

## Summary Report of Campus Consultations: Community Engagement and Partnerships

The Design and Discussion sessions were undertaken using a facilitated discussion framework called ORID. The ORID framework breaks complicated conversations into specific segments (Objective, Reflective, Interpretive and Decisional) which allow for participants to engage key conversation components. In many cases, additional prompting questions were used by facilitators to draw out additional insights from participants. The data presented prior to discussions was, in part, based on the information sheets that were hosted on [engageuwindsor.ca](https://engageuwindsor.ca).

Each of the four respective design and discussion sessions that were held in June of 2022 leveraged this framework. The responses below represent the strongest or more common responses as captured at those sessions. Clustering of responses to general statements did occur to assist in compiling this document. Underlined headers were the core questions that were asked at the session while bolded headers represent some of the prompting questions that were used for each section to generate discussion.

### **Objective – What does the shared data tell you objectively about the topic?**

- Data focused on neighbourhoods, anchor institutions and community engagement/partnerships
  - o Many were surprised by the low income and education attainment rate data for the neighbourhoods around the university and the broader region
    - The University needs to play a more direct role in tackling local challenges
  - o Size of student hours in the community were also a surprise. Major impact in the community
    - Co-op and service-learning match making challenges
  - o GDP Numbers on the region are large and impactful – we are an anchor institution
  - o Relationships with industry are clear from a research and student placement perspective. Unclear how they are distributed in the data – what sectors, etc.
  - o Better partnership data needed
  - o A gap in our data around social/creative engagement in the community – art, music, etc.

- Location of the University is key and strategic both within the city, region and beyond
  - o Footprints in West Windsor and Downtown need to play role and have positive impact
    - As an anchor institution what is our role tackling revitalization with those communities?
  - o Regional impact and cross border opportunities
    - Need to think of parts of the US as our region for both community, recruitment, and research engagement.
      - Great Lakes as an example shared waterways

### **What does this information tell us?**

- There are connections between the University and the community but there are also pinch points
- Need more and more effective communications, location-specific solutions that are efficient
- Need the ability to pivot to engage emerging opportunities rapidly

### **What is missing?**

- Role of equity, diversity, and inclusion in the data and the University's role in the community
- Implementation – we talk a lot about our strengths (like engaging communities) but when you dig in you find efforts are siloed, disconnected, and without overarching goals. Our implementation processes are not as effective as they could be, and it limits impact.
- Rapid data feedback loops -- some of the data that we shared was old, how do we get updated data quickly to make informed decisions?
- Information on the student pipeline – high schools and earlier students. Their parents who may be alumni. Working more effectively with alumni.

### **Reflective – How does that data make you feel?**

- Feel good that we are already engaging with some communities very well but missing key pieces due to silos and compartmentalization
  - o Where is the promotion of what we do with the community?
  - o Due to the disconnected nature how are decisions being made with the flawed data currently?
- How do we help make/shift policy to improve challenges in our region?
  - o What order do we shift internally to support this? How does this become a process rather than a set of conversations or just a goal or value.
- Previous consultation data showed communities want to have their research focused on local community issues. One suggestion from these consultations was that the university could assign a percentage of their research to local needs, or incentivize research with a local focus, or the institution could set these standards.
  - o This would have implications for hiring and who we bring in

## What do you find worrisome?

- University should be engaged in community problem solving but we can't become overburdened by the problems we tackle
- Burden of student learning in the community – match making challenges, barriers for external organizations to engage, costs of time and money to support
- Update curriculum and programs
- That for many people engagement is just a “flavour of the month” activity – doing it just because it is required, one more hoop that we might have to do get through in order to do research, etc. How do we foster serious, mutually beneficial engagement? How do we support those who want that?
- So much data and so many potential activities -- what are we going to prioritize?
- International students – where are they in our community engagement strategy?
- Need to understand the barriers as to why the community won't engage the university when I doesn't, and why it does, when it does.
- How can we engage employee groups in a positive and constructive way and make them a part of the conversation?
- There will be a story and a plan, and I'm worried about how ABB model affect implementation

## What do you find hopeful?

- Community is looking to us to lead
- This process is hopeful...the conversations we are having are honest and deeply important
- Love the word “anchor” ... if you want to be that you must put time and resources and money into it so can we live up to that.
- People have an expectation of what is coming next, need to build the feedback loops so they see change and can monitor it

## Interpretive – What does it mean?

- We need culture change around how we view communities and what roles they play in the institution
  - o We need to connect groups on campus with other groups, while also engaging community
- A need to be proactive rather than just reactive when engaging communities. Won't need to scramble if there we know what the needs pipelines are.
- Are we valuing community engagement internally – is it being measured for promotion and tenure criteria? Is staff engagement being supported and recognized?
- There are overburdened faculty who are going above and beyond to make community impact occur
- Need someone to do matchmaking and relationship building. No central coordination of community engagement or outreach.
- Good morale in the institution is needed for us to be better at critically important things and having good morale will reach to students and the wider community

## What have we learned?

- Some of the data is surprising but not necessarily game changing for many on campus
- A lot of known unknowns
- Important balance to strike between the internal soul searching we must do vs. how activities and goals fit in the current budget model.
  - o Will need to understand what it will cost to achieve success
- Data communicate that we are a “tight-knit community”, but for whom?
- Resourcing is a concern: equity, diversity and inclusion work is “being done off the side of someone’s desk” and resources should be allocated appropriately.
- We need to stop chasing everything and focus on what we are good at

## What information is needed to move this forward?

- A full community engagement plan is needed. In some cases we are talking about issues that aren’t issues for the community.
  - o Need a dedicated role to be aware of community issues and to add that perspective when institutional decisions are being made
    - Work with existing groups to strengthen relationships
    - Bring the community in general to campus to get their input – Carnegie type model
- What is the role of university programs and courses in supporting and participating in community engagement?
- Need a data management program/strategy

## Decisional – What should we do with this data? Now what?

- Stop the internal thinking - we need to start reaching out to external parties. Break the silos.
  - o How does this interact with leadership priorities?
  - o How does this interact with existing/planned research priorities?
- Actively and nimbly responding to stakeholders
- Create information databases and websites
- Involve alumni in process and decision making – more than just fundraising
- Take more steps to produce employment-ready students
  - o Develop new programming informed by community concerns and priorities
- So many focus groups and debates, but no results from these discussions. University needs to start acting and start implementing.
- Need for qualitative data to better understand the voices of communities

## What is the university’s untapped potential in community engagement and partnerships?

- Having more and more systematic conversations between university and community folks
- Location – people don’t know the richness and potential of our region – how can the university articulate and enhance that?

- Partnerships – industry, municipal, regional, community groups as well as cross border.
- Becoming an institutional leader in our region in terms of equity, diversity and inclusion and Truth and Reconciliation – starting with listening, learning, and changing as an institution.
- International students – support them building connections and networks in the community.
- Sustainability – our responsibilities, supporting communities' goals, helping industry adapt.

### **What are key strategic directions for enhancing community engagement and partnerships?**

- Allocating resources to ensure, coordinate, and track community engagement
  - o Office/Hub of engagement
- Create an increasingly service- and partner-focused mentality in relation to communities Becoming more efficient in order to take on additional tasks and challenges, or to enhance the impact of existing efforts.
- Enhancing community engagement and partnership development to support student learning and research opportunities that benefit communities – ensure these opportunities are relevant and impactful in the community.