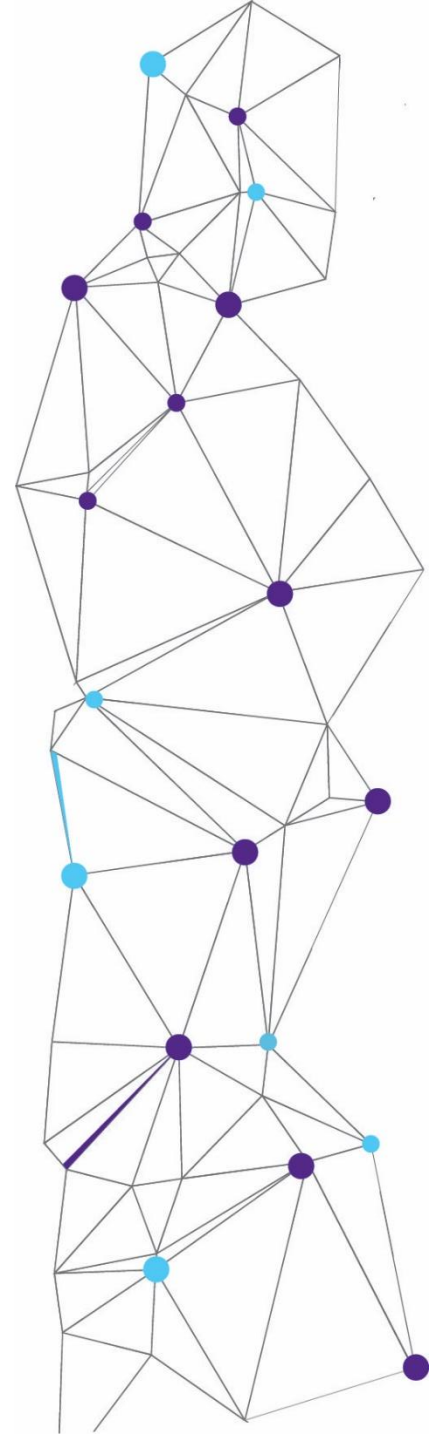


# TEFCE Toolbox

**An Institutional Self-Reflection Framework  
for Community Engagement in Higher Education**

Presentation for GUNI webinar (21 September 2021)

**Thomas Farnell**, Institute for the Development of Education (Croatia)



# THE TEFCE PROJECT

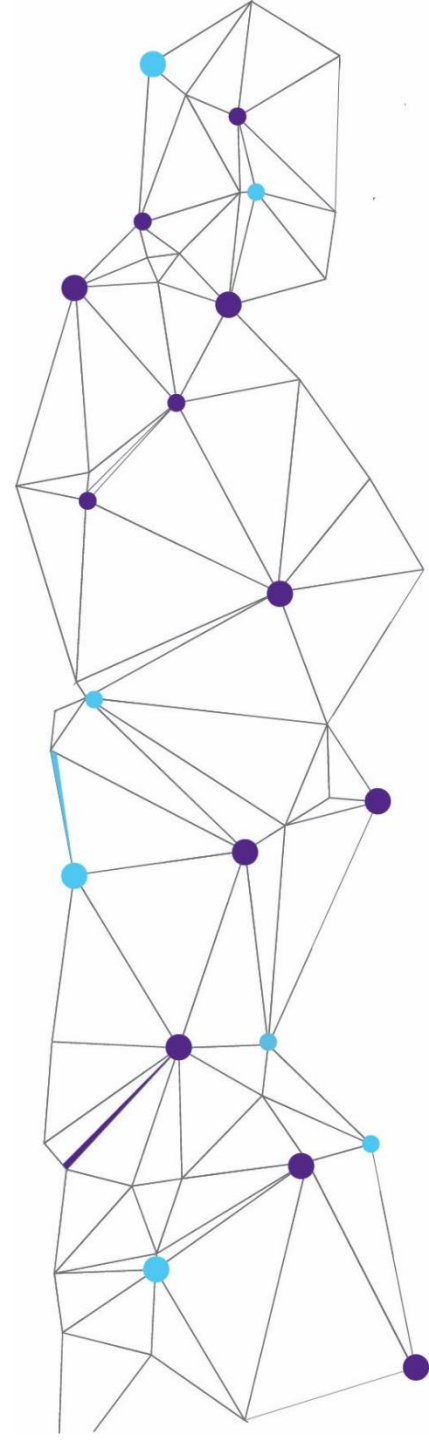
- Project: *Towards a European Framework for Community Engagement in Higher Education (TEFCE) (01.2018-6.2021).*
- Funding: Erasmus+, Key Action 3, Forward Looking Cooperation projects. Co-funding: Croatian Government, Office for NGOs
- Objective: **Develop innovative policy tools at the university and European level for supporting, monitoring and assessing the community engagement of universities.**



Sveučilište u Rijeci  
University of Rijeka



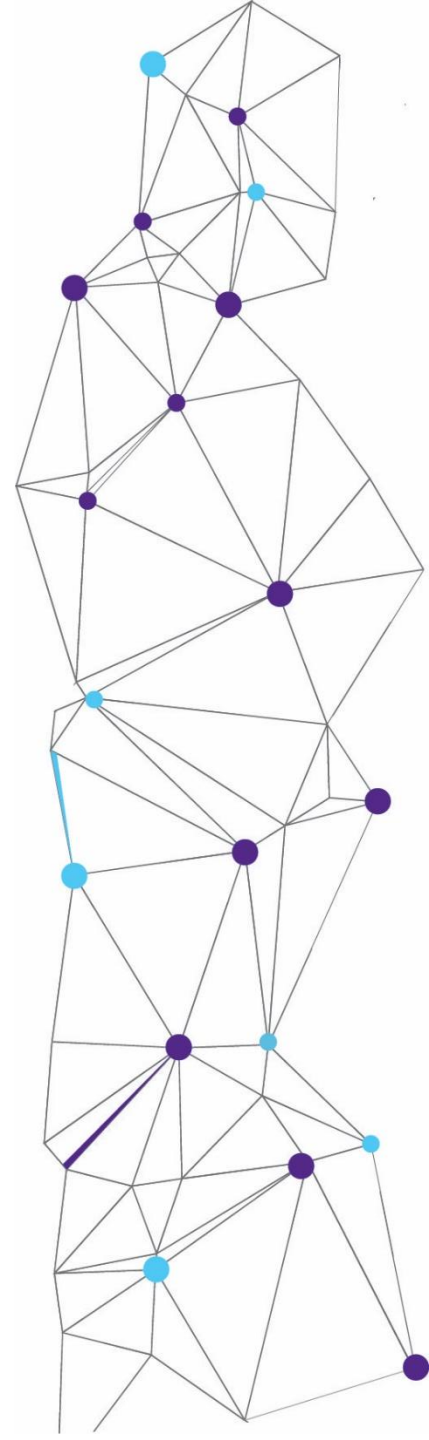
ASSOCIACIÓ CATALANA  
D'UNIVERSITATS PÚBLIQUES



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: TEFCE DEFINITION

**Community engagement is about how universities address societal needs in partnership with their external communities.**

- Community: incl. government, business, civil society, from local to global level.
- Engagement: mutually beneficial joint activities with external communities
- Societal needs: political, economic, cultural, social, technological, environmental...



