



Observatory PASCAL

Place Management, Social Capital and Learning Regions

PASCAL UNIVERSITIES REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT PROJECT (PURE)

PURE Briefing Paper No. 1

Project Description and Work-plan

1. Purpose of paper

This paper provides a detailed statement for participants in the Pascal PURE study of:

- what the project is intended to achieve;
- the methods to be adopted; and
- the plan of work for taking the project forward.

The paper will serve to clarify the respective roles of participating regions and universities on the one hand and PASCAL on the other, and make clear what the outcomes and deliverables from the project will be.

2. The PURE Project

2.1 Background

In 2004 OECD conducted a comparative study of how issues relating to higher education institutions and their engagement in regional development were addressed. This thematic review project 'Supporting the contribution of HEIs to regional development' involved 14 regions across 12 countries. The final synthesis report from the project was published in 2007, and a monograph, *Higher Education and the Regions: Globally Competitive, Locally Engaged*, was launched at a conference in Valencia that year.

The study was generally well received, but new issues arise both globally and in local regions, and it is apparent that there remain important questions about how different universities engage with different regions in the face of changing development needs. In responding to these needs, PASCAL, through the PURE study, will seek to update and build on the work for the benefit of participants, both in the original OECD study and in newly involved regions.

The PURE study is free-standing and has no connection with any additional work which might be undertaken by OECD to extend its previous work. However, OECD will be kept informed of the outcomes from the Pascal PURE project. Similarly, Pascal will maintain links with the European Union and relevant networks in other parts of the world.

2.2 Aims and Objectives

The PURE study will make a contribution in two main respects.

The first is to learn more about substantive aspects of regional development and the contribution universities can make to these. Examples of these substantive aspects of regional development may include for example supporting SMEs, supporting regional innovation, creative arts and industries, iconic 'mega-' or hallmark events, ecological sustainability, social inclusion and 'short-cycle' higher education.

The second is more about processes, and is concerned with how both regions and universities are managed and engage. Our analysis will take into account the range of sometimes competing

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missions that universities have, and the differing national policy contexts in which regions and universities find themselves.

2.3 Research questions

PURE is descriptive, analytical and applied. It will focus on several key questions as set out below. However, it should be emphasised that, consistent with the collaborative, interactive and bespoke approach taken in the design (see below), there is significant scope for the further development of the questions to be addressed in the project both overall and especially locally in specific participating regions.

The core questions to be addressed are essentially policy driven. They are:

- Within universities, how is the 'third mission' (i.e. engagements with community and society beyond teaching and research) being developed and implemented?
- In what ways is the globalisation of the economy changing regional economic, social, environmental and cultural policies? What are the implications for university regional engagement activities?
- What role is national and regional policy on the third mission of universities playing in overcoming barriers to university regional engagement activities?
- To what extent and in what ways are national and regional policies on sustainable development, the implementation of lifelong learning, and on innovation and research policy having an impact on university regional engagement activities?
- To what extent and in what ways is regional (and national) governance and administrative behaviour having an impact on university regional engagement activities?

These questions will be addressed in such a way as to allow both regions and universities to:

- work in clusters with other regions which have similar circumstances and share similar specific interests;
- identify barriers to successful partnership and the best means to overcome them;
- benchmark their activities and performance with other regions;
- provide tested metrics and templates for impact evaluation, including the 'softer' social, cultural and sustainability dimensions of engagement.

3. Project Design and methods

3.1 Principles informing the design

The study will have a 'core plus options' design. There are elements, which are common to all PURE participants, and in which they are expected to take an active part. Core elements include agreeing the basis for regional comparisons, assessing the rigour and robustness of available measurement instruments, providing guidance on the application of analytical tools, contributing to a generic mapping of engagement and identification of priority areas of interest for each region. These common elements of the project will be supplemented by other optional elements, which are of particular priority interest to a region, and these represent the specificity of each contract. Options are likely to involve clusters of regions concentrating on particular priority aspects of cultural, environmental, economic or social engagement. The particular combination of elements will be negotiated at the time of contracting, in order to produce a bespoke programme tailored to regional needs.

