

# Embedding Civic Engagement In The Curriculum In Ireland<sup>\*</sup>

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## Abstract

This paper contends that whilst there are many examples of good practice in engagement through the curriculum in universities, this work more often happens in a fragmented way, relying on the goodwill of individual academics and is often not strategically embedded in higher education institutions (HEIs) (McEwen and Mason O'Connor, 2013). The full benefits are not therefore realised at an institutional or policy level. Whilst there are examples in Ireland where civic engagement through the curriculum is strategically embedded within universities via intermediary mechanisms (see section 3), this is not commonplace.

This paper suggests that *Community Knowledge Exchanges* or *Science Shops*<sup>[i]</sup> should be explored further in Irish universities as a mechanism for creating a cohesive approach to public engagement through the curriculum. Science Shops and Community Knowledge Exchanges are small organisations that enable students to carry out social and scientific research in a wide range of disciplines on behalf of citizens and local CSOs. This approach focuses on research with and for society rather than research on society. The fact that Science Shops **respond** to civil society's needs for expertise and knowledge is a key element that distinguishes them from other knowledge transfer mechanisms. In this context we are discussing Community Knowledge Exchanges or Science Shops based in HEIs, where students conduct the research as part of the curriculum. The danger is that in delivering on so many different policy priorities, they can fall between the cracks in terms of policy development (Martin et al, 2011). This paper sets out the need for policy, practice and research to support the development of such intermediary mechanisms in Irish HEIs.

**Keywords:** Science Shops, Community Knowledge Exchange, community based research, civil society, research collaboration, knowledge mobilisation.

[i] Science Shops are not "shops" in the traditional sense of the word. They are small entities that carry out scientific research in a wide range of disciplines – usually free of charge and – on behalf of citizens and local civil society. The fact that Science shops respond to civil society's needs for expertise and knowledge is a key element that distinguish them from other knowledge transfer mechanisms. Science Shops are often, but not always, linked to or based in universities, where research is done by students as part of their curricula – under the supervision of the Science Shop and other associated (university) staff. For further information see [www.livingknowledge.org](http://www.livingknowledge.org)

\* URL: <http://ojs.aishe.org/index.php/aishe-j/article/view/160>

## 1. Introduction

The economic difficulties Ireland has been experiencing over the last ten years have led to a renewed focus on research as the engine of innovation and the cornerstone of a knowledge economy. The National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 (2011) offers a blueprint for the way ahead for higher education in Ireland, referring to engagement as one of the three core roles of higher education alongside teaching and research. 'Engagement with the wider community must become more firmly embedded in the mission of higher education institutions. Higher education institutions need to become more firmly embedded in the social and economic contexts of the communities they live in and serve' (Hunt, 2011:78). The definition of engagement is broad: 'engagement means taking on civic responsibilities and cooperating with the needs of the community that sustains higher education - including business, the wider education system, and the community and voluntary sector' (Hunt, 2011:74). It sees engagement as wide ranging and encompassing a full commitment by HEIs to engage at local, national and international level (Hunt 2011:77). However most of the engagement referred to in the strategy focuses on economic benefit. For example, mechanisms to promote the movement of staff between HE, enterprise and the public sector 'such movement would benefit both sides: industry and the public sector would benefit from the new knowledge and theoretical understanding developed in the education and research system, education would benefit from the practical know-how and constraints.' The recent *Research Prioritisation Report* places an emphasis on research to deliver direct benefits both to the economy and to society (Forfas, 2012) but again in practice the focus is on research with economic benefits. In addition, few links are made between engagement and research and engagement and teaching. An opportunity exists to articulate 'civic engagement as a way of doing higher education' (Boland,2010) and therefore bring together the three strands in a way that has the potential to enhance all three, via civic engagement through the curriculum.

## 2. Civic Engagement through the curriculum

This paper suggests that in order to create a culture within higher education where engagement becomes normalised, earlier stage intervention through curriculum based research may be a valuable tool. It can both enable culture change within HEI research and prepare students adequately for their eventual role in what the European Commission's Horizon 202 programme refers to as a knowledge economy (European Commission, 2013). In this paper the term 'Civic engagement through the curriculum' is used to represent student engagement in research initiatives embedded within the curricula of HEIs, often known as Community Knowledge Exchanges or Science Shops. Key characteristics are that they respond to research needs as expressed by civil society; they support research which involves a process of negotiation between partners to develop a question which meets the learning needs of the students and the research needs of CSOs; they produce agreed outcomes which should contribute to student learning and civil society knowledge and they respond to many of the challenges in society today, both scientific and social, encompassing research in areas as diverse as health, history, environment, nutrition, policy and planning (Martin and McKenna, 2013:1).