# INTERNATIONAL TERMINOLOGY: A WIDE VARIETY!

In your country/language, what term is usually used to refer to what TEFCE defines as "community engagement" in higher education?

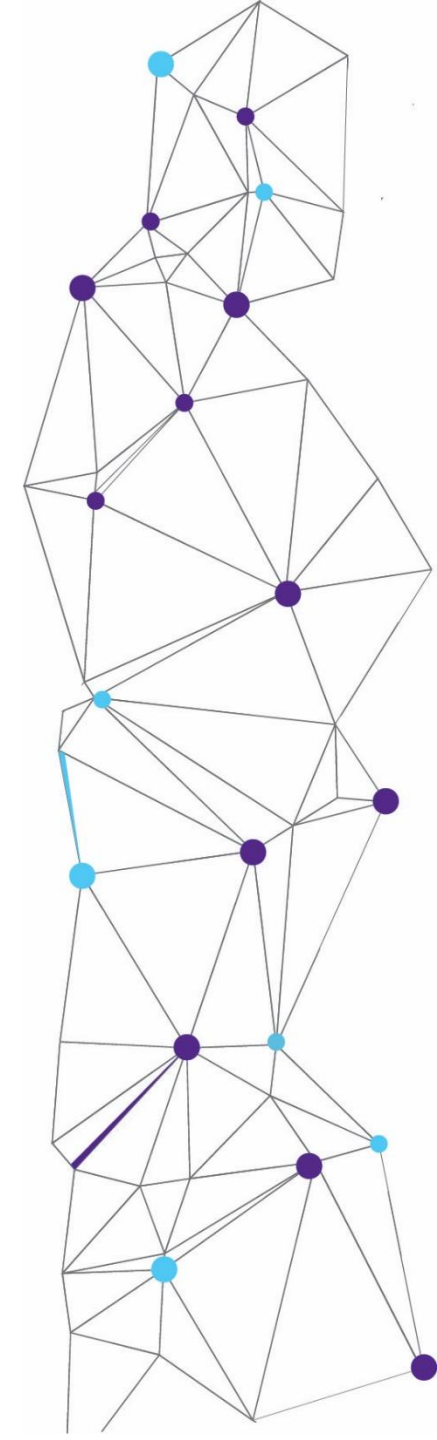
društveni angažman u zajednici  
social responsibility  
współpraca z otoczeniem  
zalaganje u zajednici  
community engagement!  
Participatief onderzoek  
transformation  
participatory action research  
ouverture sur le monde socio-économique

közösségi bevonás  
Partizipation  
連携と協働  
Participation  
ciudadania  
coinvolgimento della società  
kennisbenutting  
civic engagement  
valorisation

Science shop  
Participación  
outreach

Public engagement

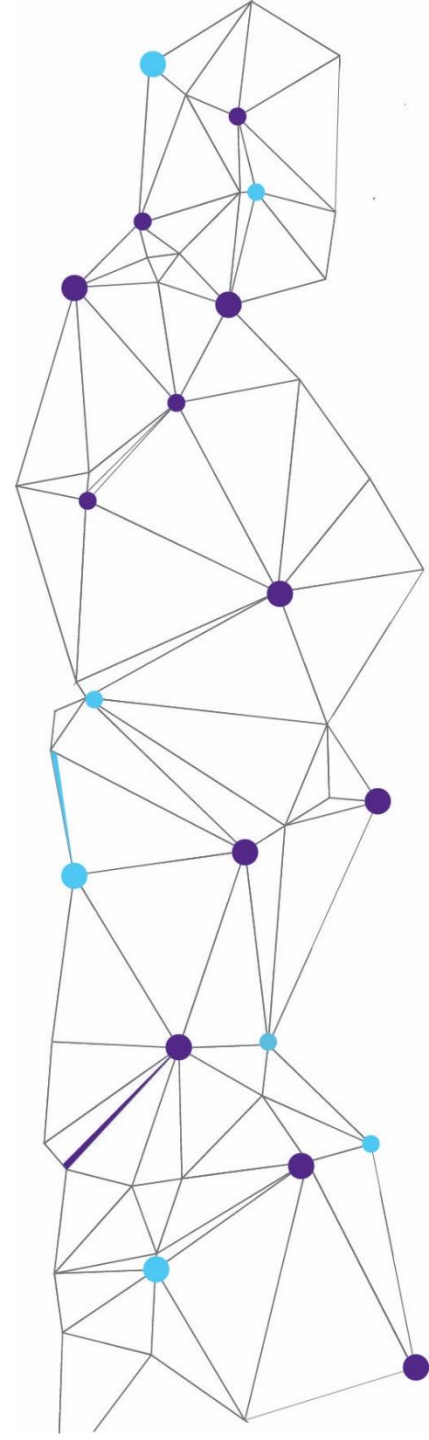
*Latin America?*  
*incidencia social y vinculación comunitaria?*  
*extensión universitaria?*  
*responsabilidad social universitaria?*  
*compromiso social universitario?*



# A RE-EMERGING PRIORITY

The role of higher education in responding to societal challenges is re-emerging as a policy priority at the international level

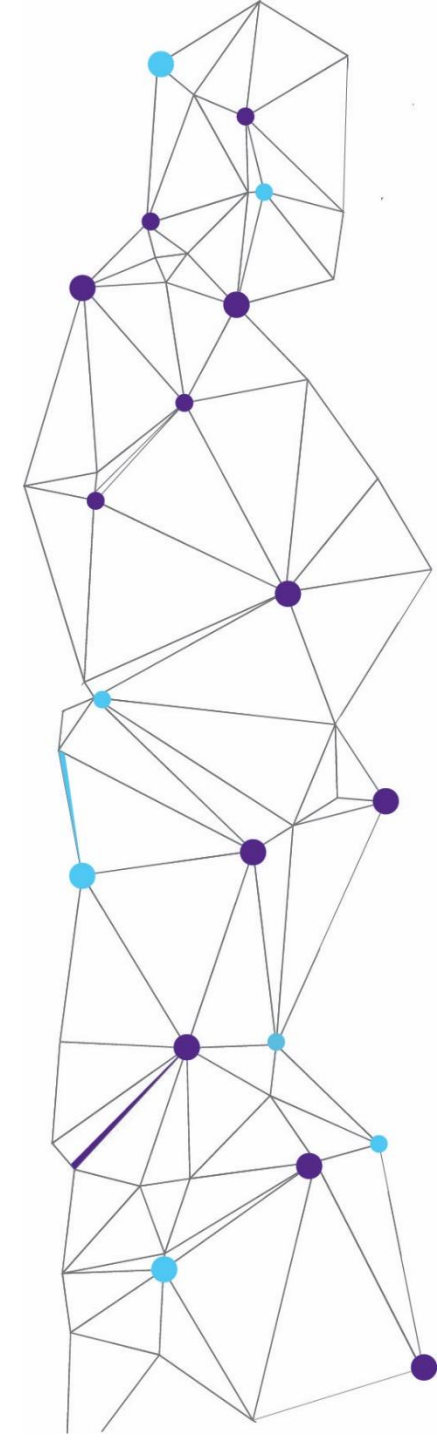
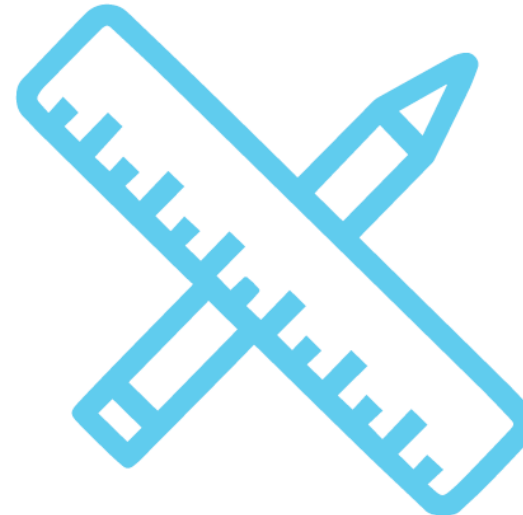
- E.g. EU: *Achieving the European Education Area by 2025* (“service to society”); European Universities Initiative;
- E.g. EU: *A new European Research Area* (“citizen engagement”); ‘Science with and for Society’;
- E.g. Universities’ role in contributing to SDGs
- COVID-19 increases the urgency of the societal role of universities



