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# **➤ Engaging With External Partners**

## **Recommended Principles, Guidelines and Action Plan Components**



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# 1.0 Message from the EWEP Commitment

## Leaders – Keith Carlson and Peggy Schmeiser

It was with some trepidation (when contemplating the scope of the project), but a great deal of enthusiasm (when thinking of the possibilities), that we accepted the provost's invitation to work under the executive sponsorship of the Vice-President Advancement, Heather Magotiaux, and become co-leaders for advancing the university's commitment to engagement with external partners (EWEP). This was a new approach to planning at the University of Saskatchewan, and one that appealed to us for what it signalled about the value the institution's leadership placed on external engagement as part of the institution's role in planning and operations—especially across both college and administrative spheres.

Among other things, the process of moving this commitment forward taught us a great deal about the way the university functions. The University of Saskatchewan is, as we came to more fully appreciate, a complex medical-doctoral research intensive university that values interpersonal relationships. As such, things get done on this campus not only because certain procedures are in place to channel information and communication, but because the campus fosters a culture that values people knowing one another and genuinely caring about the success of their colleagues and the university as a whole. This report seeks to build upon these existing strengths and to recommend ways of building capacity and creating opportunities in areas where challenges currently exist.

To provide us with guidance and direction, we began our work as commitment leaders by pulling together a committee of people who had a passion for outreach and engagement, were experienced partnership builders, and who were themselves influential faculty and administrators who were already tasked within their own units with building and strengthening partnerships with people and organizations on and off campus. This group met regularly during the term of the second integrated plan, and they provided the framework and much of the content for what follows. Later in the process, the advancement office provided us with access to staff and resources that enabled the important literature review and related consultative research to be completed. We want to sincerely thank and acknowledge the working group members, and the members of the subcommittee who contributed so directly to the ideas and drafting of this report.

### Working Group Members

- **Keith Carlson**, professor of history, interim director, Interdisciplinary Centre for Culture and Creativity
- **Peggy Schmeiser**, director of government relations, Office of the President
- **Tom Allen**, associate professor and CIBC chair in entrepreneurship, bioresource policy, business and economics
- **Peter Butt**, associate professor, Department of Academic Family Medicine
- **Doug Clark**, associate vice-president, Development University Advancement
- **Leigh-Ellen Keating**, director of the International Office, International Office Services
- **Dean McNeill**, professor, Department of Music
- **Pat Perry**, special advisor to the Vice-President Research on Strategic Research Projects
- **Bill Thomlinson**, executive director, Canadian Light Source
- **Brij Verma**, director of research- science, College of Arts and Science
- **Greg Poelzer**, director, International Centre for Northern Governance and development associate professor, Department of Political Studies
- **Jeff Schoenau**, Ministry of Agriculture Strategic Research Chair, Department of Soil Science
- **Melana Soroka**, director of alumni relations, University Advancement
- **Martin Gonzalez De Souza**, assistant director, Consumer Services
- **Nola Woods**, community relations specialist, University Advancement
- **Gail Shivak**, associate director, Development (Corporate Relations), University Advancement
- **Candace Wasacase-Lafferty**, director of First Nations and Metis Engagement, University Advancement
- **Andy Sargent**, communications co-ordinator, University Advancement
- **Jonathan Clapperton**, research analyst, University Advancement

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# 1.0 Message from the EWEP Commitment

Each member of the working group made significant contributions to advancing our commitment area, but we want to especially pay tribute to Nola Woods, Jon Clapperton, Pat Perry and Andy Sargent for the special effort and time they devoted to this project. They did the heavy lifting, especially when it came to the literature reviews, and Jon additionally drafted this report. Without them, this project simply could not have advanced in the way that it did.

Likewise, as commitment leaders responsible for external partnerships we attempted to work closely with similar commitment leaders and executive sponsors. This report is directly informed by conversations with Tom Allen, Peter Stoicheff, Charlotte Ross, Lyn Currie, Jacquie Thomarat, Baljit Singh, Jim Greer, Glen Schuler, Karen Chad, and Joan Greyeyes.

We also want to acknowledge and recognize the assistance and guidance provided by Kyla Shea, Strategic Planning and Projects Officer, and by Jennifer Millard, Communications Specialist. Likewise, our work as commitment leaders would not have been nearly as efficient and well co-ordinated had we not been able to draw upon the superlative administrative assistance of LaVina Williams, Eleanor Peppard, and Jean Goldie.

And of course we acknowledge and draw attention to the leadership and guidance that Heather Magotiaux provided us throughout the second integrated plan in her capacity as our executive sponsor. Her knowledge of university systems and procedures, and her vision for an engaged university, served not only to inspire but to genuinely motivate us.

We see the University of Saskatchewan as being at a critical juncture. The Institutional Positioning Project, recently undertaken to pinpoint our unique place in the post-secondary sector, involved extensive research and consultation with both internal and external stakeholders. Key stakeholders told us that we are seen to embrace collaborative relationships and make connections in our community and around the world. We need to ensure that these positive perceptions are well-aligned with reality as we continue to strengthen and build our university reputation. Taken as a whole, we do not currently have a distinguished national or international reputation as a leader in outreach and engagement, nor are we necessarily distinguished for partnership building. Indeed, in some ways and in some areas we have lost some of the competitive edge that we formerly celebrated. And there is no question that certain units and faculty on campus are doing remarkable work in these areas. Individually, and in particular areas, sectors, and disciplines, we have a reputation for excellence in partnership building, and many others on campus are looking for guidance and support to achieve the same. There is no question in our minds that the energy and desire – indeed commitment – exists on campus to distinguish ourselves in this area. The following report and its recommendations are our efforts to advancing this aspiration, and to position the University of Saskatchewan as a recognized national and international leader in this field.

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# 1.1 Executive Summary

The University of Saskatchewan's Second Integrated Plan: Toward an Engaged University 2008-2012 identified the theme of engaging with external partners as one of its key areas of commitment. The purpose of this commitment was to investigate and advance U of S activity relating to its outreach and engagement mandate – including its pursuit of effective partnerships.

Following wide engagement, deliberation and consultation with internal and external sources, the commitment leaders and working group prepared the following report to outline their work, process of investigation, findings and recommendations (in the form of proposed principles, guidelines and action). In doing so, it is hoped that this work will encourage and inform academic and administrative commitment to a range of activities designed to strengthen the University of Saskatchewan as a truly engaged institution where partnerships support and enable world-class scholarship, knowledge transfer, and service.

It is important to clarify this report is not meant to imply support for new bureaucratic or administrative oversight processes. Rather, all of the recommendations, guidelines and principles that aspire to enable all faculty and units, to establish systems and processes that will facilitate effective and efficient communication between partners and faculty unit training (ie. capacity building). These will improve the ability of potential external partners to find their way onto campus so robust strategic partnerships to be built and sustained, allowing existing partnerships can be leveraged and enriched. Put succinctly, we want potential partners to be able to find the university's front door while we keep the communication between the university and existing partners flowing freely through comfortable existing back doors, side doors, and windows.

## Engagement Goals

**In the course of its deliberations, the working group identified two overarching goals. These serve as a framework for broader recommendations:**

1. The U of S will foster and model a culture that values external partnerships as critical to innovative scholarly research and teaching.
2. The U of S will be distinguished for its engagement program at local, provincial, national and international levels.

The findings of the working group as presented in this report are based on extensive consultation and research. We sought to identify what already worked well and what needed attention to enhance engagement by the U of S. We found, for example, that while the decentralized and often unco-ordinated aspects of partnership creation at the U of S have allowed many partnerships to develop and thrive, many opportunities are being overlooked. Several external partners indicated that they were unaware of the possibilities available at the U of S; were frustrated by the approach to partnerships; and often did not know who to contact or where to go to initiate a partnership – or even who to contact to simply get information.

To advance the engagement goals and address gaps identified above, it is recommended that the University of Saskatchewan adopt the proposed principles, guidelines and action plan components developed by the working group for engaging with external partners as outlined in this report. These recommendations are summarized as follows:

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# 1.1 Executive Summary

## **Proposed Principles for Engaged Partnerships:**

- 1. Engaged partnerships are mutually beneficial.** Both the university and its partners agree on related goals and strategies, and work to ensure the needs of both partners are met.
- 2. Partners must work to build and maintain respect and trust.** All projects will maintain the highest standards of ethics, integrity and sensitivity, and recognize the valuable skills and capacities of each partner.
- 3. Collaboration is critical to effective partnerships.** While all partners may not contribute equally at all stages of a partnership, all partners should have the opportunity to influence a project's design, implementation, evaluation and dissemination.
- 4. Communication must be clear and regular,** and should flow in multiple directions with partners reporting regularly on all activities and developments relating to the partnership.
- 5. Partnerships must be innovative in ways that recognize that each partnership is unique and dynamic.** Engaged partnerships mean developing innovative responses to the barriers and challenges that emerge.
- 6. Partnerships should contribute to a culture of engagement.** Research results and teaching experiences from partnerships will be of high quality and will contribute to creating new partnerships from existing ones.

## **Proposed Guidelines for Engaged Partnerships:**

- 1. Maximize partnerships.** Those involved in creating and maintaining partnerships should strive to leverage the relationships for multiple purposes. Partners should be encouraged to incorporate scholarship and research, teaching and learning, and service goals into their objectives, and they should seek to be interdisciplinary. When appropriate, research partnerships should be leveraged into teaching partnerships and vice versa.
- 2. Establish common ground.** The most enduring partnerships are those that have clearly defined objectives. Partners determine benefits together, and agree on who will contribute what resources, what products/activities will result, and how such products/activities will be disseminated.
- 3. Define milestones.** Milestones should include both short and long-term goals, understanding that the completion of short-term action plans can boost partner morale, improve involvement, and demonstrate the effectiveness of the partnership.
- 4. Assess and report regularly.** All partners should engage in a self-assessment of progress, difficulties and barriers. They should identify the partnership's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT), and then jointly revise the partnership plans as necessary.
- 5. View partnerships as dynamic.** Partnerships rarely unfold as planned, so strategies should be dynamic. As the environment evolves, strategies and priorities should be adapted to meet both long and short-term goals.
- 6. Enhance opportunities for colleagues.** Whether engaging as individuals or collectives, members of academic or administrative units are all part of a broader university community. Partnerships and engagement should enhance the institutional reputation and ideally open up possibilities for others to benefit and collaborate.
- 7. Ensure all partners feel equal.** All partners need to possess the ability to act. External partners appreciate meetings taking place off campus and university partners making the effort to come to them. This helps to address issues of intimidation and power imbalances, and creates greater trust and openness.

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# 1.1 Executive Summary

## Proposed Components of an Action Plan

### 1. Improve internal co-ordination of outreach and engagement.

Enhancing co-ordination will likely be the greatest challenge to fulfilling engagement goals. The U of S does not have a database of current outreach and engagement activities and virtually every campus unit carries out some form of external partnering. New structures and processes are needed to help new and existing partners (internal and external) navigate the complex structures of the university.

### 2. Make it easier to partner.

The most important aspect of creating a partnership is building a relationship. We need to find ways to help new and existing partners navigate the complex structures of the university.

### 3. Foster a culture of engagement (including through incentives).

The most important aspect of creating partnerships is valuing and building relationships. The culture and thinking at the U of S must be transformed so that engagement is valued as a fundamental component of successful teaching and research. Doing so will result in the growth of partnerships, increased capacity and resources through partnership leveraging, and partners who are more aware of university priorities. Further, without significant involvement from faculty, the goal of making the U of S an engaged university will fail. The U of S needs to encourage and reward faculty who participate in outreach and engagement as a component of their scholarship and teaching.

### 4. Integrate engagement into the student experience.

Students are the university's most important resources but they are too often not directly involved in engaged partnerships. Involvement in community-based research and experiential learning, including community service learning, opportunities for students is an incentive for many external partners.

