in Cuba, and the University of Western Sydney in Australia. This results in substantial levels of impact on students—their attitudes and skills—on communities and on institutions, partnerships, funding opportunities, and relationships with other sectors.

### **Limited funding and government policy**

Several institutions cited resource constraints and the lack of a supportive national policy as some of the impediments to their success. Approximately 70 percent of the institutions mention the absence of government support. Nevertheless there are a number of positive examples of governments facilitating civic work. They note that lack of funds experienced by most universities impedes adequate investment in civic engagement programs. Many participants agree that faculty incentives are an important factor in driving civic engagement.

### **Optimistic visions for the future and for collaboration**

It is encouraging to see the high level of ambition in the universities' plans for civic engagement. The participating university leaders have a great opportunity to expand and improve what their institutions already are doing, and to strengthen university-community partnerships. The power of collaboration is clearly a significant element. There is a high interest in collaborating with other universities by supporting and learning from one another.

**“The engagement between university and community—mutual learning—should be a central theme.”**

*Julian Crampton  
University of Brighton  
United Kingdom*





**“We should strengthen the notion of engagement of the university in civil society as a two-way benefit. There has to be an indication that our objective is to provide interesting models of engagement rather than one-size-fits-all, and also provide examples of good practice.”**

*Shamsh Kassim-Lakha  
Aga Khan University  
Pakistan*

## PROMISING FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

The information presents a rich mosaic that broadly depicts civic engagement as a global movement characterized by impressive energy, ambitious plans to achieve those visions, an appetite for increased collaboration among institutions, and a strong desire to move towards collective action.

Universities can work together to shape this future, its direction and scale. Three important factors make this period a timely moment for shaping civic engagement:

- The societal needs on which civic engagement rests are immense in a period in which the higher education sector is continuing to expand dramatically. This means we can anticipate increased pressure on our institutions to apply their resources to these needs.
- This movement is showing the potential to approach critical mass and is no longer an isolated reality.
- There is increasing awareness of the effectiveness of civic work as the evidence of educational outcomes and community benefit mounts.

Together these three factors yield a terrific leverage opportunity for the higher education sector to contribute to building social capital and making a significant difference in our respective societies.

## OTHER PERSPECTIVES AND DISCUSSION

The discussion that followed Dean Hollister’s presentation centered on issues such as whether civic engagement helps students learn better and produce better results at university, the relationship between civic engagement and human rights, and the values underpinning civic engagement.

*Sir Roderick Floud* (London Metropolitan University, United Kingdom): The “third mission” is now increasingly established in different forms in all U.K. universities and is made possible by the fact that the government provides funding. It takes the form of what is described as “civic engagement” or “industrial engagement,” which perhaps goes back to some of the foundations of the universities in the U.S and U.K.

Most U.K. universities are engaged in community outreach, industrial service, and civic engagement in preparing students for civil society. As I understand the position in the rest of Europe, it is obviously more mixed: there are still some universities that reject civic engagement, emphasizing the universal values of research and the classical tradition of the university, and seek to distance themselves from many of these things to pursue scholarship and research. But this is a declining group and the vast majority of universities, particularly in the former Soviet bloc, see themselves as “creating democracy.” It is a strong imperative in



many of those countries, but against enormous odds. We shouldn't underestimate the enormous resource constraints and the difficulty of deciding priorities in a situation in which universities are underfinanced.

**Sung-Joo Han** (Korea University, South Korea): There is a debate whether scholars should be involved in public affairs, and, if so, where universities should engage. Does it help you to be a better teacher or researcher? Does it make you a better public servant?

Universities can teach better, and students can learn better as a result of social and public engagements. They can do better research. We have many purists who say scholars should be in an ivory tower, should not come out into the street and be involved in society. Perhaps there are different roles, depending on whether society is at a developing or developed stage, but in both cases the university (faculty and students) is an important agent of modernization and globalization, both in teaching and research. So we shouldn't worry about the conflict or competition among these three elements of teaching, research, and civic engagement.

**Monica Jiménez de la Jara** (Catholic University of Temuco, Chile): It is important to distinguish between different types of human rights. The first generation of human rights comprises civic and political rights; then we have second-generation human rights—social and economic rights; and then come the rights of peace, safety, and the environment. This distinction helps me place the university in a human rights framework and one can have activities related to each of these generations of human rights. It is useful to have a framework that is universal.

Behind civic and political rights lie values of dignity and freedom. Behind socioeconomic rights lie values of the common good and equity. Behind third-generation rights lay values of sustainability, human development, and acceptance. These values should inform all the different activities of the university—research, teaching, and the link with society. As university presidents, faculty, students, and administrative workers, we must all reflect on these values and put them into practice.

**“We had to bring the social scientists and doctors together, to work with the communities in villages to explore the cultural practices, to inculcate positive practices in the schooling system and frown on bad practices. To us it was a better way of producing a more relevant doctor for the conditions of Tanzania than was previously the case.”**

*Mathew L. Luhanga  
University of Dar es Salaam  
Tanzania*

**“We should make a distinction between political and social activism and civic engagement. We cannot discourage activism; activism has contributed to many democratic transitions. Instead of discouraging it, we should channel it.”**

*Sung-Joo Han*  
*Korea University*  
*South Korea*



Civic engagement presents an opportunity to link values with action, and to monitor the impact of such action. We call this social responsibility and we think that the university helps build countries and societies. By relating to public and private sectors and organizations, big and small, our students learn more and better, and our society benefits from our research. We are part of the society and we have to ask about its needs. Georgetown University is thinking global, they are preparing leaders for all countries; we think about social responsibility in our country and in small communities where we are.

