



**National Civic**  
Impact Accelerator

# **ACTION LEARNING DAY**

## **18 APRIL 2024**



**National  
Co-ordinating  
Centre for  
Public Engagement**

**Sheffield  
Hallam  
University**

**Centre for  
Regional Economic  
and Social Research**

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## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the NCIA Action Learning second in-person day. Today marks the mid-point of the process and an opportunity for us to take stock of the learning and action undertaken so far. We're excited to bring together the 14 partnerships taking part in the programme to utilise the day to speak with other, share your learning so far and drive the direction for phase two.

Phase two of the action learning will run from June 2024 - January 2025 and take the form of 4 x meetings held online for each action learning group.

We'll come back together in March 2025 for the final in-person meeting to consolidate our learning, celebrate our successes and set out next steps for the civic agenda.

## FUNDING

The second round of funding will consist of a competitive application process where we encourage partnerships to apply as consortia for funding. We are especially interested in cross-partnership bids and supporting groups with clear ideas, a commitment to challenge, and an ability to work proactively with others.

The NCIA Action Learning Innovation offers;

- Funding of up to £15,000 (inclusive of VAT).
- Activity needs to be completed between 1st July 2024 and 31st January 2025 and should start no later than 30th September 2024.
- Funding is only available to partnerships and organisations involved in the NCIA Action Learning Process
- Applicants will be asked to demonstrate an awareness of issues of power, diversity, and inclusion in the way they work.
- The deadline for preliminary applications is 10 May 2024

*Further guidance has been given to partnership leads and copies of the full guidance is available in the room today.*

# ACTION LEARNING

What's the best way to approach phase 2?

## WHAT MAKES A GOOD ACTION LEARNING PARTICIPANT?

Anyone can take part in the NCIA Action Learning programme but we've noticed that the following things can support getting the most out of it;

- Having some responsibility for delivering a project or implementing processes within your organisation.
- Having a good understanding of how your organisation wants to approach civic and place-based working.
- Undertaking a piece of work that has direct links to the action learning theme.
- Ability to make changes and apply learning in between action learning meetings.

## WHAT SHOULD YOU 'BRING' TO A MEETING?

It can be hard to know what sort of contributions to bring to a meeting, We've noticed the following items bring about insightful shifts in thinking and approach;

- An open-ended question e.g. how can we make climate events more inclusive?
- A summary of a piece of work that has resulted in a change in how you approach something e.g. an impact report.

## WHAT MAKES A GOOD THEME?

At the start of this process, the NCCPE curated themes for the groups from the expression of interests to the programme, we've learnt the following about what has worked well;

- Topics where there is scope to make progress; the blockers to change are not at a national level.
- Challenges that are present across different areas despite differences in geography or approach.

## HOW CAN YOU MAKE IT WORK FOR YOUR PARTNERSHIP?

By speaking with partnerships throughout the process we've noticed the following things have helped advance their work;

- Meeting regularly together between action learning groups.
- Identifying specific projects to talk about in the meetings.
- Bringing questions to the meetings that benefit from wider input.
- Using the meetings to talk through proposed work and gather feedback.
- Making time to enact change and learning between meetings.

# EMERGENT THEMES

Sheffield Hallam University's Centre for Regional, Economic & Social Research (CRESR) observe the action learning meetings and provide their expertise in critical, theoretical, and empirical research into regional, social and economic patterns and place-based policy evaluation.

Between action learning meetings CRESR are working hard with the NCCPE to understand the emergent learning across the programme. CRESR are producing a short report of these themes to share with the wider civic university movement, we would value your input as a partner in this process. The report will be published in July and will be coordinated by Femi Owolade at CRESR ([f.owolade@shu.ac.uk](mailto:f.owolade@shu.ac.uk)).



