

# Public policy perspectives on university public engagement

Paul Manners  
National Co-ordinating Centre for Public  
Engagement

‘Engagement implies strenuous, thoughtful, argumentative interaction with the non-university world’

Association of Commonwealth Universities

**Irrelevant and out of touch with society**

**Secretive and untrustworthy**



**Unaccountable and a waste of tax payers' money**

**Elitist and reinforcing inequality**



**Change  
Ahead**



**IMPACT!**

For the purposes of the REF, **research** is defined as a process of investigation leading to new insights, effectively shared.

**Impact** is defined as an effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, beyond academia.

Impacts or benefits arising from engaging the public with the submitted unit's research will be included.



**KEEP CALM**

**AND**

**GET BACK TO THE**

**IVORY**

**TOWER**

# Manchester Beacon

connecting people, place & knowledge



Image: Michael Colvin



The Beacons for Public Engagement are funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England and Research Councils UK in association with the Wellcome Trust, the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales and the Scottish Funding Council.



- *Mission*
- *Leadership*
- *Communication*

**Focal points for  
embedding public  
engagement**

## **PURPOSE**

**Embedding a commitment to  
public engagement in  
institutional mission and  
strategy, and championing  
that commitment at all levels**

# 1

“An impact beyond academia which yields economic, social and cultural benefits.”

Goal one

*World-class research*

# 2

“Enthusiastic and engaging teachers who treat students as individuals in a motivating environment.”

Goal two

*Outstanding learning and student experience*

# 3

“Social responsibility will be embedded in our research and learning.”

Goal three

*Social responsibility*



The University of Manchester



*Manchester*  
**2020** *The Strategic Plan for  
The University of Manchester*



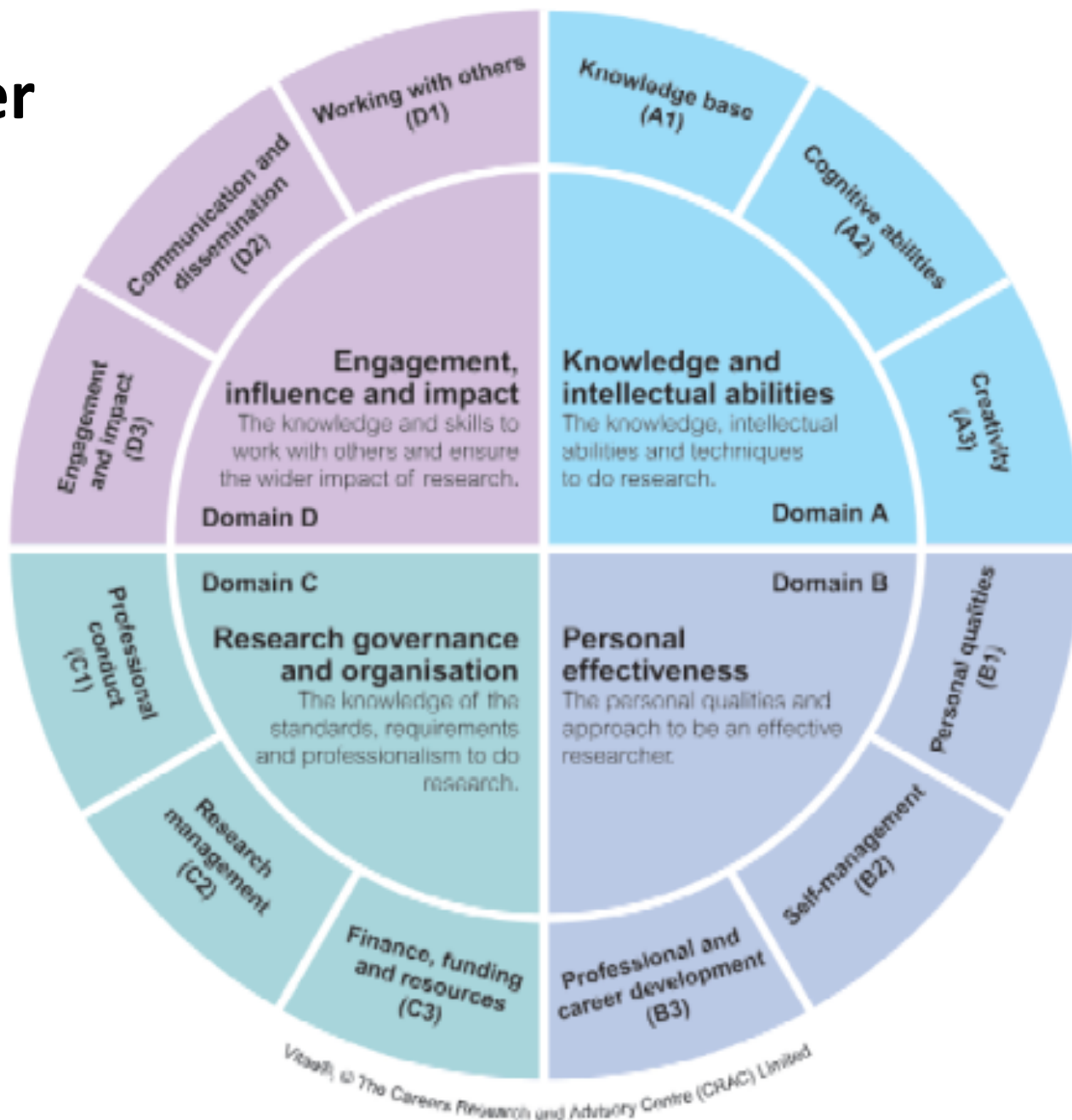
- *Learning*
- *Support*
- *Recognition*

