MEASURING HIGHER EDUCATION CIVIC AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
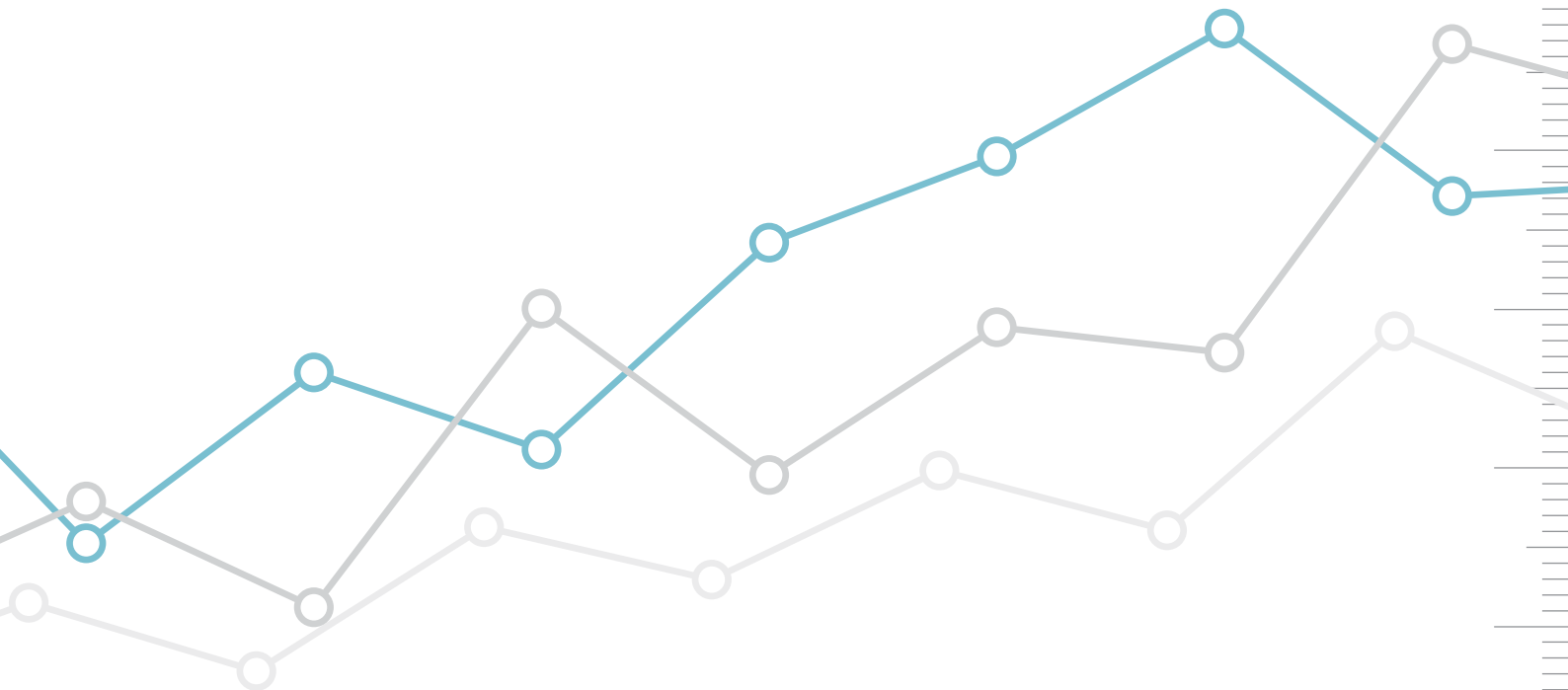
A SUPPORT FRAMEWORK

CampusEngage

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FOREWORD

In recent years the impact agenda has gained significant status with funders and policy makers at home in Ireland and abroad. Irish Universities have now been presented with a unique opportunity to frame their ambition in the field of civic and community engagement through the Higher Education System Performance Framework, 2018-2020, and associated Compacts.

At a European level, there is increasing discussion of university social responsibility and the social dimension of higher education. This includes a broad range of concerns such as equity of higher education systems, academic excellence, sustainability, and science with and for society. Additionally, there are a broad range of International and European declarations, policies and networks, including our own *Campus Engage Charter for Civic and Community Engagement*.

