

COMMUNITY-UNIVERSITY ENGAGEMENT

2021

Collective impact for a more equitable, just and sustainable future



University
of Victoria

**We acknowledge with respect the Lekwungen peoples on whose traditional territory
the University of Victoria stands and the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ peoples whose
historical relationships with the land continues today.**



“Our future, and the well-being of all our children rests with the kind of relationships we build today”.

– Chief Dr. Robert Joseph, A Hereditary Chief of the Gwawaenuk First Nation



INTRODUCTION

The University of Victoria's (UVic) vision is to "integrate outstanding scholarship, engaged learning and real-life involvement to contribute to a better future for people and the planet." The university's **Strategic Framework** highlights our ongoing commitment to excellence in community-engaged research and innovation to advance human knowledge, improve and enrich lives, tackle global challenges and promote the sustainability of the planet. Partnerships and community engagement are integral to this work and are woven into all six priorities of the Strategic Framework.

UVic is committed to working together with communities and key partners to co-create positive change. Continuing to support and build on the wide range of outstanding work already underway across campus and with partners, UVic is developing a Community-University Engagement (CUE) Collective Impact initiative.

The CUE Collective Impact initiative will animate UVic's Strategic Framework, and more specifically activate our efforts on Strategic Priority #6: Engage Locally and Globally. This initiative will support UVic and its partners to reach shared goals while upholding past and present experiences, relationships and knowledge in CUE. It will provide greater alignment between engagement priorities and the Strategic Framework, enhance co-ordination and synergies across the university and support the co-development of university-wide engagement goals, and strategic priorities for CUE.



HOW WE GOT HERE

In the fall of 2018, UVic's Community Engagement and Partnerships Advisory Committee (CEPAC) came together to discuss how to advance our new Strategic Framework commitments with respect to community-university engagement (i.e., Engage Locally and Globally). CEPAC's diverse representation with participation from Research, External Affairs as well as Faculty provides an opportunity for cross-portfolio collaboration and representation from members with a wide range of experience, background and goals.

The Committee believes a UVic Community University Engagement Collective Impact initiative will help guide this work. This document informs the development of this initiative, with recommendations on how to most strategically build on our strengths and to take a more visible leadership role in community university engagement.



MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL PARTNERSHIPS

Community-university engagement (CUE) is a term that describes the intentional relationship between a university and its larger community (this can include local as well as national and international community members, organizations, businesses, government, etc.). The goal of these relationships is to build a mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources that can contribute to more sustainable, just and healthy communities.

The term 'community' in the context of community-university engagement includes both internal and external partners. The internal community are individuals affiliated with the university and the campus including staff, faculty, instructors, researchers and students. The external community include partners outside of the campus both locally and internationally. It includes neighbours, First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples, civil society, governments, private sector and other educational and research organizations.

The underlying attribute of community-university engagement is reciprocity—where all partners benefit from the relationship as they work together to reach shared goals.

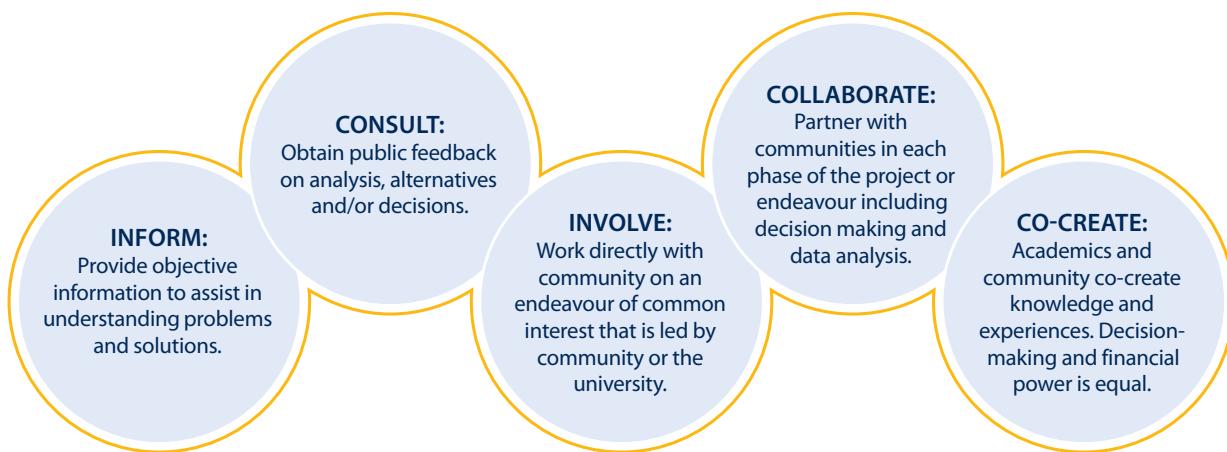
The university has established strong partnerships in the public, private and civil society sectors, as well as with local Indigenous communities and a number of Indigenous communities worldwide. These relationships tend to manifest in the following ways:

COMMUNITY-ENGAGED LEARNING Collaborative experiences (between students, instructors and community) that enhance learning and contribute to community.	COMMUNITY-ENGAGED RESEARCH A collaborative approach to research that equitably involves all partners in the research process and recognizes the unique strengths that each brings.	COMMUNITY RELATIONS Working in partnership with local communities to ensure strong relationships and collaboration on shared challenges and opportunities.	KNOWLEDGE MOBILIZATION A range of activities that foster a culture in which researchers and non-academic partners create, share and/or apply knowledge to benefit society.	GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT Partnering with institutions globally to advance purposeful relationships that have global impact.
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HOW WE ENGAGE

There are a number of ways UVic faculty, students and staff engage the broader community.



OUR GOAL

To engage our university community and external partners to develop and nurture mutually beneficial, inclusive and strategic partnerships that positively impact people and the planet.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following principles guide UVic's decisions and actions related to community-university engagement:

Strategic Alignment:	CUE initiatives are aligned with the Strategic Framework and bring the Strategic Framework and other institutional plans to life.
Relevance:	Partnerships are focused on ideas and innovation grounded in issues, opportunities and applications to help solve real world problems.
Reciprocity:	Initiatives provide mutual benefit to the university and its partner(s) and help realize shared goals.
Accountability:	We recognize our responsibilities to contribute to society and the democratization of knowledge. The CUE Collective Impact initiative will include transparent systems and processes to clarify and celebrate how those involved are delivering on responsibilities.
Clarity:	Each partner shares a common understanding of expectations around objectives, roles, responsibilities, process and evaluation.
Fluidity:	Processes and goals developed with partners are iterative to change, reviewed regularly and adjusted accordingly to reflect continuous improvement.



GROWING OUR COLLECTIVE IMPACT – A PROCESS FOR WORKING TOGETHER

Our goal, through the collective impact initiative, is to make ourselves stronger than the sum of our parts and advance work at an institutional/campus-wide and strategic level, while supporting and celebrating the outstanding everyday work of faculty, instructors, researchers, staff, students and community partners.

Finding solutions to complex problems is best done with diverse groups of people, all of whom bring different knowledge, expertise and experience to the table. Engaging in cross-sector collaboration, with people who agree on a common agenda and structure to address a challenging topic is known as collective impact. The CUE Collective Impact initiative aims to stimulate alignment between existing and new initiatives that support engagement in key priority areas.

Collective impact strategies bring together a broad spectrum of public, private and civil society organizations to catalyze action-oriented partnerships in solving challenges. These partnerships generate a mutually beneficial and enabling environment in which the co-creation of knowledge can address local and global challenges and drive sustainable change. The outcomes of these partnerships usually are place-based and context-specific to a city or region, and are designed to drive change across entire systems.





AREAS FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION

UVic is committed to addressing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and aligning our institutional contributions through research, education, operations and community partnerships to tackle local and global challenges. As an incubator for new knowledge and creative approaches to solving challenges, UVic's Collective Impact Initiative supports applied, community-driven research and learning opportunities, knowledge mobilization and local-global partnerships addressing key priority areas linked to the SDGs.

Fostering meaningful relationships rooted in Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (JEDI) and honouring Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Being are central to our work and woven throughout our approach.

Our Collective Impact initiative builds on UVic's key priority areas of *Climate & Sustainability* and *Health & Wellbeing* through mutually beneficial and reciprocal partnerships (Goal 17).



For more information please contact engagewithus@uvic.ca.