



**University of
Nottingham**

UK | CHINA | MALAYSIA

Civic Strategic Delivery Plan

Ratified by *Civic and Regional Committee*

On *11th March 2021*

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1. Executive Summary

The University Strategy highlights the importance of civic and regional activities and builds on the University's foundation motto that "A city is built on wisdom". Specifically, we state that we are *committed to making a difference in our cities and regions*", that we will solve problems and improve lives "...through application to local and global challenges" and embed collaboration in all that we do by "reaching out to our.. civic partners".

Civic and regional strategic delivery is distributed across many parts of our university. For example, some educational outcomes depend on close local partnerships (e.g. teacher training and healthcare placements), widening participation activities engage with local Schools, entrepreneurship can lead to spin-out company formation within the region and cultural activities are especially strong with civic partners. All Faculties and Professional Services play a role in our civic and regional portfolio. The Civic and Regional Committee has struggled with the sheer scale and breadth of the university's activities in this area and has taken an approach of celebrating the spontaneous nature of civic engagement whilst focussing on a small number of initiatives where we can add value by cross-institution support.

A further complication, and opportunity, for our university is the different civic and regional environments surrounding our campuses in the UK, China and Malaysia. For this SDP we have focussed on the UK environment and the potential for tri-campus sharing of best practice.

Through activities such as *Universities for Nottingham*, Digital Nottingham, entrepreneurship and our leadership in culture and arts we have the potential to be a leading UK civic university with collaboration at the heart of our approach. If we can build on a strong foundation of civic and regional activity then we can contribute to all aspects of the University Strategy. This SDP sets out 6 priorities for institutional focus. In addition to these priorities we should continue to celebrate the spontaneous civic activity that is such a strength of our university.

2. University Values

Our civic and regional strategy sets out a commitment to the people and places of wherever our University has campuses. In the UK, this is a commitment to play our part in improving prosperity, opportunity and wellbeing for the people of Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, Derby, Sutton Bonington and the East Midlands. In China, this is to the City of Ningbo and in Malaysia it is to the communities of Semenyih and Kuala Lumpur.

This SDP outlines how we will deliver economic, social and cultural benefits to these places in collaboration with government, industry, schools, community groups and health services.

There are two main principles that underpin our approach to this strategic delivery plan. These are firstly, to work in partnership with local organisations to co-curate activity wherever possible; and secondly, the need for us to have some measure of coordination at an institutional level.

Over the length of the strategy, our ambition is to move from having a somewhat *incidental* approach to becoming much more *intentional* and strategic in how we think about our civic role. This should enable our institution to make a greater contribution to the communities with whom we share our place.

3. Campus Coverage

Category 2 (*Activities that have university-led global direction but are managed locally*)

Civic and regional collaborations are important to each campus. We will share best practice and bring together local partners where international collaboration is desirable.

4. Links to Other Strategic Delivery Plans

Education and Student Experience: Partnerships with local schools (placements, volunteering); Widening Participation (access success); Placements & Internships; Residential life of students.

Research and Knowledge Exchange: Working with local / regional / global partnerships across all sectors.

Global Engagement: Deepening international research & teaching partnerships; Tri campus global civic engagement strategy; UoN/NTU/NCC shared global civic engagement strategy.

EDI and People: Opportunities for staff to engage with local communities; Race Equality Charter Mark

Digital: Digital Nottingham - vision & virtual collaboration, digital skills hub

Environmental Sustainability: The University's Civic commitments and agreements have made environmental sustainability one of 5 key priorities and the University's Environmental Sustainability SDP will directly contribute towards that; Joint large scale energy infrastructure projects being developed with partners; Joint approach to communications and engagement (e.g. sustainability weeks, common app platforms, etc).

5. Key Priorities

CRC Priority 1: Universities for Nottingham

Universities for Nottingham is the University's flagship civic initiative. It is a sector-leading partnership with Nottingham Trent University (NTU) which has led to the UK's first Civic Agreement being signed by both universities and our major local partners in July 2020. There are two aims for this CRC Priority: the first is to ensure that the overarching partnership with NTU on civic activity continues to thrive, continuing to support joint strategic planning, encouraging collaboration on civic projects between colleagues across our institution and ensuring that the reputation and positioning benefits we have as a result of our partnership continue to deliver benefits. Secondly, the Universities for Nottingham Civic Agreement signed in July 2020 has 14 initiatives which the University has committed to deliver in collaboration with our partners. The Civic and Regional Committee will monitor progress against these initiatives and support the delivery and development of future Universities for Nottingham Civic Agreements.