This Campus Engage Guide is offered as a support tool for all Irish Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to set about collecting information on existing strategic plans, policy, and infrastructure for engagement. Its purpose is to assist HEIs to set new baseline figures, or key performance indicators, for engagement activity across research, teaching and learning, student volunteering and public engagement.

The Guide aims to complement HEI's existing activity, and to prompt Institutions to consider new activities that advance clear outcomes and measures for success. In that sense, the Guide is more an aide-memoire than a prescriptive list.

We trust that the Campus Engage Guide will be helpful to HEIs in laying down benchmarks for engagement in line with best international practice.

Jim Miley
Director General
Irish Universities Association

INTRODUCTION

Higher education institutions are increasingly connecting with broader constituencies of communities and external partners. Collaborating with communities can enhance research and student learning, while addressing societal challenges and issues of public interest. To infuse an ethos of societal and community engagement across institutions, this work needs to be defined, captured, and celebrated.

Objective Two: Higher Education System Performance Framework, 2018 -2020

'Create rich opportunities for national and international engagement which enhance the learning environment and deliver a strong bridge to enterprise and the wider community'

The Campus Engage Metrics and Evaluation Working Group has produced a nationally and internationally informed Metrics Framework that fits within an Irish community engagement context and narrative, but which also has application for other institutions and higher education systems globally. This document is a tool to support institutions to consider new ways to measure their societal impact. However the authors recognise that many of the metrics are aspirational and difficult to measure over a short period of time.

The purpose of this Metrics Framework is:

- To provide a guide to institutions responding to criteria of the Higher Education System Performance Framework 2018-2020;

- To meet national and local policy expectations relating to engagement;

- To assist institutions to map, measure, and report on the expanding variety of engagement activities;

- To contribute to the development of consistent terminology;

- To articulate, recognise and reward the social contribution of staff, students, institutions, and disciplines;

- To inform the development of data capture mechanisms for civic and community engagement activities and infrastructure;

- To establish benchmark data against which future developments can be assessed;

- To provide evidence of the benefits of community engagement and include community perspectives;

- To develop and improve methods of communicating impact;

- To celebrate and showcase higher education engagement work;

- To build on the Campus Engage Charter for Civic and Community Engagement.

The suggestions listed are not intended to be prescriptive or limiting in any way, nor are they intended as a blueprint for action or a summary checklist. Priorities will vary across institutions and they will inevitably shift as institutions develop their own ways of organising, structuring and co-ordinating civic and community engagement activities. The content of the Framework is based on a review of international research and other measurement frameworks (e.g., National Co-ordination Centre for Public Engagement (UK, EDGE Tool, and Carnegie Community Engagement Classification). The Framework is also informed by expert feedback from a number of Irish higher education institution staff that participated in a pilot project to test the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification in Ireland. The Framework is underpinned by a set of values and principals developed in cooperation with the broader Campus Engage community of practice.

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VALUES

We are as individuals and organisations:

Ambitious: for our students and staff, our communities, and our work.

Accountable: to our organisations, our communities and society.

Curious: to ask questions, find solutions, and exchange ideas.

Collaborative: working in partnership for the benefit of all.

Inclusive: of all people, interests, talents, skills, and abilities.

Mindful: of people, the environment, resources, and our interdependencies and impact.

Reflective: to improve our understanding and practice.

Respectful: of people, place, context, culture, and process.

PRINCIPLES

Our work aims to:

- Be excellent, socially responsible, and meaningful.
- Involve community/external partners in phases and aspects of projects/collaborations.
- Facilitate the involvement of parties potentially affected by a project/collaboration/decision.
- Recognise the needs, interests, and potential of all parties.
- Accept and respects different contexts, ways of working and organisational cultures.
- Share decision making.
- Recognise that process and time are key to developing meaningful and sustainable collaborations.
- Promote individual and collaborative reflective practice to ensure continuous improvement and quality outcomes.
- Adhere to good governance and practices good stewardship.
- Value and acknowledges the contribution of all participants.
- Celebrate achievements of individuals and organisations.

DIMENSIONS AND DEFINITIONS

This document proposes five dimensions to consider when measuring and evaluating higher education civic and community engagement. These dimensions reflect the *Campus Engage Charter*, mirror the activities of the various Campus Engage Working Groups, and acknowledge the broader institutional initiatives which build and support a culture of engagement. It should be possible to provide data under each of the five dimensions to represent the range, volume and impact of engagement activity.