### *2.1 Supporting Higher Education Institutions*

HEIs in Ireland are increasingly aware of the need to engage with wider society in order to both ensure that the value of higher education is understood in times of fiscal retrenchment and to create research which will have the economic and or social benefits required by higher education policy in Ireland. There is recognition within the National Strategy that engagement on research issues may have an important reputational element 'research in higher education has an important role in informing public opinion. In this respect, the higher education institutions are a trusted source of wisdom and independent commentary' (Hunt, 2011:64). In order to justify the investment of public funds, HEIs are increasingly focused on enhancing their

reputation both within their immediate locality but also at a national and international level.

It is the experience of existing civic engagement initiatives that civic engagement through the curriculum can help enhance the reputation of a HEI within the local community and beyond. It can also help to bring locally relevant research into devolved and national parliaments, creating a positive perceptual impact on the political establishment, which can help universities build relationships with key decision makers. Demonstrating the benefits of the HEI to local communities is of particular value in times of economic austerity in terms of justifying the use of public funds to support higher education. This work 'actively builds bridges' between the community and the university (Robinson et al, 2012:33).

## *2.2 Supporting engaged research*

Increasingly there is a focus on research for the benefit of society. In the Irish context this has become embedded in research policy over the last twenty years. At the beginning of the 1990s, spending on basic research in the Irish higher education system was about 11% of the European Union norm (Rhodes and Healey, 2006: 64). A partnership was developed between the Irish Government and private philanthropic funder Atlantic Philanthropies, brokered in large part by the HEA, to 'expand the capacity of Irish higher education institutions to undertake basic research of international standard' (Rhodes and Healey, 2006: 68). From the outset one of the three assessment criteria was 'the impact of the proposed research on teaching and learning at the institution' (Rhodes and Healey, 2006:69) although wider societal impact was not directly addressed. From a relatively low base, the research infrastructure developed rapidly, due to significant investment in both physical and human resources. In addition there were 'many years of support from the European Union through Structural Funds and access to European research programmes' (Hunt, 2011:7). This strategy was successful, and Ireland moved into the top 20 of the most cited countries in the world in 2008, having been ranked 36th just five years before (Hunt 2011:65). In 2009, according to the World Bank, research and

development expenditure was 1.77% of GDP, up from 1.29% in 2007 (2012). Whilst in part this reflects a drop in GDP over this time period, in real terms research funding was maintained during a very difficult period in the Irish economy. However there have been concerns that research funding will decline over the next five years in real terms and that Ireland must increase its focus on other funding sources, particularly the European Commission's Horizon 2020 (O'Carroll, 2012).

Government investment in research infrastructure was largely undertaken through their Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions (PRTL), which was established in 1998 as 'an investment vehicle to bring about a permanent transformation in the research environment and culture in Ireland.' (HEA, 2006). This has had a transformative effect and 'ushered in a new era for research and innovation and fundamentally altered the research landscape in higher education.' (HEA, 2011:5). To date, €1.2bn has been disbursed to HEIs across Ireland, with almost two thirds of it being spent on physical infrastructure projects (HEA, 2011). This funding stream will continue until 2015. Strategic Innovation Funding, also administered by the HEA, has been directed towards supporting innovation in HEIs (HEA, 2012). In 2008, cycle 1 offered €42m and in 2008, cycle 2 funded research to the tune of €97m. In the second round, €20.7 million was allocated for proposals seeking to extend the research capacity of the sector, in line with the Strategy for Science Technology and Innovation. Whilst there is no direct mention of engagement within this funding stream, it has funded several initiatives aimed at supporting engagement, such as Campus Engage, which will be discussed in more detail later.

According to the Research Prioritisation Report, there is a need to build capacity amongst Irish researchers in order to assist them in bidding for international research funding, particularly through Horizon 2020, however there is limited experience of working with CSOs on research issues in Ireland (Forfas, 2012:9). The experience of practitioners community knowledge exchanges is that activities which embed an understanding of engaged research help to

prepare potential researchers at an early stage because they provide the necessary skill set for the next generation of researchers. Supervising engaged research projects also offers existing academic staff an insight into CSO research needs whilst they are fulfilling their teaching obligations. Civic engagement through the curriculum therefore over time helps to create engaged researchers, who understand how to work with external stakeholders.