**Robert Hollister** (Tufts University, United States of America): Is it in fact the case that students involved in civic engagement learn better?

**Rupa Shah** (SNDT Women's University of Mumbai, India): This is in fact so, partly because my university focuses on issues closely related to the democratic and human rights of women and because it adopts an interdisciplinary approach.

Apart from civic and political matters, we include social and economic rights in order to help alleviate the high levels of economic inequality in rural India where the societal norms have subjugated women. Some of our civic engagement programs are on peace and environmental sustainability. Today women manage bio-waste, dairy, and water-harvesting projects. The interdisciplinary approach makes it possible to adopt a comprehensive approach to community development. It becomes a melting pot that offers enormous opportunities for students, and the teams are drawn from different areas of teaching.

**Mathew L. Lubanga** (University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania): Students involved in civic engagement learn better. There are two examples from my university in Tanzania. One is a project called “Research for Democracy in Tanzania.” Multi-party democracy started in Tanzania in 1992, but we could not simply import the principles and practices from Europe. Lots of publications and research were produced and these fed into our work at the university so that today we are producing a different type of political scientist in Tanzania and the teaching is better.

In medicine we were teaching our students in the traditional way, but we were not producing sufficient numbers of medical practitioners to meet the demand. Furthermore, certain behaviors and cultural practices were contributing to the incidence of illness in communities. So we had to bring the social scientists and doctors together, to work closely with the communities in villages. Together they explored cultural practices so as to inculcate positive practices in the schooling system and frown on bad practices. This helped reduce the burden on the curative side of medicine and provided a better way of producing a more relevant doctor for the conditions of Tanzania than was previously the case.





**John Kaburise** (University for Development Studies, Ghana): Universities nevertheless face a challenge that stems from society's own perception about the desirability of getting the university involved in community activities. There is a fear that we might introduce concepts that will affect socialization in the community, and perhaps undermine indigenous knowledge that is very useful to society—preventative medicine and nutrition that is being lost over the years. Civic engagement helps us tap those aspects of traditional knowledge that are useful. My university has recognized a distinguished practitioner of traditional medicine who has perfected her knowledge in this area and is being sought by orthodox western medical practitioners. We have awarded her a doctorate and she gives lectures to our students on life skills, basic health, and the nutritional value of our traditional foods.

**Radmila Marinković-Nedučín** (University of Novi Sad, Serbia and Montenegro): It is important to articulate what form civic engagement takes in a university.

It is not sufficient for civic engagement to be embedded, hidden. We are not NGOs; we are institutions and civic engagement must be defined. Is it integral to the curriculum? Is it extra-curricular? Last year we introduced three new curricula, drawing on the experience of non-governmental organizations. One of these has to do with peace studies, working through a regional center and covering three aspects: self-management, conflict, and post-conflict circumstances.

**Shamsh Kassim-Lakha** (Aga Khan University, Pakistan): In the case of the Aga Khan University, civic engagement was at the center of the rationale for establishing the institution.

**“Although more than 50 percent of students are involved in civic engagement, research and scholarship in our country tend to be more academic. If it has entrepreneurial value, then it is considered to be very strong, but not necessarily for civic engagement.”**

*Crispin P. Betita*  
*Notre Dame of Marbel University*  
*Philippines*



**“One option may be to create a special research center that could help drive civic engagement research. We at Haifa are considering establishing such a center.”**

*Aaron Ben-Ze'ev  
University of Haifa  
Israel*

Our university is only 23 years old and we state in our charter that we shall be part of the community; the purpose of the university is to help people develop. While some universities tended to discourage women from enrolling in their medical colleges due to their domestic roles, at my university we have more women than men in the health sciences and education programs. In each of these programs there is a huge commitment to community engagement especially in urban slums. Civic engagement creates awareness of people's rights and how they can help themselves. For example one of our health projects has helped to dramatically reduce infant and maternal mortality through awareness creation.

**Juan Vela Valdés** (University of Havana, Cuba): The role of universities cannot be isolated from the rest of education; there must be a link between primary, secondary, and tertiary education.

Civic engagement means that the students learn more, the teachers are more profound in their thinking, and the university is more useful for society. But there must be consensus—in the academic community, in civil society and in all strategies and policy of government—that civic engagement is important.

At this moment the most important division between rich and poor is knowledge; so the universities, as part of the knowledge society, must be in the front line, with a commitment to society.

**“There is the need for funding to support community projects and there is a new culture of social responsibility in which companies are more interested in investing in this area, but corporate social responsibility operates according to certain economic models that may conflict with community interests.”**

*Gustavo Alvim  
Methodist University of Piracicaba  
Brazil*



**“The access of young people who come from poor homes to a quality institution of higher education constitutes a strong challenge to maintaining the equality of opportunities... I consider it valuable to develop research and career development opportunities focused on facing these challenges and needs in our societies.”**

*Silvio Israel Feldman  
National University  
of General Sarmiento  
Argentina*

**Iqbal Paroo** (Omidyar Network, United States of America): Many of the comments beg an important question: Is the university in service of society relevant and responsive to the emerging needs, or is it an ivory tower separate from society?

We all live in society, as do our students. Are we preparing our students to advance human social evolution (e.g. human rights) in a practical, responsive way? This is a highly selected group, so we need to figure out a way to continue this dialogue when we leave. More importantly, we need to come up with a process that will create a bottom-up desire to strengthen the global movement that we aspire to create with institutions taking an active role in civic engagement. This group should not become a cohesive clique of know-it-all institutions. To create a movement one needs to rely on the bottom-up participation of many institutions that for many reasons are not at this table.