How to **lead** civic activity and get buy-in and support



How to **translate** intentions into **action** and get things done



How to **resource** civic activity



How to **communicate** and tell persuasive and **insightful** stories



How to **navigate** the different **power** dynamics we encounter



How we **understand** civic work and find the best **language** to describe it



How we build meaningful **relationships**

We'd like your responses on any of the themes that resonate with you, or anything else that you'd like to reflect on. Specifically we're interested in any thoughts you might have on:

- **Opportunities** to take civic work forward
- **Progress** you or others have made
- **Conditions** that **enable** civic work to happen
- **Allies** who help you make progress
- **Language** that communicates effectively and **inclusively**
- **Barriers** that stop you making progress
- **Resources** that help you



Sheffield Hallam University centrally coordinate and lead the NCIA. Sheffield Hallam continue to lead the Civic University Network and have established the foundations of civic sector leadership.

Sheffield Hallam will broadcast outputs from the NCIA and mobilise adoption of effective civic practice across the wider HE and civic sectors.

### **The Institute of Community Studies (ICS)** at the Young

Foundation is focused on how end-to-end evidence production and knowledge exchange with local stakeholders and communities can put people and communities at the heart of finding solutions to the issues that affect them.



Within the NCIA programme, ICS are creating a repository of evidence of 'what works' and dashboards that can help inform Higher Education Institutions and local decision-making. The priorities of the action learning groups can inform Calls for Evidence from ICS to gain cutting-edge, diverse case studies of civic practice addressing specific themes and ICS are also running a series of co-commissioning panels to convene expertise on locally relevant policy challenges.



### **The University of Birmingham's West Midlands Regional Economic Development Institute (WMREDI)**

is a leading voice in the national civic university movement, focusing on how universities can support inclusive economic growth.

Their contribution to the NCIA will build on and enhance our current research programme and activities but with a focus on the development of research, training and advice for the wider university network and provision of training and activities to enhance university contribution to the civic agenda.

WM-REDI colleagues recently ran a Developing Business Cases of Civic Engagement webinar in conjunction with NCCPE and Sheffield Hallam.

# YORK PARTNERSHIP



University of York  
York Civic Trust

## CHALLENGES

York has a long and proud civic history, from its first self-governing charter of 1396, to the post-war revival of civic culture.

York is changing. new industrial, cultural and creative strategies are emerging from the City of York Council. The University of York is developing its future vision and strategy, harnessing its research strengths to tackle civic challenges ranging from housing, transport, air quality, and inequalities in health and education, to new solutions for sustainable development and transport, energy and food biosecurity, carbon reduction, education and place-making opportunities, and new opportunities around the digital and creative industries.

### Challenge 1

A city for everyone to live, work and enjoy together. York, like many heritage cities, is sometimes said by residents to be ‘for visitors, not for us’. How can the university and its communities of staff and students help shape a city that works ‘for everyone’?

### Challenge 2

Building a sustainable city: a laboratory for learning. York is a small city with a growing population. Policy thinking is thus focused on issues such as the provision of affordable housing, the maintenance of sustainable transport solutions, and how the public realm might be enhanced in a way that also fosters growth and economic development.

### Challenge 3

The future of York must be informed by the aspirations of all its residents. How can we do more to involve often-excluded groups in policy-framing, decision-making and action?

## ACTION LEARNING PARTICIPANTS

Name	Action Learning Theme	About
Chris Hewson	Mobilising Knowledge	Impact Manager
Joel Baker	Climate / Balancing Needs	Impact Coordinator
Gul Dag	Mobilising Knowledge	Partnerships Manager
Natalie Fullwood	Mobilising Knowledge	Impact Manager
Kate Giles	Balancing Needs	Senior Lecturer
Sam Gardner	Mobilising Knowledge	Director, Enterprise Works



# ANGLIA RUSKIN UNIVERSITY



ARU has 6 campuses across Cambridgeshire & the south-east, is teaching-intensive and research-active.

Their mission is to transform lives through innovative, inclusive education and research. They focus on three major themes:

- Health, Performance, and Wellbeing;
- Sustainable Futures; and Safe
- Inclusive Communities.

They deliver degree apprenticeships to over 3000 apprentices from 500+ businesses.

The areas they operate in face stark socioeconomic disparities, with significant deprivation alongside affluence.

## CHALLENGES

### Challenge 1

Scale up the clinic model which involves students assisting members of the public with supervision from qualified professional experts in areas such as Law, Optometry and Sport and Exercise.

### Challenge 2

Developing a signposting or linking service for education and skills providers across the region to better link together the needs of employers and access to training.

