



# PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY



## Vision

Public Engagement is deeply embedded into the philosophy of the University of Hertfordshire and essential to our vision to transform lives and power potential. Central to our vision is offering opportunity, embracing flexibility and building community.

Grounded in our civic mission, we foster communities of learning, exploration and knowledge, that celebrate diversity and share our passions and expertise. It is through our engagement practices that we co-create an environment that is connected locally and globally, with a culture that is inclusive, ethical and inquisitive.

By collaborating and learning from our communities, we provide meaningful opportunities with positive mutual benefits.

## Purpose

This Public Engagement Strategy compliments our Research Strategy and forthcoming Knowledge Exchange Strategy, setting out how we work with our communities locally, regionally and globally. Furthermore, our approach to public engagement is underpinned by our 2020 - 2025 vision and strategic pillars of activity.

We are embedding an evaluative approach within our public engagement activity and welcome feedback. We shall review and update this strategy every three years through consultation with stakeholders and the wider community.



## Definition – Place and People

We embrace and work with the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE) definition of public engagement:

“ Public engagement describes the myriad of ways in which the activity and benefits of higher education and research can be shared with the public. Engagement is by definition a two-way process, involving interaction and listening, with the goal of generating mutual benefit. ”

NCCPE, 2021

The NCCPE definition reflects and encompasses the broad range of public engagement activity we undertake. Further to this, we have adopted an inclusive approach to public engagement in recognition of our diverse university community.

While the University’s reach and impact are at an international level, as a civic university the majority of our public engagement activity is place-based, meaning it is within the region to deliver truly impactful benefits to those living, working and learning within the area. As such, we define our primary communities as those people, partnerships, businesses and organisations within the local area.



# Drivers

Public Engagement is highly valued by our students and staff, and deeply embedded in our philosophy and practice at Herts. From our roots as a Polytechnic to the diverse, entrepreneurial University we now are, our actions and achievements, including our recognition as a University Enterprise Zone, are testament to our commitment in this space and our endeavours as an anchor institution within the region. Combined, our public engagement efforts drive us to achieve better outcomes and greater impact across our education, research, and knowledge exchange, which in turn strengthens our community partnerships and the transformative benefits we can provide individuals.

The NCCPE representation of the 'engaged university' summarises the multi-dimensional approach we take to deliver our public engagement strategy.

## The engaged university

### 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

### Knowledge exchange

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

# Herts approach and goals

Our public engagement approach and goals are based on our four strategic pillars of activity which shape our work to 2025:

- Education and student experience
- Research
- Enterprise
- Global impact





## Education and student experience

Deliver high-quality and distinctive education that transforms lives by providing opportunities to develop students' skills for life, working in partnership with our student community and delivering flexible education with clear career pathways

### Goal 1

Staff, students and stakeholders are supported, encouraged and recognised for their public engagement work.

#### We will achieve this by:

- Identifying staff across the institution who will advocate for public engagement.
- Establishing a community of practice to share best practice, resources, and make recommendations for action.
- Providing public engagement training to ensure up-to-date skills, knowledge and resources to deliver excellent outcomes and impacts.
- Identifying and signposting public engagement activities for students within the Go Herts award.
- Promoting our Community Contribution and Business Impact Vice Chancellors' awards to students, staff and stakeholders to raise the profile of public engagement and its impact.
- Building additional capacity for public engagement and recognise this work in the recruitment, appraisal, workload and progression processes.



## Research

Carry out research that transforms lives, addressing fundamental global and societal challenges by offering research opportunities for staff and students, engaging the community in impactful research and adopting flexibly to research partnerships

### Goal 2

Our public engagement is recognised as outstanding in the region for its collaborative approach and societal impact.

#### We will achieve this by:

- Providing resources that embed evaluation and critical reflection into our public engagement activity, including establishing change mechanisms that inform our work.
- Providing public engagement training within our Research Development Programme and central professional and personal development portfolio.
- Showcasing examples of impactful public engagement from knowledge exchange and research that is accessible, visible, and meaningful to our stakeholders.
- Ensuring public engagement measures are included in early stages of research development.
- Identifying and supporting grant applications for public engagement activity.



## Enterprise

Create transformative benefits for the economy and our communities through world-class expertise in business, innovation and skills by providing opportunities for students and graduates to pursue entrepreneurship, and by welcoming businesses to our community in the University Enterprise Zone

### Goal 3

To ensure our people, partners, businesses and organisations within the local area benefit from the impacts of our enterprise expertise, campus facilities and spaces.

#### We will achieve this by:

- Involving stakeholders in the design and delivery of knowledge exchange initiatives to ensure the widest possible benefits to our student and business communities.
- Creating collaborative and engaging spaces on campus for external communities to co-work and co-create public engagement activities.
- Ensuring our public engagement work meet local and regional priorities and is ethical and environmentally responsible.
- Regularly communicating and consulting with internal and external stakeholders on our public engagement activities and outcomes.



## Global engagement

Be a globally engaged university, transforming lives by providing international opportunities for staff and students and building a global community on our campus

### Goal 4

Nurture a philosophy that recognises our diverse local and global communities to ensure unified and impactful public engagement.

#### We will achieve this by:

- Implementing an effective mechanism for identifying, analysing and understanding 'our public', including those that are yet to engage with us.
- Undertaking stakeholder consultation to identify enabling factors that drive participation.
- Promoting relevant opportunities that foster a global sense of community on campus and within the county.
- Welcoming and listening to feedback on our public engagement activities.
- Providing resources that support public engagement in different contexts and settings.

# on and business work together ss, and equality of apprenticeship recruitment?

- Key messages -
- Activities in pro



**University of Hertfordshire**

Hatfield, UK  
AL10 9AB

+44 (0)1707 284000  
herts.ac.uk

 /uniofherts  
 @UniofHerts  
 @UniofHerts