CRC Priority 2: Digital Nottingham

A major contribution to our local communities and economic recovery from C19 will be the establishment of a new centre within the City that combines excellent research, business incubation, skills training and outreach.

CRC Priority 3: Supporting the East Midlands Development Corporation and other regional levelling-up opportunities through our research and innovation

The University is a core partner in the East Midlands Development Corporation and is involved in the development of programmes, partnerships and investment cases to Government and industry across three major sites. We will explore how our research and innovation strengths can help secure investment in 1) the Uniper Ratcliffe-on-Soar decommissioned coal-fired power station site by developing a UK Centre for Zero Carbon Futures and an Institute for Hydrogen Energy Research 2) the HS2 station at Toton via an Innovation Campus focused on BioDiversity and low-carbon living and 3) the East Midlands Airport Freeport.

We will also prioritise working with regional and local partners to secure a mixture of government and industry funding, making the most of opportunities available through national funding for levelling-up and place-based research, knowledge exchange and skills. The Committee will horizon scan for new opportunities and provide guidance on prioritisation in line with regional needs set out in local community and economic development plans.

CRC Priority 4: Student Projects for Nottingham

We will encourage and amplify a range of current schemes where our students undertake projects to support local communities, business and organisations. These include programmes in Liberal Arts, Architecture and the Built Environment, Social Sciences, the Nottingham Advantage Award, the Students' Union and many aspects of healthcare training to embed students in the civic agenda.

CRC Priority 5: Supporting local educational opportunity through our widening participation programmes and partnerships with local schools

We will use our extensive widening participation and access programmes, initiatives such as the Nottingham Potential Centres, our School of Education's partnerships with local schools and build our relationships with local further education colleges to improve local educational opportunity. Specifically, we will 1) continue to invest in raising the aspirations of pupils and their families to encourage local students from deprived backgrounds to consider higher education and support applications to the University; 2) we will support local Schools in their efforts to improve educational attainment and 3) we will work with partners to develop alternative models of and routes into higher education for local pupils.

CRC Priority 6: Supporting local place-marketing, business environment and cultural life

To support efforts to revamp Nottingham's approach to place-marketing through the Nottingham Project, to convene and provide innovation opportunities to major local corporates via our University of Nottingham Business Partners Network, to support local SMEs via our business support programmes and to continue to play a leading role in supporting Nottingham's cultural life through our Lakeside Arts Centre, support for the UNESCO City of Literature and the Nottingham Contemporary.

6. Outcomes and Key Performance Indicators

The outcomes and benefits of our civic commitment are wide ranging. Through this commitment we enhance student experience, graduate opportunities, research projects, economic growth, civic pride, cultural experiences and many other areas.

To monitor and celebrate these outcomes and benefits an annual review of progress against this Strategic Development Plan will be undertaken by the Civic and Regional Committee. Performance will predominantly be determined by the delivery status of each priority project – as this is the most directly relevant measure of assessment to the aim of the Civic Strategic Delivery Plan. For example, the Universities for Nottingham Civic Agreement has its own delivery performance framework.

If judged to be helpful, options for wider evaluation for periodic review might include indicative/ illustrative metrics such as:

- qualitative and quantitative stakeholder awareness/ perception of the Universities civic role
- proxy measures for economic development and community interaction via HEBCIS – including funding secured
- engagement data via widening participation, School of Education etc.

7. Risk Management

Risks will be captured in a project level risk register for this SDP, and will be reported to the Civic and Regional Committee in line with the governance and implementation arrangements below.

8. Governance

The Civic and Regional Committee will own this SDP. An annual meeting with the Provosts of UNM and UNNC will be held to share best practice and seek opportunities to co-create civic activities as appropriate.

9. Implementation

The Civic and Regional Committee will own an action plan that will monitor progress and interventions for the initial 6 priorities and new priorities as they arise.

Implementing this strategic delivery plan will largely be dependent on each priority initiative securing its own funding and resource-base by articulating its value-add to the plans of existing business units, as well as to the strategic priorities of other areas.

Whilst the CRC and this strategic delivery plan can indicate that we think these projects should be a priority in terms of their utility to the University's civic ambitions – this is not intended (as it is not sufficient on its own) as a guarantee funding or approval for any project.