**Focal points for  
embedding public  
engagement**

## **PROCESS**

Investing in systems and processes that facilitate involvement, maximise impact and help to ensure quality and value for money

# The Researcher Development Framework



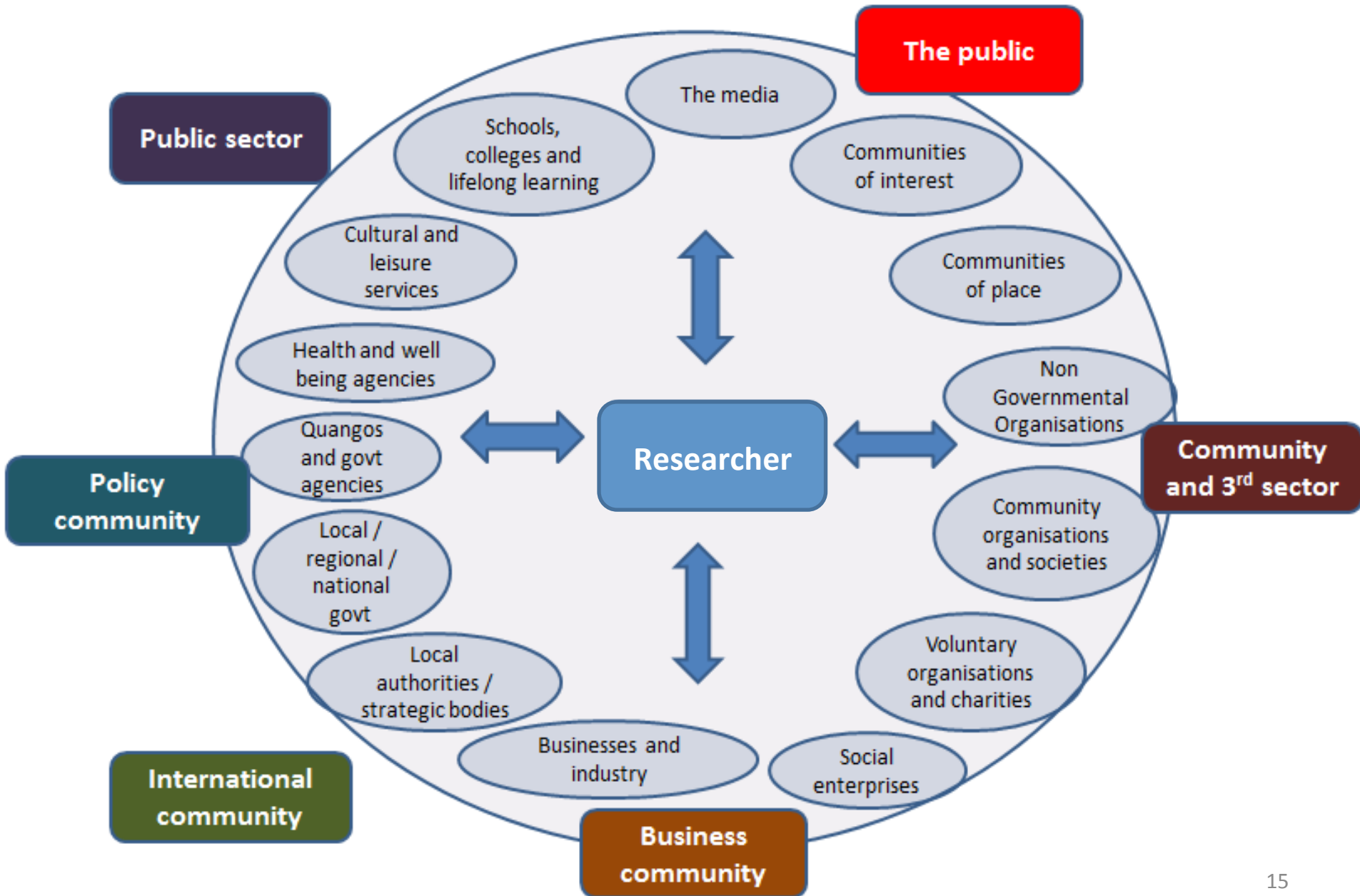
- *Staff*
- *Students*
- *Public*

**Focal points for  
embedding public  
engagement**

## **PEOPLE**

Involving staff, students and representatives of the public and using their expertise and feedback to shape the strategy and its delivery

# Who are we engaging with?





UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM

# SHAPING OUR FUTURE: BIRMINGHAM 2015

The five strategic goals are to:

- Enhance our research power
- Provide our students with a distinctive, high quality experience
- Sustain our financial strength and use it purposefully