### *2.3 Supporting student learning*

Ireland played an important role in developing the Bologna process which created an overarching framework of qualifications across the European Research Area. The 'Dublin descriptors' developed as part of this process offer general statements of the typical achievement of learners who have been awarded a qualification (National Qualifications Authority in Ireland, 2009). They also provide a set of descriptors indicating the learning outcomes relevant to qualifications at Bachelor's, Master's or Doctoral level. At all these three levels, interpreting data, applying knowledge and problem solving and communicating to specialist and non-specialist are prerequisites for achieving a degree (NQAI, 2009).

Practitioners argue that civic engagement through the curriculum via Community Knowledge Exchanges offers students an opportunity to fulfil these descriptors.

The National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 suggests that service learning and work placement offer students not only an opportunity to learn but also to better understand society. 'Every student should learn in an environment that is informed by research, scholarship and up-to-date practice and knowledge.....both undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes should develop the generic skills needed for effective engagement in society and in the workplace (Hunt 2011)

Collaborative research projects can offer students opportunities to interact and share communication with CSOs and offer real, demand driven and participatory cases to work on.

Undertaking independent research helps students to develop critical thinking skills and personal and professional skills which are important assets in the job market (Healey et al, 2013). According to the Dublin Descriptors, students need to comprehend how to apply their knowledge and understanding, make judgements and interpret data, communicate conclusions to different types of audience and develop skills needed to conduct further study in an autonomous way (NQAI, 2009). This is often framed as developing graduate attributes and contributing to graduate employability (Mason O'Connor et al, 2011:27). The priority of higher education therefore becomes teaching students how to continue to acquire new knowledge and, specifically, to *apply this knowledge in a societal context*. It is therefore extremely important to offer this type of experience through the curriculum (Mulder, 2004) if students are to acquire the kinds of knowledge, skills and experiences to equip them to play a role in helping to tackle the European Commission's grand societal challenges which are at the heart of Horizon 2020 (European Commission, 2014).

Where engagement through the curriculum is embedded as a compulsory activity in courses of study, it can also offer a unique learning experience to students who may otherwise have limited opportunities and personal networks for engaged learning. Ensuring equality of access to those opportunities for all students and sourcing sufficient quality opportunities can create a challenge for HEIs (NCCPE and HEA, 2012). Where engaged learning is offered to students, it helps them to understand the contribution their learning can make to CSOs and society (O'Rourke, 2012).

Civic engagement through the curriculum also supports students through their learning experiences. Students sometimes struggle with identifying topics suitable for research at either taught masters or undergraduate levels and extra staff time is involved in helping them to work

their way towards finding suitable topics. Working with communities can not only provide a range of suitable ideas but can also inspire and enthuse students. It can provide new perspectives and additional critical challenge which can act to drive up standards. Making work public is also a way of raising the quality of the work and acknowledging effort put into it (Healey et al, 2013). The knowledge that the results will be made publicly available can have a galvanising effect on students and encourage them to produce higher quality work (Eppink and Wals, 2011:7).

Finally, Millican and Bourner (2011) argue that student engagement with CSOs adds another dimension to the university experience, in addition to the pursuit of knowledge and understanding of an academic subject. They suggest that this work helps students move from a more transactional view of higher education where fees are exchanged for a degree to what Martin and McKenna (2012) refer to as an understanding that there are many kinds of knowledge and expertise, and that there are diverse and plural ways to address issues within academic research and in society.

#### 2.4 Adding value to CSOs and society

Public engagement through the curriculum offers CSOs an opportunity to put their research needs on student research agendas. This partnership approach means that completed research is much more likely to be of use to CSOs and is in contrast to what Nyden et al (1997) articulate as 'hit and run' research where academics go into communities to undertake research but do not share the results and where communities may feel they are exploited as free sources of student education (Stoecker and Tryon, 2009). It also offers CSOs a resource they may not otherwise have, in terms of time, research skills and/or funding.

If society is to face grand societal challenges articulated by the European Commission and move on from the current economic crises, it needs graduates who are skilled at partnership working, drawing on different kinds of knowledge from multiple sources, thinking flexibly and creatively and applying knowledge and skills. This outcome of this co created research process benefits not only students themselves, but also CSOs. By working with students on research issues, they are informing future professionals about their issues from a grassroots perspective (Stoecker and Tryon, 2009).