# A NEW APPROACH TO ‘MEASURING’ ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement is **context-specific** and is notoriously difficult to measure. The TEFCE approach is therefore:

- **Qualitative** – no metrics
- **Multifaceted and context-specific** – no comparison or ranking
- **Participative** – no desk-based checklists!
- **Innovative** – inspired by, but going beyond, existing tools

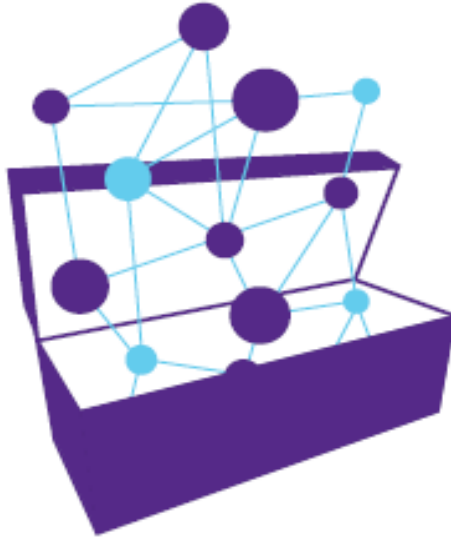






# TEFCE

Towards a European Framework for  
Community Engagement in Higher Education



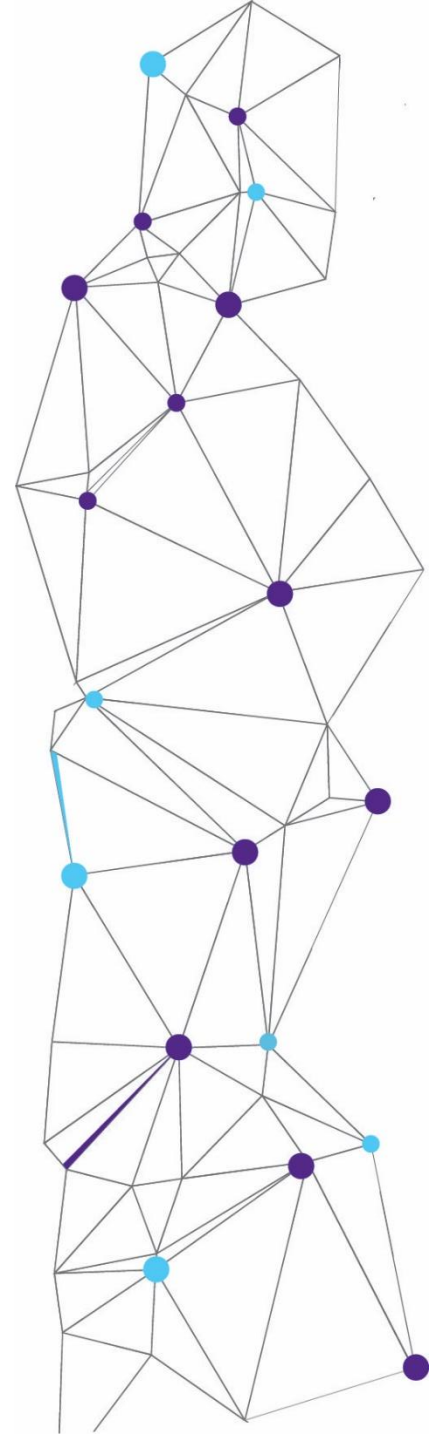
# TEFCE Toolbox

**An Institutional Self-Reflection Framework  
for Community Engagement in Higher Education**



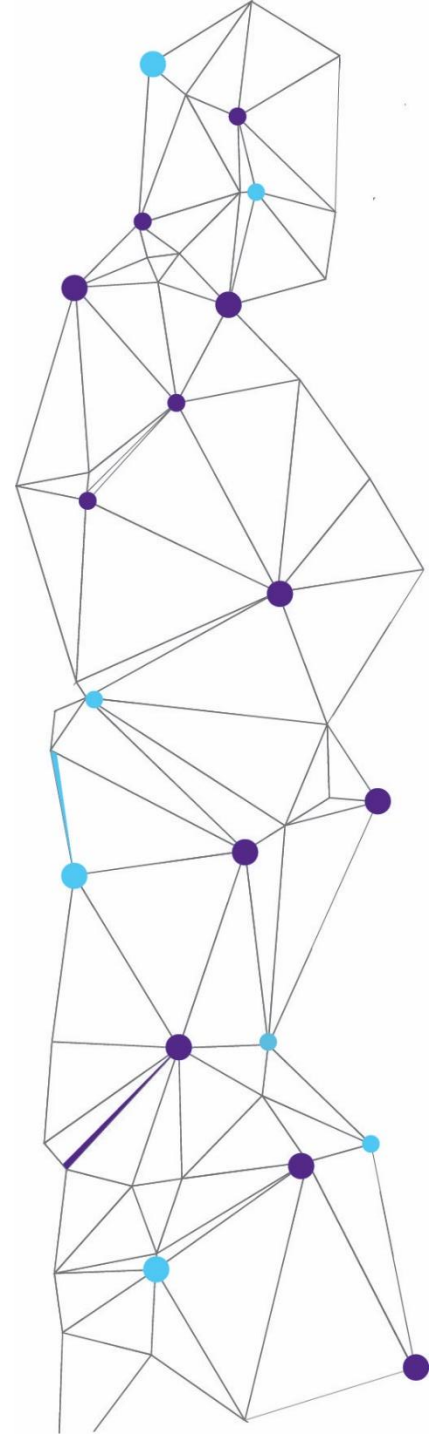
[www.tefce.eu/toolbox](http://www.tefce.eu/toolbox)

***NB: Spanish, Catalan, Croatian and German versions  
to be published in the coming weeks!***



# TEFCE TOOLBOX PURPOSE

- To serve as a **reference tool** for **universities, communities and policymakers** to better understand the dimensions of community engagement in higher education
- To serve as a **practical tool for universities** to determine how well they perform according to each dimension, as well as where they can improve.

