



Civic University
Network

A framework for civic impact:

a way to assess universities' activities and progress

What this framework is for

When assessing universities' civic impacts and examining how to improve them, it is important to understand that institutions will have different priorities and timescales and different ways of understanding their communities' needs. But they are engaged in comparable tasks and need a common language and set of criteria to compare and assess what they are doing in order to learn and improve. This is an initial attempt to provide such a framework. It is being prototyped within the Civic University Network and has been workshopped with four universities during January and February 2021. The framework has been informed by an evidence review of universities' civic activity and previous research on universities' 'anchor' role¹.

This prototype framework has three main purposes:

- to help universities to celebrate and tell the story of the action they are taking to benefit their localities
- to encourage universities to map their civic activities comprehensively
- to encourage them to do better still, by creatively asking 'what if?' questions, generate imaginative and ambitious responses, and reflect with their peers on achievements and opportunities

It is designed to inform universities' internal processes and strategies in the first instance – but we recognise that this can and should be developed further by understanding what 'place' means to local partners and communities. The framework gives universities a tool to enable them to engage in conversations with colleagues and partners about what a truly civic university might look like, and what the journey might involve. It does not seek to impose a new set of obligations, but instead asks how universities can build the wellbeing of their communities through their everyday activities and core business of learning, teaching and research.

The framework aims to help universities ask the right questions about their civic activity. The better the data they can draw on, the more informed responses to these questions will be. Some key data sources are indicated in the tables below. By asking the questions below and gathering appropriate data, universities can start to develop locally appropriate metrics and indicators.

How it has been devised

The framework is being developed iteratively in a series of conversations with university leaders and has been changed and improved in response to those conversations. We would expect that process to continue as institutions seek to use it in real-world situations and as it is road-tested in collaboration with partners such as the NHS and local authorities. The framework does not impose a particular model of 'civicness'. It recognises that every institution will need to make choices in the light of its own circumstances and resources. It is hoped that the framework will inform such choices by highlighting the key domains of what it means to be civic and stimulating conversations about the difference universities can make. Each institution will need to use it in ways that are locally appropriate, although we would encourage them to set stretching and ambitious goals that encourage genuine reflection and improvement.

How it works

The framework identifies seven domains of universities' civic commitment – the core areas in which universities impact their places and communities. It also identifies six phases of progress. Progress is envisaged as a cyclical and iterative process, in which the learning then informs further reviews and development. (Figure 1). The domains and phases are mapped in the detailed tables below against existing guidance on Civic University Agreements, and the principles of the Knowledge Exchange Concordat. This contextualises civic commitment within UK higher education policy. Mapping these activities against the Sustainable Development Goals (noted at the bottom of each section) places civic activity within a recognisable international framework.

Table 1 summarises the domains of activity and progress, with overarching questions to be addressed in each phase and potential indicators. It aims to encourage a comprehensive approach to HEIs' civic activities, ensuring they are not narrowly focused on economic development. We would expect universities to be working across these domains simultaneously as well as sequentially, informed by their relationships with local partners. Table 2 shows how the progress cycle maps against the principles of the Knowledge Exchange Concordat, and the eight 'challenge areas' in the existing guidance on creating a Civic University Agreement.

In the detailed tables that follow (one for each of the seven domains), we invite partners to consider questions that will elicit ambitious, relevant and deliverable actions, as well as evidence of positive practice. We have developed a series of questions through our conversations as a starting point, but recognise that institutions will want to take these further.

