# How do academics extend their knowledge to the benefit of external social partners?

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# Introduction: mapping patterns in diverse universities

Community engagement promoted in national policy alongside teaching and learning

➢ Conceptual confusion, debate and contestation within and between universities

➢ framework and empirical basis to understand the complexity and diversity of current 'engaged' academic practice

➢ mapping 'community engagement', drawing on an empirical analysis of patterns of interaction in five universities representing distinct institutional types, through an integrated analysis of survey of individual academic practice, and case study data of institutional facilitation

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# Scholarship for direct benefit of external audiences

**ENGAGED/
RESPONSIVE**

**Not ENGAGED/
Not RESPONSIVE**

- Teaching
- Service
- Research
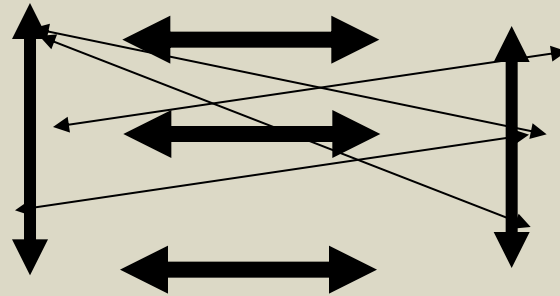
- Teaching
- Service
- Research

**(adapted from Michigan State Univ)**

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# Academic interaction with social partners

Investigating the contribution of universities to economic and social development

**"How do you extend your academic scholarship to the benefit of external social partners?"**

- Social partners
- Types of relationship
- Channels of interaction
- Outputs
- Outcomes and benefits
- Challenges and constraints
- Those who do not interact – why not?
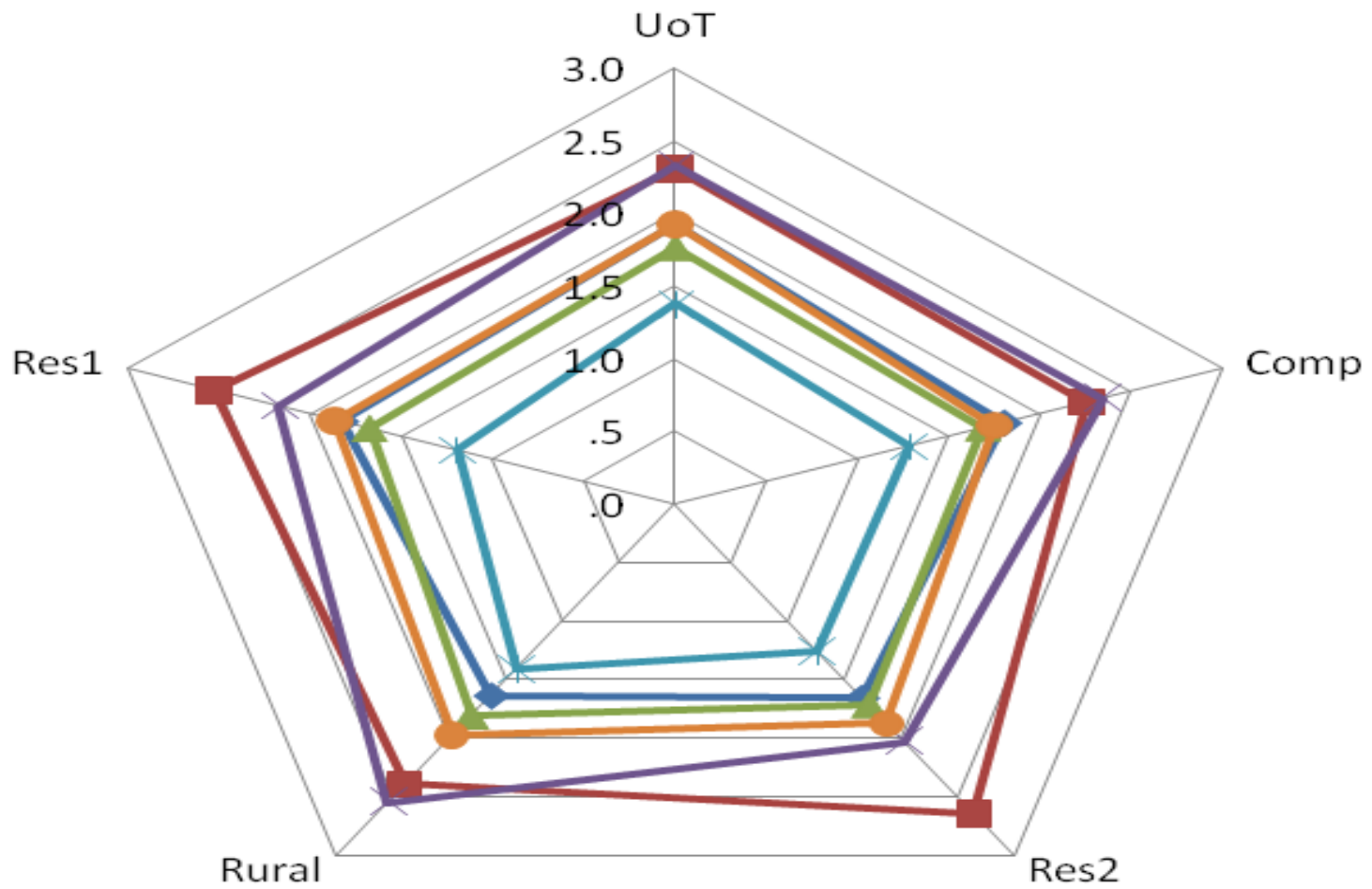- *(adaptation of RoKS survey of firms and universities)*

