Institutionalizing Community and Industry Engagement in a Research University:
the Essentials of
Stewardship and Partnerships

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I present this paper addressing my dear colleagues – you are "the movers and shakers of higher education in ASEAN" – and to the majority of you - the academics – you are the ones who play a critical role in implementing integral policies and plans to drive forward new initiatives within higher education institutions. All of you have a critical role to play as you can take key messages back to your respective universities and organisations.

I will begin with a quote from the Association of Commonwealth Universities,

"Universities face high expectations from the societies of which they are part. They will be judged, and learn to judge themselves, by the variety and vitality of their interactions with society. Those interactions, and the university decision-making to foster them, are what we term "engagement". Twenty-first century academic life is no longer pursued in seclusion (if it ever was) but rather must champion reason and imagination in engagement with the wider society and its concerns."

(Association of Commonwealth Universities, 2001, p.i)

Therefore in this context, it is important for universities to collaborate with external stakeholders from industry, govt, NGOs, communities and IT and the Media to work towards enhancing the quality of lives of communities across the region. This penta-helix partnership has been expanded from what is often described in the literature as the quadraple helix partnership, which includes unversities, industry, govt agencies, NGOs and communities with the addition of IT and the media.

There is a need to develop and establish meaningful penta-helix partnerships if we are to solve problems affecting communities. I am not claiming that these partnerships are new – they have been carried out through a number of excellent initiatives. But, they have been carried out on an ad-hoc basis, and need to be coordinated and systematised so that there is greater impact across the university. With our intellectual capital and knowledge generation capacities, universities are suitably positioned to take the lead.

Given that this is a relatively new area compared to the traditional mainstay of academic demands, universities face tremendous challenges in institutionalising all of this.   In extensive studies, the challenges that have emerged are: "the lack of support across national and institutional systems, a gap between strategic plans and operational systems, lack of funding streams and promotional recognition and lack of capacity building to develop qualities essential for engagment."

I agree with all that has been articulated as challenges and will now take you through how we dealt with some of them.

Governance System and Structures, Policy and Implementation which Direct and Support University-Industry/Community Partnerships at UKM

If a university wants to drive this area forward seriously, then there has to be a clear governance system developed for this and there has to be space and visibility of this area at the university senior management level. Let me share Malaysia's experience with you.

- On the 1st Sept 2007, the Ministry of Higher Education in Malaysia established a new senior management portfolio, that of Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Industry and Community Partnerships.

There were two matters that emerged very strongly early on – the first was the need to clarify and conceptualise what industry and community partnerships is all about so that we all have a clear understanding and acceptance of how we should work towards it.

It was clear to us anyway, that this area of industry and community engagement should not stand on its own – it only has value in so far as it is able to work with, support and enrich the core missions of the university – research, education and service (volunteerism). Clarity to us does not mean that it is clear to the rest. Herein lay the biggest challenge when I first assumed office.

In the beginning, I was continually told that my portfolio will deal with the third mission of the university – that of service. "Service" as the third mission of the university, separate from research and teaching and learning, focuses on an act of helpful activity- to do someone a service, what is involved in volunteerism; and this is extremely valuable for ensuring that we give with our hearts, hands and minds back to society.

This is a very important third mission but the richness of what industry and community engagment can offer would not be maximised if it was located only in the third mission. The philosophy that needed to be adopted and that I was very clear about from the very beginning was that industry and community engagment (if carried out well) has to be integrated across research, education and service to maximise its potential and enrich the core missions of the university. The term 'Service' is not broad enough to sufficiently encompass and capture the diverse range of activities and initiatives which involve engagement with industry and communities which encompasses the richness of knowledge exchange, carried out with various multi-sectoral partners in mutually beneficial ways.

Adopting this approach came with its inherent challenges. We move now to UKM's Governance Eco-System for Engagement that we have developed after four and a half years.

My appointment increased the number of Deputy Vice-Chancellors to 4. This is to support the Chief Executive of the institution – the Vice-Chancellor. At UKM we are led by a very dynamic woman leader – Prof Sharifah Hapsah Shahabudin, the VC. The three existing

Deputy Vice-Chancellors or Deputy Presidents are DVC of Academic and International Affairs, DVC of Research and Innovation and DVC of Student and Alumni Affairs. I am the DVC of industry and community partnerships.

