

GuildHE responds to  
**Civil Society Consultation**  
May 2018

*Distinction and Diversity  
in Higher Education*

**GuildHE**

# Section 1: Our civil society

This section is about the big questions of what civil society is, how it is working well, and what needs to change to strengthen it further. It also explores how public trust in civil society can be strengthened, and how we can ensure a strong role and voice for civil society in developing government policy and practice.

Civil society has traditionally been seen as the action of organisations, individuals and community groups that sit between the state, the private sector and private or home life. This includes the work of charities, community groups and youth organisations. However, in recent years a growing numbers of profit-making businesses have been set up primarily to do good, such as social enterprises\* and mission-led businesses. In addition the wider businesses community and private investors are making a positive contribution to communities. For the purpose of this Strategy, we interpret civil society to be inclusive of all those outside of the public sector, who share the mission of building a stronger society and improving lives, regardless of traditional sector boundaries such as charity or private and for profit or not. This mission-based interpretation will encompass individuals, movements, groups, organisations and businesses.

**What are the strengths of civil society today? You might consider its mission and motivation, services for the public, difference to quality of life or economic and/or social impact.**

Civil society within the UK generates a massive socioeconomic impact across the UK and abroad. One of its strengths is that it comprises a broad range of individuals and organisations carrying out crucial work from micro, local activity through to international initiatives.

This diversity lends it strength. We see universities in particular as playing a fundamental role in civil society. Small and specialist universities in particular add to the diversity of their communities, supporting their local socioeconomic conditions through teaching, research and knowledge exchange. As one of our members states: "Serving the common good is one of the three pillars of the University of Winchester's mission and our long-standing commitment to delivering values-led higher education places people and communities at the heart of our activities."

Civil society has the ability to step in when the state has failed. Traditionally driven by social purposes, the majority of civil society organisations started to solve local, national or international challenges. At the same time, within the more traditional charities part of civil society, there has been an increasingly professional approach (nearly 900,000 paid staff in the charities sector) whilst volunteering remains strong at 14m volunteers (cf Cass Business School's Centre for Charity Effectiveness Charity Talk, 25 April 2018:

<https://www.cass.city.ac.uk/faculties-and-research/centres/cce/professional-development/charity-talks#>)

**How can government help to increase the impact of civil society?**

As part of our response to this question, we draw reference to the response submitted by the National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE).

In particular we reference their four key recommendations:

- *Make explicit its understanding of the **trends and contextual factors** which are*

bearing down on civil society. A robust understanding about how civil society is changing and how it is being affected by wider social and political forces is vital to ensure any planned interventions are sensitive to their context. The Civil Society Futures work to identify the seven key trends noted in the previous answer provides an excellent basis. These trends are spelt out in more detail here: <https://civilsocietyfutures.org/trends/>

- Identify a meaningful set of **outcome indicators** to describe what ‘success’ would look like. Without clear goals, it will be difficult to mobilize action and monitor success. We suggest that the Sustainable Development Goals, which the government is already committed to, could provide a meaningful way to do this. These goals include addressing poverty; health and wellbeing; quality education; reduced inequalities; sustainable cities and communities; and partnerships to achieve the goals. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/implementing-the-sustainable-development-goals/implementing-the-sustainable-development-goals>
- **Identify where change is most needed, and prioritise** these areas. Again, the Civil Society Futures inquiry provides a helpful steer. Through their consultation, they have identified four priority areas where people want to see change: focusing on **places**; on **belonging together**; on **reimagining work and purpose**; and on **organising**. Identifying focal points like these to mobilize and coordinate collective action will help towards achieving the goals. [https://civilsocietyfutures.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2018/04/CSF\\_1YearReport.pdf](https://civilsocietyfutures.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2018/04/CSF_1YearReport.pdf)
- **Invest in ‘scaffolding’** to support collective action between agencies and organisations who want to work together to these ends. We would point to Stanford’s work on ‘collective impact’ as a useful way of approaching this ([https://ssir.org/articles/entry/channeling\\_change\\_making\\_collective\\_impact\\_work](https://ssir.org/articles/entry/channeling_change_making_collective_impact_work)). This points to the fact that often attempts to realise system wide change are thwarted by the ‘silo’ mentality of different organisations. They highlight five conditions which help guarantee impact: a common agenda, shared measurement systems, mutually reinforcing activities, continuous communication, and the presence of backbone organisations, to provide brokerage and to scaffold collaborative action.

Furthermore, building upon these points, the role of the civil society strategy must be considered within the context of the Industrial Strategy. Civil society organisations, including higher education providers, have the potential to play an important role in delivery of the five foundations of the strategy (ideas; people; infrastructure; business environment; places) to address the four grand challenges (leading in AI; driving clean growth; future of mobility; ageing societies). There is a risk that as the civil society strategy is developed, it does not pay attention to the Industrial Strategy and that this results in disconnected and even competing national goals. The civil society strategy must therefore be equally cross-cutting across all parts of government.

Part of the solution lies in funding. In particular, government must consider how to replace the European Social Fund programmes when the UK leaves the EU. Access to such funding has enabled civil society (including universities) to grow their communities both economically and socially. We would reference the case of Falmouth University, who, in partnership with Cornish Councils, has had sustained success in channelling EU funding into Cornwall, reducing inequality and growing the local economy (for example, through opening new university campuses).