The Five Dimensions:
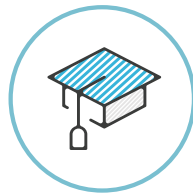
Engaged Research	Teaching and Learning: Accredited Community Engaged Learning and Research	Student Volunteering	Public Engagement and Involvement	Institutional Infrastructure and Architecture
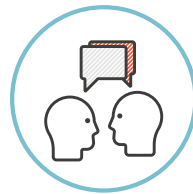
EVIDENCE AND IMPACT

There are a number of indicators of qualitative and quantitative evidence of impact, some of which are provided below.

QUANTITATIVE DATA

- Numeric data, figures, percentages, proportions
- Monetary amounts, funds, budgets
- Targets, projections, estimations
- Comparisons, benchmarks
- Data analytics
- Grants, awards
- Participant, audience, visitor involvement
- Test/exam results
- Workload/time allocation
- Attitudinal surveys.

QUALITATIVE DATA

- Impact case studies
- Contextual information: what, where, why, who and how of engagement
- Institutional documentation: strategies, plans, policies, reports
- Partnership agreements/guidelines/compacts
- Resources/materials/toolkits/websites/templates
- Measures of Esteem/Feedback: Evaluations from students, staff, communities
- Interviews/focus groups
- Blogs, video, audio, podcasts
- Awards
- Narrative reports
- Participant stories and narratives
- Process details and charts
- Reflective writings.

Some existing qualitative and quantitative data sources that maybe used include:

- The Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE): **studentsurvey.ie**
- National student volunteer portal: **studentvolunteer.ie**
- Bibliometrics (the quantitative analysis of publications)
- Altmetrics capture the attention a resource generates through blogs, reference management systems, scholarly social networks, and other platforms
- Social media metrics: reach, likes, retweets, comments
- Engaged Research Funding call criteria
- Quality reviews and self-assessment.

ENGAGED RESEARCH

Engaged Research describes a wide range of rigorous research approaches and methodologies that share a common interest in collaborative engagement with the community. It aims to improve, understand, or investigate an issue of public interest or concern, including societal challenges. Engaged research is advanced with community partners rather than for them. 'Community' refers to a range of public research stakeholders, including public or professional service and product users, policy makers, civil and civic society organisations (CSOs) and actors (Engaged Research: Society and Higher Education Working Together to Address Societal Challenges, Campus Engage, 2017).

POSSIBLE METRICS

Provide data and examples (e.g. statistics, numbers, case studies, stories) on/of:

- Current and previous research projects and partners
- Research income generated from engaged research projects
- Number and reach of engaged research publications (alt/bibliometric)
- Percentage of publications co-created with patients, members of the public, civic or civil society organisations, government agencies
- Grey literature, public information publications, infographics and other outputs
- New skills and competencies generated by engaged research and its findings
- New products, patents and intellectual property from engaged research
- New capacity building programmes developed / licensed / revised based on engaged research
- Modules, courses and training provided to build staff capacity in engaged research
- Examples of initiatives to promote Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI)
- New or improved public services informed by engaged research evidence
- Media debates highlighting new research evidence and informing public debate
- New or revised public policy or plans informed by engaged research evidence
- Engaged research partnership agreements
- Engaged research projects that incorporate transdisciplinary approaches
- Events, including public lectures, showcasing engaged research activity
- Other activities which build upon and improve institutional and community capacity to develop projects and conduct engaged research
- Social media activity metrics (analysis of social media discussions and impressions)
- Online and off-line media activities: podcasts, open source materials, MOOCs
- Open Access initiatives, including greater accessibility and usability of datasets
- Use of tools to measure attitudinal, capacity, competency changes
- Supervision of PhD and postdoctoral researchers advancing engaged research
- Honours and fellowships based on engaged research activities
- Committees, advisory boards and working groups that advance engaged research practices and cross-sectoral collaborations.

TEACHING AND LEARNING: ACCREDITED COMMUNITY ENGAGED LEARNING AND RESEARCH

Community-engaged learning and research are academic approaches that seeks to engage and accredit students, within the curriculum, for working in partnership with civic and civil society organisations (CSOs) to act on local societal challenges.