Among the numerous recommended systems/processes, structures and initiatives proposed in this report, the working group wishes to draw particular attention to the following recommendations:

- a co-ordinated communication mechanism should be created to facilitate engagement internally and externally;
- tenure, promotion and hiring guidelines should reflect the value of engagement;
- a mechanism for dialogue and feedback from internal and external partners should be developed;
- a database of outreach and engagement activities on campus should be created;
- an outreach and engagement handbook for community partners that highlights opportunities for partnership with the U of S should be developed and distributed;
- incentives should be created to encourage faculty to incorporate outreach and engagement, as well as community-based research, experiential learning (including community service learning), into their undergraduate and graduate teaching, and scholarship and research; and
- when adjudicating new proposals for funding, we invite decision makers at the U of S to adopt criteria that explicitly recognizes the value of outreach and engagement.

As the commitment leaders for the Engaging with External Partners commitment for the IP2 planning cycle, we submit this report with the intention and hope that it might form a basis for a renewed culture and distinction at the University of Saskatchewan in its engagement with external partners.

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## 2.0 Introduction: New Approaches to Outreach and Engagement

In his acclaimed 1982 publication *Beyond the Ivory Tower: Social Responsibilities of the Modern University*, Derek Bok argued that in order for universities to fulfil their obligations to society they would need to increase the quality and quantity of their partnerships with external audiences. Since then, universities worldwide have fundamentally redefined their relationship to the broader community. Historically and more recently, established and emerging universities worldwide recognize the vital need to engage and collaborate with external partners. Seminal works by Ernest Boyer (1990; 1996) and of the U.S.-based Kellogg Commission (1999) served as inspirations for this movement, the latter cited extensively in North American higher education documents on outreach and engagement, including the University of Saskatchewan's 2006 Foundational Document on Outreach and Engagement: *Linking with Communities for Discovery and Learning (OEFD)*. Universities are arguably experiencing an "engagement renaissance."

Working with the community is nothing new for the University of Saskatchewan. Outreach and engagement with cultural, artistic, ethnic and Aboriginal communities, as well as governments and organizations, industries and businesses, remains an essential component of the U of S' activities and identity, our institutional history and academic culture. All colleges and units benefit from external relationships to strengthen teaching, learning, research and

innovation. The *Second Integrated Plan: Toward an Engaged University* (2008) recognized the commitment the U of S has made to engage with its partners locally and more broadly.

Despite the importance of outreach and engagement to the University of Saskatchewan, the institution still lacks a set of overall principles, guidelines, identified actions and assessment procedures for governing or guiding its partnerships. There are currently no campus-wide structures to enrich, facilitate, and monitor partnerships. Against this backdrop, the U of S Second Integrated Plan sought to address these gaps by initiating the Engaging with External Partners (EWEP) Commitment.

The results of this commitment area work are detailed in this report. Overall, it finds that a systematic alignment of outreach and engagement vision and activities is vital if the University of Saskatchewan wishes to remain competitive in a mobilized post-secondary arena, to enhance its academic pre-eminence, to reaffirm its sense of place, and, most importantly, to answer the demands of its constituents both internally and externally. By aligning our policies, procedures, and structures for engaging with external partners, the university will not only enrich faculty scholarship, student experience, and institutional financial stability, but it will lay the foundation for ensuring that the U of S finds its place among the top tier of engaged universities worldwide.

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## 2.1 Purposes to this Report

Meaningful, enriching and mutually beneficial partnerships are not only difficult to establish, they require hard work to maintain. But the benefits are worth it. Partnerships make significant contributions to scholarship, teaching and our sense of place and identity. At this particular juncture in history, the opportunity exists for the University of Saskatchewan to become the pre-eminent Canadian leader in engagement. In doing so, outreach and engagement activities would contribute to enhancing the reputation, the relationships, and resources necessary to cement its position among the most distinguished universities in Canada and the world.

The following report provides recommendations to fulfil this ambitious goal by positioning the U of S for wider outreach and more intensive engagement. It is intended to guide the enactment of outreach and engagement on campus and create a baseline to ensure a degree of continuity for assessing these activities. Specifically, this report fulfils the OEFD's vision to bring together the various initiatives that are currently underway (or in development) in a more co-ordinated matter, including a centralized presence and a focal point for our efforts. Elements include:

- articulating the multi-faceted nature of outreach and engagement;
- recommendations for principles and guidelines on how to appropriately build and enrich external partnerships and realize the potential of outreach and engagement activities at the university;
- goals and action items that could be followed to realize the goals of the OEFD and carry over into the Third Integrated Plan;
- a description of new systems/processes and structures could be integrated into the existing U of S governance structure to remedy the sometimes eclectic approach that characterizes current engagements while minimizing bureaucratic growth and oversight;
- a baseline that ensures a degree of continuity for assessing outreach and engagement activities while recognizing that each project will have unique characteristics;
- points of consideration for the university to improve existing partnerships, initiate new ones and allocate resources and funding; and
- institutional procedures that recognize the value of faculty building and sustaining external partnerships to enhance their scholarly research and their teaching to encourage and create opportunities for innovations, student-centred curriculum, experiential and service learning.

This document is not an end point, rather a reference guide to enable the university as a whole to orient itself towards an outreach and engagement mandate of enhancing existing partnerships and creating new ones. We heard and are sensitive to the voices that warned of the dangers of creating a centralized bottle-neck for managing all outreach and engagement on campus. Likewise, the recommendations here are not intended to supplant existing partnerships. Each college, department and unit will be responsible for articulating and assessing their own outreach and engagement agendas—agendas the university will support, complement and enrich. To that end, this report should be treated, like the OEFD, as a “living document.”

There should be no doubt, however, that a greater systematic organization of outreach and engagement activities at the U of S must occur in order for the university's overall strategic goals to be achieved. This is not suggesting that a new process must begin. Rather, that the current process (dating at least as far back as the U of S's 2002 Strategic Directions) must gain momentum. The OEFD recommended that the “university as a whole organize itself to move in the direction of wider outreach and more intensive engagement.” The institution's Second Integrated Plan affirmed this strategic position. Within the second integrated planning process several initiatives linked to partnership building and outreach and engagement have been considered for institutional support. Many of these were informed by, if not formally supported by, the EWEP Commitment Working Group and its Commitment Leaders. Further developing the university's outreach and engagement program will continue to feature prominently in the currently unfolding Third Integrated Plan.

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## 2.2 Focusing on Outreach and Engagement

The OEFD highlighted the goal of improving the U of S' outreach and engagement activities in order to "ensure that we are known amongst our peer institutions as a university with a distinctive mission and a true connection to its 'sense of place.'" At the time the OEFD was written, few universities in Canada had a central organizing structure to support partnership building and encourage growth in engagement. Today, a short half-decade later, that situation has dramatically changed.

Outreach and engagement initiatives have accelerated in light of changing national and international economic and social environments that have seen university financial resources clipped and the public asking hard questions about the value and purpose of a university education. As detailed in the OEFD, many within the province have not regarded the U of S as being receptive to and supportive of the province's communities. Many of our programs are seen as dated rather than innovative, and too many of the children of alumni are choosing to leave the province for postsecondary education elsewhere. While the findings of a recent survey provide evidence that the U of S does have a respected reputation amongst provincial residents,<sup>1</sup> the U of S, like other universities across North America, will continue to struggle with the perception of our being an "ivory tower" that is unresponsive to community demands, that acts slowly and unwieldy, and that has structures and programs that are out of touch and irrelevant to contemporary concerns. With these perceptions comes increasing demands from the public for university

accountability, cost containment, relevance and productivity. More specifically, faculty get criticized for pursuing research at the expense of teaching, and for worrying more about professional advancement than service to the community. Administrators, meanwhile, face unprecedented scrutiny from legislators, students, parents and faculty concerning rising costs, limited access, large class sizes and a perceived lack of accountability.<sup>2</sup> Scholarly and public accusations have coincided with those critiques suggesting that institutions of higher learning have become either sanctuaries for self indulgent and disconnected academics or too closely aligned with industry and commercial enterprises.<sup>3</sup>

Outreach and engagement are means by which the university can address the above issues, by:

- positioning the institution as indispensable to healthy innovative economic growth;
- promoting and explaining the relevance and significance of faculty scholarship and student programs to addressing pressing societal issues and concerns;
- promoting the commercial application of innovative scholarship;"
- promoting the value of a university degree in a global system increasingly reliant upon knowledge exchange;
- leveraging research partnerships into teaching opportunities, and teaching partnerships into research opportunities; and
- recognizing that external partnerships assist in the construction of knowledge through the sharing of resources and the facilitating of greater teaching, learning, and scholarly research opportunities.

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<sup>1</sup> Fast Consulting, "University of Saskatchewan Provincial Perception Survey," Unpublished Report prepared for University Advancement, University of Saskatoon, July 2011.

<sup>2</sup> These myriad concerns were identified by EWEP Working Group members, faculty consulted by EWEP, as well as external partners interviewed for this report. The broader concerns are also reflected in: Kellogg Commission on the Future of State and Land-Grant Universities, *Returning to Our Roots: The Engaged University* (Washington, D.C.: National Association of State University and Land-Grant Colleges, 1999), 9; Jeffrey C. Bridger and Theodore R. Alter, "The Engaged University, Community Development, and Public Scholarship," *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement* 11.1 (2006): 163; Derek Bok, *Beyond the Ivory Tower: Social Responsibilities of the Modern University* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982), 14.

<sup>3</sup> See for examples: Derek Bok, *Universities in the Marketplace: The Commercialization of Higher Education* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2003); E. Gould, *The University in a Corporate Culture* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003); D. Kirp, Shakespeare, Einstein, and the Bottom Line: *The Marketing of Higher Education* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003); Jennifer Washburn, *University, Inc: The Corporate Corruption of Higher Education* (New York: Basic Books, 2005); Howard Woodhouse, *Selling Out: Academic Freedom and the Corporate Market* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009). Such issues are also discussed periodically in newspapers, such as by editorialists Margaret Wente in the *Globe and Mail* and Bronwyn Eyre in the *StarPhoenix*.

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## 2.2 Focusing on Outreach and Engagement

Indeed, the highest rated universities in Canada and abroad place much emphasis on outreach and engagement relationships and designate specific resources (e.g. people, systems, funding) to these programs. They also often provide clear means of rewarding and recognizing faculty and students for their contribution to building partnerships and to engagement broadly. Moreover, research and consultations undertaken by the working group on Engaging with External Partners show that the universities which are most successful in receiving funding assume a proactive, balanced approach to partnering; relationships are strategically formed to support the thematic focus and direction of each institution.<sup>4</sup>

Recognizing these benefits, institutions across the country have created or are in the process of establishing offices (or centres/institutes) of community-based research/outreach and engagement to support and enhance existing partnerships, to facilitate the creation of new ones, and to work together more effectively across unit and institutional boundaries. The U of S can build on the successes and failures of these existing programs, complement rather than replicate what others are doing in order to carve our own niche, and become national leaders in outreach and engagement. As in 2008 when the Second Integrated Plan committed the U of S to think of itself as an engaged institution, the opportunity remains to “develop a concept of engagement uniquely suited to our circumstances that builds on a comparative advantage.”<sup>5</sup>

We are living in a world where knowledge generation and knowledge exchange define university success; an environment in which the attraction, retention, creativity and engagement of educated people is key to success in a community, province, region and nation. Universities are thus uniquely positioned to bridge cultural, economic, business/industry and structural divides within society. They have research capacity found nowhere else, they have the capability to draw on an immense breadth and depth of resources and knowledge, and they are publicly valued.<sup>6</sup> As observed in the OEFD, more people want more contact in more ways with the knowledge created in and around universities. It is increasingly recognized that university graduates contribute more than just financially—they provide intellectual enrichment to communities and are more likely to be civically engaged.<sup>7</sup> Additionally, beneficial partnerships have never been so important to the success of our university.

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<sup>4</sup> This research includes unpublished reports prepared for the University of Saskatchewan: “Inventory of Outreach and Engagement Initiatives: University of Saskatchewan, 2005,” (2005); Laura Zinc, “Background Paper: Community-University Partnership Infrastructure,” (2009); Pat Perry, “Environmental Scan and Research of Successful Community-University Relations, Principles and Programs,” (2009); Pat Perry, “Partnering for Success: A Discussion Paper Prepared for the University of Saskatchewan Task Force on Strategic Partnerships,” (2010).

<sup>5</sup> Integrated Planning, *The Second Integrated Plan: Toward an Engaged University* (University of Saskatchewan, 2008), 30.