In addition, delivering greater impact through a civil society strategy could be found in extending Higher Education Innovation Funding (HEIF). In 2011, many smaller and specialist universities lost their HEIF which resulted in lost innovation and economic growth in their communities and fewer opportunities for their students. Government might have thought that a price worth paying in 2011. But government now has an active industrial strategy, with a strong focus on place, essential because “the UK has greater disparities in regional productivity than other European countries.” Correcting this cut will help to redress the balance and drive innovation and growth into areas of the country as intended in the Industrial Strategy.

### **How can public trust in civil society be built and maintained?**

Building and maintaining public trust is difficult, not least in light of CE pay, fundraising and safeguarding scandals.

Engagement with and through higher education can be part of the solution. In doing so, it is important to remember that a public narrative and political environment that judges the value of higher education solely on its likelihood to secure paid employment in a narrow set of ‘elite’ fields is a barrier to 1) demonstrating the broader and deeper societal contribution of the sector as a whole and 2) enhancing and expanding on our ambitions to serve the common good.

In particular, we cross-reference the NCCPE who state: “There have been a number of initiatives which seek to address how trustworthiness can be maintained between researchers and the public, with useful lessons learned. These are distilled in the report ‘What the public say: public engagement in national decision making (2010)’. The report provides 9 recommendations which could helpfully inform the Civil Society Strategy”.

### **How can civil society be supported to have a stronger role in shaping government policy now and/or in the future?**

Civil society should not be viewed as a “separate” sector and one that is “just” traditional charity. It is much broader. Government should consider the role of civil society in the Industrial Strategy, especially given the place-based focus of many civil society organisations and the Industrial Strategy. Local organisations have access to communities that the government does not.

Government should utilise its convening power at national levels, working with organisations such as Acevo, the ACF, the Small Charities Coalition, NCVO, NCP, Cass CCE but also involve organisations such as the CBI, the NCCPE, Universities UK and GuildHE within those same conversations. This will enable projects to flourish beyond traditional sector boundaries.

We interpret civil society as inclusive of all those outside of the public sector, who share the mission of building a stronger society and improving lives, regardless of traditional sector boundaries such as charity or private and for profit or not.

**What are the advantages of using this interpretation in developing this Strategy?**

**What are the disadvantages of using this interpretation in developing this Strategy?**

We believe it is beneficial that this definition potentially includes a wide range of organisations and individuals. However, we believe it is essential that the role of higher education is included within this definition.

We reference in particular the broad nature of civil society as defined in the NCVO Civil Society Almanac 2018, which includes universities as key components of civil society (see <https://data.ncvo.org.uk/a/almanac18/what-is-civil-society-4/>).

Universities have an impact on all aspects of life in Britain. The jobs that every community relies on – the teachers, doctors, dentists and nurses – are trained at university.

Universities attract valuable income and investment to all corners of the UK, including the income and jobs that students bring. Our universities also make up one of the most successful British exports, with spending international students worth £7.3 billion a year to the economy. Higher education is more inclusive than ever, giving people from any background the opportunity to go to university and transform their life prospects. (cf. Universities UK, <http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/facts-and-stats/Pages/impact-of-higher-education.aspx>)

Small and specialist universities in particular play a crucial role in wider society, with many of their missions being driven by the desire to improve lives not just for young people but society at large. For example, universities such as Chichester, Newman and St Mary's Twickenham grew from faith-inspired beginnings as teacher training colleges to serve their wider communities.

Furthermore, students whilst at university make valuable economic and social contributions to their local economies. Our recent independent economic impact study found that creative higher education institutions' students alone contribute £1.6 billion to the economy through their spending in local shops and services (EMSI, [The Economic Value of Creative Focused Universities and Colleges](#), Nov 2016). Investing in higher education institutions which aim to address skills gaps therefore also has indirect, immediate economic impacts. We would reference our response to the People section in this consultation for further examples.

## Section 2: People

This section explores how more people can be supported to play an active role in building a stronger society. This can be through social action\*, which includes anything from simple acts of neighbourliness through to charitable giving, volunteering, community asset ownership, civic engagement\* or running groups/organisations with a social mission. We want to understand the potential to enable all citizens to be fully engaged, active and with the skills and self-confidence to change the world they live in for the better - no matter what their background. When people contribute they enrich both their own lives and the lives of others. Everyone has the ability to give something if they are given the right support and opportunities.

Questions in this section relate to:

- Enabling more people to play an active role in society
- Encouraging more young people to participate in society

### Enabling more people to play an active role in society

**Reflecting on your own experience or examples you are aware of in the UK or abroad, how have people successfully taken action to improve things for themselves and their communities? Please tell us why it has worked well.**

GuildHE members pride themselves on developing 'active citizens' who are able to act on their principles and make valuable contributions to themselves, their communities, and society at home and abroad. In 2016 we released a joint report with NUS called [Active Citizenship: The role of higher education](#) - which showcases the different ways our members develop their citizens and work that students have done to improve themselves and their communities.

Some key examples from this report are:

- Ravensbourne, *Active Citizens*: The Active Citizens project is run using a partnership model between students (through the Ravensbourne Students' Union), Citizens UK and Ravensbourne. This involved setting up a Civic Action Students' Society as well as holding quarterly steering group meetings made up of key student, institutional and community stakeholders. The project's regular leadership training workshops often see up to 20 student participants, and Ravensbourne has launched listening campaigns based in the local community and leading to participation in large-scale national events, such as its contribution to the housing campaign led by Citizens UK, which culminated in a gathering of over 6,000 citizens to hold the two London mayoral candidates to account on 28 April 2016.