When you are given a new portfolio at the highest management levels, and the other portfolios have been in existence for over twenty years, you have to work collaboratively. This poses challenges. The only way this could be approached was to make it very clear that the thrust of this new portfolio for industry and community partnerships, is to support. I support the work of the other deputy vice-chancellors, that is working at making sure industry and community engagement supports and enhances education, research and service. Walls and territories need to be swept away and multi-disciplinary and multi-responsibility initiatives built across innovative bridges of collaboration.

The DVC's office, is made up of three depts – Industry-Liason Office, the University-Community Partnerships Office and the Chancellor's Foundation (which deals with fund generation). These offices work closely with the Vice Chancellor and other DVC's (academic, research and student affairs), Faculty Deans, Institute Directors, and other senior UKM staff, and together, we provide direction, coordination and support to staff and students in working together to achieve the UKM industry and community engagement vision.

The second challenge that emerged was the style of leadership. Given that it was a supportive role that I had to play, I did not have clear lines of authority over any stakeholder. Instead, to obtain the buy-in, I had to convince and persuade academics of the value of this field, I had to show them what we could do for them. It was not a situation of "Do as I say" Instead it was "work with us and we would be able to add value and strength to what we will be able to do for you and society." We had to show them how working with us can bring tremendous value to their research and teaching and learning – we have succeeded on a number of occasions and once they appreciated this, the pathways were entrenched to a future of engaged journeys.

The word that best describes the nature of leadership in this field is that of **stewardship, which I have taken from a recent World Bank report and that is used in the title of my presentation.** The Deputy Vice-Chancellors of Industry and Community Partnerships have to "to exercise stewardship to coordinate and handle actors and interactions not under their full control but critical to the performance of the sector." (The World Bank: 2012) They need to lead in the development and application of multi-stakeholder collaboration and to do this, it is essential to be sincere and giving and to be able to develop trust and forge relationships so that they have confidence in the "steward" and this applies to all levels of partnerships across the multi-sectors.

It is not sufficient to only consider administrative set up at the top. It is very important to ensure that there is development of stewardship at middle management level so that the policies and plans are implemented at the faculty level and for this we have developed the position of Head of Industry and Community Partnerships at each faculty.

Clarity of definitions are very important for common understanding of what needs to be done and I will share with you the definition developed for UKM's Strategic Plan for Engagement:

> The definition of engagement implies purposive, considerate and productive interaction with both internal (academics, students and administrative staff) and external stakeholders (industry, government agencies, NGOs and communities) for the establishment of mutually beneficial partnerships. This will involve working together with shared understanding to develop shared soloutions, through shared governance and shared assets, with the ultimate aim of gaining shared advantages for all stakeholders. All of these engagement initiatives aim to enhance and enrich the central roles of the university – education, research and service, whilst ....
> <mark>Slide of definition : Refer to powerpoint</mark>

Therefore there is a need to work out clearly how this can be done for each of the key components of research, education and service with clear examples so that it promotes greater understanding, acceptance and application in the academic environment. We need to show academics how they can achieve their research and publications KPIs and yet work at ensuring their knowledge is applicable and benefits communities. Therefore, the "Industry and Community Engagement" component is divided into the following 3 categories: "Engagement for Education", "Engagement for Research" and "Engagement for Service".

There are numerous examples of exciting and interesting initiatives of enagement in these three areas but time does not permit me to share more with you. Instead, I will take you through one of the ways in which engagement for research is applied in the university.

As we go through the process of engagement, we must be aware of and apply ways to develop effective partnerships and be aware of the essential process and factors that need to be considered as we establish partnership across various sectors.

University-Industry Engagement for Research in Action: Process of endowed chair for Climate Change

So when I first came onboard, I felt that I had to work on a project that would be able to highlight a critical area in the university and create the impact and value of engagement and then I discovered that we have a centre that researches on the science of tropical climate change systems. *No one wanted to see me locked in a room working on a strategic plan.*

Together with Prof Fredolin, who is the head of the Research Centre for Tropical Climate Change System and who sits on the UN IPCC committee on climate change, we looked at various industry partners to approach but made the decision to zero in on the Sime Darby Foundation.

This is because of Sime Darby's mission that is committed to making sustainable futures real for everyone. Then, together with Prof Fredolin began a journey of convincing the foundation of our strengths - through constant and relevant communication via discussions and presentations - and the value of establishing an endowed chair for the science of climate change.

We were eventually successful and the chair was launched in March 2010 for the value of RM 5 million.

The Chair provides a much-needed platform for critical knowledge generation through research and dissemination of information for climate change adaptation and mitigation in the region.

The knowledge generated feeds into and creates innovative and exciting content to enrich teaching and learning that takes place.