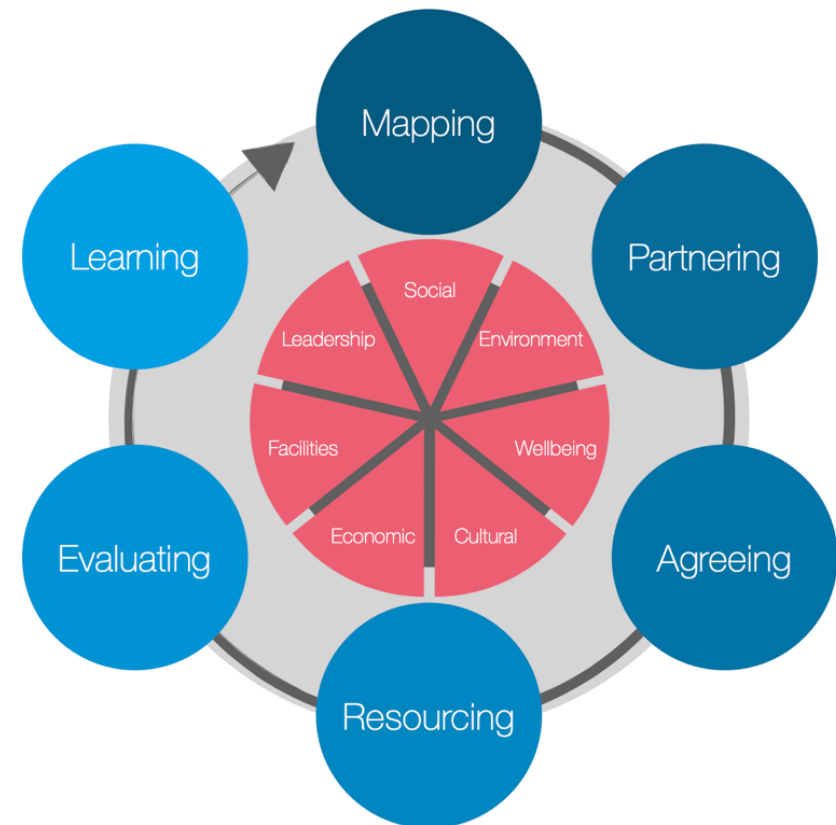


Figure 1: Domains of civic activity and progress cycle

How this framework can be used

In practical terms, this framework is envisaged as a discussion-starter and checklist that can be applied across a range of institutional activities, either within one domain or all together.

It will be especially pertinent when drawing up Civic University Agreements, enabling institutions to consider how they will address each of the seven domains and identify priorities for action. It can also be used to inform the narrative and place-based elements of submissions under the Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF).

Additionally, the framework is a tool that can be used to inform:

- partnerships with local authorities, the NHS and community organisations
- investment in festivals and cultural activities
- campus development and planning
- carbon reduction activities

Universities that aspire to be 'civic' could use the framework to inform and develop their strategic thinking across each of the seven domains.

Challenges and questions

We have been challenged in devising this framework to suggest clear quantitative indicators of progress or success, and on the normative nature of some of the questions we pose. Our view is that civic activity cannot be reduced to a single set of measurable indicators, because 'civic' will look and feel different in different institutions depending on their particular histories, geographies and economies. We recognise that choices of indicators and metrics embed norms and values, and we believe that discussion of norms and values is central to identifying what 'civicness' is – while recognising that these norms may vary between institutions. One purpose of the framework is to ensure that these conversations about values and priorities take place and inform civic activities.

We also recognise that excellent practice will take many forms. We would like to complement this matrix with examples of good and promising practice across all the proposed domains and progress levels, so we would particularly welcome real-life examples from across the higher education sector showing how civic impact can be achieved.

We see this framework as a prototype, to be developed as institutions apply it in real-world situations. We would be interested in hearing from institutions about their experiences in using this tool, and working with them to improve and fine-tune the framework.