Many CSOs lack the capacity to gather evidence to influence policy debates (Gall et al, 2009:87). Science Shops can give CSOs access to information specific to their region or context and this can enhance the building of evidence based policy. Through Science Shops, CSOs can also influence the formulation of research agendas (Gall et al, 2009:78). This can also enhance the capacity of CSOs to challenge and scrutinise and critically challenge devolved governments.

### **3. Three examples of engagement through the curriculum in Ireland from the PERARES project**

The brief descriptions offered below are examples of what is a much wider community of practice. They are drawn from curriculum development work undertaken as part of the PERARES project and are being used here to offer some suggestions as to how Community Knowledge Exchanges within HEIs have worked within academic curricula to carry out research of benefit to communities. All of the initiatives mentioned work across several academic areas. In the case of Dublin Institute of Technology and Queen's University Belfast, where Community Knowledge Exchanges are based in administrative departments, this has involved working within existing curricula whilst University College Cork, where the Community Knowledge Exchange is based within an academic department, a module has been developed specifically to engage students with communities.

### 3.1 Dublin Institute of Technology's Students Learning With Communities Programme

**The DIT Programme for Students Learning With Communities supports staff and students engaging in community-based learning and research and builds links with underserved community partners (local groups, not-for-profit organisations, charities etc) to develop real-life projects for mutual benefit. One example of the projects it supports is** an elective community based research module on the MA in Public Relations. It offers students a conceptual understanding of community based research, encourages them to consider issues of power and inequality in terms of reflection, but students are also expected to work collaboratively with community partners to co-create knowledge. Last year, students worked with three community partners to conduct primary research into the challenges of, and opportunities for, reaching particular target groups through their public relations and communications. For more information about SLWC see <http://www.dit.ie/ace/slwc>

### 3.2 University College Cork's Community Academic Research Links

Community-Academic Research Links is an initiative in UCC which provides independent research support to community and voluntary groups in the region. The research is undertaken by students in collaboration with the community partners across a wide range of disciplines and usually free of charge. Community Academic Research Links has developed a 5 credit module for postgraduate students which will expose them to the principles and practices of community based participatory research. Students will be encouraged to reconsider their research approach in order to include community partners in the design, collection, and analysis of the research, or, at a minimum, ensure that the findings of their research be relayed in a digestible manner to community groups most likely to be impacted by or interested in the findings. Students undertaking this module will also participate in a "Research Exchange Forum" to support the development of a research proposal by community groups. The proposals will then be listed on the CARL database as available CARL research projects. The pilot module is

available to postgraduate students in UCC for the 2014/15 academic year. CARL supports a number of research projects which are undertaken by undergraduate and postgraduate students annually as part of their course requirements, e.g. final year projects or Masters' dissertations. <http://carl.ucc.ie>

### 3.3 Queen's University Belfast's Science Shop

The Science Shop at Queen's University Belfast works across all university faculties linking the knowledge and skills of students and staff with community needs through course-based research projects and dissertations. One example where this work has become embedded in the curriculum is the Business Analysis module in the School of Management, which offers students an opportunity to work in groups on research issues within a consultancy type framework. All students on this course now carry out Science Shop projects. For example, in the last academic year a group of students worked with Bryson Recycling, a local social enterprise where profits are reinvested in one of Northern Ireland's longest standing social care charities, Bryson House. Students carried out time and motion studies to examine the productivity of a new recycling vehicle which was co-designed by Bryson Recycling, concluding that the new vehicle was significantly more productive than the previous design. For further information see a brief video on the website

<http://www.qub.ac.uk/sites/ScienceShop/>

## 4. Challenges for civic engagement through the curriculum

Civic engagement through the curriculum requires resources, in terms of time and funding, if potential benefits are to be fully enjoyed. A range of factors influence whether and how civic engagement through the curriculum is supported in HEIs. This section will briefly explore the

issues articulated by practitioners as part of their ongoing practice.

A major issue in resourcing civic engagement through the curriculum is staff time. Staff in HEIs face multiple challenges, including attracting research funding, recruiting and retaining students, widening participation, providing high-quality education for students, developing income-generating initiatives and responding to research opportunities with business and public sector organisations. Whilst there are supportive academics and institutions, it can be difficult for leaders and academics to create and nurture opportunities for public engagement through the curriculum given the above list of imperatives. There is also no systemic provision of support or continuing professional development in many HEIs (McEwen and Mason O'Connor, 2013). Where Community Knowledge Exchanges do not exist, academics struggle to find time to work with CSOs to develop research projects and where they do, they do not have the resources required to share this across other relevant disciplines. This work can be time intensive and requires initial set up as well as ongoing monitoring (Healey et al, 2013:49).