- Royal Agricultural University, *Sustainability Through Entrepreneurship*: The Royal Agricultural University (RAU) has a strong entrepreneurial focus and is committed to enhancing the entrepreneurship experience available to all of its students, as well as developing their skills for sustainability. At the heart of this support is the Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Programme (EEP), which encourages students to develop their business or social enterprise through the 'Think It, Try It, Launch It, Grow It' process. The EEP saw student uptake of start-up support substantially increase from 49 students in 2013/14 to 93 in 2014/15. Further to this, over 70 professional meetings (legal, accountancy or sector specific) were held, all of which were fully booked. Twenty students also worked with an external business mentor, and nine of these went on to start up their business. Most of these businesses incorporated an environmental or social sustainability aspect.

- York St. John, *Education for Recovery*: Converge is a partnership between York St John University and the local NHS trust to provide educational opportunities to people who use mental health services. Students and staff teach the courses and support those who participate. Converge offers courses in sports and exercise, music, theatre, dance, fine art, creative writing, psychology and life coaching. There is also a choir with over 50 members and a theatre company, Out of Character. Converge contributes significantly to mental health provision through opening the University and its resources to mental health service users and providing educational opportunities. It has also increased social inclusion; Converge students say that engaging in the project promotes a sense of belonging and increased social integration.

- Newman, *Gambia – Exploring Global Citizenship Through Overseas Fieldwork*: Newman and community partners in Gambia have provided a range of collaborative projects that have enabled initial teacher education (ITE) students to undertake extended school placements in Gambia, providing teaching experiences in a range of environments. Over 500 students have taken part in study visits, which focus on identifying and reflecting upon key themes such as citizenship and sustainable development.

Our members have a range of initiatives relating to community participation which form part of their overall strategy. As referenced earlier, the University of Winchester has 'Serving the common good' as one of the three pillars of their mission and they have a long-standing commitment to delivering values-led higher education that places people and communities at the heart of their activities. This is evidenced in a number of institutional level awards and actions:

- **Social Enterprise Gold Mark** – the University is one of only a handful awarded the Gold Mark for social enterprise, which recognises outstanding socially responsible management, culture and practice.

- **United Nations Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRiME) Champion** – the University is one of only six in the UK (24 worldwide) recognised as a PRiME champion for its leadership in the field of socially responsible business education.

- **Charity or Social Enterprise of the Year Award** – Winchester sponsor this award in the annual Winchester Business Awards.

- **Inspiring Enterprise project** - Winchester partner with other public service organisations on this £725,000 initiative, which supports unemployed and economically inactive people to create and run new social enterprises.

- **Hampshire Community Bank** – Winchester University is a principal investor in this community-focused bank, which will support local businesses and direct profits back into Hampshire to benefit civil society.

**Which of the following changes are the most important in enabling more people to take action on issues that matter to them? (Please rank up to three choices in order of importance, with 1 as the most important, 2 as the second most important and 3 as the third most important)**

\_\_\_\_\_ Developing more opportunities for individuals to get involved

\_\_\_\_\_ Give citizens more opportunities to be part of the decision-making processes on local and national issues

\_\_\_\_\_ Increasing awareness of the range of opportunities for individuals to get involved in civil society

\_\_\_\_\_ Empowering people or giving them permission so that they think that they do have a say and are able to take action

\_\_\_\_\_ Developing a better understanding of how social action\* can build the networks and relationships among people as well as the confidence and skills of the disadvantaged and disengaged

\_\_\_\_\_ Supporting employers and businesses to promote active citizenship, such as volunteering, becoming a school governor or charity trusteeship

**Are there any additional changes that would enable more people to take action on issues that matter to them?**

It is impossible to rank these options, as they all need to be available in order to deliver an effective social action strategy. However, one of the key aspects of the strategy should be around identifying who is currently not participating in civil society, and working with those communities to increase participation.

It would be interesting to unpick aspects of this ranking - for example, how do we give people permission to contribute to a better society?

Another important point should be working with higher education providers to encourage participation based on their learnt skills. Evidence from our members suggest that students are using their skills to improve their community; through creative arts, offering health-based support, or teaching - to name a few. Empowering people to participate with their talent is not only positive for communities, but also for developing their skills.

**Considering all the changes you discussed in this section, how could these be implemented now and/or in the future? You may want to think about the role of different parties, for example central and local government, charities, businesses, yourself / your organisation and others.**

Working with young people should be at the core of implementation. In a university context, working with students' unions, and other student-led initiatives such as Student Hubs and Student Minds are great ways to encourage participation, empower students, and increase opportunities for people while they are studying.

DCMS should work in partnership with other departments in order to deliver this. We would expect collaboration with the Department for Education to deliver social action strategies within schools and universities.

## Encouraging more young people to participate in society

### Youth social action

Youth social action\* including activities such as campaigning, fundraising and volunteering creates a double benefit both to young people and their communities.