Table 1: The Civic Framework in a nutshell

| Progress levels | 1) Mapping: where are we now? | 2) Partnering: where do we want to go, and with whom? | 3) Agreeing: who will do what, and when? | 4) Resourcing: how are activities supported? | 5) Evaluating: how are we doing? | 6) Learning: What will we change, and how? |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|--|--|--|---|
| Domains | Core questions and potential indicators | | | | | |
| Social impact | Key questions: How do we want our university to bridge and reduce social divides and improve the quality of life of our communities, including the most disadvantaged? How can our university help our places move from 'functioning' to 'flourishing'? What part can our students play in this? | | | | | |
| | We know how well our workforce and student intake reflects local populations, and the extent of our community and public engagement. | We are working with partners to create a shared vision of a flourishing society, with full involvement of all our communities. | Within our own institution, we have action plans for change in line with our shared priorities. | We have set aside resources to support our public engagement and can show how this will benefit marginalised and excluded groups. | We are measuring our social impact and we have worked with local communities to make sure our indicators are meaningful to them. | We capture and share learning across our university and with key partners, and identify areas for improvement. |
| Environment, climate and biodiversity | Key questions: How could our university play a leading role in mitigating and adapting to climate change, reversing biodiversity loss, and educating students for sustainability? How will it influence environmental behaviours throughout our city or region? | | | | | |
| | We can fully account for our carbon emissions and we measure progress on carbon reduction. We have done an environmental and biodiversity audit of our estate. We know what we waste. | We engage with local partners to create a shared vision of a sustainable locality and university. We are working with our suppliers, staff and students to improve our environmental impacts. | We have agreed priority targets for improvement and consulted our partners and the wider community on their needs and aspirations. | We have identified resources to support our environmental ambitions. We support staff and students in modelling the environmental behaviours we want to encourage (such as active travel). | We measure the wider environmental footprint of the university within and beyond our locality. We hold ourselves to account by publicising our performance and inviting suggestions for improvement. | We are implementing education for sustainable development across the curriculum. We share our learning with peers and use our academic expertise to support our partners in improving our local places. |

| | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|--|--|--|---|---|---|
| Health and wellbeing | Key questions: How does our institution support the health and wellbeing of our localities and communities? What does a flourishing community look like to us? | | | | | |
| | We are aware of the health characteristics of our communities, staff and students, and know how our activities impact on them. | We partner with healthcare organisations and communities to promote local wellbeing. | We have targets for beneficial impact on our communities' wellbeing and we are working with partners to take appropriate action. | We have identified resources to support our communities' wellbeing. We take time to listen and value communities' knowledge and experience. | Our priorities are informed by local communities, public health teams and healthcare organisations. We know what we can do differently and what impact it can make. | We are listening to our communities to understand what wellbeing means for them and adjusting our activities and priorities in response. |
| Our cultural contribution | Key questions: How does our university celebrate and enrich the cultural life of our localities and communities? How do we create vibrant, creative and playful places? | | | | | |
| | We know what contribution we make to local cultural life. We have mapped this against local demographics and identified gaps and opportunities. | We engage with a wide range of local cultural organisations. We ensure local communities are welcomed and included in our events and activities. | We have identified priorities for support and know which communities we need to work with more (including our own staff and students). | We promote and fund events and activities that enrich and celebrate the cultural life of our localities, and support staff and students to do this. | We have asked our communities what they think of the activities we support and have listened to their views. | We actively consider how our activities can be better. In doing so we value and learn from the expertise and knowledge within our localities. |
| Economic impact | Key questions: How could our university's work create more prosperous places and address and reduce economic inequality? What impacts is it having now? Can we articulate and promote a coherent vision of a flourishing local economy in partnership with local stakeholders? | | | | | |
| | We know our economic footprint and our impact on local communities and the lives of our learners. | We have joint economic strategies with local partners, which reflect our shared priorities. | We have agreed indicators of progress, with achievable targets for change. | We are using our employment and spending power to support our local economy and people. | We have agreed economic impact targets and we are measuring progress on reducing inequalities. | We review our impacts with key partners, including the groups most affected by inequalities. |

| | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|---|--|
| Estates, facilities and placemaking | Key questions: How can our facilities be used for the benefit of the whole community? Do all members of the community feel welcome? How do our facilities set the standard for placemaking and sustainability in our city or region? How can our digital infrastructure benefit our communities? | | | | | |
| | We have agreed design, quality, environmental and accessibility standards and benchmark our estates management against the best in our class. We know who uses our buildings and spaces, how and when. | We work with local communities and planning authorities to ensure our estates meet their needs and aspirations. We are open and transparent in our plans and developments. | We work with civic partners to ensure our estates management supports our civic ambitions. We have agreed priorities for action and improvement. | Our design, procurement, maintenance and management practices support an open and inclusive attitude and we are making our estate suitable for community uses as well as for our staff and students. | We work with peer organisations to critique and improve our practices. We invite local communities to tell us how we can do better. | We review the use and development of our estates to ensure they support our civic mission. |
| Institutional strategy and leadership | Key questions: How will top-level governance and strategies at our institution reflect our civic commitment to ensure we make the difference we want? Which partners are we working with and to what ends, and what are their priorities? What would it look like if our civic priorities were embedded throughout our core activities of teaching, learning and research? | | | | | |
| | We have drafted, consulted on and approved a Civic University Agreement. | We know the number, remit and make-up of the partnerships we're involved in. | We have committed to SMART targets within civic strategies and agreements. | We have identified resources to support the civic agenda. | We regularly monitor and evaluate the effects of our civic strategies, and review them with peers. | Our senior staff are involved in civic peer networks or communities of practice. |