- Enhance our performance and status as an 'engaged university'
- Be the destination of choice amongst our peers

The strategic goals in detail

Enhance our performance  
and status as an engaged  
University

We will bring the University's resources to bear on societal needs, through knowledge development and transfer, and strategic partnerships in the intellectual, commercial, cultural and policy spheres.





Explore  
it

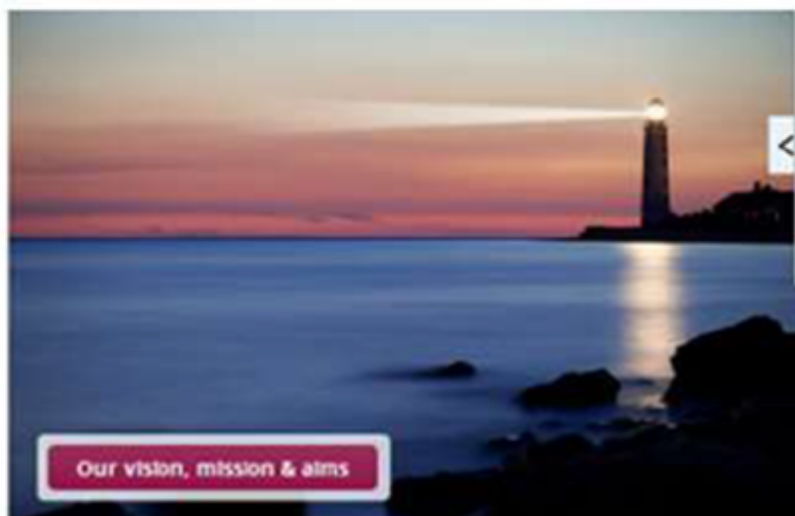
Support  
it

Plan  
it

Do  
it

About  
us

Work  
with us



Our vision, mission & aims

### We are the national co-ordinating centre for public engagement

We help universities and the public engage with each other. With our expert advice, training and tools, public engagement becomes achievable, measurable and above all, successful.