Which of the following things are the most important in further growing involvement in youth social action? (Please rank up to three choices in order of importance, with 1 as the most important, 2 as the second most important and 3 as the third most important)

\_\_\_\_\_ Enabling more disadvantaged and disengaged young people to participate

\_\_\_\_\_ Integrating young people into wider social action activities bringing families and communities together

\_\_\_\_\_ Introducing young people to social action from a younger age (e.g. at primary school)

\_\_\_\_\_ Further integrating youth social action with other personal and social development activities

\_\_\_\_\_ Further building the evidence for the longer term benefits for young people of participation in social action.

\_\_\_\_\_ Offering more support to private, public and voluntary sector organisations to create sustained opportunities for youth social action

\_\_\_\_\_ Supporting young people to develop the skills and confidence they need to lead action on issues that matter to them

\_\_\_\_\_ Increasing recognition of youth social action in young people's wider journeys, for example in university or job applications

\_\_\_\_\_ Increasing recognition of the positive outcomes that young people can deliver for communities and wider society through social action

### **Are there any additional things that are important to further grow involvement in youth social action?**

As above, it was difficult to rank the options, as all are critical to shaping a civil and civic society.

Higher education providers, including universities, are excellent at providing students with the springboard to becoming active citizens. They are able to offer volunteering and other opportunities, such as participating in democratic processes. Having the ability to participate in smaller acts of volunteering, such as one-off initiatives, or the ability to vote in a society election, teaches people the principles of social action in the real world.

Later in the response, we have detailed the 'social action charter' as outlined in our Active Citizenship report. This is an important document for growing involvement in youth social action.

The NCCPE consultation response includes one of our members when highlighting contributions from the rest of the sector. Abertay was the first Scottish university to develop a set of graduate attributes in 2007, and in 2015 it undertook a fundamental review, developing a widely praised four dimensional conceptual framework, encompassing the intellectual, professional, personal and active citizenship. Each dimension has a series of qualitative descriptors. For 'Active Citizen', the Abertay Attributes state that Abertay will foster individuals to:

- deploy their skills and learning to make a real contribution to society locally, nationally and internationally
- be inclusive, globally conscientious, socially respectful and self-reflective
- maintain and continuously develop awareness of their civic, ethical and environmental responsibilities.

For more information, here is a page detailing their contribution.

<https://abertaytle.wordpress.com/2015/08/28/abertay-attributes-defining-our-values-and-distinctiveness/>

**Considering all of the things you have discussed in this section, how could these be implemented now and/or in the future? You may want to think about the role of different parties, for example central and local government, charities, businesses, education, funders, yourself / your organisation and others.**

Government support and resource for these activities would help providers deliver these programmes effectively.

It would also be useful for government to think about social action in relation to other agendas, such as mental health. Participation in social action activities can reduce risks of isolation, increase feelings of self worth, and have a positive effect on mental health and wellbeing. Given that there is a lot of concentrated effort at the moment to improve the mental health of children and young people, thinking about the civil society in the context of that agenda may help to increase the likelihood of effective partnership working, and implementing this agenda with young people at its forefront.

Reflecting on your own experience or examples you are aware of in the UK or abroad, how have disadvantaged and disengaged young people been successfully encouraged to get involved in social action\* or delivering social impact?

Universities play a critical role in encouraging active citizenship in young people, by creating a host of opportunities for them to 'get involved' in meaningful civic action.

Our Active Citizenship report highlights how higher education can promote active citizenship, and the benefits that arise from student involvement in active citizenship:

- **Students** are empowered to contribute to their communities, get involved politically and consider a wider perspective. They gain valuable employability skills, enjoy enhanced mental health, have a better connection with communities and become agents of change.
- **Institutions** benefit because a culture of active citizenship contributes to the sense that an institution has a wider role to play in society whether locally, nationally or internationally.
- **Society** benefits from engaged and community-focused members of society who contribute to the public good.

The Charter - listed here - is intended to act as a signpost highlighting the active citizenship activity that is currently underway at institutions and in students' unions, and how it can be further supported. The six pillars are intended to enable universities to reflect on the practices at their institution and to develop the students of today into the employees, employers, parents, carers, leaders and citizens of tomorrow.

### **Volunteering**

- Active citizens contribute to the community through voluntary work. Charities, societies, clubs and public bodies all rely on volunteers, and taking an active role in these organisations fosters citizenship skills that will enable graduates to contribute to public life. Higher education should play a role in supporting volunteering, ensuring that all students have the option to get involved in these opportunities and develop core skills.

### **Democratic Engagement**

- Active citizens have the skills and knowledge to participate in political life. Active citizens engage with democratic processes at a local and national level and seek to participate in ways that they think will improve society. As a formative experience, higher education has a large role to play, not only in fostering and encouraging democratic engagement, but also in appropriately questioning received wisdom and

process.

### **Environmental Sustainability**

- Active citizens of today understand that their actions affect the citizens of tomorrow. Higher education has a large role to play in developing citizens who understand the natural environment and are inclined to act sustainably. This will include supporting research designed to tackle key issues such as sustainable energy and food production, and in the cultivation of students as citizens who understand the sustainability challenges facing society.

### **Community Engagement**

- Active citizens work with their local communities to collaborate and problem solve. They contribute to the communities in which they live and work. Developing ways for students to engage effectively with the community develops the skills of citizens to operate effectively in these areas, including an understanding of the local area's tensions, politics and needs.