Universities are facing huge challenges, one of which is the increase in the population. The environment is changing owing to pollution, lack of food, water, energy and now the World Trade Organization is debating the internationalization of higher education, treating higher education as a commodity, not as a public good. So it is the responsibility of the university to know how it can be more useful to the society; how the community sees it, and how we can learn from the people and increase our knowledge through bilateral action.

**Aaron Ben-Ze'ev** (University of Haifa, Israel): It would be helpful to create a common vocabulary.

There is “civic engagement” and “social responsibility.” The latter is a broader and possibly a more appropriate term. Responsibility speaks to engagement and “social” is broader than “civic.” However, the term is common in the business community. Could we use social responsibility instead of civic engagement?

**“Faculty members’ engagement does depend in large measure on how the discipline fits with engagement as a scholarly activity. We need to be respectful of this reality.”**


*John J. DeGioia  
Georgetown University  
United States of America*



## *Civic Engagement*

# PUBLIC POLICY AND HIGHER EDUCATION: A CALL TO ACTION

**Alison Bernstein** Vice President for Knowledge, Creativity and Freedom,  
Ford Foundation, United States of America



Civic engagement is a cross-cutting issue that bears on the work of government, civil society, the private sector, and higher education institutions. While these sectors approach civic engagement from different perspectives, the goal is to build social capital and create an environment for reciprocity. Since universities are relatively well resourced in terms of both human and physical capital, they are well positioned to play a key role in engaging society. Notwithstanding the importance of the role of faculty or departments as vehicles for civic engagement programs, the university's commitment to this mission should be judged on how any civic education program impacts its mission and policy.



The U.S. president has called hurricane Katrina a natural disaster. This is only partly true. Nature had something to do with this, and global warming is a factor. The real issue is the inability of government to exercise its civic role and responsibility. As with Katrina, we seem to know when institutions, public and private, don't fulfill their civic roles and responsibilities—a public utility fails to get the lights back on, trains fail to run on time, hospitals and nursing homes fail to honor their duty, and so forth. But how would we know when colleges and universities are failing to fulfill their civic roles and responsibilities?

While there is a range of policies and programs that promotes civic engagement in teaching, research, public scholarship, and the promotion of student service for credit, the real test of whether a higher education institution is fulfilling its civic roles and responsibility must be applied at the highest level: the activity of the board, the leadership of the president, and the institution's mission and policies.

## FOSTERING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Universities can initiate a wide array of programs and policies that foster participation, ranging from social to political dimensions in societies. What is important, however, is for universities to fulfill their civic role without being

**“Our institutions should emphasize not only the value of public service, in and of itself, but we also need to help our students to understand that they can shape, and have a long-term impact on the public policies, resources, and research in the communities that they serve.”**

*John DiBiaggio  
Tufts University  
United States of America*



**“Does the failure of universities to engage students in active political participation constitute a failure to fulfill their civic engagement responsibility?”**

*Alison Bernstein  
Ford Foundation  
United States of America*

misconstrued as being partisan. The major social institutions that are likely to partner with universities include local governments, the nongovernmental community and the education sector.

For example, in the mid-1960s Princeton University established a mid-October break, which was designed to enable students, faculty, and staff to work in elections and canvas for politicians of their choice. This serves as an example of a university policy designed to promote civic engagement. Universities can also promote nonpartisan public participation by sponsoring a United Way or Red Cross blood drive, recycling, or providing space for the community to hold critical meetings. For example, in Oshakati in northern Namibia, the University of Namibia provided space for a polling station and meeting space where the public could hear local candidates speak.

Universities and colleges have a particular role to play in expanding political participation, especially in the global south. By contrast, the situation is different in northern countries. For example in the U.S., political participation is not on the front burner as far as the role of the universities is concerned, except possibly in 2004 when the presidential debates were held on the campuses of three U.S. universities.

The promotion of civic engagement as part of the universities’ institutional mission should typically take three forms:

- ***Articulation with the public school system.*** Higher education should establish a direct relationship with schools in order to do its job properly. This is not to suggest that a university should take over a local school district, but that at the highest level of the institution, engagement with public schooling becomes a mission of the senior leadership. For example a small Catholic college in the U.S. awards teachers’ certificates for continuing professional development after every five years. This is because these teachers are products of the institution and it is in the interest of the college to maintain a relationship with them. In the U.S. there have also been remarkable high schools that have been established on community college campuses—recruiting young people who have dropped out and failed in the mainstream schooling system.

- ***Articulation with nongovernmental organizations serving in the public interest.*** Al-Quds University provides an example. It is home of the only independent broadcaster in the West Bank, providing a C-Span type service featuring debates in the Palestinian legislative assembly.

- ***Articulation with local government.*** Turning to partnerships between universities and local government, most colleges and universities are resource-rich compared with other public institutions, especially in terms of human capital,





infrastructure (including facilities), power, and influence. They teach, produce new knowledge, and provide services to local communities. One tends to find examples of university-sanctioned civic engagement projects in fields of professional education such as dentistry clinics, public interest law programs, medicine clinics, etc. By contrast, the traditional liberal arts and science disciplines are more suspicious of, and resistant to, this kind of outreach.

Strengthening engagement in these three directions requires an allocation of financial resources at the highest level of the institution. This may be one reason why there are major differences between institutions around the globe in the rate and level of civic engagement. Some universities register great success while others have had only limited success.

