



**UNIVERSITIES  
SOUTH AFRICA**

# **SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT UNIVERSITIES AS ANCHOR INSTITUTIONS**

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1 June 2017

Durban

# Universities are Social Institutions

they are involved in the knowledge industry –  
production, application and dissemination

they exist within contexts which are simultaneously  
intensely local and intensely global

they are complex social spaces

they intersect with other social spaces



# **purposes of higher education**

Creating active citizens  
Meeting the needs of the economy  
Producing new knowledge  
Generating social mobility  
Nation building

## **Building new cohorts of intellectuals**

**Critical thinking**  
**Systemic thinking**  
**Problem solving**  
**Working in diverse teams**  
**Ethical reasoning**  
**Effective communicating**  
**Innovating**

# challenges

underfunding and its impact on teaching and research

legitimacy deficit

fractured schooling system

language usage

Creating meshes between

society and universities

students and universities

staff and universities

students and curriculum

Complexity

universities are complex, multi-layered institutions

design interventions – lots of gentle nudges

engagement



# at the institutional level – through deliberate design

a strong social justice agenda – as a sociopolitical rubric

Access and success

Research and innovation for development

Graduate employability/entrepreneurialism

Intellectual, social and emotional student development

**building new communities of intellectuals**



# ***raison d'être* of the S African university?**

Globally, universities produce public and private goods.

To be S African universities they assume the responsibility for

- a. producing and disseminating knowledge of the context in which they are located
- b. embedding this knowledge in the global knowledge system

**This requires engagement.**



# STARTING POINT.....

How to be  
intensely local and intensely global at the same time?

See **ENGAGEMENT** as site for knowledge production  
and knowledge dissemination



# ENGAGEMENT

dynamic interfaces and porous boundaries

advisory bodies

work integrated learning – theory and praxis

anchor institutions

## Mode 2 Knowledge Enterprise





# UNIVERSITIES AS ANCHOR INSTITUTIONS

- ✓ Does it have a large stake in your city and community?
- ✓ Does it have economic impacts?
- ✓ Is it unlikely to relocate?
- ✓ Is it one of largest purchasers of goods and services?
- ✓ Does it attract businesses and highly skilled individuals?
- ✓ Is it one of the largest employers?
- ✓ Is it a center of culture, learning and innovation with enormous human resources?



# THEN THE UNIVERSITY MUST.....

see the city/community as a site of engagement

and hence as a site

of research, innovation, teaching  
that defines the intense local  
of long-term engagement

with the express purpose of bringing R&D and Innovation to  
bear on improving the quality of life in the city.



# AND SO WHY DIDN'T **MIDI** WORK?

supply-side and demand-side challenges.





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**THANK YOU**