### **Global Citizenship**

- Active citizens understand that citizenship does not stop at home. They appreciate that actions that occur on a local level have international consequences, and they act accordingly. Higher education has a role to play in the development of students as global citizens who have the knowledge and understanding, relevant skills, and the values and attitudes to meet the demands of globalisation.

### **Reflection and Development**

- Active citizens have the capacity to self-reflect and a commitment to personal development. Active citizens reflect on their experiences and examine the lessons learned, exploring their values, strengths and weaknesses in order to translate these personal attributes into tangible assets for themselves and society.

The report also identifies the significant risk that the increasing marketisation of higher education means active citizenship and its benefits to individuals and society could be sidelined within higher education institutions. This would be detrimental because promoting active citizenship benefits students, institutions and society. We also note that higher education in the UK is less focused on active citizenship than in other countries such as the US and Singapore, where activities and awareness are more likely to be embedded in institutional life.

The report contains numerous case studies to illustrate how these different types of activity are currently being supported <https://www.guildhe.ac.uk/blog/active-citizenship-the-role-of-higher-education/>

### **Youth participation in national and local policy and services**

**Reflecting on your own experience or examples you are aware of in the UK or abroad, how have young people shaped national policy making?**

The National Union of Students (NUS) has been instrumental in influencing national policy. There are a number of examples where they, as the representative body for over 7,00,000 students, have changed government policy on issues affecting them and their members. One of the key ways GuildHE students feel that they can influence at this level is through their engagement with NUS.

NUS have also been responsible for organising voter registration drives across the country - which was particularly important for youth turnout in the previous general election.

Which of the following changes are the most important to enable young people to meaningfully engage and participate in shaping national and local policy and services? (Please rank up to three choices in order of importance, with 1 as the most important, 2 as the second most important and 3 as the third most important)

\_\_\_\_\_ Further developing best practice on methods to enable young people to participate in policy making, commissioning and decision making at a national level, for example, young commissioners groups, youth consultation mobile app, young people on decision making boards

\_\_\_\_\_ Strengthening networks between policy makers and organisations who work with young people and have expertise on how to engage them

\_\_\_\_\_ Sharing and celebrating where young people have actively helped shape national policy, for example by creating a youth participation quality mark

\_\_\_\_\_ Identifying champions in government and local authorities who can ensure young people's view and needs are reflected across all policy areas

\_\_\_\_\_ Establishing more youth advisory panels across government departments, where the agenda is set by young people

**Are there any additional changes that would enable young people to participate in national policy making?**

Working with existing networks, such as NUS and other established representative bodies, would be more effective when enabling young people to participate in national policy making. These students have a mandate for campaigning for policy change on their behalf.

Government could encourage increased student representation on national boards (such as the Office for Students board) and on regional/local boards (such as Community Councils and LEPS).

GuildHE also has a students' union network, which we would warmly welcome government to meet and consult with on issues affecting social action, education, or shaping social policy.

**Considering all the changes you discussed in this section, how could these changes be implemented now and/or in the future? You may want to think about the role of different parties, for example central and local government, charities, businesses, education, funders, yourself / your organisation and others.**

N/A

## Section 3: Partnership

This section explores the best ways to work in partnership across sectors. We are particularly interested in unlocking the full potential of the private and public sector to work with civil society, to create social good and have a positive impact across society. By working towards shared goals and pooling knowledge and resources, partnerships, old and new, can help to improve outcomes for those in need and grow or replicate solutions that work. At the same time partnerships can help realise efficiencies and unlock new, more innovative delivery models.

Questions in this section relate to:

- Working in partnership
- Youth provision
- The funding and financing environment
- New investment models
- Responsible business
- Working in partnership

**Reflecting on your own experience or examples you are aware of in the UK or abroad, how are partnerships across sectors improving outcomes or realising new potential?**

Cross-sectoral partnerships are key to improving outcomes. For example, as part of developing a civil society strategy, there is an opportunity to create top-level cross-sectoral networks in order to create co-produced research - research that has the end user firmly in mind. By bringing together talent from across sectors - government, public, business, academic and nonprofit - a potentially powerful mix of perspectives and ideas could be generated to address key societal challenges.

Higher education providers have developed expertise in working across sectors to improve outcomes and realise new potential. We reference our report "Innovation Systems and the role of small and specialist Higher Education Institutions" which highlights the work of higher education institutions in stimulating innovation and local, regional, national and international economic growth.

For example, as well as smaller projects, partnership funding allows for ambitious transformation. An example of this includes The Hive in Worcester, the UK's first joint university and public library. This was made possible by the University of Worcester and partners including Worcestershire County Council and Worcester City Council. The result is a combined facility that is open to the whole community to use.

<http://www.thehiveworcester.org/creating-the-hive.html>

Within GuildHE's Research Network (CREST), we are funding two projects that represent a mix of partnerships between universities, traditional charities and social enterprise in order to address local and industrial challenges. CREST, itself is a collaborative venture between the Heads of Research within small and specialist higher education providers, has enabled the experimental, novel and collaborative way for universities to come together and work with others to inspire positive societal change.