In the field of public schooling, for example, universities have the most direct relationship in the training of teachers. At the same time they also generate knowledge and act as resource centers for curriculum development at schools. Despite this, many universities and colleges are not sufficiently involved in the debates about “intelligent design.”

## WHO SHOULD STRENGTHEN UNIVERSITIES FOR CIVIC ENGAGEMENT?

To date, it has been students who have promoted civic engagement in universities for the most part, mainly through work with nongovernmental organizations. My question is: “Is it a failure to leave the commitment to work with nongovernmental organizations only to students? Is it the students or the university that should carry the commitment?”

Brenda Gourley, while vice chancellor of the University of Natal in South Africa, facilitated a dynamic relationship between the University of Natal and nongovernmental organizations active in the struggle against apartheid. The closest that U.S. institutions got to this level of engagement was supporting divestment from South Africa during apartheid.

While universities benefit from working with the private sector, they should also know more about how they can work with the government. There are many books about how universities are selling their souls to the corporate sector, but little about how universities are influencing policy development.

How can the university president and board engage concretely with the civic demands of communities at the local and state level? Who should be taking action?

One example of a community engagement initiative taken at the Ford Foundation itself is a fund called the “Good Neighbor Committee,” which seeks to help develop the local community. This program is run by Ford’s support staff,

**“It is important to articulate what form civic engagement takes in a university. It is not sufficient for civic engagement to be embedded, hidden.”**

*Radmila Marinković-Nedučin  
University of Novi Sad  
Serbia and Montenegro*



**“It is important that staff of the university, or scholars, model what it is they are espousing to teach. There is tremendous diversity in communities. Rather than an individual university engaging with a community, one should disaggregate this into different interest groups.”**

*Kerry Cox  
University of Ballarat  
Australia*

not program staff, and underscores the Foundation’s commitment to working for the common good of its immediate community.

Universities should consider setting up a trustee committee which looks at the university as a civic minded player, and engage in a planning process. Ultimately, university leaders should use their power to level the playing field and set new standards in community engagement.

## OTHER PERSPECTIVES AND DISCUSSION

*Sung-Joo Han* (Korea University, South Korea): Some of the examples you cite may be construed as taking sides in the political debate and a university can’t afford to be involved in that controversy. How do you resolve that?

*Alison Bernstein* (Ford Foundation, United States of America): I tried to give non-partisan examples e.g. getting more individuals on your campus to enroll to vote or working with schools and districts in a more intentional and systematic way. The only political example is the case of divestment in South Africa.

Universities exist in a context and their relationship with that context must operate at the highest level. While community service and other programs do a lot, I don’t think that university leadership has grappled enough with the question of how top management gets involved in civic engagement.

*Sung-Joo Han*: In Korea any one of the examples (e.g. registering to vote) would be considered partisan.

*Alison Bernstein*: If the administration were serious about it, they would work out ways of making it nonpartisan.

*Sung-Joo Han*: Helping NGOs that are advocacy groups would be seen to be supporting one or more policy position. It could be construed as taking sides in a sensitive debate.



**Alison Bernstein:** The Ford Foundation draws a line between policy analysis and lobbying for a specific piece of legislation. The latter is not allowed by grantees who receive Ford funding. One needs to distinguish between these two.

For example if we allow students to hold the local chapter of Amnesty International on campus, we have already said that it is a legitimate organization. We don't seem to have any problem aligning universities with corporations—and, of course, they have agendas too. Why is it okay for engineering to have a set of contracts with big companies, but the political science department can't engage with policy advocacy?

**David Arnold** (American University in Cairo, Egypt): There are rules and regulations that govern how foundation funds can be used for lobbying, etc. But the key for our purpose is to think of linkages that are organic to finding partners, many of whom will be in the NGO or the public sector. We shouldn't hold back from forging those types of partnerships.

**Brenda Gourley** (The Open University, United Kingdom): The University of Natal (now KwaZulu-Natal) hosted a large number of NGOs that were essentially engaged in activities that were not supported by the apartheid government of the day. This was a risky position and had to be exercised with care because the whole university enterprise was exposed. The university community took that risk, a political risk, that it offer refuge to people doing fine work in difficult circumstances, and the then government knew it would have to take on the university if it wanted to stop that work. There is no doubt that the community served by these NGOs appreciated the university's position.

**Alison Bernstein:** Take an example from Latin America: When the Pinochet regime was systematically weeding out academics from the University of Chile and other universities, a number of universities decided to provide refuge to these academics and give them a place to work. That is an example of a different kind of civic engagement that requires a political judgment; the same kind of thing could come to pass anywhere, even in the U.S.

**Monica Jiménez de la Jara** (Catholic University of Temuco, Chile): Examining the context of university engagement, I was active in the Catholic University in Santiago during the Pinochet regime, but when in 1998 we launched a big campaign to register people, I had to go outside the university to create an NGO called Participa because it was impossible to do this inside the university. The principal and the institution didn't want to work with us because they were afraid of the repression by the Pinochet regime. I produced a public service announcement, just to publicize the dates of registration, but couldn't get it broadcast, even though the NGO was not named.



**“I believe the action plan for civic engagement needs to be a policy of the university, not simply extra-mural activities on the part of the students.”**

*Monica Jiménez de la Jara  
Catholic University of Temuco  
Chile*



**“American University in Cairo’s social research center is the most fully developed field-based social science research center in the Middle East region. It does rigorous policy-oriented work that informs and shapes understanding of societal problems and government responses to those problems whether maternal, child, health, water provision, literacy, etc. They have done an extraordinary job.”**

*David Arnold  
American University in Cairo  
Egypt*

Today we don’t have repression and we can work with schools, the teachers, NGOs, government, and business because we are in a democracy and have the freedom to do so. Nevertheless, we are a small group because the university doesn’t care about this type of program. I believe the action plan for civic engagement needs to be a policy of the university, not simply extra-mural activities on the part of the students.