### Challenge 3

Develop student and staff volunteering programmes to benefit the community, working in partnership with Citizens UK and other community organisations.

## ACTION LEARNING PARTICIPANTS

Name	Action Learning Theme	About
Fiona Bodle	Organisational Strategy	Assistant Director Strategic Partnerships
Julia Carr	Balancing Needs	Community Organising Lead and Senior lecturer in Education
Susan Alabaster	Balancing Needs	Senior HR Partner
Abigail Dolan	Balancing Needs	Student Opportunities Manager (SU)
Claire Pike	Complex Local & Political Geographies	PVC Education Enhancement
Denise Hawkes	Measuring Civic 2	Professor of Education Economics & Deputy Dean
Jenny Young	Complex Local & Political Geographies	Interim Director Research & Innovation Development Office



# BRUNEL UNIVERSITY



Situated in West London, Brunel plays a significant leadership role in the area and engages in multiple activities supporting local communities, promoting health and wellbeing and driving innovation and economic growth.

Brunel has a civic agreement with the London Borough of Hillingdon. This has strengthened our partnership working with them across a range of areas. We also engage with partners at a sub-regional, regional and national levels. Addressing the climate emergency is an institutional priority which informs our civic approach.

## CHALLENGES

### Challenge 1

Negotiating a complex economic and political geography.

How do complex and changing administrative, economic and political boundaries interact to create distinct policy perspectives. How can we engage, influence and support multiple agencies for societal good?

### Challenge 2

Increase our knowledge exchange deliverables.

Brunel has a long history of driving innovation through knowledge exchange activities. We need to work closely with a wide range of partners to highlight the value and transferability of Brunel's advanced technical expertise.

### Challenge 3

Enhance our understanding of the networking needs of our community partners.

What are the current networking needs of our partners and how can we facilitate a greater level of collaborative working. Can we mobilise our knowledge to maximise civic impact?

## ACTION LEARNING PARTICIPANTS

Name	Action Learning Theme	About
John Macdonald	TBC	Regional Partnerships Manager
Nancy Rawlings	TBC	External Engagement Manager





# UNIVERSITY OF PLYMOUTH



The University of Plymouth is committed to impactful civic engagement, as evidenced by initiatives like the Plymouth Law Clinic and Peninsula Dental Social Enterprise. Despite successes, ad-hoc efforts prevail, and we face challenges in embedding best practices, addressing Plymouth's specific inequalities, and promoting inclusive engagement tailored to the city's needs.

Plymouth faces complex issues, from health disparities to transport access, but through partnership and listening, we aim to maximise our expertise to benefit Plymouth, while ensuring our engagement is inclusive and responsive to community needs.

## CHALLENGES

### Challenge 1: Enhancing Best Practices

Standardising and enhancing Plymouth's civic engagement efforts, leveraging successes like the Peninsula Dental Social Enterprise, to embed best practices, facilitate shared learning, and maximise impact for the University and the city.

### Challenge 2: Addressing City Inequalities

Responding to Plymouth's entrenched inequalities, such as the 4-year gap in life expectancy between neighbourhoods, by leveraging our expertise to tackle disparities in health, transport, housing, and socio-economic status for a more equitable city.

### Challenge 3: Fostering Inclusive Engagement

Collaborating with partners to develop accessible civic engagement. Listening to community needs, breaking down barriers, and ensuring University of Plymouth is welcoming, responsive, and accessible to all community members.

## ACTION LEARNING PARTICIPANTS

Name	Action Learning Theme	About
Jenny Milligan	TBC	Head of Regional & Civic Engagement, University of Plymouth
Iola Nelson	TBC	Public Engagement Manager, University of Plymouth
Matt Grant	TBC	Plymouth Social Enterprise Network
Hannah Sloggett	TBC	Nudge Community Builders
Hannah Irwin	TBC	Arts Institute, University of Plymouth



# BATH PARTNERSHIP



University of Bath  
Bath Spa University

The local area of Bath and Northeast Somerset is highly diverse, with pockets of wealth in the UNESCO World Heritage centre, along with areas of high deprivation. There's a large rural community with ex-mining towns and farming. Primary local issues are around external perception of Bath as affluent, the impact of housing costs on the ability to attract workers, the impact of commuting on travel routes and the need for active travel, and the climate and biodiversity crises.