Which of the following factors are the most important to enable more impactful partnership working across sectors? (Please rank up to three choices in order of importance, with 1 as the most important, 2 as the second most important and 3 as the third most important)

- \_\_\_\_\_ Better knowledge of potential partners
- \_\_\_\_\_ Better understanding of the benefits of partnerships
- \_\_\_\_\_ Better knowledge of opportunities to work in partnership
- \_\_\_\_\_ Better understanding of other sectors
- \_\_\_\_\_ Greater leadership around partnership working
- \_\_\_\_\_ Ability to prove impact of partnership working
- \_\_\_\_\_ Making it easier to identify and access funding opportunities to support partnership working
- \_\_\_\_\_ A common agenda / shared vision and strategy
- \_\_\_\_\_ Shared values
- \_\_\_\_\_ Shared measurement practice
- \_\_\_\_\_ Better skills (e.g. commercial skills, collaborative commissioning practice and social value\*) and capacity (e.g. time, resource) to form partnerships

**Are there any additional factors that would enable more impactful partnerships across sectors?**

As previously mentioned, investing in 'scaffolding' to support collective action between agencies and organisations who want to work together will be essential to achieve long-term outcomes and impacts.

GuildHE would be willing to contribute to future conversations considering the development of such partnerships.

**Considering all of the factors you have discussed in this section, how could these be addressed now and/or in the future? You may want to think about the role of different parties, for example central and local government, charities, businesses, yourself / your organisation and others.**

Policy acknowledgement from across government of the importance and long term nature of partnership working would be beneficial. For example, should any funding schemes be introduced to support the delivery of the strategy they should be long term in nature and last beyond the lifecycle of one Parliament.

# The funding and financing environment

The funding and financing environment that supports the work of the voluntary and community sector has changed significantly in recent times. For example charities' income from government in the form of grants has declined, whilst contract income has increased. For some parts of civil society income from trading is playing a much greater role. Technology is also making it possible to find funding in new ways, for example crowdfunding, online fundraising platforms and tools that seek to bring together funders with projects. (Please note we have included separate questions on new investment models later in this section, such as social investment, and on public services in the 'Place' section, which covers views on public service commissioning)

**Reflecting on your own experience, or examples you are aware of in the UK or abroad, what does an effective pool of funding and financing as well as income opportunities for the voluntary and community sector look like?**

Sustaining civil society requires contributions from individuals, government, business and other partners including education institutions. These contributions are not solely monetary but also in kind; they include the provision of space and facilities, human resource and skills.

**Where is there the potential for changes to the funding and financing environment to better support the work of the voluntary and community sector, for example increasing the use of new models of funding, use of technology and/or changes to current funding practice?**

For universities especially, reconsidering the role of HEIF through the civil society lens would be useful. There is strong evidence supporting the continued investment in HEIF and we argue that even more benefit can be driven in through extending the funding to include smaller, specialist institutions.

HEIF fuels knowledge exchange and funds the majority of ways in which universities can interact with wider civil society. Knowledge exchange funding is unevenly distributed geographically. The largest share of funding goes to institutions in London, which received over £52m in 2017/18.<sup>1</sup> In contrast, the North-East, received just over £10m in total knowledge exchange funding. The two best funded regions (London and the South East) together secured more than three times as much knowledge exchange funding as the two least well funded regions (South West and North East). And this regional inequality seems to be getting worse. Between 2013/14 and 2017/18 the percentage of mainstream HEIF secured by institutions in the South West and North East has fallen.

The current method of allocating HEIF concentrates funding in particular types of institution. In brief:

- The current allocation system gives more money to institutions already spending most on knowledge exchange. By and large, that means larger, research-intensive institutions receive more from the HEIF pot;
- Larger institutions (by student numbers) tend to secure more knowledge exchange funding; and
- All but one of the institutions currently receiving over £4m in knowledge exchange funding have less than 10% of students from low participation backgrounds.

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<sup>1</sup> Data in this and subsequent paragraphs is drawn from HEFCE grant allocations, 2013/14 - 2017/18. See <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/ke/heif/>.

Adding a place-based element to HEIF along with greater acknowledgement of the importance of working with other civil society organisations would be two potential ways to positively modify this funding stream.

The healthy innovation system needed to support the development of civil society requires a diversity of higher education institutions contributing in different ways to build the right environment. It would be a missed opportunity to simply continue funding institutions that already receive HEIF to carry out 'more of the same'.

Which of the following factors are the most important in strengthening the funding and financing environment in the future? (Please rank up to three choices in order of importance, with 1 as the most important, 2 as the second most important and 3 as the third most important)

- \_\_\_\_\_ Making it easier to bring together civil society with potential funders
- \_\_\_\_\_ More skills training for civil society
- \_\_\_\_\_ Raising awareness of new funding models
- \_\_\_\_\_ Stronger collaboration between funders
- \_\_\_\_\_ Improved funding practices by funders
- \_\_\_\_\_ Increased use of technology to support fundraising

**Are there any additional changes that would improve the funding and financing environment for the voluntary and community sector?**

N/A

**Considering all the changes you discussed in this section, how could these changes be implemented now and/or in the future? You may want to think about the role of different parties, for example central and local government, independent funders, charities, businesses, yourself / your organisation and others.**

The fundamental point that needs to be made is that, if universities are to play an active role in their communities, this work will need to be funded. Investing in building relationships; in providing accessible routes for people outside the sector to engage with staff and students; and providing development funding to incubate new projects – all of these things require investment. We are encouraged that the newly formed UK Research and Innovation is committed to developing new approaches to support partnership working (cf. the NCCPE response to this consultation).

