

Regional engagement for knowledge creation and exchange

Meeting of U21 collaborative group

October 6, 2010, University of British Columbia (UBC),

Vancouver, Canada

Present

Representatives of U21 member institutions:

Hans Schuetze, UBC, Canada (morning only)

Helen Pennant, UBC, Director of International Relations (morning only)

Susan Geertshuis, University of Auckland, New Zealand

Mina O'Dowd, Lund University, Sweden

Helen Chenery, University of Queensland (by Skype early afternoon)

Mike Osborne, University of Glasgow, Scotland

Amy Metcalfe, UBC (morning only)

Guests

Ilpo Laitinen, City of Helsinki, Finland

Sumin Li, College of Education, Tianjin Normal University, China

Masao Homma, Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University, Japan (afternoon only)

1 Welcomes and apologies

Apologies from Melbourne

2 Review of priorities and work plan

An overview of the bid and aims, priorities and work plan was provided

No changes to priorities or plan other than it being noted that face to face events should be added in order for the project to gain traction.

It was agreed that 'regional engagement' did not clearly convey the meaning as we understand it. After some discussion 'Regional engagement for knowledge creation and exchange' was agreed. Noted that, although all universities express strong commitments to their region, in some nations regional engagement is funded by government and this alters the attention given to engagement activities .

3 Brief reports on progress

As per the plan a report had been submitted, a newsletter written and efforts had been made to attract a wider membership. The difficulties we experienced in locating the right people in overseas universities was noted. Helen Pennant offered to brief the U21 managers at the meeting in Fudan next week in an effort to attract more interest and identify key people. She will also see if the group can present to the U21 managers at a meeting next year.

Mike Osborne confirmed we were recognised by U21 as a collaborative group.

Since the last meeting Mike had offered to host a website for the group. This offer was gratefully accepted.

4 Priority 1 - Governance

Group shared perspectives on governance and a plan was made for the panel discussion to take place on Friday. Pascal's approach was outlined and the Melbourne taxonomy which was distributed in March was shared with those new to the group.

At the HERR Workshop panel – (to be presented on Fri Oct 8 - Mike to chair) to provide context and explain what regional engagement is; Susan to provide an analysis of governance of regional engagement within her university; Ilpo to provide a regional perspective on university governance and regional engagement; Mina to provide national perspective on the tensions universities experience as a consequence of government policy shifts.

5 Priority 2 Assessing the value of regional engagement and collaboration.

Merits of cross institutional benchmarking activities noted as:

- Allows comparisons between institutions
- Allows institutions to report on activities
- Rewards success and drive participation
- Pascal has tools available that the group could use

Difficulties with cross institutional benchmarking activities noted as:

- A resource hungry activity
- Academics' reluctance to being counted and auditing in general is likely to be even worse if regional engagement is not a high profile activity

Further discussion about timing, whether the assessments should be to measure or drive activity, the need to be aware of both university and regional benefits and with respect to universities to register the positive impact of regional engagement on research and teaching and learning

6 Priority 3 How regional engagement can facilitate mutually beneficial, international quality and large scale research.

It was agreed that a series of case studies would be assembled and examined. One of the two seminars on the work plan to be on regional research with an international impact and/or quality publication outputs.

Potential Cases

Lund homeless project (social impact)

A successful commercialisation project (financial impact)

U21 water management project (environmental impact)

Seminar 1, Priority 3. (Delivered by March 2010)

Seminar learning outcomes to be:

1 Understand how researching locally can have significant research outputs and an international impact

2 Able to assess features of a regional partnership and context that are necessary for effective and mutually beneficial research working

3 Able to assess likely outcomes of a project in terms of university and regional impact

Videos from case studies to supplement text materials. Assessment tools derived from Melbourne taxonomy (subject to permission) or Pascal benchmarking tools to be provided to build skills in assessing the potential of projects.

Seminar to be made available as podcast. Helen P. Suggested we might make some or all available in face to face briefings to senior U21 managers.

A call to be made for additional or alternative cases and cases or links added to site to supplement podcast.

It was noted that the seminar in this format introduced elements of benchmarking tools in a 'lite' format as we committed to do under priority 2 and in a form contextualised for effective learning. Mike suggested more substantial efforts could take place in 2011/2012.

7 Priority 4. How teaching and learning can be enhanced by regional engagement.

It was agreed that regional engagement for enhanced teaching and learning would be the topic of the second seminar. To be available by October 2011.

Potential cases

Helen Chenery explained how volunteering was part of every undergraduate's for credit learning. (all)

Med schools have good practices (vocational/professional)

Learning outcomes

- 1) Understand how regional engagement can enhance research informed teaching and learning
- 2) Able to identify the engagement contexts and characteristics that will enhance research informed T and L
- 3) Able to assess and plan for the added value in terms of enhanced T and L that engagement will bring about

Format and process to be as for seminar 1 and an effort made to identify cases.

8) research proposals –

The only possibility was identified as EU - lifelong learning – KA 1 or 4 of the transversal programme. Mike to explore.

9) Publications

Papers presented at the conference (perhaps augmented by papers from other U21 members) could be written up for potential publication in a special issue of a journal such as Compare (which is looking for special issues) or the Journal of Adult and Continuing Education.

10) Virtual seminars – see above

11) Increase network and raise profile

Activities as follows: U21 managers meeting, events – conference 2012 wherever VC's meeting is subject to funding, seminars/podcasts, web site , case studies.

It was noted that PVCs research would be in Auckland in April 2011, VCs would meet in May 2011 in Sydney??

12) Links to other research intensive institutions

Mina to contact League of European Research Universities (LERU)

Mike to contact IRUN

Susan to contact APRU

13) Next meeting

Possibly May 2011 when VCs meet, October 2011 in Berlin, again as a pre-workshop before the next Higher Education Reform International Workshop, or Auckland in late February/early March 2012.