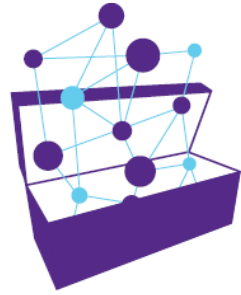






# TEFCE

Towards a European Framework for  
Community Engagement in Higher Education



# TEFCE Toolbox

**An Institutional Self-Reflection Framework  
for Community Engagement in Higher Education**



**TOOL 1**

**DIMENSIONS OF ENGAGEMENT**



**TOOL 2**

**LEVELS OF ENGAGEMENT**



**TOOL 3**

**INSTITUTIONAL COMMUNITY-ENGAGEMENT HEATMAP**



**TOOL 4**

**SLIPDOT ANALYSIS**



**STAGE 1: QUICK SCAN**



**STAGE 2: EVIDENCE COLLECTION**



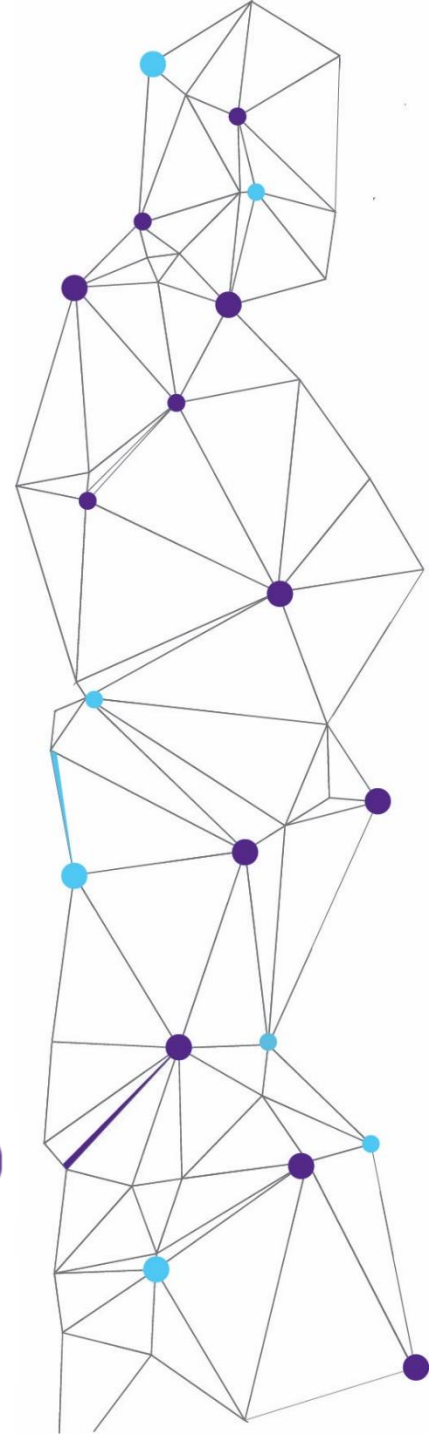
**STAGE 3: MAPPING REPORT**



**STAGE 4: PARTICIPATIVE DIALOGUE**



**STAGE 5: INSTITUTIONAL REPORT**

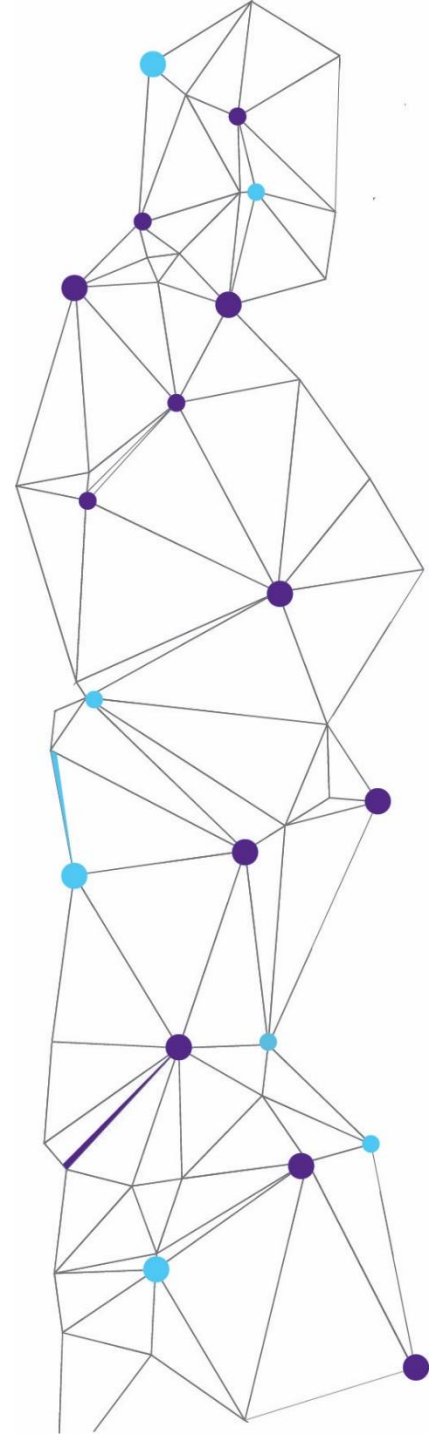
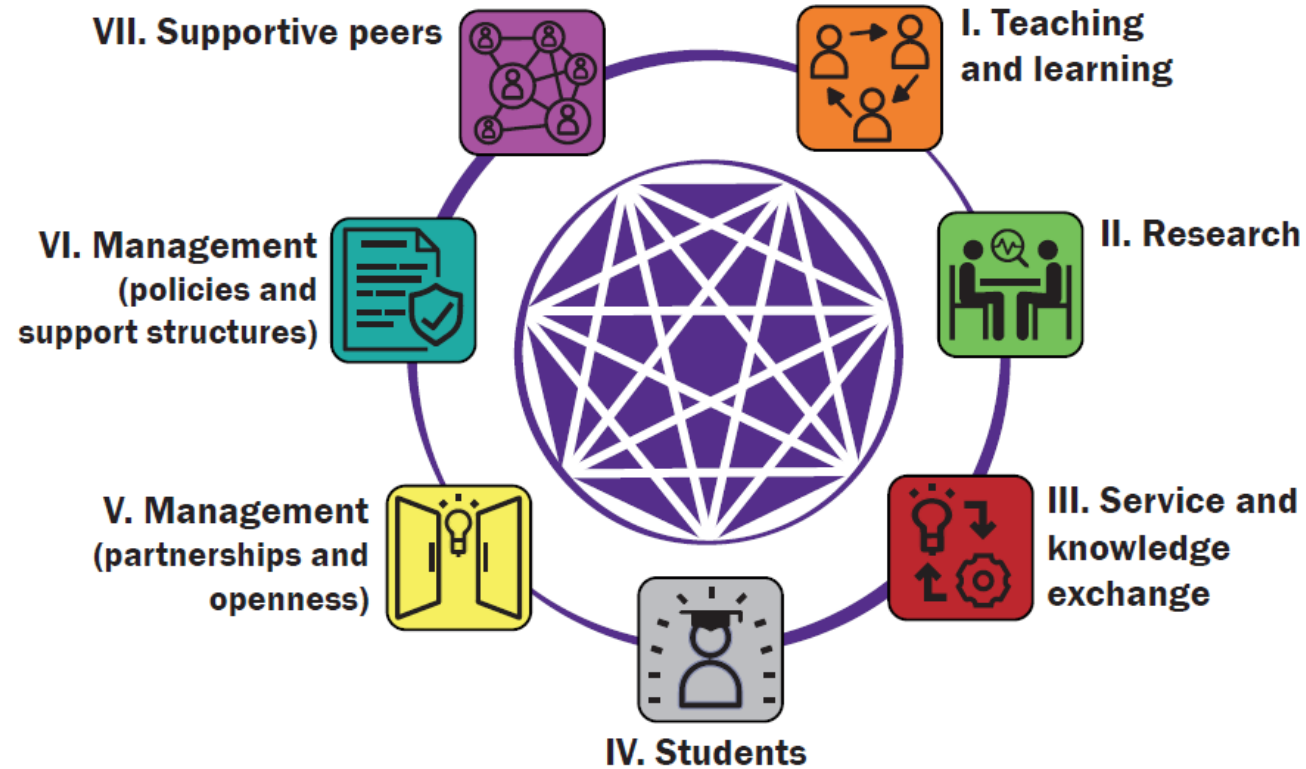