# New investment models

Over recent years, a range of new and innovative models have developed to fund investment into addressing social challenges. These have included the rise of venture philanthropy\*, social investment, and the development of social enterprises\* and mission-led businesses that are able to fund their activities through revenue generation. Increasingly, there has been growing interest in social impact in the mainstream financial services industry.

**Reflecting on your own experience or examples you are aware of in the UK or abroad, how are new investment models unlocking new potential and partnerships?**

Universities use innovative funding models in partnership with their communities and government to enable them to carry out activities which would be otherwise impossible. An example is the CUPI - Community University Partnerships Initiative <https://www.publicengagement.ac.uk/nccpe-projects-and-services/nccpe-projects/community-university-partnership-initiative>

This is funded by in part by the AHRC (Arts and Humanities Research Council).

**Where is there the greatest potential for the future development of investment models for civil society?**

Due to the different initiatives and routes to funding, many potential partners may not be aware of the ways to effectively engage with civil society. A fund specifically built for civil society projects could focus attention on the Government's ambitions for civil society and encourage new partnerships.

Which of the following factors are the most important in enabling the growth of new investment models in the future? (Please rank up to three choices in order of importance, with 1 as the most important, 2 as the second most important and 3 as the third most important)

- The scaling of social impact bonds\*
- Knowledge of social impact investment\* as a form of finance
- Understanding of how to make / receive a social impact investment
- Identifying suitable opportunities for social impact investment
- Establishing a formal framework, such as the UN Sustainable Development Goals, to analyse social impact

Are there any additional factors that could enable new investment models to grow in the future?

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Considering all the factors you discussed in this section, how could these factors be addressed now and in the future? You may want to think about the role of different parties,

for example central and local government, charities, businesses, yourself / your organisation and others.

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## Responsible business

Across the UK, a growing number of businesses are adopting more responsible and purposeful business models, looking to meet consumers' and workers' changing expectations of the social contribution of business. From social enterprises\* to corporates, businesses are moving beyond a focus on community affairs to placing positive social and environmental impact at the core of their operations. The Prime Minister has expressed her support for business to make a greater positive social contribution, and government has a range of activity underway on this. There is action to encourage wider business-civil partnering to tackle social challenges and to back the next generation of purposeful businesses, plus follow up to the Green Paper on corporate governance, including the Financial Reporting Council's work on the UK's Corporate Governance and Stewardship Codes.

**Reflecting on your own experience or examples you are aware of in the UK or abroad, how are businesses unlocking new partnerships and potential within civil society? Please tell us how this is different to other types of organisations.**

Various partnership opportunities open to businesses enable them to engage with civil society. The established UK-wide Knowledge Transfer Partnership programme allows businesses (often SMEs) to work together with universities on projects that provide societal and other benefits. Universities also use research funding and the HEIF (Higher Education Innovation Fund) to work collaboratively with industry, but this fund is not open to all higher education providers and could be broadened to increase impact.

Which of the following factors are the most important in enabling more businesses to have a social purpose or positively increase their social impact in the future? (Please rank up to three choices in order of importance, with 1 as the most important, 2 as the second most important and 3 as the third most important)

- \_\_\_\_\_ Celebration of best practice
- \_\_\_\_\_ The legal and regulatory framework for businesses
- \_\_\_\_\_ Consideration of the UN Sustainable Development Goals
- \_\_\_\_\_ Improved data on the "business case" for social purpose
- \_\_\_\_\_ The legal and regulatory framework for investors
- \_\_\_\_\_ Advice or tools to help businesses adopt, show and set value on social purpose
- \_\_\_\_\_ Increasing demand for products, services, businesses that have a social purpose or a positive social impact

Are there any additional factors that could enable more businesses to have a social purpose in the future?

N/A

Considering all the factors you have discussed in this section, how could these factors be addressed now and/or in the future? You may want to think about the role of different parties, for example central and local government, charities, businesses, yourself / your organisation and others.

N/A

## Section 4: Place

This section explores how to enable more people, service providers, voluntary and community organisations, businesses, including social enterprises\*, and public sector institutions to work together to make the places they care about brilliant places to live and work in. In particular we are interested in exploring: how to break down barriers in our communities and build a common sense of shared identity, belonging and purpose how to build strong local public services that respond to the needs of communities and draw on the talents of diverse people and organisations from across different sectors By focusing on the place as a starting point communities are better able to take charge of their own futures, speak for themselves and build social capital. This is about local and central government and other institutions responsibly moving from a 'top down' to a more 'bottom up' way of doing things - devolving power and decision making to local people, without stepping away entirely and leaving communities to it without any support.

Questions relate to:

- Devolution/localism
- Public services
- Public service mutuals

### Devolution/localism

**Reflecting on your own experience or examples in the UK or abroad, how have local people, businesses, voluntary and community organisations, and decision makers worked together successfully to break down barriers in our communities and build a common sense of shared identity, belonging and purpose?**

We would point out that universities could play the crucial role here in addressing local needs. Furthermore, small and specialist universities can lead on the development of specialist skills required by the different parts of civil society that operate in their localities. They have the power to act as facilitators and connectors and can use their capital investment to support their local communities through developing science/ technology parks as Abertay has successfully done with the gaming industry in Dundee. Universities can also take over old council building and breath new life into them, turning them into centres of excellence for town and gown alike. Norwich University of the Arts provides a good example of this, along with their positive working relationship with the local LEP.