**Alison Bernstein:** Universities in countries like the U.S. support more extracurricular activities than other countries and therefore should not leave all civic engagement programs to the faculty level.

**Bruno Sion** (Saint-Joseph University, Lebanon): The movement for a university-wide response to the struggle for democracy in Lebanon appealed to the moral authority of the university. It protected students against military action by providing them with places of refuge, and kept the military out. With its unique location across the “green line” which divided Beirut between Christians and Muslims it managed to involve as many political parties as possible.

**Alison Bernstein:** I don’t think universities should be the place where every group should find a home. It is a process that begins with pulling together the university community to say what are we, as an institution, prepared to do? What democratic values can we support both on and off campus? We need to address this as part of the university mission.

**Shamsh Kassim-Lakha** (Aga Khan University, Pakistan): I liked the reference to the university trustees and faculty being involved, as well as the students. The rewards are huge. Aga Khan University has worked to change the way that students in the school systems are examined, and this was done by engaging with three successive governments in Pakistan. Each supported the initiative, but none, except President Musharraf, had the length of office to carry it forward. There was tremendous resistance in some parts of the community, but we are now succeeding step by step. So it is most important to look at the upstream issues.

**Gasim Badri** (Ahfad University for Women, Sudan): Let’s also look at donors and civic engagement. In the Sudan we had support from Ford and other donors, but when the current regime came to power, donors withdrew and left us to fend for ourselves. This suggests that the Ford Foundation is neglecting its civic responsibility. It is the wrong policy for donors to leave nongovernmental organizations to fend for themselves, knowing that it is difficult for them—both in terms of funding and the politically hostile environment in which they are working.



**Alison Bernstein:** The Ford Foundation did close its office in Khartoum, but now has a higher education specialist in Cairo who is interested in connecting higher education in Egypt to the sector in Sudan. But we understand that we were seen to have abandoned you.

**Vo-Tong Xuan** (An Giang University, Vietnam): Linking the university with public schooling is very positive, because schools produce the students for the university. The quality of general education is declining, especially in Vietnam, and so we need to put enormous effort into producing a new crop of teachers. We are now doing research with existing teachers in order to help them improve their methods of teaching and the way in which they produce resources for us at the university.

**Liz Hollander** (Campus Compact, United States of America): U.S. colleges are doing a lot to register voters on campuses. I have learned here how serious people in other countries are about developing the skills to run nongovernmental organizations. There are very few programs in the U.S. to train the next generation for NGO development.

**Rupa Shah** (SNDT Women's University of Mumbai, India): How does one involve the staff? Making them capable of civic involvement is one thing, but getting them involved when they are part-time is another.

**Alison Bernstein:** University staff often feel alienated because of class issues—faculty and students often live in different places, for example. Staff representatives need to be involved in the planning process from the beginning, in order to help shape a university-wide response. The Ford Foundation's experience of the "Good Neighbor Committee" suggests that staff do want to take the time to get involved in making grant allocations in the neighborhood. It was a very promising way of involving staff at the organization.

**"We need to recognize how research priorities are shaped; the priorities which became hegemonic after 1945 reflected the huge increase in funding fueled by the Cold War. The position of institutions like MIT was historically constructed at a particular moment. To recognize the role of history in this way is to raise difficult and intriguing questions about very different definitions of research."**

*John Rowett  
Association of  
Commonwealth Universities  
United Kingdom*

# PLACING CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AT THE CENTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Talloires Conference participants worked in sub-groups on three broad challenges: organizing the university for civic engagement, research and scholarship, and government policy and resources.

## **ORGANIZING THE UNIVERSITY FOR CIVIC ENGAGEMENT**

How can the university best be organized for civic engagement?

Does civic engagement lie at the heart of the university or is it an 'add-on' to the mission of teaching and scholarship?





### **Challenges and opportunities in mainstreaming civic engagement**

In a number of institutions a weak culture of civic engagement within the academic environment results in an incongruence of goals between the university and its immediate community (faculty and students). Faculty come to universities with personal and professional interests that do not necessarily coincide with civic or social issues. This affects research priorities and makes it difficult to integrate civic issues into the curriculum.

Those universities with a strong tradition of civic engagement show that it is possible to infuse teaching and the curriculum with the values and content necessary to develop an ethos of citizenship among faculty and students. In Sudan, for example, the location of the Ahfad University for Women within a highly impoverished community has made courses in education, women's studies, and population studies a requirement for all students. In Brazil, a commitment by the Methodist University of Piracicaba to building the capacity of civil society has resulted in close collaboration between faculty, the nongovernmental sector and government. However, as noted earlier, these universities face significant challenges in terms of human capacity and financial resources, as well as the need for academic recognition.

**“In Lebanon, we have a strong tradition of research about society, in both Christian and Muslim communities.”**

*Bruno Sion  
Saint-Joseph University  
Lebanon*





**“The overall appreciation and support for civic engagement is well understood by the faculty and Board of Trustees of my institution. There is a core group of faculty that is highly motivated and this puts a premium on our Office of Public Service to support these efforts and motivate others.”**

*Mark Gearan  
Hobart and William Smith Colleges  
United States of America*

The university leaders identified three factors that influence the ability of universities to make civic engagement core to their operations:

- 1) The “massification” of higher education around the world introduces the possibility of pedagogical and curriculum reform, but this is a considerable challenge, particularly in terms of sufficient faculty supervision.
- 2) The political environment in which universities operate may constrain their efforts to foster civic engagement. In the context of a repressive political environment, for example, democracy education and the promotion of civic awareness may be “taboo.” The experience of the former University of Natal in South Africa prior to the democratic dispensation shows, however, that a university can function as a safe haven in a politically turbulent context, which in turn affected faculty and students.
- 3) Teaching and research in many universities have traditionally been uncoupled from the realm of civic engagement and community development. University leaders thus have the task of fostering an institutional outlook that sees the institution “working with the society” rather than being separated from it.