**Survey of 2 000 academics in 5 distinct types of university**

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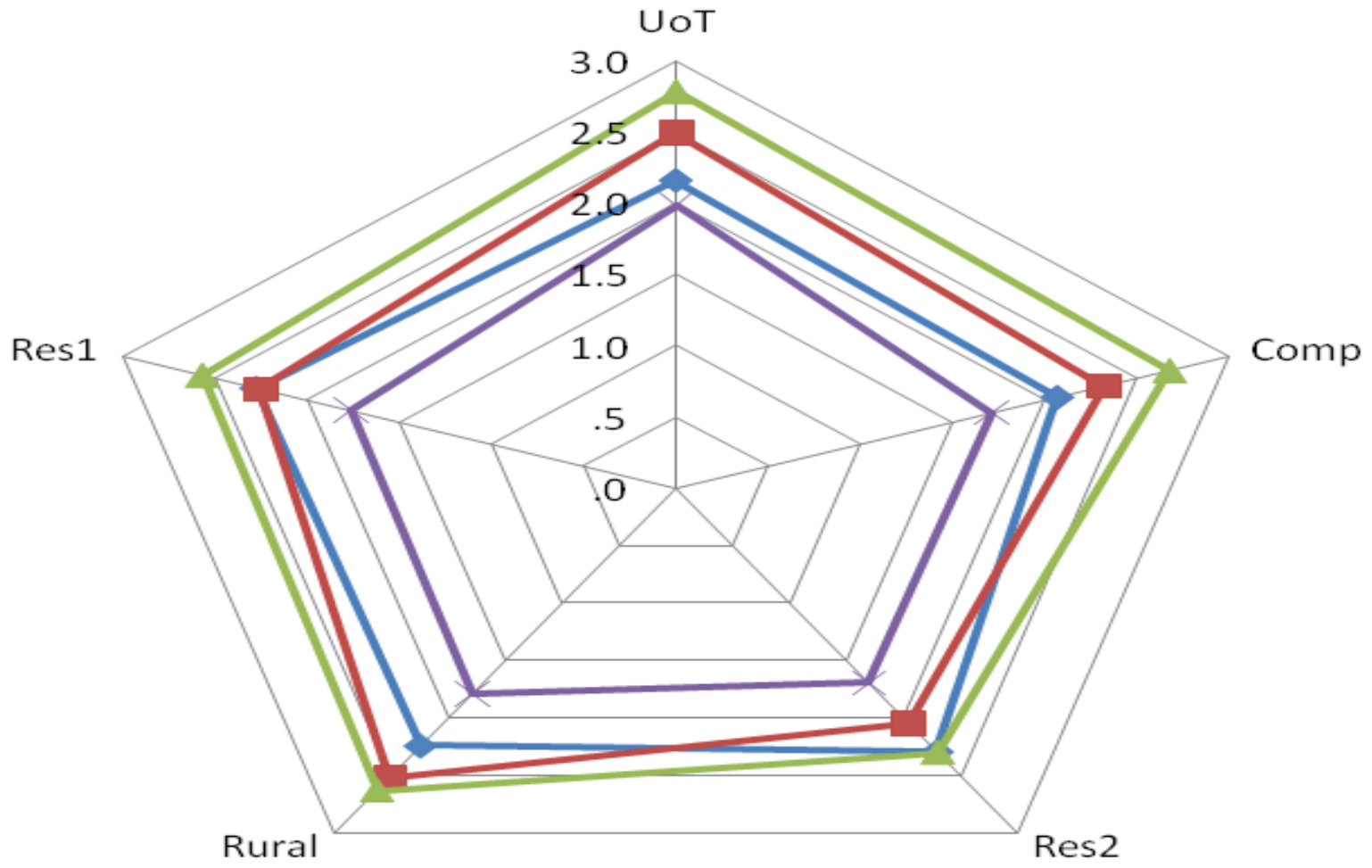
# Methodology: complexity and variety of patterns?

