CHAPTER 2

Knowledge, Higher Education and the Institutionalization of Community-University Research Partnerships

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Our goal in this study and book is to illuminate the varieties of institutional and administrative structures, in both universities and community-based research bodies throughout the world, that facilitate respectful community-led research partnerships. We will fill in some parts of the map of what is sometimes referred to as the ‘mainstreaming’ of community-based research (CBR) and community-university engagement (CUE). And the starting point at this moment in the 21st Century must be attention to our global contexts. What are the deep challenges, the complex and chronic issues that are confronting us? While we do not need to be exhaustive in this contextualizing, it is required if we are to answer the questions ‘knowledge for what’ and ‘community-university engagement for what’?

We are living in a time of extraordinary contradictions. Never has capitalism produced so much wealth yet never has the gap between the rich and the poor been so vast. As noted by Oxfam, soon 80 individuals will have the same wealth as the poorest 3.5 billion people on earth (Hardoon, 2015). Former U.S. President Carter notes that “the world’s discrimination and violence against women and girls is the most serious, pervasive, and ignored violation of basic human rights” (2014, p. 1). The economist Thomas Piketty says,

…because return on investment historically outstrips growth, wealth will concentrate to levels incompatible with democracy, let alone social justice. Capitalism, in short, automatically creates levels of inequality that are unsustainable. The rising wealth of the 1 per cent is neither a blip nor rhetoric. (2014, p. 8)

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change notes that without additional efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions beyond those in place today, emissions growth is expected to persist, driven by growth in global population and economic activities. Baseline scenarios, those without additional mitigation, result in global mean surface temperature increases in 2100 from 3.7 to 4.8°C compared to pre-industrial levels (IPPC, 2014, p. 7).
Meanwhile, de Sousa Santos explains that “the understanding of the world by far exceeds the Western understanding of the world. There can be no global social justice without global cognitive justice” (2014, p. viii). According to UNESCO (2011), approximately 600 languages have disappeared in the last century and they continue to disappear at a rate of one language every two weeks. Up to 90 percent of the world’s languages are likely to disappear before the end of this century if current trends are allowed to continue. And each of us knows about rates of child poverty, levels of homelessness and other critical issues that render our communities and our families insecure and unstable. It is our contention that issues like these must become significant drivers of the higher education agendas.

**Higher Education Today**

As will be argued in further detail throughout this book, the higher education sector’s most fundamental and critical task is to serve as society’s primary engine of knowledge production and preservation. Historically, universities have not only produced knowledge but have also been the arbiters of which knowledge is ‘good’ and ‘valid’, establishing the very frameworks by which such assessments are made. Tautologically, universities have long considered knowledge produced by universities as the best and most legitimate. But in the face of global crises that challenge humanity’s capacity to respond, the value of alternative forms and paradigms of knowledge is being revisited. As the ability of the technical-rationalist knowledge long-favoured and reproduced by universities is questioned for its adequacy for the current moment, researchers are increasingly moved to work with organizations and communities outside of the university in order to co-generate knowledge which draws dynamically on multiple epistemologies and lifeworlds. Cultivating research partnerships with communities and civil society organizations is a way of making subaltern knowledge visible. Such co-creative acts of knowledge production are at the heart of the university’s contribution to deepening knowledge democracy and cognitive justice. Assessing the practice and institutionalization globally of such co-generative community-university research partnerships is one of our aims.

Institutional change is extraordinarily difficult in higher education. This is in part because of the scale and complexity of higher education institutions themselves, institutions that have been around since the first universities of Narlana and Taxila were founded in the Indian sub-continent hundreds of years BCE (Tandon, 2008). It is also because what we call a national university in modern times is in reality a world university. Universities in all our countries are organized in similar ways and have quite similar disciplinary content. One university cannot change too dramatically without the global consensus becoming uncomfortable and critical of an institutional outlier.
Nonetheless, higher education is a dynamic system which is constantly pulled in various and often competing directions, as Marginson (2010) points out:

…the research university is pulled three ways: by the commercial imperative, by the formal knowledge status system (dominant within the university) and by the unpredictable swirls of open source knowledge. These heterogeneous ‘systems’ are in highly unstable symbiosis and more unpredictable changes will surely occur…for national organizations, institutional forms, academic behaviours, relations of power and the vectorising of the life world. (p. 39)

Barnett (2013) suggests that institutional change may be limited by our institutional imaginations: “(t)here is a thinness in our contemporary thinking about the university—we could say that the imaginary landscape of higher education is rather empty at the present time” (p. 13). Watson et al. (2011) document trends in higher education in their work on the engaged university by claiming that, “while expressing unique ways that follow cultural, political and economic influences, most universities now understand the need to place greater emphasis on extension, outreach and engagement” (p. 24). This also includes frequent changes in undergraduate programs that make them more relevant and identified with the social, cultural and economic realities of all groups in the population (de Durán et al., 2012).