Through a cascading model, the Chair also facilitates the creation of a cadre of Climate Change Ambassadors amongst the students and the youth of the communities. Researchers will educate university students and local youth to become **change agents who can raise awareness, develop knowledge and direct behavioural changes to manage climate change in the community. We have developed a very successful programme called Green Rose – targeted at primary school children as they feel that change has to start at an early age and it is this generation that can then influence their parents at home.**

UKM's Essential Criteria for Developing Successful Partnerships
Knowledge, Value, Trust, Relationship

As deputy vice-chancellor when I go out to industry and obtain opportunities for the various disciplines of the university, these potential opportunities can only be translated into concrete realities if the knowledge leaders are able to work and meet tight deadlines, take instruction, be flexible and adaptable and develop a relationship of trust and knowledge-sharing – all integral qualities that the team had. Last but not least, the team has to possess the ability to express knowledge with technical accuracy and in an interesting and impactful manner which is absolutely critical to persuade external stakeholders to work in partnership with a university.

It is very important to establish partnerships with NGOs. Many of you here come from civil society – I stand here with the greatest admiration of your work – you are the heroes on the ground, the practitioners who know what challenges are when working with communities.

One of the missions of both NGOs and HEIs is to work towards the common goal of service to society. The World Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (WANGO) outlined general principles of partnership and collaboration with ".... Other civil society organization, governmental and inter-governmental agencies and for-profit corporations ..." The Association encourages cooperation with other civil organisations when

appropriate but it recommends any form of collaboration be based on these four principles:

i)   Missions are consistent with each other
ii)   Collaboration is made on the basis of shared values and for the good of society
iii) There are equitable and mutual benefits
iv)   The partnership is committed to financial transparency and the sharing of information, ideas and experiences. (WANGO, 2008)

When I read the above from a publication titled, "NGOs and Higher Education: Working Together for Citizenship Education and the Development of Identities" (2008) by Necmi Aksit, Nanny Hartsmar and Lisa Moraeus, London: UK, it was clear that there is tremendous potential for universities to work with NGOs because of the similarities in the missions of NGOs and HEIs.

Scholarship of Engagement

To ensure that this field is taken seriously and is not considered a soft option, it is essential that **the scholarship of engagement** is developed. Academics who work in this field must ensure that their industry and community engagement is research-driven and publications are of quality and they can be rewarded in terms of promotion based on the publications that have emerged out of all the wonderful work that is being carried out with multiple stakeholders to solve integral problems of both industry and communities.

Another integral area that had to be seen to was capacity development especially for the field of engagement. This is not something that all can be involved in naturally – the following are the areas that could support capacity development – social participatory research, systems and processes for effective stakeholder engagement, examining the social impact of community engaged projects in terms of the extent to which they enhance the quality of life of the target community through social, economic, environmental, health, education or technological development; Skills and competencies to access funding for industry and community engagement amongst others.

As part of capacity building, we recently organized a platform for all in the university to present work related to community engagement that they have been involved in. The response was overwhelming and we had academics who were amazed at what their colleagues were working on and that they never knew of before. Being able to provide forums where good practices can be shared and learnt from is an integral part of capacity development. But it is also important to make them aware of criteria and indicators that need to be achieved to ensure that their work is productive and sustainable and helps improve the quality of life of the community.

At various forums that I have attended, I have always been asked to share the knowledge and experience that we have gained over the years. We then felt that it was valuable to

take this to the regional level to create the multiplier effect and synergies in community and industry engagement through regional platforms and as you heard yesterday, that is what AsiaEngage (ATNEU, AUN USR&S and AYVP) has been established for.

Conclusion

Universities will work seamlessly with industry, NGOs and Govt agencies to ensure that their academics, students and professional staff apply knowledge and share facilities and services for the benefit of community based stakeholders in the region. As they do this, the multi-sector and multi-stakeholder engagement will in turn, enrich and transform the manner in which the core business of the university is approached – that is research, education and service. You are the noble drivers for the development of Truly Engaged Universities, developing mechanisms, systems and processes for genuine engagement; creating exciting opportunities for partnerships so that academia will never be the same again.

We have our work cut out for us and all of this requires hardwork (as they always say, success requires 90% pespiration or diligence and 10% inspiration). But with the support of industry and foundations, civil society and NGOs across the region, and with the Grace of God, I am convinced that we can be the trailblazers across the region and will be able to contribute powerfully to the development of an ASEAN and Asian community, possessing not only strong minds, but also generous souls to volunteer, develop and enhance the quality of lives of communities around the region.