The University of Bath, along with Bath Spa University, B&NES Council, and Royal United Hospitals Bath agreed in 2020 to develop a civic agreement.

## CHALLENGES

### Challenge 1

How to bring together EDI leads and teams from across the organisations involved in the civic agreement to generate new ideas and share learning?

### Challenge 2

How can the different organisations and teams working to address the climate and biodiversity crises be brought together?

### Challenge 3

How to navigate changes in senior leadership and ensure a continued commitment to civic activity at a strategic level?

## ACTION LEARNING PARTICIPANTS

Name	Action Learning Theme	About
Helen Featherstone	Organisational Strategy	Head of Public Engagement, University of Bath
Katrina Kelly	Climate	Head of Community Engagement, University of Bath
Kim Townsend	Equitable Partnerships	Research Impact Manager, Bath Spa University





# CITY, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Knowledge Quarter  
St George's, University  
of London

City, University of London (City) is the "University of business, practice and the professions" and is placed in the capital of London in the Borough of Islington, one of the most deeply divided boroughs between the haves and have-nots.

Out of 317 local authorities, Islington is ranked 53rd of the most deprived local authority areas and 6th most deprived local authority in London. It has the 10th highest level of income deprivation affecting children, and the 4th highest in England for income deprivation affecting older people. Yet it is a vibrant borough with a good supply of local jobs, access to the wider London economy, a rich cultural heritage, and some of the highest property prices in the country.

## CHALLENGES

### Challenge 1

Defining civic, public, and community engagement. What do these terms of engagement actually mean, theoretically and practically, across universities and civic partners?

### Challenge 2

Commercial versus social value push-pull tensions for HEI's and our civic partner, Knowledge Quarter. The tension between commercial value and social value arises due to the divergent objectives and priorities of different stakeholders involved.

### Challenge 3

To effectively share "the power" in civic engagement,

## ACTION LEARNING PARTICIPANTS

Name	Action Learning Theme	About
Kanan Barot	Organisational Strategy	AVP, Civic Engagement & Regional Development, CUL
Caroline Sipos	Equitable Partnerships & Complex Political Geographies	Civic Engagement and Regional Development Manager, CUL
Jodie Eastwood	Measuring Civic Impact	CEO, Knowledge Quarter
Daniel Stevens	Equitable Partnerships	Advocacy & Communications Manager, Knowledge Quarter



# LANCASTER PARTNERSHIP



Lancaster University, Lancaster City Council,  
Lancaster & Morecambe College, University  
of Cumbria, Morecambe Bay Hospitals Trust  
& Lancaster District CVS

Lancaster University is a top 15 research-intensive University in the Northwest region encompassing urban, rural and coastal communities, and with global strategic partnerships in Malaysia, Ghana, Germany and China.

The University is committed to being a force for good and creating positive economic, cultural, societal and environmental change. Our latest strategic plan places equivalence on engagement, education and research. Our values of respecting each other, building strong communities and creating positive change underpin our long-held commitment to civic, public and community engagement.

## CHALLENGES

### Challenge 1

Maximising the benefits of the Eden Project Morecambe & National Cyber Force investments in an inclusive way and in the geography in which they are set, going beyond the physical build and ensuring there is genuine, lasting societal benefit.

### Challenge 2

Identifying the best vehicle/opportunity to catalyse a civic agreement (or similar).

### Challenge 3

Data insights to show the impact of our civic work

## ACTION LEARNING PARTICIPANTS

Name	Action Learning Theme	About
Sarah Rees	Mobilising Knowledge	Head of Stakeholder Relations, Lancaster University
Abi Lucy-Lloyd	Measuring Civic Impact	Engagement Manager, Lancaster University
Mark Rushforth	Complex Political Geographies	Associate Director of Enterprise & Innovation, Lancaster University
Daniel Braithwaite	Complex Political Geographies	Principal, Lancaster & Morecambe College
Mark Davies	Measuring Civic Impact	CEO, Lancaster City Council
Yak Patel	Mobilising Knowledge	Chief Officer, Lancaster District CVS



# EDGE HILL PARTNERSHIP



**Edge Hill  
University**

Edge Hill University, Friends of the Earth, West Lancashire CVS, Wigan, The Sewing Rooms & Leigh Community Charity

Edge Hill University is a campus university in rural West Lancashire. It is close to Liverpool and Manchester, and is surrounded by the towns of Ormskirk, Skelmersdale and Wigan. Each town has its own rich history and its own challenges. Ormskirk is a market town, which is in parts affluent but also has areas of disadvantage.