➢ Main types of institutions: 2 research, 1 comprehensive, 1 U of Technology and 1 rural university

➢ CATI tool: short telephonic interviews yielded 62% return

➢ Analysis of large sample :

    ➢ Frequency: weighted average

    ➢ Principal component analysis - identify patterns of partners, relationships, channels and outcomes

    ➢ correlation to identify coexisting patterns of partners with types of relationship and channels of interaction

➢ Qualititative investigation of conceptualisations of engagement, policy, structures and mechanisms to promote interaction: interviews with institutional leaders and managers, analysis of institutional documents /data

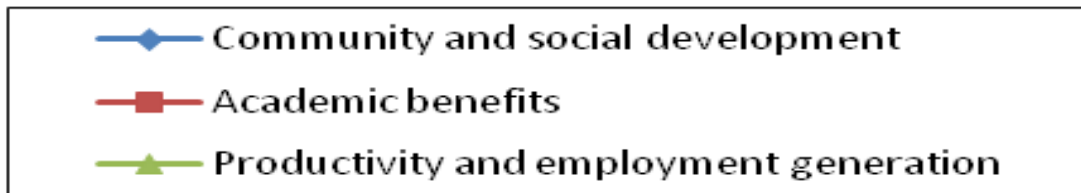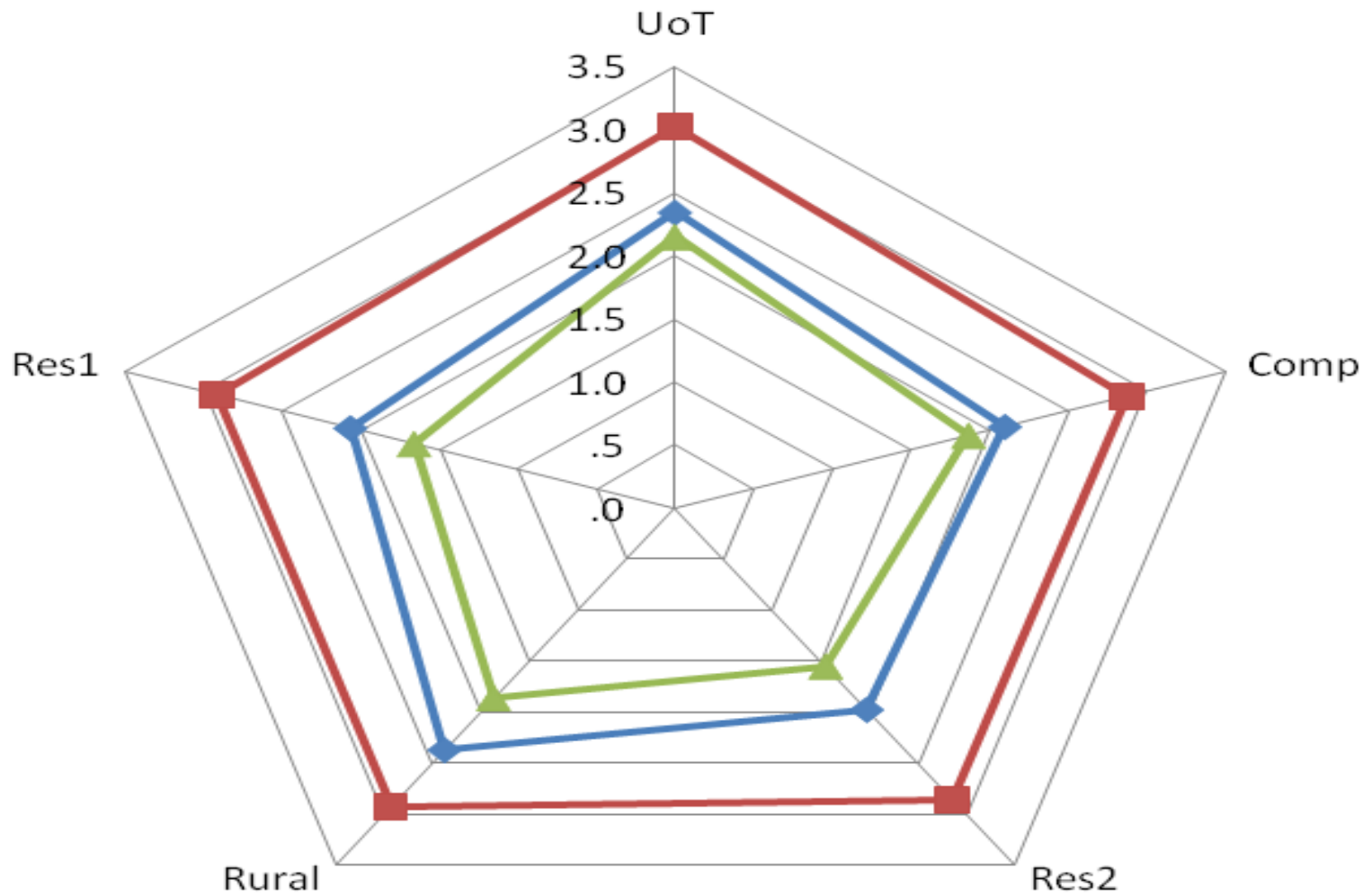# 81% engage BUT varying scales of frequency and networks