A second fundamental aspect of the design relates to the intention to promote within it collaborative and participant driven interactive learning, facilitated but not directed from a strong and informed central project management team. The core analysis and the steering group provide a structure, but



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the collaborative elements around shared priorities will allow time for dialogue and inter-regional peer learning. This will distinguish the project from more familiar centralised spokes-of-a-wheel approaches.

Thirdly, the PURE study will develop robust methods of impact assessment, making efficient use of data, rather than relying on regional self-evaluation and peer review.

The fourth principle underlying the design is to provide essentially practical outcomes and clear recommendations for action by actors at regional level. Where implications for national governments are apparent in the course of analysis these will be identified, but will not form the core output. The project is designed so that direct benefit will accrue to participating regions and institutions in terms of better local understanding and action, and at a modest cost, thereby ensuring excellent value for the time and money invested by regions.

Methodology

The study will employ a multi-method methodology which will include a review of recent work by OECD and others on regional engagement, assessment of emerging 'impact' measurement instruments, data collection, analysis and benchmarking using applications of preferred impact assessment instruments, expert review and interactive collaborative workshops.

The study will proceed in stages based on work by the project team, participating regions and major working steps at regular PURE workshops. The significant development in the PURE methodology from what has gone before lies in the recognition of the need for a better basis for comparisons and for the assessment and application of tools and techniques which are available to provide robust comparative analysis.

Stage 1: Exploration of the basis for comparisons

This stage will be predominantly desk-based secondary analysis and critique of previous work and existing tools for understanding and measuring HEI engagement and impact.

Outcomes:

- Analysis of findings and lessons from OECD 14 study;
- Assessment of tools and techniques for the analysis of HEI engagement and for impact assessment;
- Particularly for new regions, guidance in the process of mapping regional engagement by HEIs and measurement of impact of engagement in their region, as a basis for work in stage 2;
- Guidance to structure for analysing comparability (which acknowledges appropriate contextualisation).

Stage 2: Pilot stage

This stage will use this guidance in early work with and by regions for two main purposes. These are first, to identify regional priorities as a basis for future clustering arrangements with other regions, and second, to define, assess, and where necessary, develop the data required for comparative work on engagement and impact. This will be taken forward by regions with the benefit of the first expert visit from Pascal associates.

Outcomes:

- Tested tools and techniques for engagement and impact assessment;
- Interim regional reports
- Identification of clusters of interest.



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Stage 3: Main study field phase

This stage will consist of regional fieldwork and data collection for use in application of models, and working groups of regions around particular interests. This includes a second expert visit from Pascal associates.

Outcomes:

- Regional data collection
- Regional analysis

Stage 4: Analysis, write-up and dissemination

This stage is concerned with exchange of good practice and preparation of draft reports.

Outcomes:

- Detailed regional reports
- Synthesis report
- Guidance book for guided social impact evaluation.

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4. Timeline

Date	Administration	Research	Workshop	Output
Stage 1 Sept 2008 – Jan 2009	Regions contract with PURE Project team established Regions select topic options and clusters	Review of lessons and learning from OECD 2004-7 study Tools for preliminary mapping of engagement; Review of 'impact' measurement instrument	Workshop 1 Glasgow 23/24 th September	Agreed basis for comparison Guidance for structure of comparability data and analysis Mapping of engagement (where necessary)
Stage 2 Feb – May 2009	Selection & allocation of experts to Regions	Visit 1 by expert panel to 'new' regions (and others if requested)	Workshop 2 Vancouver , May 2009 Cluster workshops as required	Tested tools & techniques for impact assessment Identification of clusters of interest
Stage 3 June 2009 –May 2010	Oversight, guidance and management of project work	Visit 2 by expert panel to regions Data collection Regional analysis	Workshop 3 Paris Dec 2009 Workshop 4 Sweden June 2010 Cluster workshops as required	Progress review Regional analysis Plans for write up of regional reports and synthesis report
Stage 4 June - Sept 2010		Synthesis findings and write up results	Final workshop Gaborone Sept 2010	Detailed regional reports July 2010 Synthesis report Sept 2010 Guidelines on impact assessment Planning future dissemination
Oct – Dec 2010	Promoting ancillary events and meetings Developing dissemination procedures			Wide Dissemination of project outcomes Plans for on-going network activity



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5. Outputs

- Detailed regional reports
- Synthesis Report
- Guidance book on impact assessment
- International inter-regional workshops/network
- New and ongoing development-related action in participating regions
- Arrangements for future network activity

6. Project Management

The project will be directed by an academic director, Professor Chris Duke.