There are ongoing tensions between some residents and the university, not least because of the high number of students who live in the town. Skelmersdale was designated the first of the UK's 'Mark II' New Towns. Built on a roundabout system, it has poor public transport links and is isolated from the rest of the North West. Wigan is in Greater Manchester but sees Edge Hill as its local university. It is a town on the margins with high levels of deprivation and worklessness. The university has recently developed a civic agreement with Wigan.

## CHALLENGES

### Challenge 1

Social responsibility and community voice , What does social responsibility mean to those living and working in the towns surrounding Edge Hill?

### Challenge 2

Understanding more about community-owned businesses and the role of larger organisations in supporting them.

### Challenge 3

How to best engage with the sustainability agenda.

## ACTION LEARNING PARTICIPANTS

Name	Action Learning Theme	About
Victoria Foster	Mobilising Knowledge	Director of the Centre for Social Responsibility, Edge Hill University
Michelle Howarth	Measuring Civic Impact	Senior Engagement Fellow, Edge Hill University
Kim Cassidy	Mobilising Knowledge	Professor, Edge Hill University
David Baxter	Mobilising Knowledge	CEO, Wigan & Leigh Community Charity
Christopher Dent	Climate	Professor, Edge Hill University
Vic Citarella	Measuring Civic Impact	Trustee, West Lancashire CVS
Susan O'Halloran	Climate	Volunteer, Friends of the Earth
Neil Hickson	Climate	Director, Burscough Community Farm
Paula Gamester	TBC	Director, The Sewing Rooms



# UNIVERSITIES FOR NOTTINGHAM

Nottingham Trent University,  
University of Nottingham, Nottingham  
University Hospitals Trust



The UfN partnership combines the universities' strengths in research and civic connectedness with; three local NHS trusts, the Integrated Care Board, City and County local authorities, Vision West Nottinghamshire College, and the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership. Together we work together to improve health, prosperity, education, community connections, and sustainability in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

As an early adopter of Civic University Agreements (July 2020), the UfN partnership is now well established and can therefore build on this solid foundation to explore unique and innovative approaches to place-based engagement. Early successes include the launch of the £5.2m Research England funded Co(l)laboratory project.

## CHALLENGES

### Challenge 1

Developing sustainable models of civic partnership working.

### Challenge 2

Measurement and articulation of civic engagement activity; developing a monitoring framework to better understand and articulate the impact of civic activity.

### Challenge 3

Better Understanding our Community Needs and Effective Response Development; ensure we work with rather than on our communities; putting participation and active listening at the heart of our public engagement

## ACTION LEARNING PARTICIPANTS

Name	Action Learning Theme	About
Jenny Davies	Measuring Civic Impact	Civic Affairs Manager, UoN
Rebecca Ogden	Measuring Civic Impact / Balancing Needs	Civic Engagement Project Manager, NTU
Andy Coppins	Balancing Needs	Community Engagement & Volunteering Manager, NTU
Maria Richards	Mobilising Knowledge	Head of Public Engagement, UoN
Rich Pickford	Mobilising Knowledge	Manager, Nottingham Civic Exchange
Sarah Oldershaw	Measuring Civic Impact	Integration Programme Manager, Nottingham University Hospital



University of  
**Kent**



# KENT PARTNERSHIP

University of Kent &  
The Food Foundation

The University was founded in 1965. With around 16,000 students, campuses in Canterbury and Medway and a centre in Paris, the University has significant research strengths and in 2017 was awarded TEF Gold. It has strengths across arts and humanities, social sciences, and in the sciences, which enables us to develop inter-disciplinary approaches to tackling local and global challenges.