Table 2: The progress cycle mapped against KE Concordat principles and CUA guidance

| Progress levels | 1) Mapping: where are we now? | 2) Partnering: where do we want to go, and with whom? | 3) Agreeing: who will do what, and when? | 4) Resourcing: how are activities supported? | 5) Evaluating: how are we doing? | 6) Learning: What will we change, and how? |
|--|----------------------------------|--|---|--|--|---|
| Relevant KE Concordat principles | Mission Policies Engagement | Engagement Policies Transparency Capacity building | Engagement Capacity building Policies | Capacity building Policies Recognition and rewards | Evaluating success Continuous improvement | Evaluating success Continuous improvement |
| Civic University Agreement challenge areas | Data and intelligence gathering | Consultation and co-creation | Agreeing focus Striking agreements Governance and risk Delivering outcomes | Resourcing the process Delivering outcomes | Evaluation and learning Governance and risk | Evaluation and learning Governance and risk Delivering outcomes |

Domain 1: Social impact

| Progress levels | 1) Mapping: where are we now? | 2) Partnering: where do we want to go, and with whom? | 3) Agreeing: who will do what, and when? | 4) Resourcing: how are activities supported? | 5) Evaluating: how are we doing? | 6) Learning: What will we change, and how? |
|----------------------------------|---|--|--|---|---|--|
| Social Impact | <p>Key questions: How do we want our university to bridge and reduce social divides and improve the quality of life of our communities, including the most disadvantaged? How can our university help our places move from 'functioning' to 'flourishing'? What part can our students play in this?</p> | | | | | |
| | <p>Potential supporting data: Board and senior leadership papers; HEBCE returns; community engagement tools (EDGE, TEFCE); access and participation plans; local JSNAs.</p> | | | | | |
| | Do we know what social disparities exist in our city or region? Does our institution reflect the make-up of our communities? What do we do to address social disparities? Do any of our activities have negative social effects? Are we mapping community and public engagement? How do our staff and students support civil society organisations? | Do we and our partners have a shared vision of a flourishing society, and how will it make life better for individuals or groups who are disadvantaged? Has this vision been co-created with our communities? Who has informed and influenced this vision? Has anyone been overlooked or excluded? | Who will ensure our university celebrates and supports community life and reduces social divisions? How will they be encouraged and held accountable? What priorities will we select for action? | What would we do if we could use our spending power to maximise social impact? Are we funding activities that address inequalities sufficiently? How will we review our activities and how often? | How are we measuring the difference we're making, and the difference we want to make in future? Do we use existing tools to measure and improve engagement? Do our metrics miss important issues? | How will we act to ensure continuous progress on social equality? Whose experiences will inform our learning and how will we review and change our activities in response? |
| Illustrative indicators | We have mapped our workforce and student intake against local population characteristics and identified priorities for action; we know the full extent of our community and public engagement. | We can show how we are working with partners to create a shared vision of a flourishing society. We can show the actions we are taking to welcome the insights of excluded and marginalised groups. | Within our own institutions, we have action plans for change in line with our shared priorities, and we have identified who needs to act and when. | We have set aside resources of staff time and money to support our public engagement and can show how this work will benefit marginalised and excluded groups. | We have developed or adopted tools to measure our social impact and we have worked with local communities to ensure these indicators are meaningful to them. | We have a system to capture and share learning across our university and with key partners. We regularly reflect on this learning and identify areas for improvement. |
| Relevant SDGs: 1,2,3,4,5,8,10,11 | | | | | | |