<sup>6</sup> University of Saskatchewan, *The Foundational Document on Outreach and Engagement: Linking with Communities for Discovery and Learning* (University of Saskatchewan, 2006). See also: Eugene P. Trani and Robert D. Holsworth. “The Indispensable University: Higher Education, Economic Development, and the Knowledge Economy,” (Lanham, MD: Roman and Littlefield Publishers, 2010).

<sup>7</sup> AUCC report.

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## 2.3 Definitions

Before reviewing the activities of the Engaging with External Partners Commitment and outlining its key findings and recommendations, it is important to provide definitions of the key terms in this report. These are based on the OEFD, the Kellogg Commission, definitions as used at universities reputed for their programs of outreach and engagement, and, especially, feedback received during the EWEP consultation processes.

### Outreach

Outreach is more than “extension” and more than “public service;” it goes beyond the unidirectional transfer of university expertise. As explained in the OEFD, outreach involves non-academic as well as academic units, and includes “all activities specifically designed to inform or involve external publics, including community lectures or workshops, clinics, consulting and policy work, off-campus courses for degree credit or for certificates, public information and communications, relations with alumni and donors, co-operative education programs and internships, applied research and projects conducted with external organizations...activities too varied to fully catalogue. Considering the breadth of the term, it may be better to consider outreach as an approach or attitude within many fields of work rather than as a discrete set of activities.”<sup>8</sup>

### Engagement

As also outlined in the OEFD, and for the purpose of this report, engagement means “...going beyond the traditional practices of public service and extension towards a reciprocal and meaningful co-creation to a wider community (one kind of outreach) or the contemporary expression of the traditional third mission of universities (service). It is a mutually beneficial partnership involving the core missions and functions of the university – teaching, research, scholarly, and artistic work, and service – bringing together the best of what the university and the community have to offer one another for the enrichment of both.”<sup>9</sup>

It is important to emphasize the different yet complementary roles of outreach and engagement: “Outreach encompasses many familiar activities, while engagement systematizes a distinct way of thinking about them. While outreach potentially diffuses institutional effort, engagement focuses and integrates it around partnerships that are connected to academic missions... At the University of Saskatchewan, ‘outreach and engagement’ is a comprehensive, philosophical approach, a commitment to thinking about the needs of the world around us and developing partnerships with others for

mutual benefit, as we decide among the many competing priorities for our time and resources. Engagement is a guiding philosophy throughout the institution, assisting us in a host of challenges and problems, including our teaching and research programs. Our openness and accessibility as an institution, both in terms of physical space and in terms of transparent processes; the culture of our workplace and our focus on solving problems rather than promoting bureaucracy; and our responsiveness to the needs perceived by the public we serve, all should find expression in a commitment to outreach and engagement.”<sup>10</sup>

### Engaged university

An engaged university, according to the Second Integrated Plan, has three overlapping dimensions. First, it is a university where faculty, staff, and students engage each other collaboratively and cooperatively in pursuit of common objectives. Second, it is a university organized so that its research and student experience embrace critical issues of importance to society, thereby stimulating knowledge and creative activity, enhancing curriculum, and contributing to the public good. Third, it demands partnerships not only within but also beyond the campus to enrich what we do and to make the university’s contributions visible and meaningful. The engaged university’s watchwords are “innovation through connection, participation and collaboration.”<sup>11</sup>

An engaged institution must also be, according to the OEFD, place-related (linked with the communities and regions in which they are located); interactive (a spirit of give and take by the university and its partners); mutually beneficial (to the benefit of all parties involved, including building greater public understanding of and support for the role of the campus as a knowledge asset and resource); and integrated (at a campus level, should permeate all levels of the institution, and be integrated into its policies, incentive structures, and priorities. At a department level, it cuts across the imperatives of teaching and scholarship to bring unparalleled opportunities for the entire campus community—faculty, staff and students).<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> The Foundational Document on Outreach and Engagement, 3.

<sup>9</sup> The Foundational Document on Outreach and Engagement, 4.

<sup>10</sup> The Foundational Document on Outreach and Engagement, 4-5.

<sup>11</sup> The Second Integrated Plan, 30.

<sup>12</sup> The Foundational Document on Outreach and Engagement, 4. This definition aligns with that espoused by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities: “The publicly engaged institution is fully committed to direct, two-way interaction with communities and other external constituencies through the development, exchange, and application of knowledge, information, and expertise for mutual benefit.” See: David J. Weerts, “Facilitating Knowledge Flow in Community-University Partnerships,” *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement* 10.3 (2005): 24.

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## 2.3 Definitions

### Partners/partnerships

This report identifies partners as two or more parties that have agreed to work together in the pursuit of commonly identified goals. The general term used designates all external and internal individuals or groups who care about the project and who have an interest in seeing that it succeeds.

The term partnership implies consultation. Partnerships are characterized by: the reciprocal and meaningful co-creation of knowledge rather than the “extension” of knowledge from the university to the partner; by trust and openness; by working as a team for consensus and consultation; the respect of the organizational missions and limits of each partner; the sharing of power, risks and responsibilities; and joint investment.

In any partnership there is two-way interaction. All partners may not have equal responsibility for the project or share fully in its design, but they have agreed to participate in the project in a meaningful way and to have their respective needs met through pooling their resources. Partners have input in project design, implementation, and evaluation, and they share central responsibility for the project. Partnerships are also cyclic; they ultimately begin, are renewed, and end as relationships (a connection—either positive or negative - between two or more bodies). These relationships can be nurtured well or poorly which can result in partnerships expanding, contracting or dissolving.

As Beere et. al. (2009) concluded from reviewing over 2000 submissions for Carnegie’s elective Community Engagement Classification, types of university-community partnerships vary immensely, a variety that we should continue to celebrate at the U of S:

- **Size:** from two people/units to hundreds of people/units from multiple universities and multiple external partners.
- **Focus:** can be in any area, from agriculture to health to non-profit capacity building to commercialization (e.g. of a new vaccine), etc.
- **Partners:** such as business; government; First Nations; not for profit; individuals; academic; etc.
- **Duration:** ranging from a single day to decades.
- **Complexity:** ranging from one circumscribed project to a broad, transformative endeavour.
- **Length of time to produce results:** ranging from immediate to five years or longer.
- **Formality:** ranging from casual working relationships to highly structured agreements that have official approval of various governing boards and legal documentation.<sup>13</sup>

Not all partnerships are worth entering into, however. The university has limited human and financial resources to ensure the affective management of its partnerships and they must be pursued and maintained in a thoughtful manner. The EWEP Commitment area has identified three categories of partnerships that serve the university’s interests particularly well:

- Those characterized by and contributing to Teaching and Knowledge Transfer;
- Those characterized by and contributing to scholarship, research and innovation, and teaching and learning; and,
- Those that might be thought of as “Service and Other”. This third category of partnerships includes those which contribute directly or indirectly to the first two categories.

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<sup>13</sup> List adapted from Carole A. Beere, James C. Votruba, and Gail W. Wells, *Becoming an Engaged Campus: A Practical Guide for Institutionalizing Public Engagement* (San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons, 2011), 191.

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## 2.3 Definitions

Partnerships may be initiated in one category and evolve or expand to function in another. Indeed, partnerships in one category should, in most instances, be regarded as holding the potential to be leveraged into expanded or additional partnerships in other categories. Organizing partnerships into these three categories provides an umbrella under which the types of partnerships listed above can be placed in order to allow faculty and university administration to better understand where partnerships are occurring and what ends they are meeting, and how best they can be expanded or directed.

**Community:** The notion of community is central to any program of outreach and engagement, but it remains a somewhat vague concept. As Bridger observes, “in the absence of a clear definition [of community], efforts to create new relationships are likely to be unfocused and therefore less effective than they might otherwise be.”<sup>14</sup> Like the Kellogg Commission, it is not the purpose of this report to define what counts as “community”; other university centres/offices on outreach and engagement have done this (i.e. defining the community as the non-profit organizations, as disadvantaged groups, as government, etc.), but such definitions delimit the scope of potential partnerships a priori. Rather, to provide for the greatest flexibility possible, and based upon feedback from consultations with internal and external partners, those actually involved in the creation of a partnership will be responsible for defining the reach of their target community.

For the purpose of planning, assessment, and the coordination of university resources and energy, communities should be thought of as a reasonably cohesive group reflecting a shared structure, identity or interest. While each community is distinct, they may be grouped according to

different criteria. Indeed, communities will of necessity need to be thought of as falling into categories; the point is to recognize that each category is limiting, and that each community, by definition, will fall into more than one category.

Our ability to sustain, enrich, and nurture partnerships and to link them to other initiatives and partnerships has been hindered by the degree to which our own internal offices, departments, colleges, faculty, and staff are mandated to think of partner communities as existing within discrete and nonporous categories. For example, partners can be thought of in geographic terms (local, regional, provincial, national, international), in structural terms (corporate, government, not-for-profit, Aboriginal, academic, etc.), or in sectoral terms (health, mining, environmental, social, etc.).

Likewise, while partners can be either collectives or individuals, communities are by definition collectives. The point to take into consideration from an institutional planning perspective is the value of considering communities as existing in both multiple and often overlapping categories. For example, some business partners are local and may warrant consideration alongside other local partners from different structural and sectoral perspectives such as not-for-profit organizations or local government partners working in specific areas. Likewise, there is value in considering indigenous partners as being a “type” of partner while recognizing the distinctiveness of local, national and international Indigenous partners. For example, an office focused on international engagement, could benefit from dealing with international Indigenous partnerships in collaboration with an office of Aboriginal engagement (even if the Aboriginal engagement office is principally concerned with, and has expertise in more local aboriginal relations).

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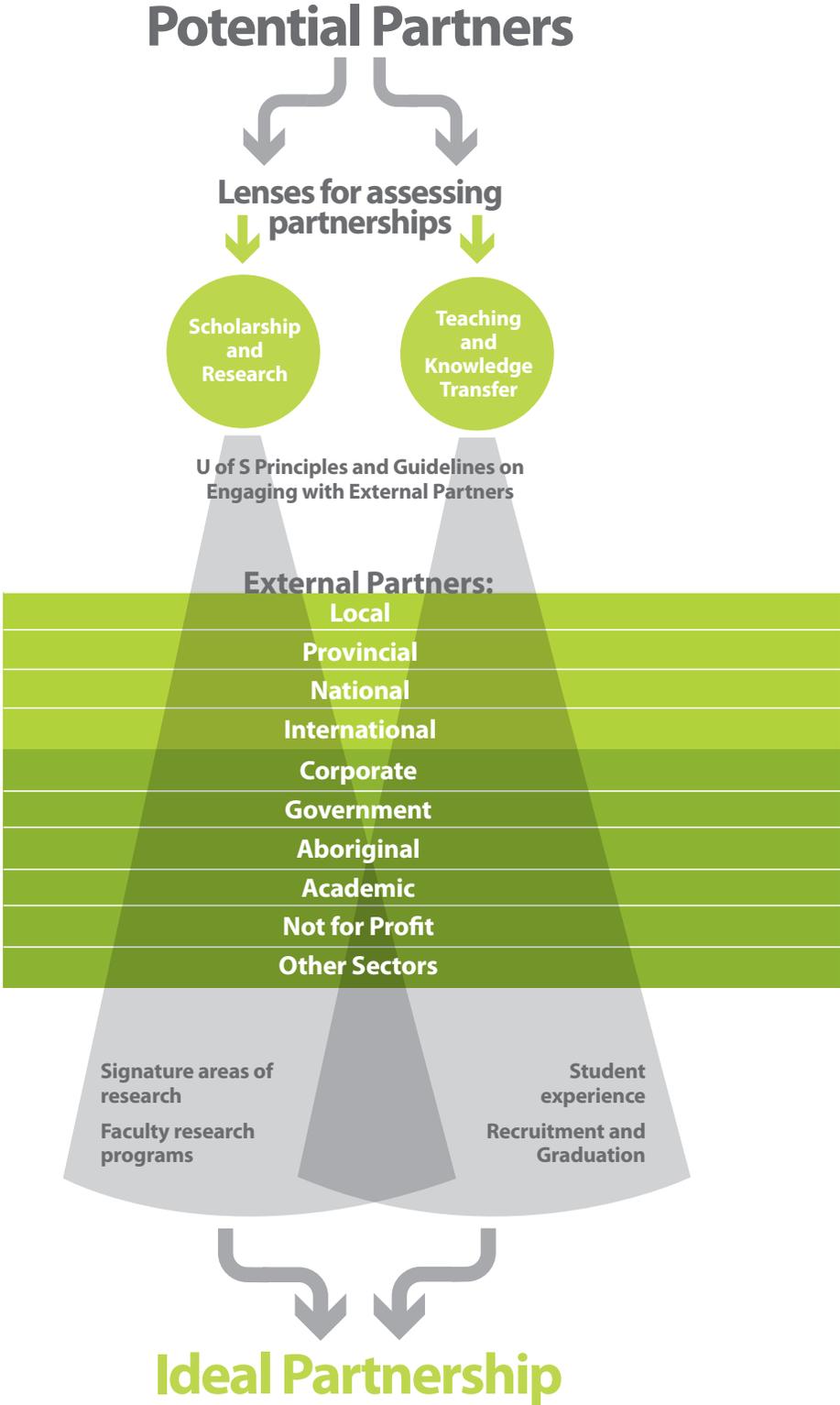
There should be no doubt that a greater systematic organization of outreach and engagement activities at the U of S must occur in order for the university’s overall strategic goals to be achieved.

