



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA



University of Minnesota Twin Cities
**PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT
ACTION PLAN**
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OFFICE FOR
PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

engagement.umn.edu



An action plan for reciprocal public engagement at the Twin Cities campus

1. Strategic Integration

VISION: *Public engagement principles and practices are integrated into the campus's key institutional policies and priorities within and across programs and units.*

ACTION STEPS:

- Integrate public engagement with the University's teaching, research, and outreach efforts
- Eliminate policies and practices that hinder University-community partnerships and development
- Use public engagement as an interdisciplinary approach to address society's grand challenges
- Develop college-specific public engagement action plans
- Embed public engagement strategies into the University's core functions
- Establish a peer network of universities to gain insight into innovative approaches to advancing public engagement

2. Scholarly Value of Engagement

VISION: *Public engagement is widely valued as essential to advancing the campus's scholarly agenda.*

ACTION STEPS:

- Incorporate a public engagement frame into the review, promotion, and reward systems for students, staff, and faculty
- Make public engagement an integral component to grand challenges research and grand challenges curriculum initiatives
- Inspire academic leaders to recognize the scholarly value of public engagement
- Expand professional development opportunities to incorporate public engagement into scholarly work
- Establish metrics for measuring outcomes of publicly-engaged research, teaching, and service
- Establish peer feedback mechanisms for engaged scholars
- Expand opportunities for academic units to recognize the role of public engagement in advancing scholarship
- Strengthen promotion and tenure committees' capacity to assess engaged scholarship
- Identify grand challenges that are best addressed through publicly-engaged scholarship

3. Student Experiences and Development

VISION: *All University of Minnesota students participate in and help shape academically-integrated and co-curricular community-engaged learning that prepares them to be active community members, civic participants, professionals, and scholars.*

ACTION STEPS:

- Secure funding and support for all students to access community-engaged learning opportunities
- Develop student community-engaged learning action plans for every college
- Increase funding for faculty and instructional staff training on community-engaged learning
- Provide adequate funding to units that facilitate community-engaged learning opportunities
- Provide training to academic advisors on community-engaged learning opportunities
- Develop campus-community learning partnerships that address grand challenge themes
- Promote community-engaged learning in student recruitment, admission, and orientation messages
- Create public engagement living-learning communities
- Offer dedicated funds to community-engaged student organizations
- Train students on responsibilities of reciprocal public engagement activities
- Develop a program for advisors to support graduate students interested in community-engaged research

Core Values for Advancing the Institutionalization of Public Engagement

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

- Advances the University's research, teaching, and public service missions
- Honors diverse forms of knowledge
- Promotes sustainable campus-community partnerships
- Is responsive to community needs and concerns
- Requires equitable sharing of power, knowledge, and intention
- Must be reciprocal and mutually beneficial for all stakeholders
- Is prioritized to serve Minnesota communities, but embraces engagement from local to global
- Is a strategy to accomplish institutional priorities
- Institutionalization is a shared responsibility

4. Community Connections

VISION: *The campus supports equitable, sustainable, and mutually beneficial relationships and partnerships that are co-created with non-profits, community groups, educational institutions, government agencies, businesses, and industry at local, regional, state, national, and global levels.*

ACTION STEPS:

- Secure funding to enhance University-community partnerships
- Improve and increase connection channels between the University and community
- Improve and increase community members' access to campus space and resources
- Implement innovative approaches that deepen reciprocal engagement
- Incorporate community voices into relevant University policy and decision making
- Systematically assess and communicate the impact of public engagement to stakeholders and partners

5. Cultivating and Supporting Campus Leaders

VISION: *Across all colleges and units, the faculty, students, and staff who lead the advancement of public engagement are supported and celebrated.*

ACTION STEPS:

- Increase talent pool of publicly-engaged faculty, staff, and students through hiring and admissions
- Promote opportunities to develop leadership skills among publicly-engaged faculty and staff
- Expand incentives for faculty, staff, and students to serve as public engagement ambassadors
- Create endowed chairs for campus and community leaders
- Celebrate publicly-engaged leaders through system-wide events and central campus communications
- Reward and retain publicly-engaged faculty, staff, and students

6. Internal Coordination and Collaboration

VISION: *A collaborative culture draws expertise from across the campus to build alliances that allow public engagement to flourish and maximize its impact.*

ACTION STEPS:

- Effectively communicate public engagement activities and opportunities
- Align the multiple engagement agendas of central campus administrative units
- Coordinate and align community ports of entry to the campus
- Increase sharing of resources and best practices across engaged units
- Maximize support for public engagement staff positions
- Include public engagement learning outcomes in curriculum development
- Create public engagement administrative support that promotes efficiency, cross-college communication, and high-quality service

7. Visibility and Value

VISION: Stakeholders (e.g., students, faculty, staff, community members, legislators) of the University of Minnesota value and laud the public engagement that strengthens our teaching, research, and service.

ACTION STEPS:

- Align the University's overarching communication strategies and practices with public engagement values
- Expand opportunities for communication staff to promote public engagement efforts
- Support University participation in conferences to present on public engagement efforts
- Address the implications of the subtext of University messaging for community partnerships
- Support faculty, staff, student, and community partner participation in communicating about public engagement in a variety of mediums
- Leverage University's external relationships to raise visibility of public engagement activities
- Include public engagement messaging in recruitment and orientation materials
- Create a physical representation that honors public engagement on campus
- Ensure University messages are accessible to intended audiences and stakeholders

8. Accounting and Assessment

VISION: A campus-wide framework accounts for and assesses the impact of public engagement on students, faculty, communities, and the institution.

ACTION STEPS:

- Cultivate data sharing practices that track and record public engagement activities
- Create a tool that documents on-going partnerships
- Embed engagement questions into existing data collection processes
- Systematically elicit feedback from stakeholder communities on University issues
- Annually compile and analyze public engagement data to document impact
- Identify and catalogue public engagement best practices
- Annually assess progress of the Public Engagement Action Plan

9. Leveraging Extramural Resources

VISION: The campus has proactive, coordinated leadership and aligned resources that advance bold initiatives that inspire funders and enhance campus capacity to support public engagement.

ACTION STEPS:

- Create a public engagement landing page on umn.edu
- Identify funding opportunities that support public engagement
- Secure external funding sources to create student, staff, and faculty development programs
- Create resources and technical assistance repository to support campus-community partnerships
- Seed and support innovative public engagement initiatives
- Promote campus-community partnership stories that inspire funders

10. Local, National, and International Networking

VISION: Connections to the engagement field are broad and deep.

ACTION STEPS:

- Identify and coordinate local, national, and international opportunities that recognize exemplary public engagement
- Support involvement in local, national, and international engagement networks and conferences
- Support dissemination of engagement work through publications and other opportunities
- Create communities of practice to increase knowledge production and dissemination
- Encourage scholars to serve on editorial boards of engagement journals
- Advocate for integration of public engagement into national program accreditation requirements

OFFICE FOR
PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
Driven to DiscoverSM

The University of Minnesota Office for Public Engagement is a unit of the University's Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost. Copyright 2017 Regents of the University of Minnesota. All rights reserved.

The University of Minnesota is an equal opportunity educator and employer.