Domain 2: Environment, climate and biodiversity

| Progress levels | 1) Mapping: where are we now? | 2) Partnering: where do we want to go, and with whom? | 3) Agreeing: who will do what, and when? | 4) Resourcing: how are activities supported? | 5) Evaluating: how are we doing? | 6) Learning: What will we change, and how? |
|---|--|--|--|--|---|---|
| Environment, climate & biodiversity | Key questions: How could our university play a leading role in mitigating and adapting to climate change, reversing biodiversity loss, and educating students for sustainability? How will it influence environmental behaviours throughout our city or region? | | | | | |
| | Potential supporting data: Board and senior leadership papers; HEBCE returns; estates and facilities plans; investment strategies; ecological audits; carbon measurement | | | | | |
| | Is our university on course to be carbon-neutral in line with national and international commitments? What is our impact on biodiversity? Are there genuine links between our research and teaching and environmental responsibility? Are we eliminating waste? | What is our vision of a sustainable university and who has informed it? Which partners will we work with to make it happen? Who outside the university is impacted by our activities and how will we ensure they bring environmental benefits? How will we work with our students to create the world they want? | Is our environmental vision and performance articulated at the highest level? Who will be responsible for ensuring our university sets an example for our city or region? How will they encourage and enthuse staff and students to play their part? | What resources are needed to embed environmental responsibility and improvement in all our activities? How will we ensure it is not an afterthought in planning and decision-making? How can we actively manage our investments to achieve environmental impact? | What do we need to measure to ensure we are making genuine gains on carbon neutrality, biodiversity and wider environmental impacts? How do our activities align with the Sustainable Development Goals? | How will we embed environmental learning and improvement in all we do, including teaching and research? How will we monitor and take action where we fall short? Are we supporting communities of practice that share learning regularly? |
| Illustrative indicators | We can fully account for our carbon emissions (from teaching and research as well as estate) and measure progress on carbon reduction. We have done an environmental and biodiversity audit of our estate. We know what we recycle and what we waste. | We are engaging with local partners to create a shared vision of a sustainable locality and university. We are working with our suppliers, partners, staff and students to improve environmental performance, reduce waste, and promote sustainable travel. | We have agreed priority targets for improvement and consulted our partners, staff and students, and the wider community on their needs and aspirations to ensure our actions complement and amplify theirs. | We have budgeted to ensure resources are available to support our environmental ambitions. We support staff and students in modelling the environmental behaviours we want to encourage (such as active travel). | We measure the wider environmental footprint of the university within and beyond our locality, not just our net carbon emissions. We hold ourselves to account by publicising our performance and inviting suggestions for improvement. | We are implementing education for sustainable development across the curriculum. We share our learning with peers and use our academic expertise to support our civic partners and local communities in improving our local places. |
| Relevant SDGs: 3,7,8,10,11,13,14,15 | | | | | | |

Domain 3: Health and wellbeing

| Progress levels | 1) Mapping: where are we now? | 2) Partnering: where do we want to go, and with whom? | 3) Agreeing: who will do what, and when? | 4) Resourcing: how are activities supported? | 5) Evaluating: how are we doing? | 6) Learning: What will we change, and how? |
|-------------------------------|--|---|--|---|---|---|
| Health & Wellbeing | Key questions: How does our institution support the health and wellbeing of our localities and communities? What does a flourishing community look like to us? | | | | | |
| | Potential supporting data: Local public health data; board and senior leadership papers; involvement in local partnerships; community engagement tools (EDGE, TEFCO); access and participation plans; local JSNAs | | | | | |
| | What do we currently do that contributes to maintaining and improving the physical and mental health of our communities, including staff and students? How are we addressing the wider determinants of health? | Who do we work with on health-related activities? What partnerships and protocols are in place to advance our shared agendas? Are our activities informed by the wider public and by marginalised groups? | Do we have shared visions of healthy and flourishing communities? How will these be realised and who will be involved? | What resources are we devoting to activities that improve the health and wellbeing of the wider community? What do we do beyond our mainstream teaching and research? How do we draw on the knowledge that exists within our communities? | What are our measures of success and who has informed them? How do we know we are making a difference? Have we identified key indicators and how are they changing over time? | What have we learned about improving health and wellbeing in our localities and communities? How will we apply it to future activities? How will we share our learning with partners and the wider public? Are we supporting communities of practice that share learning regularly? |
| Illustrative indicators | We are aware of the health characteristics of our communities, staff, and students, and know how our activities impact on them. | We have formal and informal partnerships with healthcare professionals and community-based organisations to promote local wellbeing. | We have set ourselves targets for beneficial impact on our communities' wellbeing and we are working with partners to take appropriate action. | We have identified staff and financial resources to support our communities' wellbeing. We take time to listen to our local communities and value their knowledge and experience. | We have set priorities for action based on input from local communities, public health teams and healthcare organisations. We have identified what we can do differently and what impact it can make. | We are listening to our communities to understand what wellbeing means for them and adjusting our activities and priorities in response. |
| Relevant SDGs: 3,4,5,10,11,17 | | | | | | |