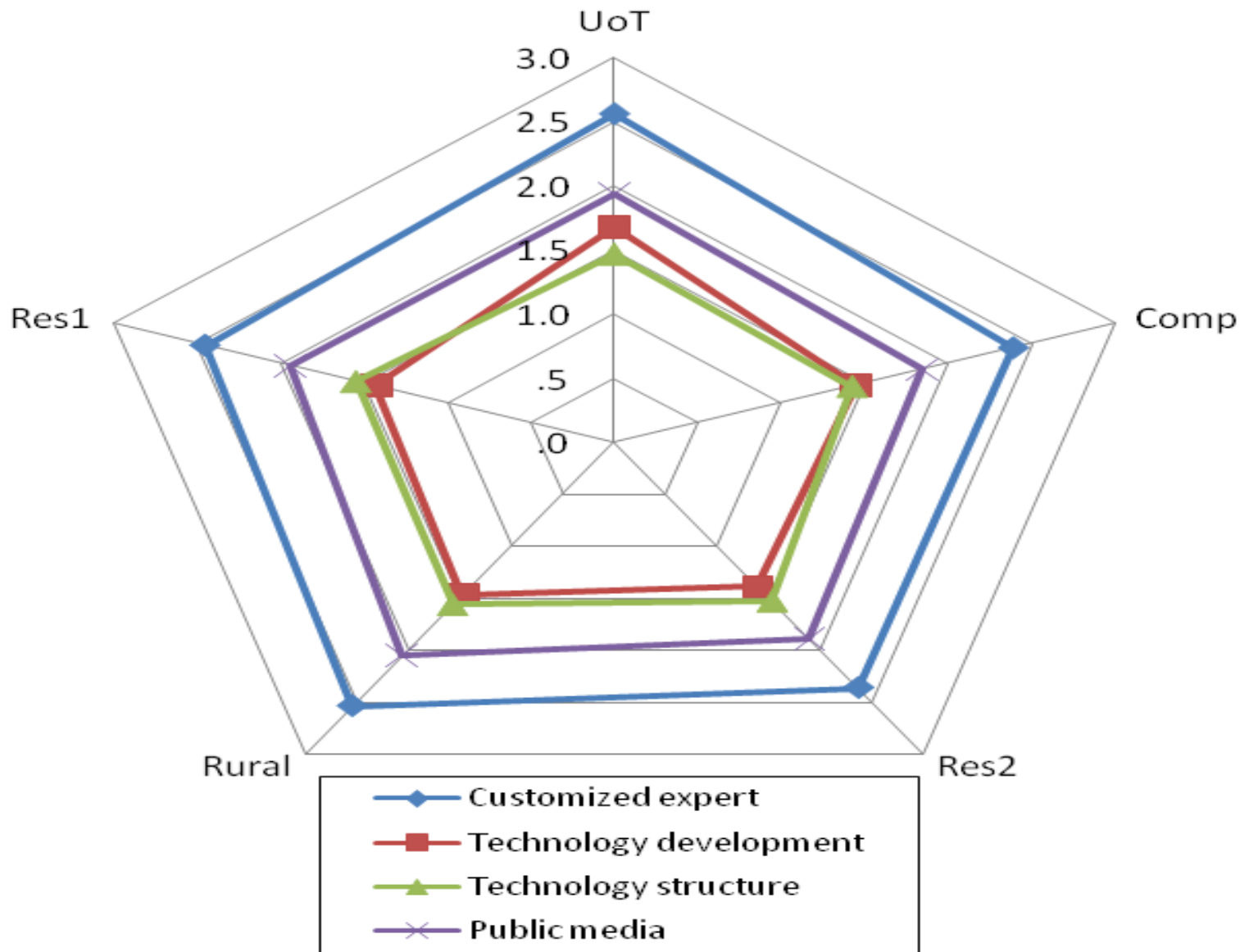| | Research university 1 | Research university 2 | Comprehen-sive university | Rural university | University of Technology |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| No Engagement | 24% | 7% | 21% | 14% | 26% |
| On isolated scale | 34% | 38% | 38% | 40% | 17% |
| Moderate scale with a single partner | 28% | 33% | 23% | 24% | 21% |
| Moderate scale with two or more partners | 14% | 23% | 18% | 22% | 37% |
| Number of academics in sample | 738 | 442 | 343 | 274 | 462 |
| Number of academics in institution | 1 186 | 716 | 563 | 290 | 722 |

