

## UK Community Partner Network: Glossary of terms

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There is often a lack of consistency about terms used in community and university co-working so please find below an attempt to clarify what we mean by some of the main terms.

- By **local community** we mean people from local neighbourhoods or communities of interest, or from the organisations that work with them. Our local universities are also part of this mix.
- By **community engagement** we mean universities and communities co-working or involving local individuals, organisations and/or groups in the planning, development, shaping and delivery of university activities and/or involving the university in community activity. Examples of the work include:
  - community university partnerships that tackle disadvantage or promote sustainable development through developing capacity, teaching, research, conferences and/or dissemination activities
  - promoting student involvement with the local community e.g. through volunteering
  - providing services for local groups/organisations e.g. free or subsidised room hire or specific course provision
  - relevant research activity e.g. conducting projects which stem from needs expressed by those from within the local community or commissioned specifically to review local circumstances or evaluate local activities
  - share our learning, develop new ideas and ensure sustainable locally owned solutions, strategies and interventions that will enable communities to thrive and recognise their assets.
- By **social** or **public** we mean activities that are not primarily about economic impact, including those which may be of interest to the general public e.g. exhibitions, public lectures and events; access to sports facilities; or which are about the functioning of civil society e.g. being a school or college governor. Some universities use the term public engagement to include making science and scientific findings more broadly available to the general public.
- By **community sector organisations** we mean:
  - community groups
  - voluntary organisations
  - social enterprises
  - public sector organisations e.g. a school or a local authority team.
- By **community partnership** we mean a specific and organised activity or action which is intended to benefit both the local community and the university.

- By **participation** we mean a continuum that moves from low level involvement, to consultation, to collaboration, to shared leadership - it's about involving those affected by a decision in the decision-making process.
- By **community support** we mean a response to a request to the university for support or help from the local community or a community organisation. This may include community activities and may be paid or unpaid.
- By **research** we recognise the different meanings attached to this term inside and outside the academy and the need to be clear about what different partners want and expect. Academic research approaches do not always meet the needs for evaluation and appraisal expected by community partners and in this, as in all areas of our work, clarity and dialogue are key to managing both our expectations.
- By **social inequalities** we mean when individual groups in society don't have equal access to its riches such as social status, property rights, education, health care, housing, travelling and so on – in other words, the inequality has its roots in socioeconomic conditions.
- By **knowledge exchange** we mean community and university practitioners working together to share their expertise. This contrasts with the traditional **knowledge transfer** whereby the university, as expert, transfers knowledge to the community.