## TOOL 1

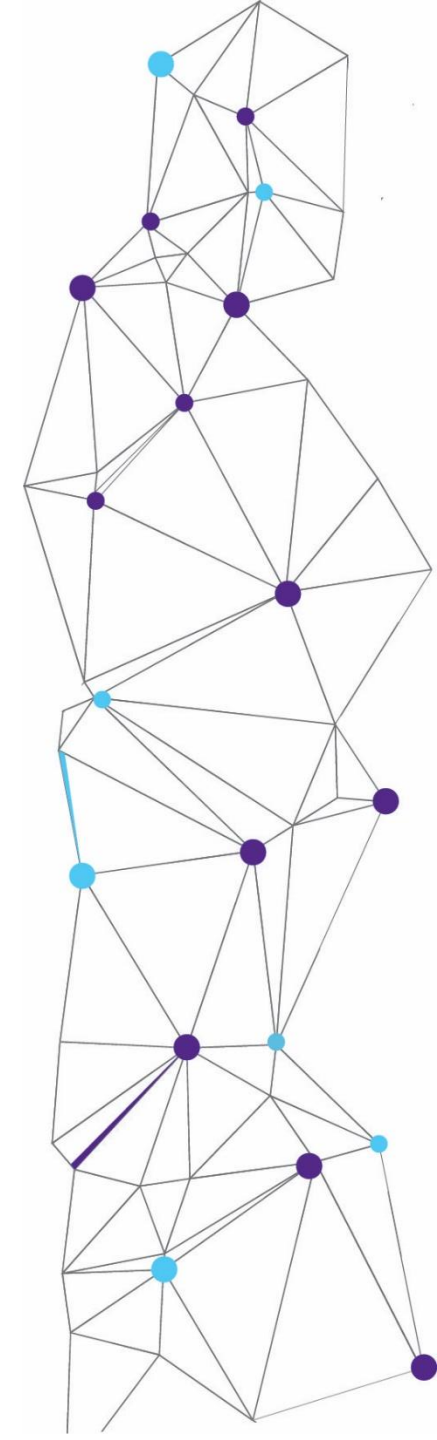
### DIMENSIONS OF ENGAGEMENT

Classification of community  
engagement activities



# DIMENSIONS OF ENGAGEMENT

	<b>I. Teaching and learning</b>	Credit-bearing courses in partnership with communities: <i>E.g. community-based learning / service-learning; project-based learning</i>
	<b>II. Research</b>	Research <u>with</u> external communities, e.g. <i>Community-based research; patient and public involvement; citizen science</i>
	<b>III. Service and knowledge exchange</b>	Academic staff involvement in public (policy) debates; Capacity-building for community groups
	<b>IV. Students</b>	Student volunteering; student activism
	<b>V. Management (partnerships and openness)</b>	Community access to facilities and resources.
	<b>VI. Management (policies, support structures)</b>	Policies and institutional support structures
	<b>VII: Supportive peers</b>	Supportive environment among academic and administrative staff



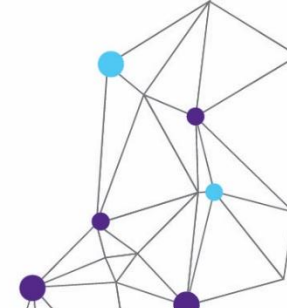




## TOOL 1

# DIMENSIONS OF ENGAGEMENT

Each dimension has 2-4 sub-dimensions – with a total of **20 sub-dimensions** of community engagement



### I. Teaching and learning

- I.1. The university has study programmes or courses to respond to societal needs that are specific to the university's context and its external communities.
- I.2. The university has study programmes or courses that include a community-based learning component for students.
- I.3. The university facilitates the participation of community representatives in the teaching and learning process (in a curricular or extra-curricular context).
- I.4. The university has study programmes or courses that are created, reviewed or evaluated in consultation/cooperation with the university's external communities.



### II. Research

- II.1. The university carries out research focusing on the societal needs of the university's external communities.
- II.2. The university carries out collaborative/participatory research in cooperation with the university's external communities.



### III. Service and knowledge exchange

- III.1. University staff contribute to debates and initiatives that address societal needs of the university's external communities.
- III.2. University staff provide their knowledge to support and/or build the capacity of the university's external communities.
- III.3. University staff community-engagement activities have resulted in demonstrable benefits for the university's external communities.



### IV. Students

- IV.1. Students deliver community-engagement activities independently through student organisations or initiatives.
- IV.2. The university facilitates and supports partnerships between students and external communities.



### V. Management (partnerships and openness)

- V.1. The university has a track record of mutually beneficial partnerships with its external communities.
- V.2. The university makes learning and research resources accessible to its external communities.
- V.3. The university has facilities and services that are jointly managed and/or accessible to its external communities.



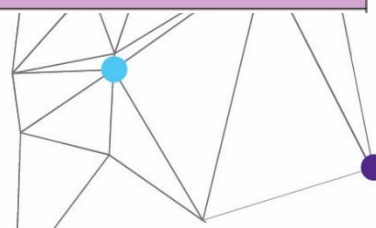
### VI. Management (policies and support structures)

- VI.1. The university provides support and/or incentives for community-engagement achievements by its staff, students and external communities.
- VI.2. The university has a support structure (e.g. committee, office or staff) for embedding and coordinating community-engagement activities at the university level.
- VI.3. The university has staff-development policies (e.g. recruitment, tenure, promotion) that include community engagement as a criterion.
- VI.4. The university has a mission, strategy, leadership and (funding) instruments that specifically promote community engagement.



### VII. Supportive peers

- VII.1. The university has prominent academic staff members that have a strong track-record of community engagement and that advocate for its further advancement.
- VII.2. The university's academic staff are acceptive of the idea of university-community engagement and of the value and rigour of community-engaged teaching and research.