### **Strategies for organizing the university for civic engagement**

Universities have a mandate to educate and train responsible and dedicated citizens. In light of this duty, universities should revisit their founding principles and locate civic engagement within their institutional framework. In years that follow, those students may assume key political positions and are then in a position to infuse policy and legislative action with civic values.

Alongside an enabling institutional policy for civic engagement, the existence of central administrative capacity is crucial to the university's reaching out to the broader university community, managing community-university partnerships, and encouraging civic engagement at all levels of the institution.

It was noted that the normal (discipline-based) organizational structure of the university does not necessarily lend itself to creating the conditions required to support civic engagement. For this reason, a number of strategies were suggested to operationalize and coordinate civic engagement at the university:

- Locate the initiative in the president's office, as is the case with the "social capital initiative" at Metropolitan University at Caracas, Venezuela.
- Establish an interdisciplinary coordinating center such as that established by the University of Cantho to serve complex agricultural needs in Vietnam's Mekong Delta.
- Set up a center for social service alongside other issue-specific centers, each of which represents a means of promoting civic engagement at the university.

Underpinning these structural arrangements, however, is the need for strong leadership that seeks to make civic engagement core to the university's activities. Conference participants were unanimous that there is no contradiction or dichotomy between civic engagement and excellence. The task of university leaders is to persuade faculty to engage with communities within the context of academic excellence. It may be possible that the so-called "new generation universities" find it easier to foster these strategic changes than those universities that have been in place for much longer, but participants agreed that the task of changing the outlook of faculty is a key goal in all instances.

Other strategies suggested for making civic engagement part of the academic enterprise include:

- Designing a system that recognizes and rewards the integration of civic engagement in teaching and research.
- Finding funding for good civic engagement projects and making such financial support available to faculty for teaching and research. Faculty should also be encouraged to bid for worthwhile projects around policy development and research.

**"In Cuba social engagement is a very old matter. It starts even when children are in primary school. We have a philosophy of education and work at all levels of education (primary, secondary, and higher education) and all our majors have a lot of hours in the curriculum that are community-based learning., e.g. medical doctors do not start their training in the laboratories of biology, histology, etc."**

*Juan Vela Valdés  
University of Havana  
Cuba*





**“Although both private funding and government policy are helpful, they are not necessarily required for universities to support civic engagement activities or developing partnerships with communities.”**

*Susan Stroud  
Innovations in Civic Participation  
United States of America*

- Recognizing civic engagement in processes of hiring, compensation, and academic promotion. Strategies suggested here include establishing a “civic engagement ranking system” that could be used to guide faculty remuneration and tenure, and building civic engagement into performance management processes. While these measures may be controversial in the short-term, they are bound to guide and inform faculty tenure and reward in the long term.
- Forging international networks.

## RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP

Despite the provision of “good education” to young people, graduates are often unable to translate its impact and make it relevant to the wider community. This disjuncture between societal needs and educational outcomes provides an opportunity for universities to develop new knowledge through civic engagement with the wider society. Rather than having civic engagement as a “third leg” of the higher education mission, universities should infuse it throughout their strategic thinking, particularly as far as scholarship is concerned.

This seems to be happening in developing countries, where universities are increasingly being regarded as a resource for national development. In Indonesia, for example, many faculty recognize the key role that universities play in integrating the nation, while in South Africa, community service is being cited as one of the quality assurance indicators used to measure the responsiveness of universities to national and local imperatives.

### Challenges and opportunities for research and civic engagement

In some cases, ideological differences around research may draw negative reactions from government as is the case in countries like Korea, Egypt, and Sudan. The governments in these countries have taken a hostile position towards universities that publish research findings that are contrary to the official perspective. However, faculty at the University for Development Studies in Ghana and at the University of Havana in Cuba are committed to placing civic engagement at the heart of their research agendas due to the supportive climate for university civic engagement in those countries. Cuba’s philosophy of education has made it possible to prioritize curricula and research programs that are community-based. It proceeds from the standpoint that the university needs to prepare men and women to live in the twenty-first century in a way that does not destroy the environment. Faculty must teach students about the challenges that they will face in this world. The research interest in civic engagement is closely related to the socioeconomic context in which universities operate.



In the United States and the United Kingdom, there has been some resistance to civic engagement as a legitimate field of research and scholarship; research on civic engagement is not recognized by peer-reviewed journals as an area of legitimate scholarship. Two strategies have been used to integrate civic engagement more closely into the university's research agenda: conducting needs assessments to generate demand-driven projects and making grants available to stimulate community-based research.

University leaders thus have a crucial role to play in establishing civic engagement as a legitimate area of research and scholarship. By generating an understanding of how action research and community engagement can be mutually beneficial to communities as well as to the institution, the university leadership stands a better chance of persuading donors to support community-based research.