The University's strategy is grounded in a clear sense of place and the needs of its communities. While Kent and Medway is generally regarded as a part of the 'prosperous South East', it also contains some of the most deprived areas in the country, particularly concentrated in our coastal towns but also in rural areas too. Founded on a strong commitment to social justice, the University's civic mission looks to address some of these acute inequalities and to ensure that all communities are given opportunities to grow and flourish.

## CHALLENGES

### Challenge 1

How we can embed civic mission across the institution in line with our 'whole university' approach to civic engagement? Ensuring that all staff have a clear line of sight to the third pillar of our institutional strategy.

### Challenge 2

How can we measure the impact on our region of the Right to Food initiative and our civic engagement activities more generally.

### Challenge 3

How do we take our learning from our campus to the wider region but also across the sector? How can we achieve long-term systemic change within the food system through expansion of the right to food programme?

## ACTION LEARNING PARTICIPANTS

Name	Action Learning Theme	About
Robert Barker	Measuring Civic Impact	Head of Public Engagement, University of Kent
Catherine Morris	Climate	Sustainability Manager, University of Kent
Anna Taylor	TBC	Director, Food Foundation



# STAFFORDSHIRE PARTNERSHIP

Staffordshire University,  
VAST Services, Expert Citizens CIC & other  
community organisations

Staffordshire University prides itself in being a civic university with substantial economic and social contributions to the region. Although the city region sits between the Northern Powerhouse and the heart of the Midlands Engine, it faces significant challenges. As a 'Catalyst for Change', we are involved in many strategic and collaborative initiatives that demonstrably transform lives, places and society.

We have campuses throughout Staffordshire and Shropshire and a Digital Institute in London. The University educates approximately 25,000 students overall. A high proportion of on-campus students are non-traditional, disadvantaged, or local. Our main campus is based in Stoke-on-Trent where the local authority ranks 14th (out of 317 districts) in the 2019 Indices of Multiple Deprivation, and Stoke-on-Trent North, Central and South constituencies saw child poverty stand at 44.5%, 44.9% and 41% respectively (End Child Poverty Coalition, 2020).

## CHALLENGES

### Challenge 1

How to embed civic engagement and build a culture of ethical engagement across the institution.

### Challenge 2

Recognition of the value of civic engagement in terms of contributing to wider university KPIs through to developing a 'third generation impact culture' through civic engagement.

## ACTION LEARNING PARTICIPANTS

Name	Action Learning Theme	About
Nicola Gratton	Organisational Strategy & Balancing Needs	Lead for Civic Engagement & Evaluation, Staffordshire University
Dana Jundi	Measuring Civic Impact	Engagement Officer, Staffordshire University
Jackie Reynolds	Measuring Civic Impact	Associate Professor & Research Impact Manager, Staffordshire University
Carolina Salinas	Organisational Strategy	Head of Student & Graduate Employability, Staffordshire University
Lisa Healings	Organisational Strategy	CEO, VAST Services
Ayad Al-Ani	Measuring Civic Impact	Director of own business & Community Member
Monienne Stone	Balancing Needs	Civic Fellow & Community Member







# TEESSIDE UNIVERSITY

Teesside University is an anchor institution with a mission to generate and apply knowledge that contributes to the economic, social and cultural success of students, partners and the communities it serves. Teesside University has over 20,000 students, a growing international footprint, distinctive research strengths, and a clear business engagement mission. Over 80% of Teesside University's home students are from a disadvantaged background with 73% recruited from the North East.

The Tees Valley has a rich industrial legacy that lives on in the area's rail and engineering industries and ports, and has evolved into new sectors including advanced manufacturing, digital and creative technologies, process industry and green energy. The region includes some of the most deprived neighbourhoods in the country. A recent report placed the Tees Valley towns of Middlesbrough, Hartlepool, Redcar and Cleveland, and Darlington all within the bottom quartile of their social fabric index

## CHALLENGES

### Challenge 1

Low Civic and Democratic Engagement. Developing trust and ensuring inclusive and meaningful engagement with these communities is one of the most significant challenges for civic engagement within the Tees Valley.