## TOOL 2

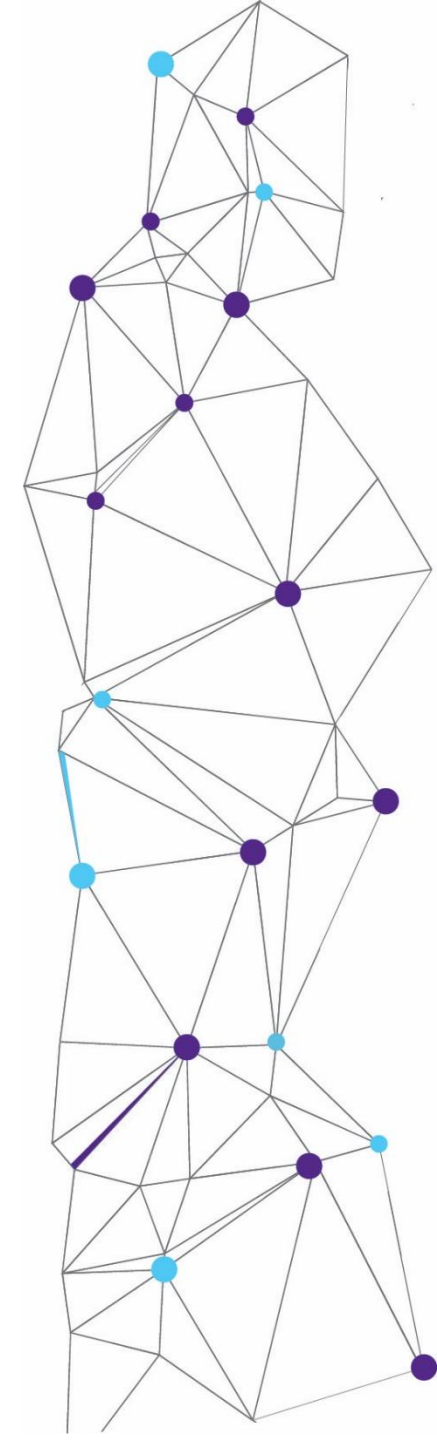
### LEVELS OF ENGAGEMENT

Each sub-dimension has different levels – indicating the level of authenticity of community engagement (from beginner to advanced)

*\*Example:*

#### Community-based learning is included in relevant study programmes at the university and...

<b>Level 1</b>	... benefits students to develop their knowledge and skills, although there is little evidence yet of their outcomes for the community.
<b>Level 2</b>	
<b>Level 3</b>	... has demonstrated benefits for students and supports community partners in addressing a short-term problem or need.
<b>Level 4</b>	
<b>Level 5</b>	... builds capacities of community partners and bring equal benefits to the students, teaching staff and university as a whole.

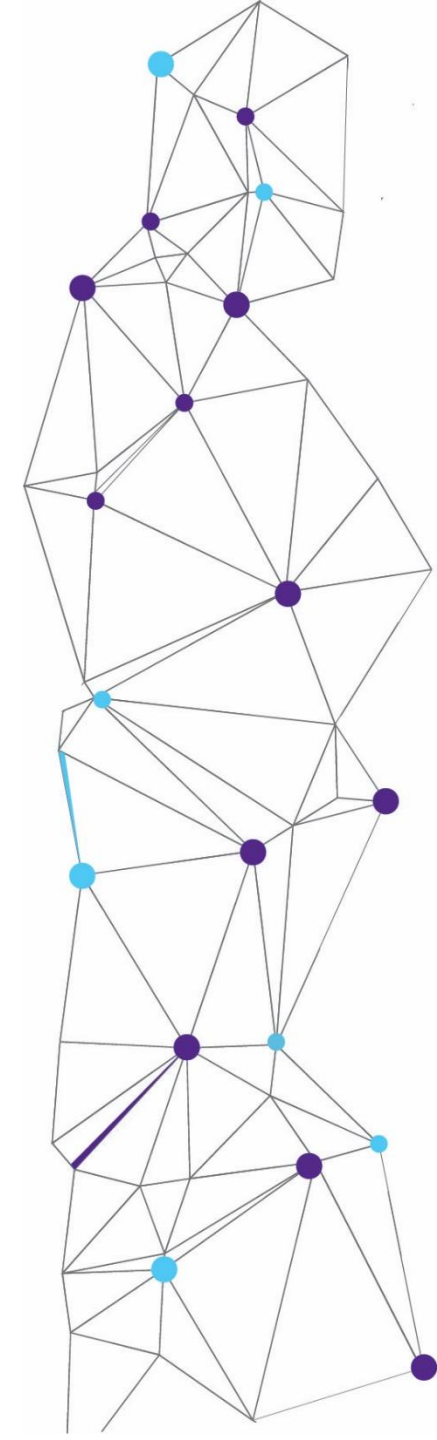
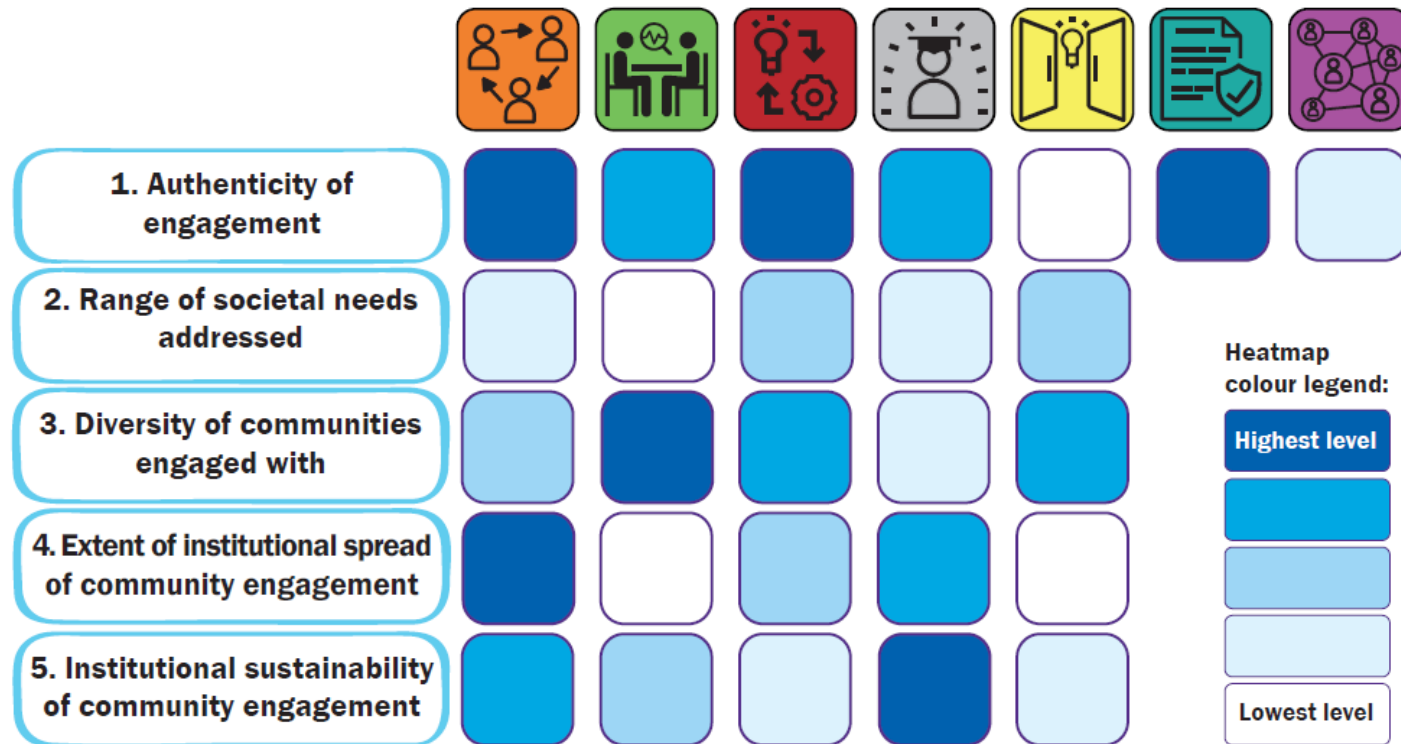