#### Our vision, mission & aims

- < Engage Competition 2014
- < Self assess your Institution with the EDGE Tool
- < Consultancy services
- < Manifesto for public engagement

The NCCPE seeks to support a culture change in universities. Our vision is of a higher education sector making a vital, strategic and valued contribution to 21st-century society through its public engagement activity.



[www.publicengagement.ac.uk](http://www.publicengagement.ac.uk)

Contact us: [nccpe.enquiries@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:nccpe.enquiries@uwe.ac.uk)

# Public engagement in the UK

Paul Manners  
National Co-ordinating Centre for Public  
Engagement

# Collaboration



*Focus on the positive*



*Creating connections*



*Parasites in Botswana*

# Engaging with young people



*What if?*



*Erica the Rhino*



*Dreams of low carbon...*



**Engage Competition 2014**  
Celebrating Public Engagement

## History and heritage



*Caer heritage project*



*Know your Bristol*



*Postman's Park*

## Art, design and culture



*Prison reading groups*



*Interactive sensory objects*

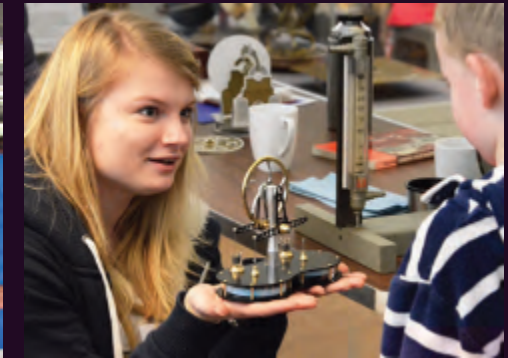
## STEM



*Deadinburgh*



*Marine Connections*



*Objects of invention*

**Health and wellbeing**



*Sugar*



*Dance for Parkinson's*



*Parasite infection*

**Established projects**



*Danceroom spectroscopy*



*Conker tree science*



*Bright Club*

**Individual-led projects**



*Celestial sirens*



*Hospice volunteers*



*EcoCentrix*

**PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT  
WITH RESEARCH**

*Actively involving the public in  
the research activity of the  
institution*

**ENGAGED TEACHING**

*Developing teaching  
activities which positively  
impact on the community,  
and enhance students'  
engagement skills*

***The engaged  
university***

**KNOWLEDGE  
EXCHANGE & SHARING**

*Increasing the two-way  
flow of knowledge and  
insight between the  
university and wider society*

**SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

*Seeking to maximise the  
benefits that the institution  
can generate for the public*

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## Concordat for Engaging the Public with Research