In addition, at present, many academics feel they are not sufficiently recognised for their work supporting community engaged learning. Engaged learning can require extra time in terms of academic supervision and building extra skills (O'Rourke, 2012). This is often not factored into workload modelling which can act as a disincentive for busy academics (Mason O'Connor et al, 2011:34). Experience in this field also suggests that engaged courses often rely on the commitment of a relatively small number of academic staff. This can lead to courses ceasing to exist when key staff members move on or retire. For engagement to become embedded in the curriculum, it needs to move beyond one or two committed members of staff and become core within academic programmes. Many institutions also do not value or reward community engagement through the curriculum in staff promotions criteria or student assessment criteria, nor do they have mechanisms in place to support it (Stoecker and Tryon, 2009).

Assessing engaged learning in a way that balances research outcomes for communities and learning outcomes for students can also be challenging for academics. Practitioners in the field report that academics can feel concerned about ensuring that there are clear assessment criteria which can apply to students on the same course who participate in engaged research versus those who do not. There can also be a concern amongst academic supervisors about managing the expectations of community partners. As Owen et al (2011) report, academics also feel that not all of the learning experienced by students is reflected in current assessment practices and they offer a range of useful resources to support the student assessment element of this work .

Finally it can be challenging for CSOs to find a way in to the HEI, negotiate disciplinary boundaries and identify the academic courses or course leaders who can help with their research needs. This takes time and many CSOs are not able to make the time commitment to develop relationships with a range of academics (Stoecker and Tryon, 2009). This is a question which merits further research.

## 5. Opportunities

The Hunt report (2011) articulated engagement as a key policy priority in Ireland. Whilst there are still few policy levers at an institutional level to drive this work forward, some funding has been found to enable networking in this area. The Higher Education Authority recently funded *Campus Engage*<sup>[i]</sup> 'to promote civic engagement as a core function of Higher Education on the island of Ireland, by better enabling HEIs, their staff and students across all disciplines, to engage with the needs of the communities they serve' (Campus Engage, 2014).

Practitioners involved in the PERARES project established the *Irish Network for Community-Engaged Research and Learning* (INCERL).[ii] INCERL provides a space for co-ordinators in the field of community engaged research and learning to share experiences and offer mutual support. Several members of INCERL also serve on Campus Engage working groups. Both Campus Engage and INCERL are linked to the UK based National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE)[iii] who play a key role in supporting public engagement in the UK and offer a range of useful resources.

Finally, the recently established *National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Ireland* 'will be a one-stop-shop and showcase for teaching excellence in Irish higher education that unlocks collective approaches to addressing common challenges. The National Forum will strive to ensure that all students have the best environment in which to learn, and that academics have the tools to provide excellence in teaching' (Higher Education Authority, 2013). Campus Engage and INCERL hope to work with National Forum to bring together curriculum development with community engagement.

Given that all three networks have a strategic interest in enhancing student engagement through the curriculum, the opportunity exists to move this work forward within Ireland.

There may also be an opportunity to move this work forward at an institutional level through the *Performance Evaluation Framework* (HEA, 2013). Whilst the current report offers a range of examples of international criteria for measuring engagement it does not undertake such a measurement for HEIs in Ireland, however it is anticipated that institutions will produce their own targets against which they will be measured and these will include indicators for civic engagement.

## 6. Key discussion points

Given the opportunities but also the challenges that exist, there is a need to continue discussions about how to take forward civic engagement through the curriculum in Ireland.

Key discussion points include:

**Synergy:** How best to harmonise and synergise the different policy agendas around public engagement, curriculum development and responding to community need if we are to create truly engaged universities.

**Research:** What types of research are needed to investigate the benefits and challenges for universities, students and CSOs working on community research issues.

**Recognition:** How HEIs and academics can be incentivised to support public engagement through the curriculum.

**Support:** How to encourage more Irish universities to set up support mechanisms for public engagement through the curriculum such as Science Shops and Community Knowledge Exchanges.