## TOOL 3

## INSTITUTIONAL COMMUNITY-ENGAGEMENT HEATMAP

Synthesising results of entire process by indicating how developed is each dimension of community engagement according to 5 criteria – colour coded matrix to synthesise findings:







**TOOL 4**

## SLIPDOT ANALYSIS

Customised SWOT analysis for  
self-reflection discussions

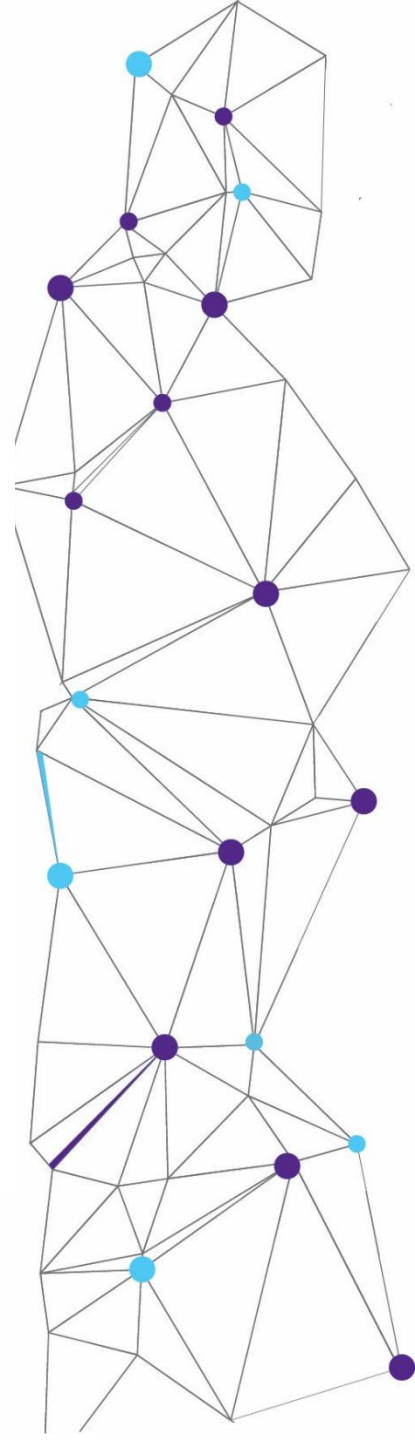
**Areas of Strength**

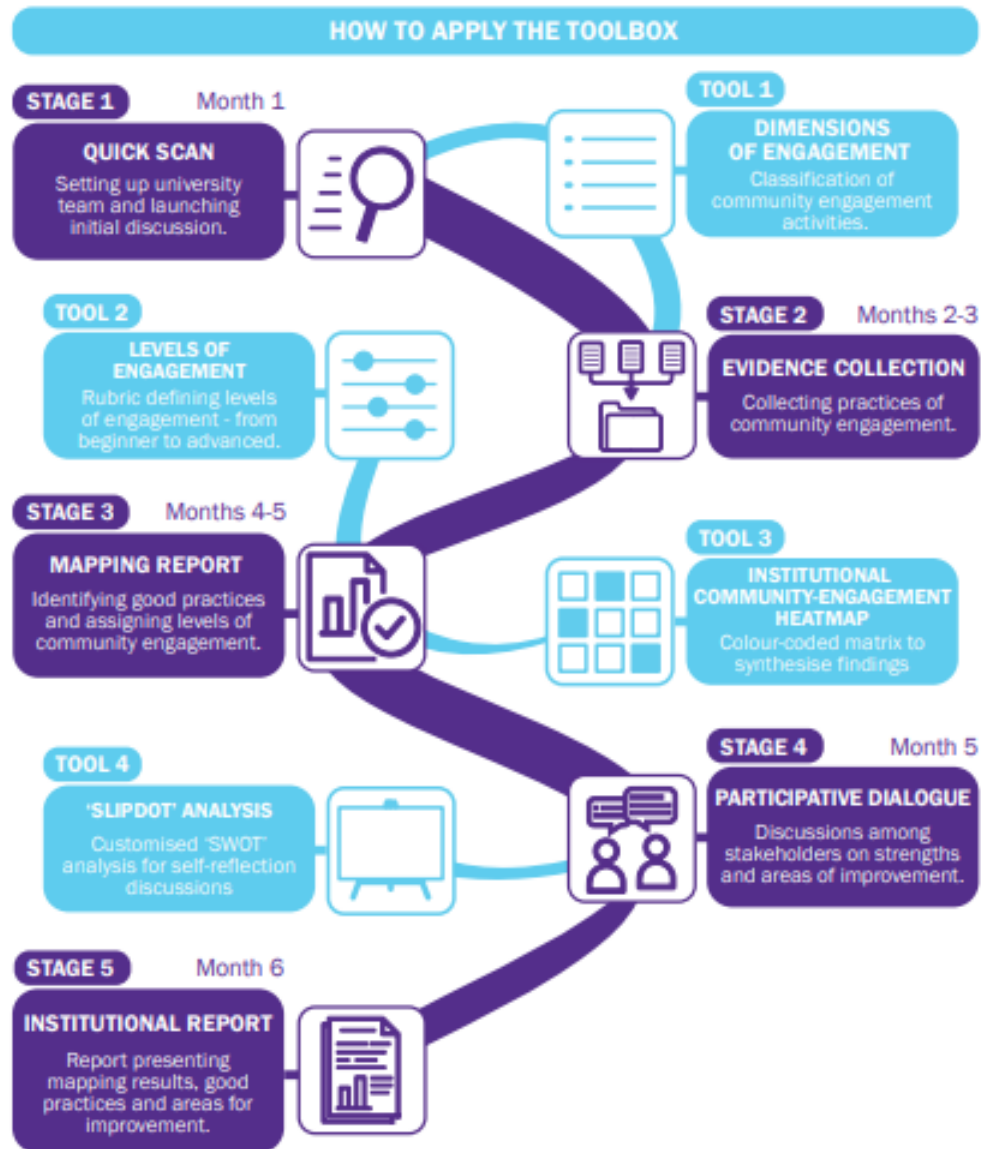
**Areas of Lower Intensity**

**Areas with Potential for  
Development**

**Opportunities**

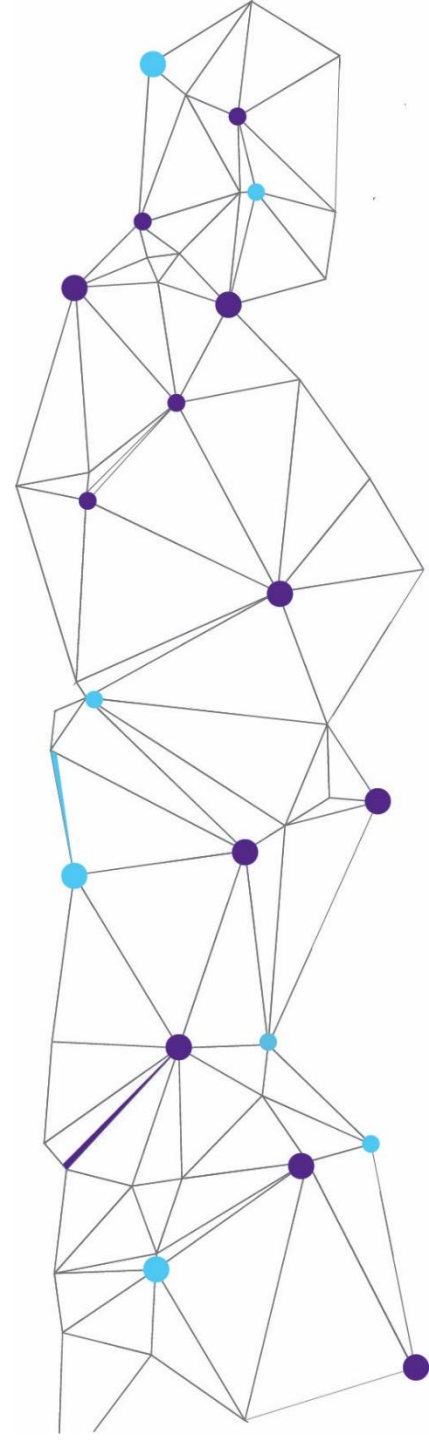
**Threats**





How to apply the  
Toolbox:  
stages 1-5

A process of up to 6  
months



# TEFCE TOOLBOX PILOTING

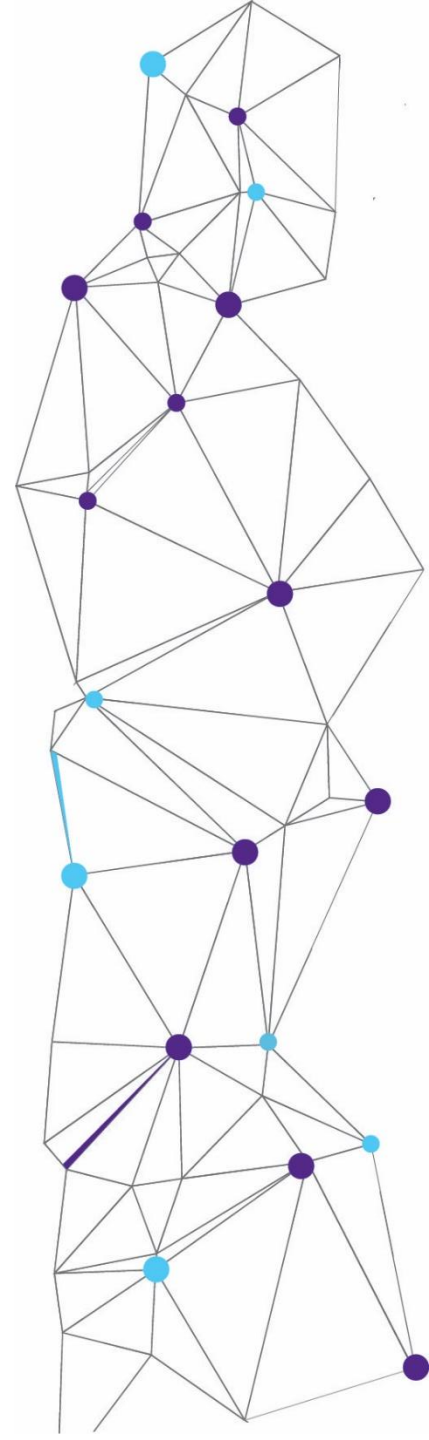
- **2019-2020:** Piloted by 4 universities, in cooperation with local authority and community partners:
  - *Dresden (Germany),*
  - *Twente (Netherlands)*
  - *Rijeka (Croatia)*
  - *Dublin (Ireland)*
- Involved **120 practitioners** and **60 experts**
- **2021:** Piloted by 3 universities, in cooperation with local authority and community partners:
  - *Krems (Austria),*
  - *Antwerp, Brussels (Belgium)*
  - *Girona (Spain)*
- Interest expressed by additional 5 universities



# TEFCE TOOLBOX PILOTING RESULTS



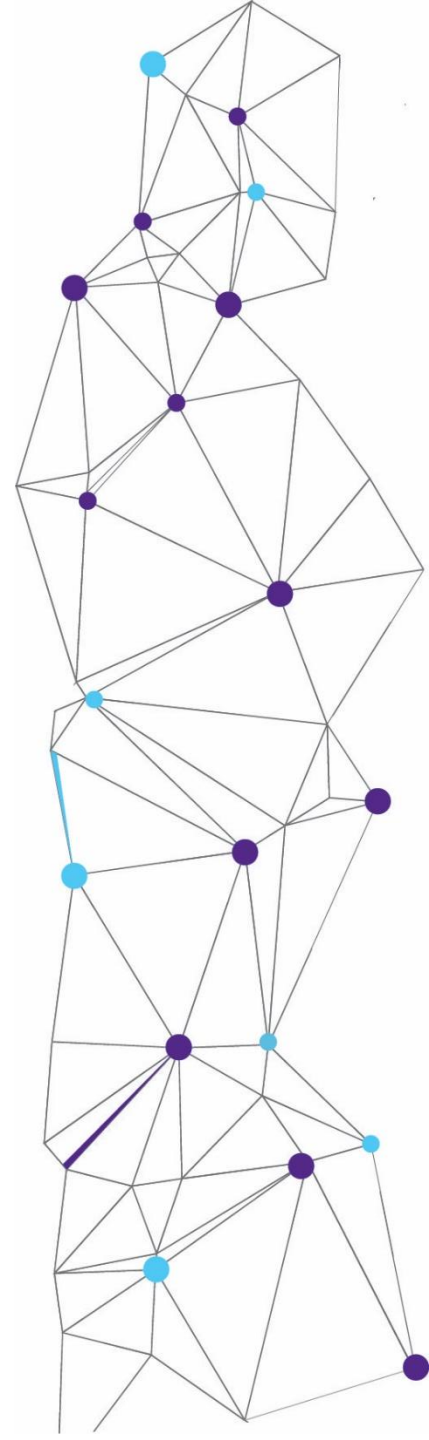
- TEFCE Toolbox results:
  - ✓ comprehensive
  - ✓ context-specific
  - ✓ empowering for participants
  - ✓ uncovered wealth of engagement activities
  - ✓ offered **insights** about potential for improvement
  - ✓ supported by management





# TEFCE FOLLOW-UP PROJECT

- **Project:** *Steering Higher Education for Community Engagement (SHEFCE) 2020-2023*
- **Funding:** Erasmus+, Key Action 2 – Strategic Partnerships
- **Partners:** 22 total - 10 partner institutions; 12 associates



# SHEFCE associate partners

## ADVISORY TEAM



## NATIONAL PARTNERS ; NETWORKS



## LOCAL PARTNERS





# Thank you for your attention!

## Contacts:

- Thomas Farnell, [tfarnell@iro.hr](mailto:tfarnell@iro.hr),
- [www.tefce.eu](http://www.tefce.eu) and [www.iro.hr](http://www.iro.hr)
- Twitter: [www.twitter.com/TEFCEProject](https://www.twitter.com/TEFCEProject)