The authors of this book associate with the views expressed in the Global Communique on Enhancing Community University Engagement between the Global North and South issues by the Big Tent group of higher education networks:

…we believe that the transformative potential of our community sector organizations and our higher education institutions is enhanced when we combine our collective knowledge, global connections, skills and resources to address the myriad of social cultural economic health and environmental challenges in our places and regions. (Watson, 2011, p. 239-240)

The Many Discourses of the Engaged University

The literature on community-university engagement is vast and diverse. Nonetheless, a closer look reveals many significant gaps, disconnects and even contradictions. Facer et al. (2012) argue that a lack of a coherent knowledge base upon which to draw contributes to engagement’s struggles as an emerging field of theory and practice. Engagement spans many disciplines, institutions and contexts. Language is often vague and various discourses exist which do not interact because of differences in terminology (Facer et al., 2012; Hall & Tandon, 2014). In practice commonality exists between the various sub-genres of outreach, community service, service-learning, community engagement, civic engagement, community-based research and community-university research partnerships. Although there is some overlap in intentions, these discourses implicitly carry different theories of
change for making an impact in the world. Outreach, service and service learning frequently focus on volunteerism and charitable action (Global University Network for Innovation, 2012). Community engagement tends to have a community development focus, while civic engagement frequently frames engagement as way of moulding university students into active citizens. Community-based research and community-university research partnerships focus more on the role of academics and the knowledge production capacities of universities as a means to creating social and structural change.

In consequence, these different, embedded theories of change about why and how universities should engage result in different conceptualizations of how to institutionalize engagement within university structures and processes. For the service-focused genres, student-oriented programs which enable student service with marginal groups are sufficient as infrastructure. Service-learning and civic engagement anticipate institutionalization at a deeper level which impacts course design, classroom pedagogy and available fields of study (Tapia et al., 2005; Bertomeu et al., 2010; Butin & Seider, 2012; Tandon & Hok Ka Ma, 2014). Discourses which focus on research as a core component of engagement posit that institutionalization should challenge and transform how universities produce knowledge, reassessing Watson’s (2005) question: “what is a university for?” It is to these questions of academic knowledge production that we next turn our attention.

Inequalities in Research and Academic Knowledge Production

The dominant mode of production of academic knowledge is of a colonized variety. The Western canon, that European based knowledge arising from the enlightenment and disseminated around the world over the last 500 years, has resisted the inclusion of diverse knowledge systems from Indigenous and other knowledge systems and has collaborated in what de Sousa Santos (2014) calls epistemicide, the killing of knowledge systems. This is true from a global context where the global North dominates the journals, the web sites, the encyclopaedias, the book publishing industries and the research funds. But it is also true within the global North from the perspective of gender, social location, racialization, and more. The voices of Indigenous people, the poor, women, the differently abled, and the homeless are missing from the dominant knowledge systems.

In the world of community-university engagement, the homes of most of the global networks are in the global North. Most of the publications that have come out in the past 10 years have been published in the global North. Moreover even some of the knowledge that has been co-created with communities is inaccessible behind the paywalls of market publishing or costly and obscure journals. We will address this issue of research/knowledge accessibility further in the final section of this chapter.
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The Case for Knowledge Democracy

At the heart of the transformative potential of community-university research partnerships is a deepened understanding of knowledge democracy. What do we mean by knowledge democracy? We are all familiar with the discourses of the knowledge economy and the knowledge society. The knowledge economy has become in practice the acquisition of skills needed by the global marketplace to enhance individual and national competitiveness. No mention of democracy whatsoever. The discourse of a knowledge society is closer to our ideals, because it refers to the use of knowledge to strengthen or deepen participation in decision making. Democracy is at the centre of this discourse, but there is an absence of questioning about whose knowledge should be used, how the knowledge we are supposed to use for democratic action has been created or even who owns the knowledge. Knowledge democracy takes our discussion of knowledge and democracy several steps further. The principles of knowledge democracy as they have been used within the work of the UNESCO Chair in Community Based Research include:

1) Recognition of a multiplicity of epistemologies or knowledge systems
2) Knowledge systems are as diverse as the biodiversity of the natural world
3) Knowledge is both produced and represented in a dazzling array of methods that go well beyond text and statistics to include ceremony, drama, video, poetry, spirituality
4) Knowledge is produced in social movements, community organizations, business, local government, Indigenous political organizations and thousands of places in addition to institutions of higher education
5) Locally created and owned knowledge is a powerful tool of community and social movement organizing
6) Knowledge generated in communities or as a result of community-university research partnerships must be made available free of charge and in an open access format.