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<sup>14</sup> Bridger and Alter, “The Engaged University, Community Development, and Public Scholarship,” 164.

# 2.3 Definitions



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## 2.3 Definitions

### **Collaborative and community-university research**

Consists of strategic partnerships between the university and a collective group of individuals or an organization(s) with a common interest and objective external to the university. The university recognizes that this research is mutually beneficial for the community and university – both the community and the university have expertise that, when put together, can benefit society. Community-university research fosters a reciprocal relationship between the university and its partners through the co-creation and application of knowledge and increases the capacity of both partners to address issues. The university strives to blur the distinction

between the university and the external community, but it is important to recognize that there are university interests that are distinct from those of the community. Community-university research seeks to meet each partner's needs by maximizing the effectiveness of each participant's resources. This point has been made effectively and persuasively in several U of S studies and reports, including the 2010 Task Force on Community Based Research co-ordinated by the Office of the Vice President Research, and Professor Baljit Singh's ongoing work as Special Advisor to the President on Experiential Learning.

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## 3.0 Process and Method: An Evidence-based Approach

The findings presented in this report are based upon a wide range of consultations and qualitative evidence-based research beginning with the sustained conversations that occurred within the working group on Engaging with External Partners (EWEP).

The working group met roughly once a month over the first year of the commitment. Extensive and sustained conversations characterized these meetings. The working group set as its goals “to develop a set of guiding principles and best practice protocols that can be used to ensure that partnerships lead to genuine and effective relationships that bring meaningful benefits to all concerned.” It also sought to make recommendations toward structural change where research deemed it appropriate. Discussions were organized around identifying issues and concerns that then informed the subsequent literature research and consultation. These were:

- An acknowledgement that often both external and internal partners feel ill-equipped to engage with each other;
- A concern over the lack of a link between tenure and promotion with faculty scholarship and teaching activities related to external partnerships;
- A concern the U of S was not taking full advantage of its unique attributes as a large medical doctoral research institute that was still small enough to bring a personal touch to external partnerships;
- A recognition that different academic and administrative units on campus had different “cultures” and that these were strengths – one size need not fit all;
- A recognition that relationships need to be nurtured and are more than “one-off” encounters;
- A recognition that partnerships are as much about relationships as outcomes;
- A concern that the university overly compartmentalizes partnerships as reflected in institutional organization and that this results in the stagnation or truncation of certain partnerships; and,
- A desire to see a system of categorization adopted that will enable external partnerships to be more efficiently facilitated and explicitly linked to societal and university priorities (eg., scholarship; teaching; service/other).

With these concerns and issues in mind, the working group first undertook a “mapping exercise” to better understand who at the U of S was engaging with external partners and what form that engagement took. Given there is virtually nothing the university does that does not include some component of external engagement, the result was a complex web of partnering and interrelationships with very few clear lines of reporting or accountability. While some might view this lack of oversight by centralized units as important for enabling new and dynamic relationships to grow and prosper, it nevertheless exposes a gap in institutional support for those who might have questions or need information about how to engage externally, with whom, and under what authority.

In addition, a full literature review was conducted of publications and materials produced at the U of S and elsewhere relating to engagement (including presentations, discussions, and material that was not produced specifically for this Commitment but which asked similar questions of other partners as well as literature making up the canon of the scholarship of engagement). This also included interviews with outreach and engagement directors and coordinators in Canada and the United States.

This broad information gathering process led us to devise a consultation process with the U of S’ internal and external partners. We sought to identify clearly and with reference to specific existing partnerships what was working and what needed attention in order to enhance engagement at the U of S.

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## 3.1 Consultation Findings

EWEP has operated under the principle that in order to create engaged partnerships, partners must have an opportunity to speak and to be heard. EWEP has also sought to ensure it receives feedback from a broad cross-section of internal and external audiences so as to best create an umbrella large enough to cover the myriad relationships at the U of S. EWEP's working group identified a list of audiences corresponding to different types of partners according to geographic, structural and sectoral criteria. Included was representation from academia, administrative, government, industry, community, business, Aboriginal, educational and international groups. It then further narrowed this list according to a variety of considerations all intended to supplement the work completed to date. These considerations included:

- Ensuring that the foundational vision of EWEP was advanced in dialogue with important internal bodies (e.g. Dean's Council, committee on Integrated Planning Advisory Council, Senate, etc.);
- Supplementing and building upon existing strengths in: the university's signature areas; mutually-beneficial and long-term partnerships that can serve as models for other outreach and engagement activities; varying geographic scales (local, provincial, national, global); and research, teaching and funding; and
- Covering Third Integrated Plan (IP3) proposed areas of focus and U of S signature areas of research.

Each interview took the form of an extended conversation. That is to say, the interviews were semi-structured, and based on pre-determined questions and took the form of dialogue. They were also encouraged to contact us for follow-up conversations, and provided contact information to provide additional feedback through different channels. The following summary of interview results breaks the feedback into categories so readers can easily distinguish internal feedback from external. The findings are a synthesis of the most common trends among respondents based upon five standard questions. Note that in order to protect the interests of partners and to garner candid answers, respondents have not been identified. For a list of people and organizations who participated in the interviews, see appendix #1.

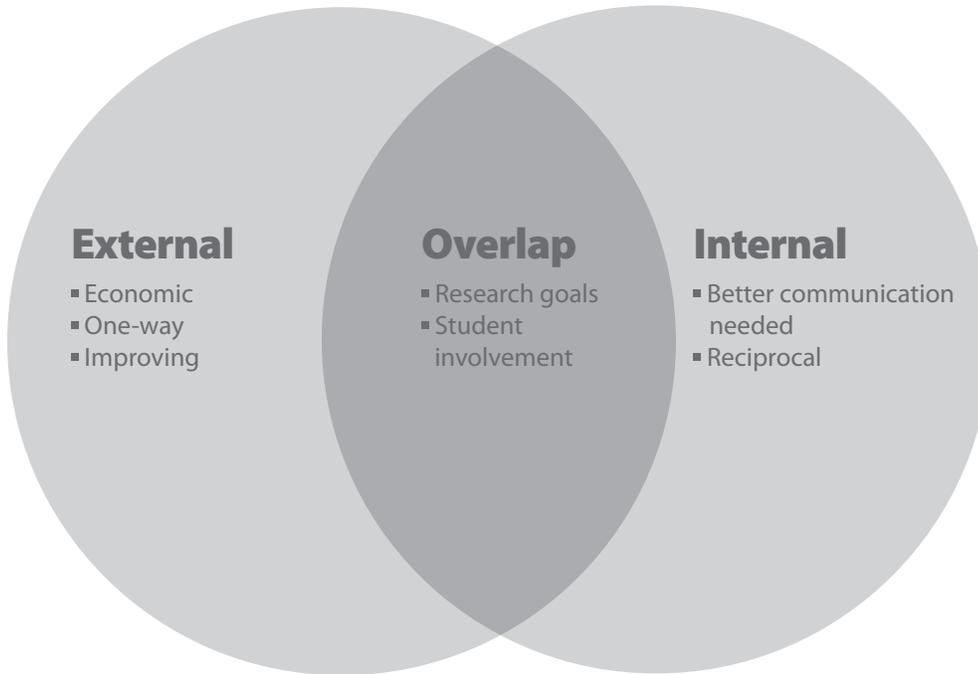
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## 3.2 Consultative Summaries

### —Question 1

**External:** Please describe your current relationship with the university and how effective you feel it is/they are?

**Internal:** Please describe your current relationship with key external partners and how effective you they are?



#### External Respondent Themes

##### Positive and Negative

Satisfied; evolving; good; improving; diverse; mutually beneficial; strong; healthy. Non-existent; tenuous; superiority complex; narrow; one-way.

##### Research

The U of S is a resource to access and collaborate around researching, primary research itself, for the research tools it houses, and because the university is important for its reputation as being an impartial party.

##### Economic

The university is a source of employees (students as a resource to tap); a source for concept development; a means to increase capacity, and a source of innovation.

##### Personal

Importance of individual relationships driving the partnership; having access to decision-makers.

#### Internal Respondent Themes

##### Dialogue/Communication

Regular communication is the key to a good partnership.

##### Research

The goal of partnerships, but sometimes the hardest aspect of them to achieve. Agreements, both formal and informal depending upon context, are important to success here.

##### Student Involvement

On multiple levels: teaching, research, and work experience (experiential learning including community service learning).

##### Reciprocal

Importance of giving back to the partner and community. Partners appreciate it when the U of S comes out into the community. Many U of S programs rely upon external partners funding them entirely, and on tax dollars otherwise, so an obligation exists.

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## 3.2 Consultative Summaries

### —Question 1

#### **External Respondent Summary**

Overall external respondent descriptions of relationships were positive. They emphasized that incentives had to exist for a partnership to take hold, and these incentives revolved around economic or personal objectives. Most external partners identified that they only had experience with specific, rather than broad institutional partnerships, but wanted to expand and enhance these partnerships further in regards to both. The importance of good personal relationships in creating an effective, satisfactory partnership cannot be understated; nearly all external respondents stated that without the participation of the one or few key people with whom they had regular interaction, the partnership would be far less productive, if not dissolved entirely. Nonetheless, all respondents, regardless of their experience in partnering with the university, stated that there was room for improvement.

#### **Internal Respondent Summary**

Internal respondents generally agreed that existing partnerships could be enhanced and expanded, both in creating new partnerships and enhancing existing ones. There was also consensus that dialogue and communication formed the most important part of any partnership. Some respondents felt that the U of S, or sectors thereof, does not take partnerships seriously enough. As will be noted in the internal responses to the other survey questions, these respondents noted that partnerships existed in spite of structural and institutional barriers to partnerships that include a lack of resources, a lack of recognition of the time it takes to create a partnership, and a lack of incentive within tenure and promotion guidelines that measure partnerships as being far less valuable than research and teaching.

#### **Overlap and Divergence**

Feedback from internal respondents differed in some important ways from external respondents. Internal respondents tended to think at the unit or university level when framing their summary of partnerships, while external respondents tended to emphasize the importance of the individual contacts with whom they worked. Internal respondents also highlighted the importance of academic development and only rarely mentioned the economic benefits of partnerships, though they did recognize the importance of funding. Meanwhile, economics repeatedly arose as a key consideration for external respondents. Finally, both external and internal partners agreed in their answers that students were important to partnerships but were probably the most under-utilized aspect of what the university has to offer.