Domain 4: Cultural contribution

| Progress levels | 1) Mapping: where are we now? | 2) Partnering: where do we want to go, and with whom? | 3) Agreeing: who will do what, and when? | 4) Resourcing: how are activities supported? | 5) Evaluating: how are we doing? | 6) Learning: What will we change, and how? |
|-----------------------------|---|---|---|--|--|---|
| Cultural Contribution | Key questions: How does our university celebrate and enrich the cultural life of our localities and communities? How do we create vibrant, creative and playful places? | | | | | |
| | Potential supporting data: Board and senior leadership papers; involvement in local partnerships; HEBCE returns; community engagement tools (EDGE, TEFCE); access and participation plans; local JSNAs | | | | | |
| | What activities are we engaged in that support the wider cultural life of our places? Which aspects of community life do we celebrate in our institution? How are our staff and students involved? Is our heritage and history perceived as positive or problematic by our communities? | Which groups and organisations are we partnering with, and whose ideas are welcomed? Are any groups or activities under-represented? How will our institution learn from the cultures of our communities as well as give to them? | What activities will we support and in what ways? How will we ensure our cultural activities are partnerships of equals? How will we support staff and students in their cultural activities? | What resources do we contribute to the cultural life of our places? Do we have capacity to respond to new ideas and initiatives from our communities? How does mainstream teaching and research engage with the cultural life of our places? | Can we measure the depth as well as the extent of our cultural activities, and how do we do it? What do our communities think of our cultural activities? Have we addressed aspects of our legacy and heritage that may offend and alienate our communities? | How will our communities inform and help to develop our plans and ideas for events and activities? What has worked well in engaging new groups and places? What do we need to do better? Are there communities of practice that share learning regularly? |
| Illustrative indicators | We know, across our institution, what contribution we make to local cultural life. We have mapped this against local demographics and identified gaps and opportunities. | We know and engage with a wide range of local cultural organisations, with a range of formal and informal partnerships. We ensure local communities are welcomed and included in our events and activities. | We have identified priorities for support and know which communities we need to work with more. | We promote and fund events and activities that enrich and celebrate the cultural life of our localities, and support staff and students in linking with local communities. | We have asked our communities what they think of the activities we support and have listened to their views. | We are not content with repeating success but are actively considering how our activities can be better. In doing so we value and learn from the expertise and knowledge within our localities. |
| Relevant SDGs: 4,5,10,16,17 | | | | | | |