There will be a Project team, based at Glasgow University, working under the supervision of Pascal Co-director Professor Mike Osborne.

The project team will provide administrative support and research assistance to the project from Sarah McCulloch and others to be confirmed.

A dedicated project website will be maintained by administrative staff in the Pascal office in RMIT under the supervision of Pascal co-director Professor Bruce Wilson.

The work in each participating region will involve accredited associates of Pascal with appropriate expertise, selected in agreement with each region. Each region's expert panel will, as far as possible, include associates with both academic and administrative/policy backgrounds.

There will be opportunities for the involvement of post-graduate research students in participating universities to undertake comparative studies.

7. Allocation of costs

The project fee payable to Pascal for each participant region will normally be 50,000 Euros. This fee will provide:

- Services of central project team;
- 2 Field visits by expert panel;
- Cost of participation of one regional representative at 2 PURE workshops;
- Data analysis;
- Detailed regional report;
- Final Project Synthesis report.

The fee will not cover the costs of local organisation and liaison arrangements, or participants' travel to event, which will be the responsibility of each region.

Reduced fees may be offered to regions outside the OECD, dependent on GDP.

8. Expectations and obligations

8.1 Expectations and Obligations of participating regions

In contracting to participate in PURE, each participating region will be expected to:

- nominate a regional organiser and project contact point(s);
- develop local arrangements for liaison between participating HEIs and regional authorities;
- participate in agreed arrangements for baseline data analysis using the agreed PURE template;
- identify topics of particular priority interest for study in the region;



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- participate in, and provide data for, PURE project workshops to address the core elements of PURE;
- participate in 'cluster' workshops to share knowledge and experience with other regions with similar topic interests;
- Provide feedback to the PURE team from draft interim and final reports to the region and the overall synthesis report.

8.2 Responsibilities and Obligations of PASCAL International Observatory

In contracting with participating regions for the PURE project, Pascal International Observatory will:

- Appoint a dedicated project team, including a Principal Investigator, Academic Director, Administrator/Research Assistant, Website Manager, Secretary and team of Experts;
- Agree a timetable to undertake activities between 1 October 2008 and 31 December 2010 within the constraints of the fixed dates in the attached project proposal;
- Prepare and agree a common template and guidance notes to identify and analyse the range of engagements of universities with the city/region. This will define core areas of work common to all regions in the project;
- Create a system for selecting additional options vital for the region, and cluster the region with other regions by these self-defined areas to exchange and share practices;
- Facilitate regional analysis of current situation using common templates;
- Collate and assess the various instruments for impact assessment and data analysis within regions;
- Conduct secondary analysis of appropriate existing regional and national datasets using agreed instruments;
- Analyse and circulate a report on main lessons and implications to be drawn from the OECD 14-regions project, including and extending beyond the Valencia report;
- Where requested by the region, organize two visits to the region by a peer expert or expert panel drawn from agreed PASCAL associates and/or other experts to assist the gathering and interrogation of qualitative data;
- Organise meetings of participating regions in Vancouver in May 2009, Paris in September 2009, Osternund in June 2010 and Gaborone in September 2010. The fee and accommodation costs for one participant per region in at least one of these meetings each calendar year will be covered by the project budget;
- Produce interim and final reports specific to the region;
- Create a mechanism for continuous bi-lateral, cluster and full project electronic interchange between regions to exchange, share, compare and analyse practices backed up by a dedicated Pascal PURE website facility;
- Create ancillary bilateral and sub-group events and exchange visits where sought by the region;
- Produce a final synthesis report for all regions involved in PURE; Plan dissemination of agreed Project Outcomes from the final synthesis report;
- Consider ongoing future network activity in 2011-12.

Jarl Bengtsson, Chair of PASCAL Board
Chris Duke, Academic Director of PURE
Mike Osborne, Co-Director of PASCAL
John Tibbitt, PASCAL CEO

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