POSSIBLE METRICS

Provide data and examples (e.g. statistics/numbers/case studies/stories) on/of:

- Accredited community-based engaged teaching, learning and/or research modules offered
- Accredited community-based engaged teaching, learning and/or research projects completed
- Percentage of students taking accredited community-engaged teaching, learning and/or research modules
- Percentage of programmes offering community-engaged teaching, learning and/or research modules
- Percentage of staff supervising community-engaged teaching, learning and/or research modules
- Number of organisations, charities, civil and civic society organisations, etc., collaborating to offer accredited community-engaged teaching, learning and research modules
- Number of staff who have completed capacity building programmes in accredited community-engaged teaching, learning and/or engaged research
- Initiatives to empower and support communities and staff to develop/implement community-engaged learning
- Number of hours community partners contribute in co-ordinating/engaging with students in community-engaged learning (monetary and economic value of these hours)
- Community partner testimonials
- Percentage of students who report improved/enhanced graduate attributes through accredited community-based learning (e.g. communication, team work, IT, higher order thinking skills, analysis, understanding complex problems, career awareness skills, technical skills, etc.)
- Percentage of students satisfied with accredited community-engaged teaching, learning and research opportunities
- Student ratings of personal and social outcomes (e.g. self-esteem, confidence empowerment, respect for others, civic responsibility, local/global citizenship, communication skills, teamwork due to accredited community-engaged teaching and learning)
- Student rating of professional and/or subject/discipline outcomes (e.g. graduate attributes, higher order thinking skills, analysis, understanding complex problems, career awareness skills, technical skills, teamwork due to accredited community-engaged teaching and research)
- Student rating of engaged learning experiences (e.g. course evaluations) and percentage of students satisfied with community-engaged learning opportunities
- Percentage of students reporting enhanced social networks due to accredited community-engaged teaching, learning and research
- Number and reach of publications on innovating and developing practice.

STUDENT VOLUNTEERING

Higher education student volunteering is the commitment of time and energy for the benefit of society and the community, the environment or individuals outside one's immediate family. It is undertaken freely and by choice, without concern for financial gain. StudentVolunteer.ie is a one-stop-shop portal connecting higher education students with civil society organisation volunteering opportunities.

POSSIBLE METRICS

Provide data and examples (e.g. statistics/numbers/case studies/stories) on/of:

- Percentage of students who volunteer
- Social media metrics related to student volunteering
- Number of organisations affiliated to student volunteering/ hosting student volunteers
- Total number of hours students volunteer
- Average number of hours students volunteer per week
- Monetary value of hours donated (use the Volunteer Investment and Value Audit (VIVA) tool)
- Percentage of student volunteers who receive institutional volunteering awards
- Percentage of students who report improved/enhanced graduate attributes through volunteering: communication, team work, IT, higher order thinking skills; analysis, understanding complex problems, career awareness skills, technical skills etc.
- Percentage of students who report improved/enhanced personal attributes: wellbeing, self-esteem, empowerment, respect for others, civic responsibility, local/global citizenship etc
- Qualitative impact of volunteering on student learning outcomes: case studies/ stories of how volunteering enhanced student learning
- Number, and impact, of training programmes delivered to promote and advance student volunteering good practice; number of participants who attended
- Institutional budget/staff dedicated to support volunteering
- Protocols/procedures/guidelines on how students are selected, trained, and supported
- Percentage of students who would recommend volunteering or their volunteer experience
- Percentage of hosting organisations who report positive experience working with student volunteers, perception of work done by volunteers
- Percentage of students reporting enhanced social networks
- Statistics on retention of volunteers
- Charitable actions: number of institutional and partner fundraising events, number of attendees, amount raised.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Public engagement and involvement captures the broad range of initiatives, activities and events which combine to create a culture of societal engagement with higher education. Public engagement is about the institution facing outwards and connecting as widely as possible to communicate the value of learning and research and to leverage institutional knowledge and resources for social good.