### **Infusing civic engagement into research and scholarship**

National policy frameworks can facilitate the university's ability to make civic engagement a priority within research and scholarship. In Serbia and Montenegro, for example, the passage of new higher education legislation has made it possible for the University of Novi Sad to elevate civic engagement as an integral part of the university's mandate. In South Africa the government is in a developmental state, and this creates many opportunities to undertake research that can influence policy formulation.

Universities can benefit from a reciprocal relationship with their communities. Some have made civic engagement part of their curriculum and place specific emphasis on participatory or applied research. Most university leaders concurred that while applied research has never conflicted with traditional research, it is a good vehicle for community engagement.

The status of civic engagement could be transformed through benchmarking practice against examples of excellence. Universities can draw examples of good practice from a range of sources such as the European universities' Bologna Declaration and the Association of Commonwealth Universities. Creating space in the global arena for research on civic engagement was also identified as an important goal.

Incentives that reward faculty on the basis of their interest in civic engagement are crucial. Examples include the University of Caracas in Venezuela, the Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University in Indonesia, and Georgetown University in the United States of America where civic or social engagement is one of the criteria for tenure and promotion. In some cases it has proved difficult to encourage faculty to move from a narrow disciplinary focus to cooperating around community-based research projects because discipline-based research is easier to conduct and is often better funded.

Collaborative forums and projects could slowly build a critical mass of faculty with an active research interest in civic engagement. Examples from the Aga Khan

**“There is an inherent conflict in the current dominant research paradigm. If we are to develop a new paradigm it has to start with graduate education. We also need to pay more attention to the student outcomes of civic engagement. There is not yet a strong enough body of research that documents the causal effects of civic engagement in college on life long citizenship inclinations, abilities and actions.”**

*Liz Hollander  
Campus Compact  
United States of America*





**“The main challenge is the distinction between research and scholarship on the one hand and social values including civic engagement on the other. While the two are distinct from one another, ways should be found to inform research with civic engagement values.”**

*Sari Nusseibeh  
Al-Quds University  
Palestine*

University in Pakistan, the University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania, An Giang University in Vietnam, and Tufts University in the United States demonstrate how significant the impact of a multi-disciplinary approach can be. In their respective studies, they set up cross-disciplinary research teams (drawing together health, natural and social scientists, for example) to address societal problems ranging from HIV/ AIDS to obesity. Based on these studies it is clear that if each discipline looks beyond its own specialized field, particularly in addressing local or national problems, the efforts are likely to yield powerful results.

## GOVERNMENT POLICY AND RESOURCES

Government policy and funding are two factors that shape the environment in which civic engagement can function, and conference participants agreed that both make an impact on the nature and extent of university civic engagement.

Although there are not many examples of explicit government support for university-level civic engagement, universities can nevertheless achieve a great deal by establishing strategic partnerships with the public sector so as to enhance the impact of community engagement. The example of An Giang University in Vietnam shows how university-government collaboration can benefit the society as a whole. As part of the country’s reconstruction program after the Vietnam War, the university went ahead with its research in the agricultural sector without waiting for government assistance. By the time funding became available, much of the groundwork had already been done and the university was able to amplify its efforts in partnership with government.

### Influencing public policy

Regardless of policy constraints, universities should be proactive in promoting civic and social engagement, preferably in relation to national priorities. This



helps capture the attention of government, funding bodies, and other partners in the development arena. As the experience of the Aga Khan University in Pakistan shows, universities can contribute to “evidence-based” policy change.

Universities have the responsibility of creating an awareness of civic engagement within the government and wider society. The Catholic University of Temuco in Chile provides a cogent example in this respect: research was conducted by the university at schools to establish the pupils’ knowledge about and attitudes towards civic issues, and this paved the way for the Ministry of Education to provide financial support for a civic engagement program.

### **Funding for civic engagement**

The competition for funds between civic engagement and mainstream teaching and research activities is a key challenge. Universities in both developed and developing

**“The challenge is not prioritization—for us the civic engagement obligation exists. The challenge is to find the funding to support research and find outlets through which to publish such research.”**

*John Kaburise  
University for Development Studies  
Ghana*

countries face budgetary constraints when it comes to financing civic engagement teaching and research. In some cases government and donor agencies are selective in the projects they prioritize for funding. In Korea, for example, government is more interested in programs that relate to globalization or human resource development in broad terms, and less interested in the needs of local (non-student) constituencies. While multi-lateral bodies such as the Association of South East Asia Nations and the United Nations University (in Japan) emphasize manpower development, they seldom consult with other development partners to

identify areas of greatest need. Financial support must be sought from multiple funders, including sources in the private sector. The collaboration between the Australian universities and IBM (which inter alia supports MBA students on the basis of their interest in community work) could be a model for other universities.

### **Broadening civic participation**

Currently, university-led civic engagement is confined within national borders; this ignores the interdependence of universities and countries in the global environment. A call was thus made to participants to broaden the meaning of “civic” to “global civil society.” Networking at the international, regional, and national levels is a potential means of increasing leverage for civic engagement by building awareness among universities, providing platforms for resource mobilization and facilitating greater understanding and appreciation for civic engagement.

**“Our new institution has inherited a great challenge in promoting research capacity as a starting point. The institutions were technikons (like polytechnics) offering diplomas with very little research, but since the 1990s have been able to offer degrees up to doctoral level where there is capacity. Applied research is the focus of the new institution and in this context we have an opportunity to ensure that civic engagement is taken into account.”**

*Marcus Balintulo  
Cape Peninsula  
University of Technology  
South Africa*

## *Directions for Action*

# ESTABLISHING A GLOBAL NETWORK

**Iqbal Paroo** President and Chief Operating Officer, Omidyar Network, United States of America

Universities and other organizations operate in a highly volatile environment. This is a time of transition and invention that requires new types of networks that can shed traditional practices and embrace emerging approaches in order to create leverage for success.