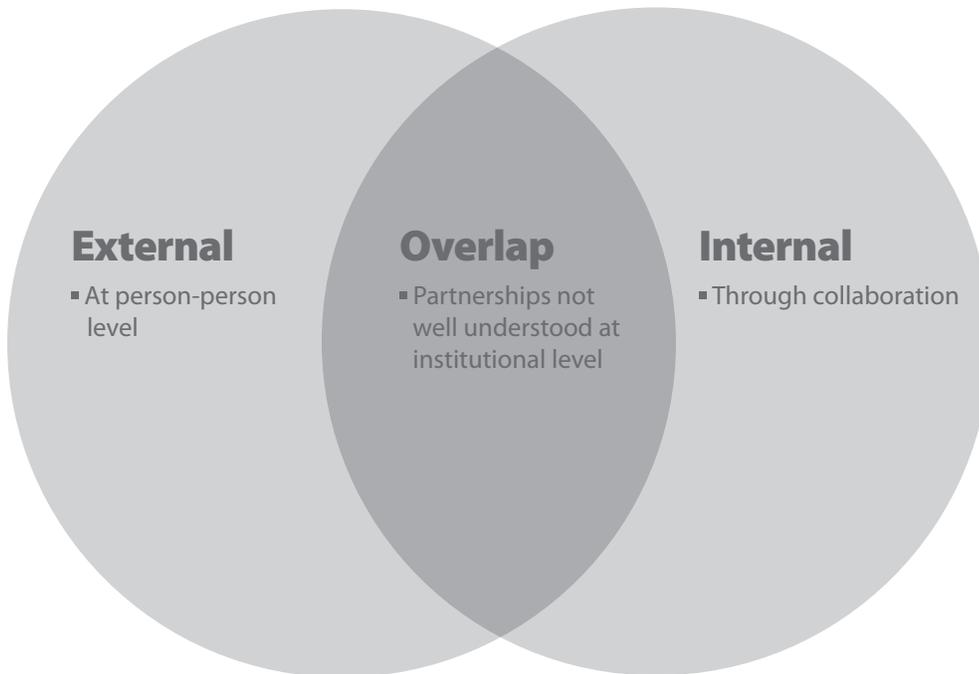
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## 3.2 Consultative Summaries

### —Question 2

**External:** Do you think the university has a good understanding of what you want and expect from your partnership?

**Internal:** Do you think you have a good understanding of what key external partner want and expect from your partnerships with them?



#### External Respondent Themes

**Yes, but only at the individual level**

The university as a whole/at the “top” does not understand the needs of individual partners, but those specific individuals/units who maintain the partnership do—understood specifically but not broadly.

**Yes, at the specific and institutional level**

This is dependent upon lines of communication being open to “people at the top” such as the President, as well as with individual partners (admin, faculty) who do the day-to-day partnership activities. When the university strategic direction happens to align with that of an external partner’s (e.g. Aboriginal focus), then this is also the case.

**No, not very well at all**

The university and individual partners specifically are not fully aware of partner capabilities and needs, and so both are missing out on many opportunities; university partners “speak” a lot but do not “listen” as well or as much.

#### Internal Respondent Themes

**Yes, through collaboration**

Internal partners know what their partners want because they work with them all the time; they ask for external input into everything they do. Internal governance structures include community partners.

**Yes, through our expertise**

Internal partners know what their external partners want because it is the internal partners/ unit’s specialization. This understanding does not necessarily translate to the institution as a whole.

**Yes, through negotiation**

All partnerships are a negotiation, and through that an understanding of what external partners want. Some of these include signed agreements, others are informal. All understandings are based upon personal relationships.

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## 3.2 Consultative Summaries

### —Question 2

#### **External Respondent Summary**

External partner responses to this question were mixed. The most common reply was that university partners at an individual level understood what they, as external partners, wanted, but that the university at an institutional level did not. A few respondents noted that both the university and their individual partners understood them. An even smaller minority noted that they were not well understood by either their specific partners or the broader university. It is noteworthy that most external partners mentioned that they could do a better job of letting the university know what they wanted, thus placing part of the onus on themselves to be better communicators. Respondents in all three categories suggested that there was room for improvement.

#### **Internal Respondent Summary**

It first needs to be noted that most internal respondents answered this question from their own specific position as a partner, rather than speculating on how well the university at the institutional level understood the wants and needs of external partners generally; those few who did speculate on how well the institution understood its external partners answered that there was definitely room to improve such understanding. The overwhelming answer from internal respondents was that they, as individuals and the units which they represented, had a very good understanding of what their external partners wanted. The most common reply from internal respondents was that they worked hard to develop partnerships, and an understanding of external needs resulted through that work – through negotiation, collaboration, and the fact that external partners wanted to utilize the expertise that they (as individuals or units solely) had to offer.

#### **Overlap and Divergence**

While many external partners did state that their university partners had a good understanding of their needs, there were a number who stated that they were not well understood by the university. Internal respondents, meanwhile, all stated that they had a good understanding of their partners' needs. There is therefore a disconnect where external respondents believe that they were sometimes not well understood by their university partner, while internal respondents believe that they had a good understanding of what their external partners wanted. In other words, it is likely that we at the U of S think we understand our partners' needs better than we actually do. This is a crucial point that should be, first, recognized, and, second, acted upon.

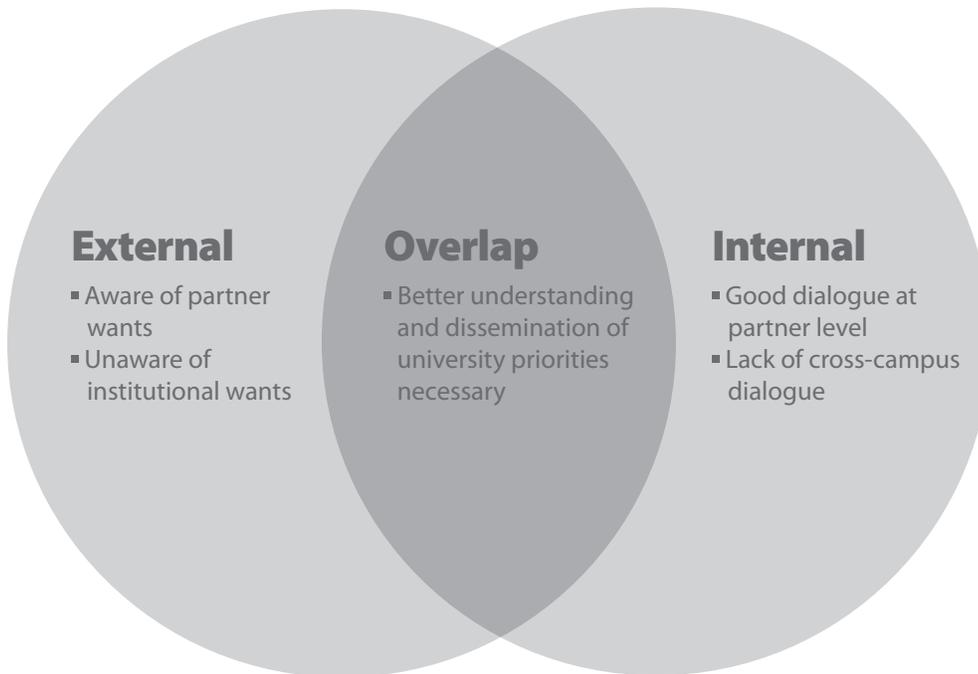
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## 3.2 Consultative Summaries

### —Question 3

**External:** Do you think you have a good understanding of what the university wants from this partnership?

**Internal:** Do you think the external partner understands what the university wants from the partnership?



#### External Respondent Themes

**Yes, but only on specific projects**

Most external partners are unaware of broader university priorities and initiatives, but feel they understand the needs of their specific partners very well.

**Yes, those of specific partners and the institution as a whole**

Some external partners feel that they know what the U of S as a whole and their specific university partners want. Both have similar incentives for entering partnerships, these being: money; “grass roots” information; time; academic freedom; increased capacity; its graduates hired; academics want publications.

**No, not very well at all**

When external partners responded they did not understand the U of S as a whole or their partners well, they added that they very much desired to understand both in order to align themselves better with the U of S’s needs and do a better job of being a good partner. This lack of understanding was attributed to gaps in communication.

#### Internal Respondent Themes

**Yes, through good dialogue**

Internal partners take the time to explain to their external partners exactly what they expect from the partnership, and, further, how this can help fulfil the university’s objectives.

**No, lack of information**

There is a lack of information provided to both external and internal partners concerning what the university wants from partnerships. Additionally, there is not enough information for people on campus to create partnerships that spur this deeper understanding.

**No, lack of communication and recognition**

While internal partners at the individual/unit level try to recognize their external partners, this aspect could be improved. There is also a lack of recognition for partners, both internal and external, who try to fulfil institutional priorities.

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## 3.2 Consultative Summaries

### —Question 3

#### **External Respondent Summary**

Overall, external partners felt that they had a good understanding of what their specific university partners wanted from them concerning individual partnerships. However, as in the response to the above question, partners felt that they had a much weaker understanding of what the university as a whole hoped to achieve (i.e. in terms of priorities, signature areas of research, university strategic directions, etc.). In fact, not one external respondent felt that they could confidently identify the key priorities of the university. In other words, openness experienced at one level did not always translate to other levels. When external partners felt they had a good understanding of what the institution wanted out of partnerships, they mentioned the key role of the current President in facilitating this understanding. It is also important to note that the external partners who felt that they understood the U of S and their individual partner's needs took time to share planning documents and other information to spur this understanding. Finally, nearly all external partners responded that there was room for improvement – especially in aligning their partnership with the university's priorities – and that it was the obligation of both the university and themselves in making these improvements.

#### **Internal Respondent Summary**

The most popular answer from internal respondents was that external partners could be made more aware of the university's priorities. They felt that while the individual/unit partnership identified what it wanted from the partnership, partnerships could be enhanced through tying them to institutional goals and strategies, but that this information and support for doing so was lacking. In particular, internal partners stated explicitly that the upper levels of the university governance and administration did not recognize it when partners tried to align themselves with the university's goals. Consequently, internal partners expressed frustration at what they regarded as a waste of (often very limited) resources—resources that could have been better utilized directing the partnership in other ways.

#### **Overlap and Divergence**

It is important to note that nearly all external partners remarked that they had a good understanding of what their internal, university partners expected out of the partnership. Both external and internal partners identified the lack of dissemination of university priorities to be a key detriment to mutual understanding and partnership enhancement. As external partners stated that this would be extremely helpful for them in identifying new partnerships as well as being a better partner in existing ones, this area of deficiency seems one that could be easily remedied.

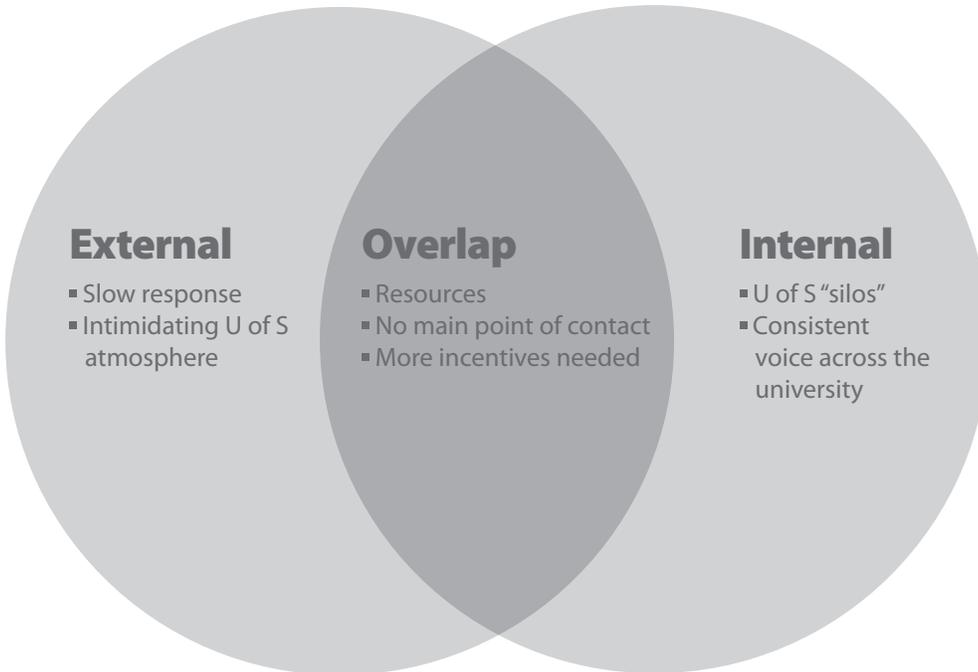
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## 3.2 Consultative Summaries

### —Question 4

**External:** From your perspective, what is the biggest obstacle or challenge to building a partnership with the university?