**Nature of partners**

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**Types of relationship**

**Channels of interaction**

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| | Concept | Typology | Institutional debate and contestation |
|---|---|---|---|
| Research university 1 | Community engagement | Curricular community engagement<br>Non-curricular community engagement<br>Research-related community engagement<br>Outreach<br>Social development and empowerment | Curricular programmes seen as more valuable vs any exposure of students to (impoverished, black) communities is valuable.<br>'One way' philanthropy and charity vs Mutual benefit and mutual exchange<br>Engagement should include professional academic service |
| Research university 2 | Social responsiveness | Socially engaged service and learning Socially engaged research<br>Socially engaged teaching and research<br>Civic engagement | Responsiveness promotes social justice, the public good and addresses inequality<br>All our work is responsive vs socially engaged academic scholarship |
| University of technology | Community engagement and work integrated learning | Work Integrated Learning<br>Cooperative education<br>Service learning<br>Civic Engagement<br>Community outreach<br>Volunteerism | Community engagement focuses on teaching and learning activities only<br>Old notion of 'cooperative education' repackaged as work integrated learning with little paradigm shift vs new sophisticated conceptualisations of work integrated learning |
| Comprehensive university | Engagement | Engagement through outreach and community service<br>Engagement through professional/ discipline based service provision<br>Engagement through teaching and learning<br>Engagement through research and scholarship | Engagement with local and regional development<br>Narrow definition of community engagement vs broad definition of engagement with firms and society |
| Rural university | Community engagement | Volunteerism<br>Community outreach<br>Internships<br>Cooperative education<br>Service learning | Conceptual framework not suited to the specific demands faced by the institution<br>Community development and service as philanthropy vs community exchange as mutual exchange and partnership |

# Mapping the landscape

1. Awareness of and commitment to engagement
2. Conceptual confusion and contestation
3. Absence of concept of engaged scholarship: core academic activities reported as engaged activities
4. Engagement oriented to teaching and learning or to outreach and service
5. Very little activity oriented to innovation and technology
6. Prevalence of academic partners but absence of networks reflects weak knowledge flows across HE
7. Pattern in each university complex and messy, diverse knowledge fields, cannot be easily and neatly described
8. Clear institutional differences, associated with strategic challenges and intersecting with historical trajectories

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# Institutional patterns

Characterised by strongest trend of more active and frequent engagement:

1) A community service, teaching-oriented pattern *(research university 1)*

2) A socially responsive, research and teaching oriented pattern *(research university 2)*

3) A teaching-oriented community engagement with a research-oriented firm engagement pattern *(comprehensive university)*

4) A development-oriented service pattern *(Rural university)*

5) A firm and user teaching- and research-oriented pattern *(university of technology)*

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# A COMMON SET OF INSTITUTIONAL POLICY, STRUCTURES AND MECHANISMS

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| | Res 1 | Res 2 | Comp | UoT | Rural |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Formal policy on 'engagement'** | | | | | |
| Approved by Senate and internal structures | 2010 | 2008 | 2011 | 2010 | 2008 |
| Aligned with strategic plan | | X | X | X | X |
| **Senior manager responsible (DVC)** | X | X | X | X | X |
| **Senate committee** | X | X | X | X | X |
| Deans as representatives | X | | X | | |
| Champions as representatives | | | | X | |
| Champions as members | | X | | | X |
| **Functional unit** | X | X | X | X | X |
| Very small | | X | X | | X |
| Small | X | | | X | |
| Reporting to DVC | X | | X | X | X |
| Reporting to other structure | X | | | | |
| **Faculty committees** | X | | | X | |
| **Stakeholder forum** | X | X | | | X |
| **'Entities' as external interface mechanisms** | | | X | X | X |
| **Alignment with** | | | | | |
| Innovation structures | | | | | |
| Research structures | | X | | | |
| Teaching and learning structures | X | | | X | |

| Funding | X | | | X | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Promotion policy** | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? |
| **Performance reward policy** | ? | ? | ? | ? | ? |
| **Advocacy mechanisms** | | | | | |
| **Showcase events** | X | X | X | X | X |
| **Showcase publications** | | X | | | X |
| **Annual awards for good practice** | | X | | | |
| **International networks** | X | X | | X | X |
| **Database to monitor** | | X | | | X |
| **Regional development networks** | | | | | |
| **Formal insertion in provincial and city government** | | X | | X | |
| **Dedicated township campus** | X | | | | X |
| **Physical local interfaces** | | X | | | X |

# Allows for strategic and conceptual insights:

⇒ Comprehensive mapping of *existing patterns* of interaction **within** distinct institutional types and substantive conditions **across** HE system, relative to institutional and national policy intent and global trends

⇒ Inform policy, strategic intervention and capability building across national system of innovation, and within universities

# THANK YOU

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