### Challenge 2

Diverse Geography and Polycentricity; there is no central city within the Tees Valley and Teesside University is the only University located within the region.

### Challenge 3

Social Fabric and Civic Imagination Infrastructure. The Tees Valley lacks a Civic Imagination Infrastructure to renew the region's social fabric and to support a collective sense of vision and pride-in-place.

## ACTION LEARNING PARTICIPANTS

Name	Action Learning Theme	About
Kieran Fenby-Hulse	Complex Geogrpahies	Associate Dean (People and Place)
Jo Heaton-Marriot	Measuring Civic Impact	Executive Director, Communications and Development
Elena Calin	Measuring Civic Impact	Public Engagement Officer
Claire Sedgewick	Climate	Senior Impact and Engagement Manager
Rex Elston	Climate	Community Development Manager



**ual:** camberwell  
college of arts

# CAMBERWELL COLLEGE OF ARTS, UAL

As the UK's largest art and design university, a commitment to civic engagement lies at the core of UAL's social purpose. Our distinctive approach embraces society as a learning environment, and staff and students as societal resources. For UAL, culture and creativity are fundamentally collaborative and engaged. We use a place-based approach, focused on several specific sub-regions across North, South and East London, where we have established industry, government, and civic stakeholder partnerships to support inclusive growth.

We are focussing on Camberwell and Peckham in Southwark, centred around Camberwell College of Arts. Southwark is a diverse borough with high levels of deprivation. Working closely with Southwark Council and other stakeholders, we have established a vision for a local civic ecosystem including physical spaces and activity spanning business incubation and community engagement.

## CHALLENGES

### Challenge 1

We want to form a South London Ecosystem, that is a civic resource relevant to local needs. Managing this ecosystem is a new challenge for the college and we need to navigate internal silos, bureaucracies, need for income generation and the expectations of partners.

### Challenge 2

The cost-of-living crisis is ubiquitous, coupled with increasing housing issues. How can we build on our partnership with CitizensUK to connect students, staff and communities to creatively address these challenges?

### Challenge 3

How can we build stronger relationships with the local NHS anchor alliance in order to address local health and wellbeing issues?

## ACTION LEARNING PARTICIPANTS

Name	Action Learning Theme	About
Hannah Guthrie	Complex Geographies	Head of Public Engagement
Alice White	Mobilising Knowledge	Community Engagement Manager
Ian White	TBC	Strategic Projects Consultant



# UNIVERSITIES PARTNERSHIP: WORKING TOGETHER FOR LEICESTER, LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND

The Universities Partnership is comprised of three well-established HEI leads each having distinct strengths that complement each other; this diversity in makeup also provides an effective foil to the hyper-diverse nature of the city of Leicester with a contrasting county surrounding, requiring the partnership to work across the full range of political parties and across all levels of local and national government structures.

This Civic University Agreement is a commitment between De Montfort University, the University of Leicester, Loughborough University and the city and counties of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland to work together, in collaboration with our partners and the community, for the benefit of local people and the prosperity of our places.

Universities touch people's lives at many different points - it could be at an individual level for those who have benefitted from studying at one of our institutions, or at a societal level as a result of ground-breaking research, pioneering innovations and knowledge creation. Our partnership describes the many ways in which our universities make a positive impact in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland, while recognising that none of it can be achieved in isolation.

## CHALLENGES

### Challenge 1

Collaborative commitment between all partners.

### Challenge 2

Small p political vs big P Politics. We think this partnership is unique in its engagement with varying local government structures and the full range of political parties across those structures. This often places the partnership in a highly political arena with sometimes conflicting priorities.

### Challenge 3

Evaluation of impact. What data to collect and how to use it to best demonstrate impact and tell the story of why civic engagement is worth the investment and the benefits it can bring.

## ACTION LEARNING PARTICIPANTS

Name	Action Learning Theme	About
Donna Worship	Measuring Civic Impact	Universities Partnership Manager
Fiona Donovan	Complex Geographies	Head of Engagement & Partnerships, De Montfort University
Zafar Saleem	Complex Geographies	Head of Service, Communities, Policy & Resilience, Leicestershire County Council