**Internal:** From your perspective, what is the biggest obstacle or challenge for the university in building partnerships with external partners?



#### External Respondent Themes

**Resources (time/money/capacity):** External partners responded en masse that if the university wants to increase and enhance its partnerships, it needs to provide assistance in terms of resources or incentives.

**Knowing how to fit into the U of S:** Lack of strategic direction from the university; the U of S needs to let its partners know what it wants, what its priorities are and how the university can work with what partners have to offer.

**Intimidating/exclusive atmosphere:** The U of S has a reputation for being exclusive. The decision-making process is not wholly understood.

**Who to contact:** Unless one knows someone in the U of S, and sometimes even if they do, it can be hard to navigate the university – both metaphorically and physically.

**Slow response/too much bureaucracy:** It can be frustrating and expensive to work with the university. Its timelines can be out of sync with other sectors.

**Intellectual property conflicts:** Different perceptions of how results should be disseminated and owned. The process by which this is agreed upon is cumbersome.

#### Internal Respondent Themes

**Point of contact:** People don't know where to go. Misdirection when they do contact someone. A front door would be helpful, but would need to be staffed and funded properly.

**Incentive:** The reward structure of tenure and promotion is set up in a way that punishes faculty for creating good partnerships.

**Communication:** There needs to be a more consistent U of S voice, a more effective system for creating and maintaining partnerships, and better campus-wide co-ordination of partnerships and partnership resources.

**Resources:** Time, funding (including stability of funding and positions), pitting units against one another for limited resources, huge amount of money taken by the university to manage accounts and an unwieldy/inflexible accounting system.

**Silos:** People are too focused on their own agendas or "turf-guarding." The faculty/administration divide is problematic. The university structure and culture/value system does not encourage cross-departmental or (even less so) interdisciplinary work.

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## 3.2 Consultative Summaries

### —Question 4

#### External Respondent Summary

Throughout the external consultation process, partners repeatedly pointed to the same barriers and difficulties, as listed in the chart above, in building or enhancing a partnership with the U of S. A lack of resources, knowing how to “fit” into the university (that is, how external partners could relate their needs to what the U of S has to offer), and the perception that the U of S is intimidating/exclusive were the top three-mentioned answers; knowing who to contact, and, once contacting someone, getting an accurate, efficient response (or a response at all) was also oft-repeated. However, it is important to note that three external partners responded that they experienced no major barriers in working with the U of S, only minor issues that were to be expected in any partnership. A further two external respondents said that the biggest obstacle was actually their own fault (for not knowing what they wanted and being poor communicators), not the university’s.

#### Internal Respondent Summary

Common themes from internal respondents quickly became apparent. These turned upon different anxieties and uncertainties, as well as lack of resources for professors to create partnerships. Feelings that external partners did not know who to contact and incentive to engage in partnerships were the top two responses. In particular, faculty responded that tenure and promotion guidelines discouraged them from creating partnerships, which often take a long time to do properly and do not yield immediate results, and encouraged research and teaching endeavours. Some faculty even noted that they were advised by other senior scholars and department heads avoid engaging in partnerships because these would not help them secure tenure or acquire promotional advances as quickly as would other pursuits. Unreliable, ineffective communication by the U of S to both the campus and external community was also mentioned repeatedly. A chronic lack of resources combined with overloaded work schedules was unsurprisingly mentioned as one of the largest barriers to increasing and enhancing partnerships. Many internal respondents expressed deep frustration over accessing funds managed by the university, as well as the large fee that the university charged to do so – money that would otherwise go to the partnership. Finally, some internal respondents stated that their attempts to leverage partnerships through cross-department and inter-disciplinary channels were often met with resistance.

#### Overlap and Divergence

Both external and internal respondents identified many of the same obstacles and barriers. Providing adequate resources, knowing who to contact, having effective campus-community communication, and making external partners feel comfortable approaching the U of S are all areas that were identified as requiring improvement to facilitate greater and enhanced external and internal partnerships. Incentives for both internal and external partners are also important to address: for external partners, this can be done through communicating university priorities and capacities, as well as making it easier to navigate the university and addressing concerns over intellectual property that may otherwise turn partners away. Internally, creating partnerships will need to be recognized in tenure and promotion guidelines, as well as in additional support or relief of other duties, in order to get faculty to commit to partnerships and to give them the attention that a truly engaged partnership demands.

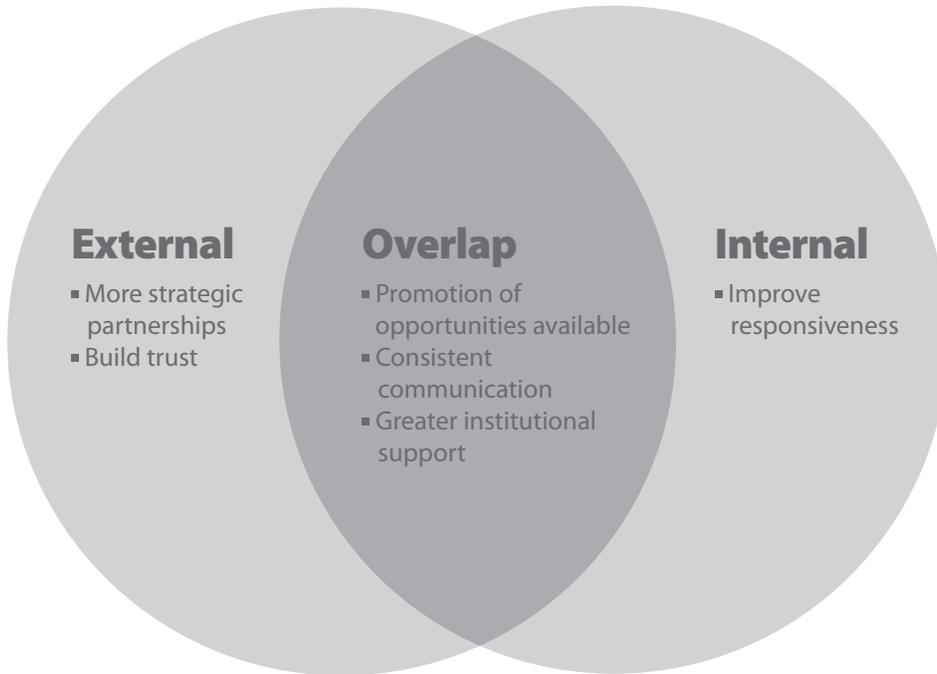
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## 3.2 Consultative Summaries

### —Question 5

**External:** Do you have suggestions on how the university can improve its effectiveness in engaging with external partners? From your perspective, what is the biggest obstacle or challenge to building a partnership with the university?

**Internal:** Do you have suggestions on how the university can improve its effectiveness in engaging with external partnerships?



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## 3.2 Consultative Summaries

### —Question 5

#### External Respondent Themes

**U of S promotion and information dissemination:** Let people know what the U of S can offer; share university priorities.

**Establish a common ground:** Partnership agreements matter; these should include timelines, outcomes, benefits, etc. The needs of both partners need to be met. Partnerships must be mutually beneficial. The U of S should think about how it aligns with broader consensus.

**Personal contact/relationships:** Go out to partners for feedback regularly. Create opportunities for people to mingle. Bring people to the university. Don't be afraid to approach potential/existing partners. Be open to alternative models. Think broadly on how partnerships could work or how to build on what partners can offer.

**Be strategic:** Be clear about what the university is willing to engage in. Leverage partnerships in multiple directions to be most effective and efficient. Get more students involved.

**Build trust and respect:** Nurture partnerships. Don't take partnerships for granted whether they're new or well established. Don't create false expectations and only promise what you can deliver. Recognize your partners privately and publicly.

#### Internal Respondent Themes

**Promotion/visibility:** Support engagement throughout and beyond campus. Promotion needs to permeate from all levels. Those in charge of promoting engagement need to be passionate and take their role seriously. Build upon the history of the institution and the current perception of the U of S as dynamic. Get academics/faculty on board because there is likely to be resistance to any new administrative agendas.

**Multiplicity of partnerships:** Recognize partnerships are different across campus and that any new system put in place needs to be flexible in order to value this diversity. Not all partnerships need assistance, but some could use support at a broader level (i.e. principles and guidelines).

**Responsiveness:** Timely, honest, effective responses in order to build trust, reduce anxiety, and create comfort.

**Communication/collaboration structures (internal):** Structures are needed that work with, rather than against, the diversity that makes an engaged university, one that can leverage partnerships within and across units. It should facilitate, not impede, individual and unit endeavours.

**Communication/collaboration structures (external):** More dialogue with external partners that are clear about each other's needs. Ensure community expectations are fulfilled and that those making partnerships understand that they are ambassadors of the U of S.

#### External Respondent Summary

All external respondents agreed that sustained and honest communication more broadly and through personal relationships was the most important aspect of partnerships. Consequently, the advice external partners provided was intended to apply broadly (university-wide) and narrowly (focused at the individual level). Themes common to other survey questions appeared here too, with communication and relationship building as integral to all responses.

#### Internal Respondent Summary

While internal respondents had a large number of specific suggestions (which have been incorporated into the recommendations to follow), these generally turned on getting internal people on board the engagement program – that is, changing the university culture – in order to spur better external partnerships, as well as creating a more welcoming and accessible environment for both internal and external partners.

#### Overlap and Divergence

External and internal respondents answered in ways that complemented one another very well; there was little divergence here. Both internal and external respondents called for greater support from at the institutional (governance) level. External respondents tended to request greater contact with individuals who could act as representatives of the university, and they stated that periodic visits by these representatives to reappraise the university-external partner relationship would be welcome; internal respondents, by calling for structures that would increase the level of communication between the university and the external community, support this suggestion. The only way in which responses diverged was that internal respondents tended to look at the “big picture,” that is, for structural change, while external respondents focused on potential changes at the partnership level.

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## 4.0 Recommendations

The recommended principles, guidelines, and action plan components proposed below have been developed to address the major themes in consultation feedback, to align engagement efforts with university priorities and to reflect the immense diversity of partnerships undertaken at the U of S. Further, they take into consideration all the work conducted by the working group on engaging with external partners, including consultations, environmental scans and mapping exercises, as well as the literature review.

These recommendations are meant to be utilized in multiple ways and are designed to enable:

- Faculty, staff and units to assess new or ongoing partnerships;
- Partners to align their engagement strategies with the U of S perspective in mind;
- University administration to evaluate grant proposals, communications strategies and hiring practices; and
- All the above parties to expand and enhance existing and future partnerships.

It needs to be restated that these recommendations are optional best practices designed to apply broadly across the university. They are not intended to be adopted as rules to be enforced upon faculty, staff or units, nor do they suggest a new oversight mechanism to control the development or maintaining of all partnerships. Rather, it is hoped that institutional support be developed or expanded accordingly to assist those in need with respect to external engagement and that units across campus will adapt and adopt these ideas as deemed helpful and appropriate.

### Engagement Goals and Proposed Assessment Criteria

In the course of its deliberations, the working group identified two potential institutional engagement goals as a framework for its recommendations:

1. The U of S will foster and model a culture that values external partnerships as critical to innovative, scholarly, research and teaching.

The U of S will know it has achieved this goal when engagement and partnerships are highly valued across the campus environment. Administrative systems will recognize, and review processes that will assess, the quantity and quality of partnerships that faculty and administration engage in. U of S will use engaged partnerships, and the products thereof, to contribute to the IP3 "Areas of Focus and will know it has

achieved its engagement goals when it sustains itself as one of the top medical-doctoral universities in Canada and one of a select few internationally in key areas; has become the pre-eminent Canadian medical doctoral university in aboriginal education; has increased the diversity of its student, faculty and staff populations; and is more student centered in its academic program design. Moreover, engaged partnerships will be particularly directed towards improving the U of S's signature areas of research in:

- Aboriginal Peoples: Engagement and Scholarship
- Agriculture: Food and Bioproducts for a Sustainable Future
- Energy and Mineral Resources: Technology and Public Policy for a Sustainable Environment
- One Health: Solutions at the Animal-Human-Environment Interface
- Synchrotron Sciences: Innovation in Health, Environment and Advanced Technologies
- Water Security: Stewardship of the World's Freshwater Resources

2. The U of S will be distinguished for its engagement program at local, provincial, national and international levels.

This will mean that both internally and externally, the U of S will be known, and respected for the dedicated way it engages with and values engagement with external partners. The U of S will provide evidence of outside recognition (i.e. more requests from external partners); the U of S disseminates the results of engaged partnerships and contributes to the scholarship of engagement (critical self-reflection of the process of engagement) in peer-reviewed forums; there is a greater number of experiential learning including community service learning opportunities for students (to put this in perspective, 40 per cent of Michigan State University's undergraduate students have been involved in an experiential learning/community service learning course); and the U of S is more connected in multi-dimensional ways (i.e. with different government agencies, Aboriginal and Métis communities, regions, other post-secondary institutions).