What does knowledge democracy look like? In British Columbia, there is a movement for the revitalization of Indigenous languages, the languages of the land before European contact. The First People’s Cultural Council leads this work with support from the University of Victoria. The heart of the revitalization process has been the identification of ‘language champions’, fluent speakers from each of the 50-60 languages. These mother tongue scholars have been able to energize the Indigenous language movement in ways that Western trained linguists were never able to do. Indigenous scholars from the Universities have supported these language champions.

In England, with links to the Community University Partnership Programme at Brighton University, there is a movement in community mental health which
has both university and community activists actively involved called ‘resilience therapy’. At the heart of this movement are young people and their families who in spite of all societal obstacles and restrictions are seizing control of their community rights and demonstrating a capacity of resilience that could never have been imagined if they were depending on the knowledge of ‘experts’ to tell them how to live.

In Brazil, there is a national movement that grew out of the Campaign Against Hunger and For Life that was started by the late Brazilian activist named Betinho. It has grown to become a network of universities and anti-poverty social movements to co-create knowledge together for the transformation of rural communities. Co-creating grassroots knowledge from below has been at the heart of this social movement/network that has resulted in changes to laws, creation of cooperatives and more.

In India, movements for the protection of forests and other natural resources have regularly galvanised practical and ecological knowledge of forest-dwellers and indigenous communities (Mohanty, 2004).

Based on these examples and many others throughout this book, we argue that community-university research partnerships are a key mechanism for aligning the higher education sector with the goals and practices of knowledge democracy. To this end, we conclude this chapter with a series of recommendations about how higher education institutions can strengthen their policies and infrastructure to better enable this kind of co-generative knowledge production.

**Knowledge Democracy through Knowledge Co-generation**

We have been drawn to the discourse of knowledge democracy in thinking through the issues of community-university research partnerships. Appadurai (2000, p. 2) notes that

…there is the sense that social exclusion is ever more tied to epistemic exclusion and concern that the discourses of expertise are setting the rules for global transactions, even in the progressive parts of the international system, have left ordinary people outside and behind...

De Sousa Santos (2007) and Visvanathan (2009) write about the need for cognitive justice and for epistemologies of the South. De Sousa Santos goes so far to say that the dominant western knowledge systems have perpetuated an epoch of ‘epistemicide’, killing off excluded, subaltern and Southern knowledges. Shultz and Kajner (2013) argue that “the scholarship of engagement requires an epistemology that enables going beyond the ‘expert’ model to one of ‘collaboration’” (p. 14). Even ‘northern’ scholars have noted these inequities. Watson et al. (2011) note “there is a serious asymmetry in the power, influence and resulting priorities of the North and South” (p. 240). This call for the democratization of knowledge is even clearer within African universities, where “institutions of learning in the former colonies continue to be used by the political North to promote their agenda of
subjugation, which is meant to obliterate the knowledge that Africa can identify with” (Modise & Mosweunyane, 2012, p. 50). The task is as Taylor (2008) states, “how can we challenge ideas about ‘dominant knowledge’ residing in the hands of experts and engage with the majority in ways that make connections between knowledge, action and consciousness?” (p. xxvi).

We argue that community-based research and community-based research partnerships are a key mechanism for addressing inequities in academic knowledge production. We have created, and are still creating, a situation in social science research which effectively denies recognition of the knowledge-generating abilities innate to every human being in the world. In our search for techniques for adding to the body of knowledge, we have lost sight of objectives of our work: people. Science is not a bag of tricks that one learns by being trained to remove oneself even farther from reality. We have created an illusion and we have come to believe in it-namely, that only those with sophisticated techniques can create knowledge. This should remind all social scientists of the crucial need not to forget that, whatever they do, they must keep a steady eye on their own values. This is especially true for participatory research workers (Hall, 2002). A transition to the participatory approach requires some basic attitudes on the part of the researcher or activist. If s/he practices participation in her/his own work, it is much more likely that s/he will be able to facilitate participation of the people in various research efforts (Tandon, 2002).