A set of principles drawn up by the Funders of  
Research in the UK





## **PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT WITH RESEARCH**

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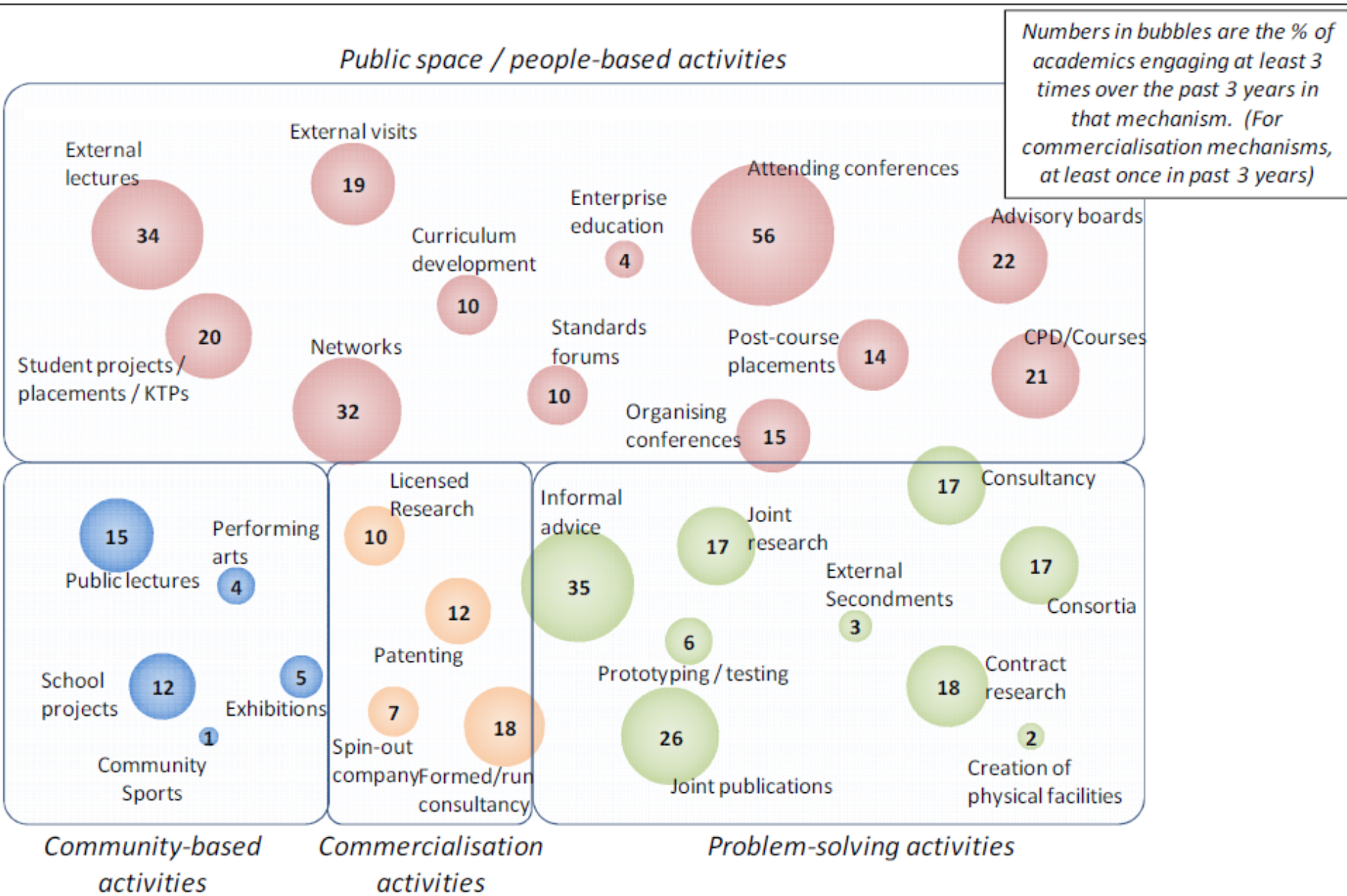


- *The impact element will include all kinds of social, economic and cultural benefits and impacts beyond academia, arising from excellent research.*
- *Impacts or benefits arising from engaging the public with the submitted unit's research will be included.*

**KNOWLEDGE  
EXCHANGE & SHARING**

*Increasing the two-way  
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university and wider society*

**Figure 1.1 Academic engagement in knowledge exchange activities**



# ESRC guidance: how to maximise impact

- established networks with research users
- involving users at all stages of the research
- well-planned public engagement and knowledge exchange strategies
- understand and target barriers to, and enablers of, change
- portfolios of research activity that build up reputations with research users
- excellent infrastructure, leadership and management support
- the involvement of intermediaries and knowledge brokers



## **ENGAGED TEACHING**

*Developing teaching activities which positively impact on the community, and enhance students' engagement skills*



**Higher education should be a transformative process that supports the development of graduates who can make a meaningful contribution to wider society, local communities and to the economy.**

**Professor Craig Mahoney,  
Chief Executive,  
Higher Education  
Academy.**

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GOAL THREE

# SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

To make the University a force for good, locally, nationally and internationally, by bringing knowledge to bear on the great issues facing the world in the 21st century, and by producing graduates prepared to exercise social leadership and environmental responsibility.

**SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**  
*Seeking to maximise the benefits that the institution can generate for the public*

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**SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

*Seeking to maximise the  
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can generate for the public*

**Relevant**

**Accountable**



**Trusted**

**Socially  
responsible**

**How porous and open can universities become before they compromise their independence and identity?**