**To advance the above engagement goals, it is recommended that the University of Saskatchewan adopt the proposed principles, guidelines and action plan components developed by the working group for engaging with external partners as outlined below. It would also be useful to assess the U of S's overall advancement on these goals by conducting future consultations with internal and external partners – including as many of the same that were consulted throughout this round of planning—and evaluating the results.**

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## 4.1 Principles for Engaged Partnerships

The following principles should be regarded as integral components to any engagement with external partners. All partners should periodically return to these and assess whether or not they are being adhered to throughout the duration of the partnership. Additionally, any outside assessment of a partnership (e.g. for funding) should judge the quality of the engaged partnership based upon how well it adheres to these principles.

It must be noted that the intent of the following principles differs from those included in the Foundational Document on Outreach and Engagement. The OEFD's principles are to: guide and inform university planning processes and suggest ways the university as a whole could organize itself to move in the direction of wider outreach and more intensive engagement. By contrast, EWEP's principles are meant to: guide the operation of outreach and engagement activities and create a standard against which these activities can be consistently evaluated.

### Principles for Engaged Partnerships

- 1. Engaged partnerships are mutually beneficial** and are marked by reciprocity. The capacity of all partners is enhanced by the partnership and partners learn from one another. Both the university and its partners agree upon goals and strategies at the earliest stages of the partnership and take ownership of ensuring that the goals and needs of its partners are met in context of the understood parameters of the partnership. Engaged partnerships will facilitate external access to the university and vice versa.
- 2. Partners must work to build and maintain respect and trust** throughout a partnership. All projects will maintain the highest standards of ethics, integrity and sensitivity, including openness and transparency. Partners will be forthright about their expectations and promise only what they can deliver. Partners are responsible for taking precautions to ensure no partners are negatively affected by their involvement in the partnership. In an engaged partnership the university does not think of itself as the superior partner, but genuinely recognizes the equally valuable skills and capacities of its partners and acknowledges their contribution to the project.
- 3. Collaboration is critical to effective partnerships** and all those engaged in a partnership share power. It is not expected that all partners will contribute equally at all stages of the partnership, but all partners should have the opportunity to influence a project's directions, including its design, implementation, evaluation and dissemination. All partners should also be part of the analysis and interpretation of data; engaged partnerships do not expect consensus and differences of opinion, when they arise, are acknowledged.
- 4. Communication must be clear and regular**, and should flow in multiple directions with partners reporting regularly on all activities and developments relating to the partnership. The quality of a partnership will, in large part, be a product of efficient and effective communication. Communication must be clear, regular and timely. Partners will report regularly on all activities and developments relating to the partnership. Evaluation and impact of work will assess the progress and impact of the work and will critically appraise the partnership in order to target and enhance strengths, rectify weaknesses, and anticipate and identify threats.
- 5. Partnerships must be innovative in ways that recognize that each partnership is unique and dynamic.** Partners must recognize that each partnership is context-specific, that the needs, expectations or resources of one or more partners may change over time, and that tensions may arise. Engaged partnerships keep partners informed of changes, embrace this dynamism and develop innovative responses to these challenges.
- 6. Engaged partnerships will, by definition, contribute to a culture of engagement at the University of Saskatchewan.** Research results from partnerships will be of a high quality and will contribute to the positive perception of engaged scholarship and the leverage new partnerships from existing ones.

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## 4.2 Guidelines for Engaged Partnerships

A partnership's success and strength is not only dependent upon the partners involved, and the reasons behind their relationship, but also on the process by which that relationship and its benefits or objectives are defined.<sup>15</sup>

Guidelines provide insights to inform one's course of action. They reflect best practices to better ensure that partnerships remain of relevance and a priority for those engaged in them. The following guidelines are designed to be flexible according to context. For example, many but not all partnerships will benefit from being multidisciplinary in order to bridge academic silos and create a greater breadth of knowledge. Guidelines should be considered from the initial development of a partnership and used especially during its planning stages.

### Guidelines for Engaged Partnerships

- 1. Maximize partnerships.** Those persons and units involved in creating and maintaining partnerships should strive to leverage them in multiple directions. Partnerships should be encouraged to incorporate scholarship and research, teaching and learning, and service goals into partnership objectives; they should seek to break free of silos by being interdisciplinary and not dependent upon the vision of a single individual for sustainability; and the outcomes of partnerships should be relevant on multiple scales (i.e. geographic; sectoral; economic) and to multiple interests (i.e. students, faculty, institutional, community).
- 2. Establish a common ground.** Partnerships most likely to last clearly identify objectives, both unique and shared, from the outset. Benefits are explained to partners, and agreement is reached regarding who will contribute what resources, what product will result, and how such product will be disseminated. Once these issues are agreed upon, all partners become responsible for ensuring every partner has their needs addressed. This acknowledgement of shared responsibility is designed to avoid situations where one partner gets what they want out of the partnership and then neglects it thereafter.
- 3. Define milestones.** Partnerships are more likely to result in satisfaction, and be sustained, if milestones are outlined from the beginning. These milestones should include both short and long-term goals, and when each milestone is reached they should be celebrated. The fulfillment of "signature projects"-specific, short-term action plans with clear and achievable goals-have been shown to boost partner morale, improve involvement and demonstrate to external partners that the university is capable of providing results within a shorter time-span. It is much easier to cultivate commitment with a short-term project than a massive effort that takes years to yield results, the latter of which tend to "fizzle" part way through.

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<sup>15</sup> Gust and Jordan, 155.

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**4. Report and reassess regularly.** All partners should regularly engage in a critical self-assessment of progress, preliminary findings, difficulties and barriers, while identifying the partnership's strengths, weaknesses and threats, and evaluating the economic situation (if working from a joint fund) and then jointly revising the partnership plans as necessary. If students are involved in the partnership, they should take part in this process (as part of course criteria, for example) as well. Partners should assume that plans will change and difficulties will arise throughout the lifespan of the partnership, and confront these as soon as possible—leaving problems to deal with later will only compound them.

**5. View partnerships as dynamic.** Linearity rarely unfolds in partnership plans. Instead, strategies should be regarded as dynamic and continually renewing. As the environment evolves, tactics and priorities should adapt accordingly for both long and short-term goals. Partners need to recognize that different groups are better able to work within different structures (i.e. timelines, budgets); a respect for the diversity of these, rather than seeking to fit them into one structure, will allow for a richer, more productive partnership.

**6. Enhance opportunities for colleagues.** Whether engaging as individuals or collectives, members of academic or administrative units are all part of a broader university community. Partnerships and engagement should enhance the institutional reputation and ideally open up possibilities for others to benefit and collaborate.

**7. Ensure all partners have agency.** Partnerships must strive to recognize the value of all partners. External partners appreciate and would like to see more meetings taking place off campus with university partners making the effort to come to them rather than vice versa. Doing so helps to resolve the issues of intimidation and power imbalances and creates greater trust and openness. This will also assist in promoting the U of S beyond the campus and may leverage more partnerships and enhance existing ones. In those cases where the partnership is based largely on campus, the university partner(s) can still make an effort to provide the broader community with knowledge of, and benefits from, the partnership depending upon the parameters of the partnership agreement.

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## 4.3 Action Plan

Identifying components of a clearly articulated action plan is an effective means for planning and measuring progress. The proposed components outlined below should be undertaken with adherence to the principles and guidelines outlined above and through implementation in consideration of the specific recommended structural measures and initiatives.

The following list of action items is neither comprehensive nor static. Rather, these items should evolve over time as specific units and as the university as a whole becomes increasingly engaged. Additionally, units should create specific goals of their own that best support their planning cycles and composition.

The recommended structural changes may require the creation of new systems/processes or the enhancement of existing ones. Engagement across campus will only occur when the appropriate physical and virtual infrastructure is in place. Whether it is communication structures that encourage dialogue at certain important points or physical buildings such as the recently approved Office of Aboriginal Engagement and Office of Community Engagement, structures and systems/processes need to be put into place to ensure that engagement operates efficiently and

effectively. Certain systems/processes or structures will also need to be developed beyond this report to address certain issues to which there needs more thought to find a solution. As the OEFD points out, it is important to remember that engagement approaches are developed in uniquely different ways by different faculty, staff and students. Consequently, any systems/processes and structures put into place need to take this into account while making room for flexibility and still serving a central role.

Finally, a number of initiatives have been recommended as part of this action plan. **It is strongly recommended that a new cross-campus committee be created to oversee consideration and implementation of the recommendations of this report.** The U of S should most likely attempt a phased-in approach for the proposed structures and initiatives and strike a balance between long-term projects and smaller-scale collaborations that are often more visible and have a higher completion rate. It should also be noted that many units or individuals on campus are already implementing these projects in various forms; these should be recognized and replicated across campus where appropriate, and those already enacting these projects should act as leaders in this regard.

## Action Plan Components

### 1. Improve internal co-ordination of outreach and engagement

At the moment, the U of S does not have a database or repository of the current extent of outreach and engagement, nor do we have any mechanism in place for capturing new initiatives. Most units at post-secondary institutions in Canada and abroad have website pages devoted solely to outreach and engagement activities. The U of S lags here, with few units having pages dedicated to this theme and those that do are not regularly updated, contain within them broken links, and are generally “buried.”

We need to do a better job of “connecting-the-dots”; co-ordination will likely be both the greatest challenge and means to fulfil the above goals. This will include optimizing the use of IT and integrating the U of S into existing national/international community engaged/based research offices/institutions.

#### Recommended structures and initiatives:

- i. An advisory structure should be created to provide advice to the university and act as a medium between the university and the community. This could be achieved by updating the terms of reference for a round table on outreach and engagement for this purpose.
- ii. Co-ordinated communication structures/portals should be designed to co-ordinate messages internally and externally.
- iii. A database of all outreach and engagement ventures on campus should be created with links to information about participants and/or how to get involved.
- iv. A library (virtual and/or physical) of engagement and partnership resources available on campus should be developed for faculty, staff and external partners.
- v. A mechanism should be developed to assess which engagement initiatives should be funded. As resources are limited, open and accessible criteria should be developed based on priorities.
- vi. All units should be encouraged to incorporate into their planning processes an engagement plan including accountability and reporting measures with indications of the impact of this work on faculty, students, the institution, partners and the community.

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## 4.3 Action Plan

### 2. Make it easier to partner

The most important aspect of creating an engaged partnership is building a relationship. The institution needs to find ways to help new and existing internal and external partners negotiate the complex structure of the university, and to publicize resources, activities, and opportunities so that all partners can access these without being discouraged or disadvantaged because of a real or perceived lack of knowledge, power and/or resources.

We need dedicated personnel to advocate for engagement within and beyond the campus and to promote the goals and opportunities for engagement. These staff should regularly attend partner events, recognize partners when hosting events, and prevent certain partners from feeling less important than others through comparison or the creation of hierarchies.