The Omidyar Network has recognized the need to move beyond the conventional donor/grantee relationship. We seek to develop an “attractor” network. It expresses our belief that people are basically good, and when given an opportunity to contribute (through leveling the playing fields), are able to introduce diversity of thought. This generates robust results and optimum solutions. It is the power of direct, unmediated exchange.

We are a network in the making, and a community of shared interest. The question is: can we go from shared interest to shared action? How will we work together, once we have signed the Talloires Declaration?



## CONVENTIONAL VS. EMERGING NETWORKS

Traditional approaches view networks as requiring organization and staff, being open only to members (i.e. with limited access), relying on periodic meetings and printed materials, and, most importantly, restricting individual initiative.

The emerging approach can develop with minimal investment in organizations, structure, and staff. It can take advantage of emerging technologies, provide equal access to information (and is thus empowering), can broker temporary sub-groups, and sustain long-term collaboration.

This approach has a number of advantages: it is cheaper, quicker, more inclusive and more transparent, and exhibits strong self-realizing characteristics that enhance the self-empowerment of individuals. It is “bottom-up” rather than “top-down”. While some direction from the top is essential to provide the organizing principle and guidelines, institutions have to allow the network to follow a bottom-up direction to create a level playing field.

Civic engagement is a two-way relationship: it depends on leveling the playing field, without which one faces a “we-they” situation of university versus community.



**“We are a network in the making, and a community of shared interest. The question is ... How will we work together, once we have signed the Talloires Declaration?”**

*Iqbal Paroo  
Omidyar Network  
United States of America*



**“We hope that multiple relationships will emerge from this, as well as the beginning of a network, a web of relationships that is organic.”**

*Lawrence S. Bacow  
Tufts University  
United States of America*

## OMIDYAR NETWORK

Omidyar Network strives for complete openness and transparency. We post all our financial data for anyone to review and comment on. Everything, except the payroll in Omidyar Network, is posted. Outside of our own work, anyone interested in making the world a better place can connect with others who share their passions. The most exciting and promising aspect of this approach is that it allows people to share information, supports the exploration of different ideas and viewpoints, fosters collaboration on different projects, and creates value. We took public the tool we had internally, and today we have over 10,000 individuals on the [omidyar.net](http://omidyar.net) site. They are engaging in a dialogue through a network that enables individuals to share, learn, and move discussion into shared action.

Several groups have helped each other review business plans and have given free advice and resources on the basis of their experience. The uses are bounded only by people's interests and their imagination.

## HOW DOES ONE CREATE AN EFFECTIVE NETWORK?

You do not have to promote civic engagement. Create a mechanism that addresses people's interests, and they will be attracted to your network. Shared goals require the collaborative efforts of all participants. On eBay, 150 million people transact, but more importantly, they have shown that they can trust a stranger with every transaction. They join and come to rely on the information on the basis of sharing it.

An attractor network such as this could provide an excellent platform for the Talloires Network, particularly because digital tools are a major form of interaction for young people and would appeal to university students. An attractor network draws together people on the basis of self-interest; the higher the interest, the greater the participation. The larger the network, the more there is shared interest.

If you do not participate, the group suffers. So if you are committed to the movement of civic engagement globally, stay engaged in the process. If you don't seize this opportunity to contribute individually, the network suffers.

By staying connected and contributing individually to the Talloires Network, university leaders could help expand civic engagement exponentially. This will in turn create other opportunities for true civic engagement that we can't imagine as we sit here. We need to create the future and not wait for it to arrive.





## THE TALLOIRES NETWORK: STRENGTHENING THE CIVIC ROLES AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF HIGHER EDUCATION

### The mission

The Talloires Network is a collective of individuals and institutions committed to promoting the civic roles and social responsibilities of higher education. Founded by the inaugural signers of the Talloires Declaration, the group is working together to catalyze dialogue, research, and action to implement recommendations of the Declaration. All parties interested in furthering the actions and principles of the Talloires Declaration are welcome to join the group in this endeavor.

### Key goals of the Talloires Network

1. Expand the number of universities signing the Talloires Declaration and working to enact it
2. Support and disseminate civic and social engagement research
3. Collaborate on a common global project

Members of the Talloires Network are committed to undertaking the action items outlined in the Declaration at their universities, and are responsible for encouraging other university leaders and higher education associations to sign the Declaration as well.

Several founding members of the Talloires Network have agreed to collaborate on a global initiative to increase literacy. This common global project aims both to accelerate the impact of university resources on a pressing international problem and to demonstrate the

high potential of collective action by institutions of higher education around the world. Each participating institution will be expanding or establishing programs that apply the expertise and human energies of their faculty, staff, and students to increasing literacy rates in their respective locales. Working in coordination with established international organizations concerned with literacy, the universities will set collective goals, exchange best practices, and support one another's efforts.

Contributing to research about civic and social engagement is also a key goal of the Network. Two projects are currently being planned: a worldwide survey on the civic attitudes and actions of university students, and a book about the global civic engagement movement of higher education. The efforts of the Talloires Network will be strengthened by producing empirical data about the civic engagement of universities and their constituencies. This data will contribute to policy reform and bolster university-led civic engagement.

### Opportunities to Participate

A web site located at [www.tufts.edu/talloiresnetwork](http://www.tufts.edu/talloiresnetwork) has information on joining the Network. Please visit the site, join the Talloires Declaration Network, and begin to engage with fellow signatories.