## 7. Conclusion

Embedding engaged learning opportunities which combine the pursuit of excellence in education with high-quality civic engagement will take time, energy and commitment from leaders and academics in universities and policymakers in the field of higher education. Good practice should be developed in this area or we risk Irish students not engaging with issues beyond the boundaries of the HEI, and failing to acquire the broad range of skills, knowledge and experience needed for our knowledge economy and knowledge society to flourish. We also lose the opportunity to expose future researchers to research impact and engagement at an early stage. The practice of co-creating learning opportunities for students in response to community need takes specialist skills and knowledge. Community Knowledge exchanges,

Science Shops and intermediary staff in these organisations can offer effective ways of sharing good practice between disciplines and departments, and supporting engaged learning. The opportunity exists to envision a truly engaged HEI sector which offers opportunities to undergraduates, postgraduates and staff to take a partnership approach to research issues. Enacting public engagement through the curriculum as a policy priority will encourage all groups to move forward towards the vision of the engaged HEI.

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[i] Campus Engage is a platform for the promotion of civic engagement activities in Irish higher education and is based at the Irish University Association (IUA). Campus Engage was recently awarded funding by Higher Education Authority (HEA) to drive activities to support a range of higher education community engagement practices to 2015. As a civic engagement platform, Campus Engage is open to all higher education institutions in Ireland, and aims to strengthen the relationship between higher education and the wider society, through the promotion of civic engagement activities in higher education and facilitating the sharing of knowledge and resources between academic and civic communities. For more information see <http://www.campusengage.ie/home>

[ii] INCERL was established as an outcome of the PERARES project. It is an inter-institutional All-Ireland initiative involved in coordinating, supporting and developing community based learning and research activities in Higher Education. The network plays a supportive role for individuals and groups working in coordination and development roles relating to Community Based Research (CBR) and Community Based Learning (CBL).

[iii] The National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement [NCCPE] was established in 2008 as part of the Beacons for Public Engagement Initiative. Funded by the Research Councils UK, HEFCE and the Wellcome Trust the NCCPE helps inspire and support universities to engage with the public.

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[1] According to the World Bank, "Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) therefore refer to a wide of array of organizations: community groups, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), labor unions, indigenous groups, charitable organizations, faith-based organizations, professional associations, and foundations".

[1] Study Financed by the European Community's Seventh Framework Programme (FP7/2007-2013) under *grant agreement* n° 244264. PERARES is an FP7 project funded by the European Commission. The views and opinions expressed in this publication are the sole responsibility of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Commission. This paper summarises learning from workpackage 7 of the Civic engagement with Research and Research Engagement with Society (PERARES) project which was funded by the European Commission under the Framework 7 programme. One element of this work has been examining civic engagement with research through the curriculum, trialling new ways of enabling students to make a contribution to communities by carrying out research on issues of community concern. For further information see <http://www.livingknowledge.org/livingknowledge/perares>

[1] Science Shops are not "shops" in the traditional sense of the word. They are small entities that carry out scientific research in a wide range of disciplines – usually free of charge and – on behalf of citizens and local civil society. The fact that Science shops respond to civil society's needs for expertise and knowledge is a key element that distinguish them from other knowledge transfer mechanisms. Science Shops are often, but not always, linked to or based in universities, where research is done by students as part of their curricula – under the supervision of the Science Shop and other associated (university) staff. For further information see [www.livingknowledge.org](http://www.livingknowledge.org)

[1] Campus Engage is a platform for the promotion of civic engagement activities in Irish higher education and is based at the Irish University Association (IUA). Campus Engage was recently awarded funding by Higher Education Authority (HEA) to drive activities to support a range of higher education community engagement practices to 2015. As a civic engagement platform, Campus Engage is open to all higher education institutions in Ireland, and aims to strengthen the relationship between higher education and the wider society, through the promotion of civic engagement activities in higher education and facilitating the sharing of knowledge and resources between academic and civic communities. For more information see <http://www.campusengage.ie/home>

[1] INCERL was established as an outcome of the PERARES project. It is an inter-institutional All-Ireland initiative involved in coordinating, supporting and developing community based learning and research activities in Higher Education. The network plays a supportive role for individuals and groups working in coordination and development roles relating to Community Based Research (CBR) and Community Based Learning (CBL).

[1] The National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement [NCCPE] was established in 2008 as part of the Beacons for Public Engagement Initiative. Funded by the Research Councils UK, HEFCE and the Wellcome Trust the NCCPE helps inspire and support universities to engage with the public.