#### Recommended structures and initiatives:

- i. Systems/processes should be developed to facilitate dialogue/feedback from internal and external partners; this should be both personal and virtual, with a means to communicate confidentially if requested. Such a mechanism is important because numerous respondents noted that the U of S needed to do a better part of listening. Consequently, feedback garnered through this mechanism needs to be valued and acted upon, rather than simply acknowledged and catalogued.
- ii. Engagement “portals” or “sites of interface” should be developed, including identifying those which already exist. The Office of Community Outreach and Engagement and the Office of First Nations and Métis Engagement should lead this endeavour, including developing and disseminating a comprehensive understanding of the campus and the engagement activities going on throughout.
- iii. An outreach and engagement handbook should be developed for both the university and community agencies to strengthen the potential and existing partners. The handbook should include explanations of the Third Integrated Plan and the Signature Areas of Research as well as resources available to supplement and enable partnerships.
- iv. Facilitate training and technical assistance for community members and organizations either new to community-university partnerships or those who want assistance.
- v. Create newsletters, bulletins, social media, etc., showcasing engaged partnerships.
- vi. Expand exchange opportunities including fellowships or grants open to community members to allow them to spend time in a university academic or administrative setting and vice versa.
- vii. Develop a U of S engagement web page (i.e. a search engine) that provides information relating to engagement for internal and external audiences as well as allows for faculty or others to post research opportunities and seek partners.
- viii. A mechanism needs to be created that will address the bureaucratic obstacles and challenges which have frustrated internal and external partners. At present, the governance relationships at the U of S regarding outreach and engagement are disjointed. These relationships need more clarity and co-ordination in order to minimize the ongoing confusion over who to talk to and with whom to follow-up. Such a structure should also work to leverage partnerships in multiple, interdisciplinary directions. The emergent Office of Outreach and Engagement seems a logical choice in which to locate this.
- ix. Enhance support for experiential learning opportunities, both financial and other.

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## 4.3 Action Plan

### 3. Foster a culture of engagement (including the use of incentives)

At the moment, partnerships are often maintained within “silos” that sometimes do not branch out. Additionally, there remains a perception that engagement is less valuable and easier to “do” than research and teaching. Until this culture changes, engagement will falter.

The most important aspect of creating partnerships is valuing and building relationships. To enhance partnerships at the U of S, we need to transform thinking so that engagement becomes valued no less than teaching and research. The U of S needs to promote a “culture of engagement” on campus. Doing so will result in the growth of a spectrum of active partnerships, will disperse feelings of “ownership” of engagement, will increase university and partner capacity and resources through partnership leveraging, partners will be better aware of university priorities and capabilities, and, ultimately, outreach and engagement will permeate the campus rather than be concentrated in certain areas/units.

Further, without significant involvement from faculty, staff and students, the goal of making the U of S an engaged university will fail. At the moment, too many factors discourage faculty and others on campus from participating in the process of engagement: responsibilities and workload are growing; faculty face pressure to “publish or perish;” and tenure and promotion favours ventures that do not include partnerships.

The U of S needs to encourage and reward faculty who participate in outreach and engagement. The U of S needs to provide resources to those units which demonstrate commitment to engagement, just as there are resources provided to teaching and research activities. Faculty need to be provided financial and other support to attend regional, provincial, national and international conferences on outreach and engagement. Academics who have a proven track record of engagement need to be recruited. Faculty and staff who are successful at creating engaged partnerships need to be publicly and frequently recognized, and they should be encouraged to share their insights with others across the institution.

#### Recommended structures and initiatives:

- i. Expand and build upon the success of the existing Outreach and Engagement Award and organize and host conferences, forums, symposiums, workshops, etc. to profile research or pedagogy that owed its success to outreach, engagement and partnerships.
- ii. As suggested in the OEFD, create an associated public scholar network to recognize distinguished faculty contributions to external engagement, and support faculty concerned with time and resources by providing the needed grants and other assistance to develop their engagement initiatives further.
- iii. Create a mechanism through which tenure, promotion and hiring guidelines can be evaluated such that engagement is valued. Faculty need to be made more aware of how to include engaged scholarship as part of their research, teaching and service responsibilities.
- iv. Establish an interdisciplinary, peer-reviewed journal of engagement based out of the U of S and designed for the scholarship and pedagogy of engagement in a Canadian context; there is a definite opportunity for the U of S to capitalize on the current lack of such a journal.
- v. Explore promotional strategies including creation of an “engagement app.”
- vi. Recruit and support “champions of engagement” who promote its benefits and leaders.
- vii. Create an engaged scholar in residence program and develop a means which ensures that such a program is sustainable
- viii. Facilitate faculty exchanges, reciprocal visits and inter-institutional partnerships.
- ix. Facilitate more international study tours and student exchanges.
- x. Introduce small research grants, community fellowships and workshops, etc.
- xi. Perform a biannual audit of engagement activities and their benefits.
- xii. Join existing national and international networks of leading edge scholars and universities.

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## 4.3 Action Plan

### 4. Integrate engagement into the student experience.

Students are a critical university strength in addition to being its *raison d'être*. Yet students are the least likely to be directly involved in engaged partnerships. As with the lack of faculty involvement in engagement, it takes a lot of time and means to create engaged (e.g. experiential/community service) learning opportunities for students.

This situation needs to be rectified, especially as external partners have identified that increasing the involvement of students (as potential future-employees, community activists, political leaders, etc.) would be a major incentive to create or expand a partnership with the U of S. In order to do so, appropriate policies and incentives related to experiential learning including community service learning will need to be developed.

#### Recommended structures and initiatives:

- i. Assistance should be expanded for faculty looking to develop courses based on experiential learning including community service learning and community engagement; this could include grants for faculty members to design courses that have an engagement aspect, or enhance it.
- ii. Structures should be developed to collect and disseminate information on agencies interested in having students work with them, to assist faculty in locating partners in the community, and to educate community partners about outreach and engagement and how it differs from volunteerism.
- iii. Develop the appropriate relationship with and between academic units and administrative bodies to facilitate greater student involvement in engagement activities.
- iv. Provide workshops that help faculty incorporate experiential learning including community service learning via engaged partnerships in their classes.
- v. Establish a module for relevant programmes and units designed to introduce faculty to engaged scholarship.
- vi. Have experiential learning including community service learning through outreach and engagement a required part of all appropriate academic programs on campus.
- vii. Provide financial support for students to participate in experiential learning including community service learning courses that take place off-campus (e.g. field-schools).
- viii. Facilitate university-wide, departmental and college discussions about experiential learning including community service learning.
- ix. Create a public discussion series that highlights student presenters and host an annual, or semi-annual, student research series to highlight engaged scholarship produced by students.

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## 4.3 Action Plan



Often we'll set up an umbrella agreement with certain partners so that it's easy to do partnerships with the same organization repeatedly... This has included government, corporate administration, etc. While this umbrella agreement requires a lot of discussion, negotiation and time, in the end it works quite well to facilitate the partnership."

—EWEP Internal Consultation Respondent

Our relationship with the U of S was tense in the past, but we've entered into sustained dialogue with the U of S. We've been clear about resource allocation and we're making clear what we need to do, what we expect including around money and budget and how that lines up with the strategic direction of the U of S. The U of S, in turn, has tried to understand us better and we've tried to be more open and honest with what we expect. We're trying to work within the planning cycle of the university."

—EWEP External Consultation Respondent

Here's an opportunity to improve your reach. Others at the U of S need to get out to meet us. I.E. Get us to save 20 minutes on an agenda and people from the university can come and provide us with an overview on priorities and opportunities. This is a gap that the university could fill, since we're doing this with everyone else."

—EWEP External Consultation Respondent

...if we can't provide what the partner needs, then we try to provide it through liaising with a colleague elsewhere. Unfortunately this request sometimes gets ignored because partnerships are not regarded as important as other things, or people are overloaded with work."

—EWEP Internal Consultation Respondent

We want graduates, we have a strong interest in them, and we'll have a stronger interest in the future as we need to hire more people. So we have a good relationship with campus recruiting. But we have to look far afield because we need so many employees. The U of S doesn't have a 'lock' on this aspect of our relationship by any means – we have relationships with other universities as well. One way of increasing this relationship here would be to expand beyond business and engineering colleges, while also enhancing the relationship we [and others] have with these two.

—EWEP External Consultation Respondent

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## 5.0 Implementation and Success

This report marks another stepping stone in the process of becoming a truly engaged university. Ultimately, it is up to the entire campus community to ensure that such an ambitious yet necessary undertaking succeeds.

The recommendations around better internal co-ordination are critical. Systems/processes need to be in place that connect key outreach and engagement points across campus; units involved in outreach and engagement need to be effectively organized themselves and with one another in order to reduce duplication, create better institutional awareness, break free of the silo mentality, and align the U of S as a whole towards a program of engagement.

Engagement across campus will only occur when the appropriate physical and virtual infrastructure is in place. Whether they are communication structures that encourage dialogue at certain important nexus points or new units like the recently approved Office of First Nations and Métis Engagement and the Office of Community Engagement, structures and systems/processes are needed that ensure engagement operates efficiently and effectively. Most importantly, the flow of information needs to be moving in multiple and reciprocal directions across the campus and to the external community.

While measurements of success need to be developed, the following list provides a preliminary reflection on a potential assessment criteria.

### Assessment Criteria:

- Numbers of discussions regarding tenure and merit at multiple levels (i.e. college, department, etc.);
- Numbers of college faculty complement plans and IP plans reflecting partnership building;
- Numbers of units within colleges have received adequate encouragement to build and nurture partnerships;
- Baseline with respect to the number of ways the university engages so as to measure progress;
- Growth targets established that target increases over a certain time frame ;
- There is increased understanding and monitoring of the amount of funding being generated through partnerships;
- Numbers of new courses that have been created as a result of experiential learning including community service learning (and a percentage goal of courses that the U of S will expect to have in this regard);
- Numbers of students involved in experiential learning including community service learning programming;
- Feedback from external partner satisfaction surveys.

As the OEFD recognized, it is important to remember that engagement approaches are developed in different ways by faculty, staff and students. Consequently, any systems/processes and structures need to be flexible, prescriptive only to the extent needed, and responsive to a wide community. It is this diversity and adaptability that has allowed the U of S to thrive in the past and that will enable its successful engagement in the future.

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# Appendix #1: Organizations Consulted

## Internal Organizations/Units

Alumni Association  
Campus Communicators Network  
Centre for Continuing and Distance Education  
Centre for Study of Cooperatives  
College of Kinesiology  
CUISR  
Dean's Council  
Diefenbaker Canada Centre  
Husky Athletics  
International Coordinating Committee  
Kenderdine Gallery  
Museum of Antiquities  
Planning and Priorities Committee  
President's Committee on Integrated Planning Advisory Council  
Retirees Association  
Senate Roundtable  
Snelgrove Gallery  
Social Science Division Heads

## External Organizations

Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada  
Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration  
Agriculture Canada  
Agriculture West Biotech  
Cameco  
City of Saskatoon  
Federated Cooperatives  
Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations  
Health Science Network  
Innovation Saskatchewan  
Meewasin Valley Authority  
Northern Management Trust Account (NMTA) board  
Phenomenome  
Potash Corp of Saskatchewan  
Sask Energy  
Saskatchewan Arts Board  
Saskatchewan Regional Colleges  
Social Science and Humanities Research Council  
St. Thomas More College  
SWITCH  
University of Regina College of Arts  
Western Economic Diversification

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## Appendix 2: Additional Academic Literature on Engaged Partnerships

There is a growing canon on the scholarship of engagement (publications relating to the 'doing' of engaged partnerships) which has been a valuable resource for the research in this report; some of the most useful, and which are not cited in the report above, are listed here for reference.

Behringer, Bruce, Bert C. Back, Howard C. Davidstel et. al., eds. *Pursuing Opportunities Through Partnerships: Higher Education and Communities*. Morgantown: West Virginia University Press, 2004.

Boyer, Ernest L. *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate*. Princeton, N.J.: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1990.

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Michigan State University. "Points of Distinction: A Guidebook for Planning & Evaluating Quality Outreach." Unpublished Report, University of Michigan, 2000.

Moore, Tami L., and Kelly Ward. "Documenting Engagement: Faculty Perspectives on Self-Representation for Promotion and Tenure." *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement* 12.4 (2008): 5-27.

O'Meara, KerryAnn. "Reframing Incentives and Rewards for Community Service-Learning and Academic Outreach." *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement* 8.2 (2003): 201-219.

Percy, Stephen L., Nancy L. Zimpher and Mary Jane Brukardt, eds. *Creating a New Kind of University: Institutionalizing Community-University Engagement*. Boston, MA: Anker Publishing Company Inc., 2006.

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University of British Columbia. "Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Community-Service Learning and Community-Based Research at UBC Vancouver." Draft report, University of British Columbia, 2010.