Domain 5: Economic impact

| Progress levels | 1) Mapping: where are we now? | 2) Partnering: where do we want to go, and with whom? | 3) Agreeing: who will do what, and when? | 4) Resourcing: how are activities supported? | 5) Evaluating: how are we doing? | 6) Learning: What will we change, and how? |
|-------------------------|--|---|---|--|--|---|
| Economic Impact | <p>Key questions: How could our university's work create more prosperous places and address and reduce economic inequality? What impacts is it having now? Can we articulate and promote a coherent vision of a flourishing local economy in partnership with local stakeholders?</p> | | | | | |
| | <p>Potential supporting data: Board and senior leadership papers; HEBCE return on business and community engagement; influence within LEP boards; use of HEIF funding; graduate outcomes; HESA data; local JSNAs</p> | | | | | |
| | <p>What is our institution's economic footprint in our locality and what wider impacts does this have? Where do our students come from? What is our vision of a fair and thriving local economy? How does it align with what we currently doing to support our local economies and address economic disparities?</p> | <p>What would our places and communities look like if they were prosperous? Do we and our partners have a shared vision of a flourishing, equitable and sustainable economy? Who has contributed to it, and who else could do so? What are the downsides and who is affected?</p> | <p>What would it look like if our institution was fully committed to a shared economic ambition for our locality? Who is responsible and how will we judge performance? How soon can key changes be achieved?</p> | <p>What investments would achieve the impacts we desire? How will we use the levers at our disposal? Do we pay the real living wage and support low-paid staff, and reduce gender pay gaps and casualisation? Does our procurement and commissioning promote social value and support local employment? How will our teaching and research contribute to an inclusive local economy?</p> | <p>How could we measure the difference we are making? What indicators and targets are appropriate for our local economy and circumstances?</p> | <p>How will we review our ambition and activities in the light of changing circumstances? How will we identify and address gaps in our work?</p> |
| Illustrative indicators | <p>We have measured our economic footprint and our impact on local communities and on our student population.</p> | <p>We have agreed and/or reviewed joint economic strategies with local partners; we have identified our shared priorities.</p> | <p>We have agreed indicators of progress, with achievable targets for change.</p> | <p>We have set targets for workforce change (e.g. elimination of low pay and inequalities); we have agreed what proportion of our spend will be recycled within the local economy and have the capacity to monitor this.</p> | <p>We have agreed and/or reviewed economic impact targets; we are measuring progress on reducing inequalities.</p> | <p>We have formal monitoring and review processes in place with key partners, including the groups most affected by inequalities in our localities.</p> |

Relevant SDGs: 1,3,4,7,8,9,10,11,12

Domain 6: Estates, facilities and placemaking

| Progress levels | 1) Mapping: where are we now? | 2) Partnering: where do we want to go, and with whom? | 3) Agreeing: who will do what, and when? | 4) Resourcing: how are activities supported? | 5) Evaluating: how are we doing? | 6) Learning: What will we change, and how? |
|---|---|--|---|---|---|--|
| Estates, facilities and placemaking | Key questions: How can our facilities be used for the benefit of the whole community? Do all members of the community feel welcome? How do our facilities set the standard for placemaking and sustainability in our city or region? How can our digital infrastructure benefit our communities? | | | | | |
| | Potential supporting data: Board and senior leadership papers; estates and facilities plans; planning applications and masterplans; digital investment plans. | | | | | |
| | Who do we want to benefit from our facilities? How do they do so already, and how do we know? Have we assessed the standard, accessibility and inclusivity of the physical and digital facilities we provide? Are we celebrating the best of local heritage and creating spaces future generations will thank us for? | What would make us proud of our buildings and spaces? What does a welcoming, inclusive campus look like? Do we have a ‘place standard’ for our estate? Who do we partner with to ensure our facilities benefit the community? Do our facilities contribute to wellbeing? Have we asked communities how our spaces and digital facilities can work better for them? | How will we ensure all our facilities and infrastructure contribute to an inclusive civic vision? Who will identify groups who might feel excluded and seek their views? How will staff and students have a clear sense of the place they are involved in creating and a say in how it is designed and managed? | How are we working to include the wider community in our spaces? What resources will we provide to ensure high quality, sustainable design that contributes to the local quality of life? In what other ways could our physical presence support the work of other community or civic partners? | How will we measure the quality and inclusivity of our places and spaces? What tools will we use and how will we incentivise improvement? | How are we learning from best practice and innovation in sustainable design and use of buildings and open spaces? How are we future-proofing our investments? What will we do to meet the needs of people who do not feel welcome in our spaces? |
| Illustrative indicators | We have agreed design, quality, environmental and accessibility standards and benchmark our estates management against the best in our class. We know who uses our spaces, how and when. We understand where our spaces have heritage value. | We are working with local communities and planning authorities to ensure our estates meet their needs and aspirations (including, for example, encouraging biodiversity and active travel). We are open and transparent in our plans and developments. | We are working with civic partners to ensure our estates management supports our civic ambitions. We have agreed priorities for action and improvement. | Our design, procurement, maintenance and management practices support an open and inclusive attitude and we ensure resources are available to make our estate suitable for community uses as well as for staff and students. | We work with peer organisations to critique and improve our practices and examine where small changes might make a big difference. We invite local communities to tell us how we can do better. | We review the use and development of our estates regularly to ensure these support our civic mission, and ensure our estates department does not become a ‘silo’ within the university. |

