



University of Plymouth

Community Engagement Strategy 2009 – 2012



The University is at the top spot in the national People and Planet green university league table.

The Active in Communities project has run 119 events and worked with 194 external organisations involving nearly 12,000 participants.

840 students regularly took part in volunteering activity through the Students' Union in 2008/9.

The university supplies 82% of the graduates to supply replacement demand in Plymouth and 20% in the south west.

The University's expenditure on goods and services in the South West was £87m in 2008/9, over 50% of this was spent in Plymouth.

Each year 12 000 students have the opportunity to be involved in work based learning, many in community based settings such as schools, hospitals, prisons and with community and voluntary groups.

Transforming lives through knowledge, collaboration and partnership



The University of Plymouth is firmly **connected with place and people**, playing a significant role in driving economic, social and cultural vitality. Our development as an organisation has continued to reflect the changes and demands of our City and region.

Our commitment to the community is focused around sharing **excitement about and opportunities for learning**. As a university strongly connected to our community, we want to help people transform their lives through education, empowering people to deliver their talents, provide opportunities to foster social inclusion and build a future-facing society distinguished by innovation, where people are encouraged to use their abilities, experience and talents to make a difference.

As **the enterprise university**, we embed creativity and innovation in all our activities. We deliver these activities through partnership with business, the public sectors, community groups, and charities, playing a distinctive role in the development, application and exchange of knowledge in the City, the region and beyond.

We recognise strength in diversity, promote the importance of a globally connected community and are committed to achieving a low carbon economy and of integrating **sustainability principles** into our work.

Plymouth – a connected learning community

Our Plymouth values define our culture and guide our decision making. They also demonstrate how we work collaboratively with each other and our community:

- Transforming lives through knowledge, collaboration and partnership
- Providing access to research informed teaching and learning to all who can benefit
- Undertaking world-class research of high-impact to society and the economy
- Championing innovation, entrepreneurship and creativity.
- Using our scholarship to influence regional, national and international developments
- Taking pride in our people and their achievements
- Nurturing and rewarding skills and talent
- Being transparent, open and inclusive
- Encouraging sustainability through shared practice
- Embracing diversity, promoting opportunity and social cohesion
- Pursuing excellence in all that we do

“Community engagement weaves an integrating thread through our activities at the University of Plymouth”

The University of Plymouth, Exeter and Peninsula College of Medicine and Dentistry are among 16 regional organisations to have formed an alliance to improve health innovation in the South West. Health Innovation and Education Cluster South West is funded by the Department of Health.

The University of Plymouth in partnership with Cornwall College and Plymouth City Council has created Marine Academy Plymouth for students aged 11-19, and for the wider community, on the site of Tamarside Community College.

The University is investing £2.5 million in Plymouth’s Life Centre as a contribution towards an innovative indoor climbing zone and the region’s only 10 lane, 50 metre Olympic standard swimming pool.

Our Widening Participation strategy provides opportunities for participation in HE through activities for schools, parents, teachers and community groups. In 2008/9 the University worked with 40 000 people in the SW peninsula.

The Sustainability Research Institute will explore and enact solutions to local and global sustainability challenges

The University is a leading partner in Sell2Plymouth encouraging public sector use of small local suppliers, supporting the local economy and helping to reduce transportation costs and carbon emissions.

The University supports an estimated 4 540 full time jobs in the UK, of which 2 570 are directly employed by the University.

We are a key partner in the Plymouth Science and Innovation Programme with Plymouth City Council, Tamar Science Park and the Regional Development Agency, developing a strategy aimed at creating jobs, businesses and economic success based on higher level skills and enterprise.

During 2007/8 £1.23 million was directly invested in the community including £300,000 for the development of the Drakes Garden area and £100,000 to support the South West Film and Television Archive.

Working together in partnership is important for us, for individuals, the City and the region

Our community partners include: social enterprises, businesses, regional bodies, local authorities, NHS/health, statutory authorities, schools and colleges, alumni groups, the general public, our neighbours, communities of place, communities of interest, community organisations, and charities.