POSSIBLE METRICS

Provide data and examples (e.g. statistics/numbers/case studies/stories) on/of:

- Institutional resources provided as outreach to the community and utilised by members of the public and civil society organisations (e.g. campus facilities, sports amenities, library, archives, museums, IT services, lifelong learning programmes)
- Connections to, and/or partnerships with, public agencies, cultural organisations, professional bodies, civic and civil society organisations, non-governmental organisations and charitable bodies which are mutually beneficial
- Educational programmes which foster, on a sustained basis, relationships with primary and secondary schools and their communities to widen participation
- Initiatives designed to support widening participation of students, their families and communities
- Number and impact of public intellectual activities (e.g. contribution of staff to public debate)
- Number and impact of staff who serve on local, community and charitable organisation committees
- Number of staff who act as consultants or advisors to community and voluntary bodies, public agencies and civil society organisations
- Number of staff who volunteer in community groups, organisations, civil society organisations, and NGOs
- Actions and activities which assist with community capacity building
- Involvement of community representatives in governance and advisory structures
- Initiatives to promote sustainability actions (e.g. green campus initiatives)
- Number and impact of public events (e.g. learning festivals/events, Science Galleries, Festival of Social Science, Festival of the Mind, Science/Poetry Bus, Images of Research, Thesis in Three, SciComm, public talks and lecture series)
- Number attending institutional public events and evaluations, if applicable
- Open access resources (e.g. free MOOCs, podcasts, web materials, blogs, video, archives, museum collections)
- Number of school visits and talks
- Number of campus tours
- Social media metrics (e.g. analysis of social media discussions and impression).

INSTITUTIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND ARCHITECTURE

Institutional infrastructure and architecture relates to the strategies, policies, practices, and resources put in place to implement, sustain and and embed civic and community engagement as a core institutional activity.

POSSIBLE METRICS

Provide data and examples (e.g. statistics/numbers/case studies/stories) on/of:

- Institutional leadership / appointment for civic and community engagement

- A governance framework for civic and community engagement

- An institutional Civic and Community Engagement strategy, policy, and/or plan

- An institutional unit/structure for civic and community engagement

- A budget dedicated to civic and community engagement

- Staff employed specifically to drive and foster civic and community engagement activities

- A plan/programme to build institutional understanding of engagement with the wider community as a core higher education activity

- A policy on recruitment and promotion which weights civic and community engagement activity

- Programmes and training offered to build institutional and community capacity

- An institutional system/procedure to capture civic and community engagement data

- A civic and community engagement dimension to Quality Assurance mechanisms

- Institutional awards and honours (e.g. President's Awards, Teaching and Learning, Student Awards which recognise and celebrate civic and community engagement)

- A workload allocation model which recognises and rewards time invested in community engagement

- A commitment to civic and community engagement through membership and involvement with national and international community engagement networks (e.g. Campus Engage, Talloires Network etc).

CAMPUS ENGAGE CHARTER FOR CIVIC AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

ONE

We, the Irish Higher Education Institutions, wish to acknowledge and celebrate the achievements of our higher education institutions over the years, pursuing engagement with local communities, and society at large, for the common good;

TWO

We will continue to promote civic and community engagement through the mission and strategy of our institutions wherever possible;

THREE

We will promote civic and community engagement through a variety of community-based learning, community-based research, public scholarship and volunteering activities and seek to align these with the overall teaching, research and outreach missions of our institutions;

FOUR

We will continue to build a campus community imbued with a civic culture through our use of space, cultural activities, commitment to diversity, co-operation with partners, student civic engagement and all relevant operational practices;

FIVE

We will pursue, through a variety of means, our aspiration to open our campuses to local communities, and our social, arts, cultural, academic and sports activities will, where possible, promote local community engagement and partnership;

SIX

We will contribute to the widening participation and lifelong learning agendas by promoting civic and community engagement, combating disadvantage and furthering the social inclusion mission of higher education;

SEVEN

We will partner with relevant stakeholders and agencies to promote our institutions as hubs of engagement activity in order to actively address the local and regional development, regeneration and research agendas;