Relevant SDGs: 6,7,8,9,11,12

Domain 7: Institutional strategy and leadership

| Progress levels | 1) Mapping: where are we now? | 2) Partnering: where do we want to go, and with whom? | 3) Agreeing: who will do what, and when? | 4) Resourcing: how are activities supported? | 5) Evaluating: how are we doing? | 6) Learning: What will we change, and how? |
|--|--|---|---|--|--|---|
| Institutional strategy and leadership (including wellbeing of future generations) | Key questions: How will top-level governance and strategies at our institution reflect our civic commitment to ensure we make the difference we want? Which partners are we working with and to what ends, and what are their priorities?? What would it look like if our civic priorities were embedded throughout our core activities of teaching, learning and research? | | | | | |
| | Potential supporting data: Board and senior leadership papers; involvement in local partnerships; comms strategies; executive recruitment; HEBCE returns; HESA; participation data; departmental business plans; curriculum development plans; local joint strategic needs assessments (JSNAs) | | | | | |
| | What is our civic ambition and what kind of places do we want to play a part in creating? Is our civic ambition clearly articulated? Is it supported by governance frameworks and recruitment to boards and leadership positions? Do our policies and strategies align with it? | Where is our focus and how can we welcome key partners into our plans? How do we support our partners' civic priorities? Do we know who our communities are and how have we defined the 'place' (or places) we are concerned with? Who gets to have a say in our strategies? How do we know they reflect our communities' desires and needs? What will the next generation need? What can we learn from our students? | Who would be involved if we were serious about becoming more civic? What partners could we work with? Who will ensure we deliver on our civic ambition and when? How will reward and recognition reflect their roles and success? How will we communicate our beliefs and mission and ensure comms strategies reflect and celebrate our priorities? | What would it look like if our financial decision-making and investment priorities reflected our civic ambition? How are civic ambitions encouraged and enabled within teaching, research, and campus development? | How is our civic ambition reflected in leadership throughout the institution? How are we measuring this? How will we benchmark our activities with our peers, and how often? How will we open our evaluation processes to external perspectives? | Is there scope for us to do better? How are we judging how well we are doing? How will our review processes encourage new ideas and creativity? What will we do differently this or next year? What levers do we have to enable aspirations to be actioned? |
| Illustrative indicators | We have drafted, consulted on and approved a Civic University Agreement. | We know the number, remit and make-up of the partnerships we're involved in. | We have committed to SMART targets within civic strategies and agreements. | We have identified resources (finance and staff) to support the civic agenda; we have reviewed decision-making processes in finance and procurement. | We regularly monitor and evaluate the effects of our civic strategies, and review them with peer organisations. | Our senior staff are involved in civic peer networks or communities of practice; we have formal reviews of our civic activity. |

Relevant SDGs: 3,4,5,10,11,16,17

Footnotes

- 1) The evidence is summarised in the paper, *Capturing and Enhancing the Impact of the Civic University: Current thinking, issues and challenges*.
- 2) Note: While the Sustainable Development Goals are a broad international measure of progress, mapping the domains of civic commitment against them could enable a detailed analysis of progress and comparison between institutions. The SDGs are listed below.

SDG 1 – no poverty

SDG 2 – zero hunger

SDG 3 – good health and well-being

SDG 4 – quality education

SDG 5 – gender equality

SDG 6 – clean water and sanitation

SDG 7 – affordable and clean energy

SDG 8 – decent work and economic growth

SDG 9 – industry, innovation and infrastructure

SDG 10 – reduced inequalities

SDG 11 – sustainable cities and communities

SDG 12 – responsible consumption and production

SDG 13 – climate action

SDG 14 – life below water

SDG 15 – life on land

SDG 16 – peace, justice and strong institutions

SDG 17 – partnerships for the goals