Our criteria for partnership are

- An emphasis on learning and skills development
- An enterprising and enabling approach
- Shared values and goals
- A respect for individuals and the common good
- Mutual benefit
- A strong fit with our mission

We will focus our investment of resources in these strategic priority areas:

- Opportunities to develop global citizenship
- Engaged partnerships in learning with schools and colleges
- Support for developing social enterprise capacity
- Commitment to sustainable development and carbon reduction activities
- Developing the City of Plymouth as a learning city

We will involve our community in taking the University forward, and:

- Build and sustain strong relationships with our community contacts
- Encourage mutual development through our partnerships
- Be proactive in responding to key community needs and expectations that deliver on our mission
- Pro-actively manage our ideas and knowledge to secure benefits for the communities we serve
- Develop partnerships to support our strategic and operational plans
- Review our partnerships and resource allocation to ensure that they are working effectively
- Monitor external factors and the implications for the University and the community
- Make ourselves accessible, friendly and easy to work with

Key themes

We will focus on these key themes, building on our strengths in teaching, learning, research and knowledge exchange, and work with our communities to develop a socially and culturally vibrant region:

1. Enabling our community to share the learning experience
2. Our students as residents, volunteers and global citizens
3. Communication and partnership working
4. Developing businesses and employability opportunities
5. Promoting vibrant cultural, sports and recreational opportunities

We created 'Enterprise Solutions' with the help of Government funding and assisted 750 businesses and over 1 600 individuals in the first year of operation.

Over 35 000 people have studied with us through our partner college network and today nearly a third of our students are spread across 19 colleges in the South West.

In 2008/9 the University hosted a range of exhibitions, performances and public lectures through Peninsula Arts attracting more than 32 000 people onto the campus.

The Nature Trail will begin at the Jigsaw Garden and wind through six city parks to provide an environment and biodiversity resource for schools and an activity for residents and visitors to the city to enjoy.

The University delivers the academic element of officer training for the Royal Navy in a unique partnership with Britannia Royal Naval College.

Key theme 1 – Enabling our community to share the learning experience

We will:

- Welcome people to the University by offering a range of opportunities to participate in events and activities, in person and online some of which will be free
- Make our campus more welcoming and information rich through signage and information design
- Celebrate our resources and facilities and encourage our community to engage with them
- Further develop our community research awards
- Further develop access pathways through our University partnership network and work with schools
- Develop innovative ways to encourage and enable people to access higher-level skills

Key theme 2 – Our students as residents, volunteers and global citizens

We will:

- Promote community based and employer led learning, and a curriculum that engages with contemporary problems and issues, and encourages global and local citizenship
- Promote the importance of volunteering in our community to our students and staff
- Encourage cross cultural and overseas activities to develop global citizens
- Work to maintain a thriving local community underpinned by high level skills and innovation



Key theme 3 – Communication and partnership working

We will:

- Communicate our community engagement purpose and priorities
- Promote the importance of partnership working in our community.
- Develop creative ways of working with our communities to enhance sustainability
- Work with our Academy, Trust Schools and local schools to raise aspiration and develop a pathway of educational opportunity for young people in the region
- Promote the value of an international approach
- Contribute our expertise to public understanding and policy development

Key theme 4 – Developing businesses and employability opportunities

We will:

- Help build social enterprise capacity and capability
- Use our in-house talent to provide consultancy services
- Create opportunities for internships, placements and work experience
- Develop continuing professional opportunities for local businesses
- Provide incubator facilities for new businesses

Key theme 5 – Promoting vibrant cultural, sports and recreational opportunities

We will:

- Enrich community inclusivity and creativity through exhibitions, performance, public lecture and interpretation trails
- Work with the City and others to develop recreation and sports opportunities
- Promote healthy lifestyles through our health related partnerships
- Support initiatives that recognise the value of well being to achieving sustainability

Strategies in this series include:

August 2010

Human Resources
Internationalisation
Teaching and Learning
Research and Innovation
Information Technology
Sustainable Procurement

Contact us

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