EIGHT

Our campus and all our activities will be informed by the sustainability agenda in recognition that a 'green campus' contributes to community well-being and economic development;
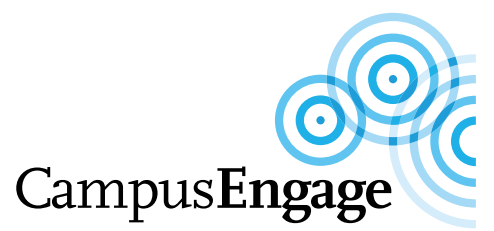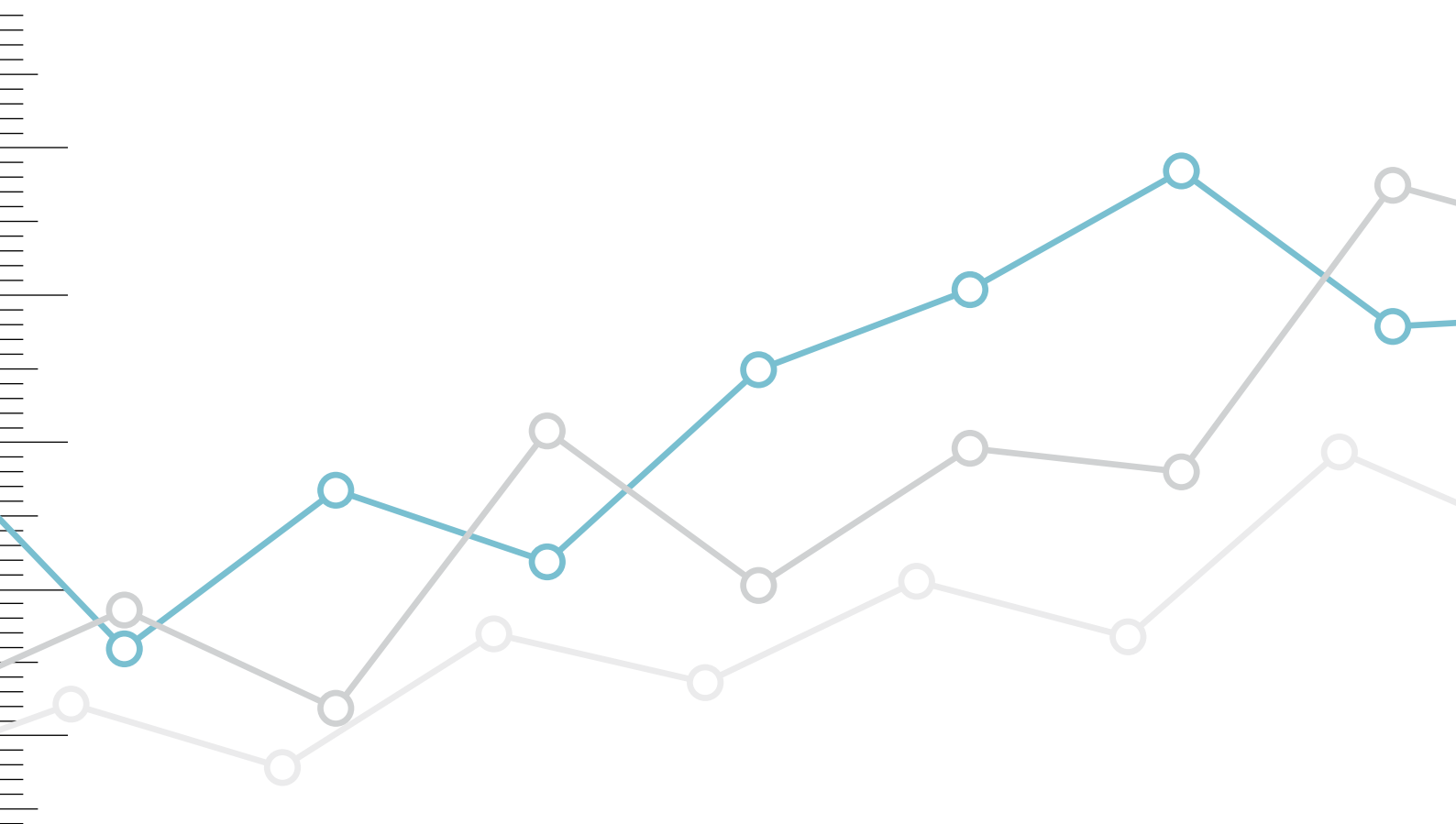
NINE

We will continue to promote the engagement of our institutions with the wider society through two-way knowledge exchanges, and actively communicate the social relevance and impact of our research and teaching activities as broadly as possible;

TEN

We will continue to advocate for appropriate resources, both financial and human, to achieve high impact civic and community engagement activities to maintain and build on what we have achieved to date.