We'd also point to good practice that is carried out by CVS style organisations. Given that the majority of their funding comes from local authorities, they can be convenors of many different groups for their local areas. For example, Community Southwark is developing Southwark Giving in collaboration with corporations and others based in the area to enable anyone to give time, skills and/or money in collaboration with others to help make a difference to people's lives.

Citizens UK is also an organisation worth exploring. Their approach to community activism brings together community leaders, often including universities and businesses, to work with those in power. Initiatives such as the Living Wage grew out of activity coordinated by Citizens UK.

Building upon such an initiatives, there is the opportunity to develop them further in the Civil Society strategy in light of the Industrial Strategy. The Industrial Strategy aims to develop local industrial strategies that will primarily be lead by LEPs. For these local strategies to develop fully, the involvement of civil society organisations will be essential. Government should actively encourage local industrial strategy leaders to include civil society organisations in the process from the start in order to enable communities to thrive.

What are the most important changes that need to be made to enable more people to work together locally to break down barriers and build a common sense of shared identity, belonging and purpose in general? (Please rank up to three choices in order of importance, with 1 as the most important, 2 as the second most important and 3 as the third most important)

- \_\_\_\_\_ Communities having a greater ability to set their own priorities
- \_\_\_\_\_ Communities being more aware of issues facing them collectively
- \_\_\_\_\_ Workers in local public services taking greater control over how they operate
- \_\_\_\_\_ People being more aware of physical assets, resources, skills and relevant organisations the community holds
- \_\_\_\_\_ Communities having more or better support on how to mobilise themselves and take action
- \_\_\_\_\_ Greater understanding of community shares
- \_\_\_\_\_ Institutions and organisations delivering public services involving communities in decision-making
- \_\_\_\_\_ Institutions devolving more power to their local communities
- \_\_\_\_\_ People having better skills, and access to learning opportunities to obtain the skills needed to mobilise themselves
- \_\_\_\_\_ More opportunity for diverse groups of local people to meet to discuss local issues and what they think they could do to improve things

**Are there any additional changes that would enable more people working together to break down barriers in our communities and build a common sense of shared identity, belonging and purpose?**

Government could play a role in convening initial conversations between different local initiatives. Funding may needed to enable different groups of people to come together. Some of our ideas are addressed earlier in this consultation.

There could be a role for sector liaison groups - whether they be an extension of LEPs, strategic authorities or something different. Some LEPs can be hard to access for small businesses and other organisations (eg charities). Guidance/ best practice toolkits could be developed centrally to support LEPs and local authorities to connect with a broad range of businesses and organisations.

Considering all the changes you discussed in this section, how could these changes be addressed now and/or in the future? You may want to think about the role of different parties, for example central and local government, charities, businesses, yourself / your organisation and others.

N/A

## Public services

Civil society is involved in our public services in a variety of ways - from delivering public services with or on behalf of public sector organisations, investing in solutions to complex public service problems, providing supplementary preventative services or when people have a say in shaping the type of services that they receive. Through its participation in public services, civil society is well-placed to create social value\*, i.e. social, economic and environmental benefits to society.

Reflecting on your own experience or examples you are aware of in the UK or abroad, how have local public services successfully responded to the needs of communities?

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What are the most important changes needed to enable local public services to respond further to the needs of communities? (Please rank up to three choices in order of importance, with 1 as the most important, 2 as the second most important and 3 as the third most important)

- People having more opportunities to shape and/or run the public services they use
- Service providers delivering more public services that have been designed and produced with their users
- Drawing on wider civil society networks to support services
- Changes to commissioning practices
- Greater understanding of how to demonstrate and measure social value\*

Are there any additional changes that would enable local public services to respond further to the needs of communities?

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Considering all the changes you discussed in this section, how could these changes be implemented now and/or in the future? You may want to think about the role of different parties, for example central and local government, other public sector bodies, charities, businesses, yourself / your organisation and others.

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## Public service mutual

Public service mutuals ('mutuals') are organisations that have left the public sector, continue to deliver public services and have a significant degree of staff ownership, control and/or influence in how they are run (for example, staff may own shares or be represented on a Board). Research shows that they have better staff engagement and morale, and stronger outcomes. Reflecting on your own experience or examples you are aware of in the UK or abroad, do you know of any public service mutuals that are unlocking new partnerships and potential? If yes, please tell us how this is different to other types of organisations.

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What are the most important factors in enabling more people to work in mutuals to deliver public services in the future? (Please rank up to three choices in order of importance, with 1 as the most important, 2 as the second most important and 3 as the third most important)

- More funding to consider/develop new innovative ways to deliver services
- More time to consider/develop new ways to deliver services
- More professional advice on creating / growing mutuals
- Building further staff capabilities to set up and run this sort of organisation
- More evidence of the benefits and how it works
- Greater understanding of mutuals and their benefits amongst those commissioning public services
- More partnerships between organisations bidding for contracts
- More support from others who have developed/are developing mutuals

Are there any additional factors that could enable more mutuals to deliver public services?

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Considering all the factors you discussed in this section, how could these factors be addressed now and/or in the future? You may want to think about the role of different parties, for example central and local government, charities, businesses, yourself / your organisation and others.

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