Community-Based Research: A Myriad of Approaches for Co-creating Knowledge

Community-Based Research (CBR) can take different shapes, and a wide range of functional structures that support engagement practices can be developed. In Latin America for example, within different disciplines, institutions and contexts, CBR practices are commonly embedded within discourses around Participative Research, Participatory Action Research, Action Research, Community Learning, Service-Learning, Participative Learning and Community Development (PRIA, 2000). As will be shown, these terms commonly share the principles of co-creation of knowledge, and transformation of the local community. Sometimes the expected impact might be even at a regional, national or international level. The definition we have used in this study is from Strand et al. (2003):

…community-based research (CBR) involves research done by community groups with or without the involvement of a university. In relation with the university CBR is a collaborative enterprise between academics and community members. CBR seeks to democratize knowledge creation by validating multiple sources of knowledge and promoting the use of multiple methods of discovery and dissemination. The goal of CBR is social action (broadly defined) for the purpose of achieving (directly or indirectly) social change and social justice. (Strand et al., 2003, p. 5)
As the results of the survey done for this project show, CBR is beginning to be the most widely used of the umbrella terms, but even within the North American and European literature, one finds a dizzying array of terminology, as demonstrated in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 Terminology and Traditions Associated with CBR  
(Source: Etmanski, 2014, p. 7)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Sources</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Action learning (research)</td>
<td>Coghlan &amp; Coughlan, 2010; Zuber-Skerritt, 2002; Rigg, 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Action research</td>
<td>Levin, 1948; Reason &amp; Bradbury, 2008; Stringer, 2007</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arts-based research</td>
<td>Eisner, 1981, 1997; McNiff, 1998</td>
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<td>Arts-informed research</td>
<td>Knowles &amp; Cole, 2008</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community action research</td>
<td>Brown &amp; Reitsma-Street, 2003; Reitsma-Street, 2002; Tandon, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community-based participatory research</td>
<td>Israel, Schultz, Parker, Becker, Allen, &amp; Guzman, 2003; Minkler &amp; Wallerstein, 2003; Tandon &amp; Farrell, 2008; Minkler, 2014; Guta &amp; Roche, 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community empowerment research</td>
<td>Ristock &amp; Pennell, 1996; Farrell, 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community service learning</td>
<td>Marullo, 1996; Mooney &amp; Edwards, 2001; Strand, 2000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community-university partnerships</td>
<td>Ball &amp; Janyst, 2008; Jansson, Benoit, Casey, Phillips &amp; Burns, 2010; Jackson, 2014</td>
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<td>Collaborative inquiry</td>
<td>Bray, Lee, Smith, &amp; Yorks, 2000</td>
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<td>Co-operative inquiry</td>
<td>Heron, 1996</td>
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<tr>
<td>Decolonizing methodology</td>
<td>Tuhiwai Smith, 1999</td>
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<td>Engaged scholarship</td>
<td>Fitzgerald, Burack, &amp; Seifer, 2010</td>
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<td>Feminist action research</td>
<td>Maguire, 2001</td>
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<td>Feminist community research</td>
<td>Creese &amp; Frisby, 2011</td>
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<td>Indigenous methodology</td>
<td>Kovach, 2009</td>
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<td>Knowledge democracy</td>
<td>De Sousa Santos, 2014, 2007; Hall, 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge mobilization</td>
<td>Dobbins, Robeson, Ciliska, et al., 2009; Levin, 2008; Sá, Li, &amp; Faubert, 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge translation</td>
<td>Banister, Leadbeater, &amp; Marshall, 2010; Jansson, Benoit, Casey, Phillips, &amp; Burns, 2010</td>
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(Continued)
Despite the growing body of engagement literature globally, and the diversity of research approaches related to CBR, the literature on the institutionalization of community-university engagement is limited (Facer et al., 2012; Bivens, 2011). A tremendous quantity of normative literature exists, arguing the social, civic and practical value of engagement and advocating for its expansion in the sector. An even larger share of the engagement literature is case studies of individual projects and institutions, in which work is highlighted mostly in terms of its successes. As Bivens (2011) notes, documentation of the intermediary processes that occur between the articulation of normative visions at universities and the assessment of the subsequent impacts of engagement is infrequent and superficial. Few universities have focused on institutionalization as topic of inquiry and have missed the opportunity to learn from and share their own processes of transformation. Although some detailed case studies exist (Furco, 2010, 2014; Benson et al., 2007; Zimpher & Brukardt, 2007; Rodin, 2007; Facer et al., 2012) question the value of individual cases for building the field for engagement, because of their tendency to be highly context dependent. They also argue such descriptions of individual projects and institutions can be overly rosy, as they are often written for funders of engagement programs, and so gloss over challenges and failures. Bivens notes the most prominent cases of documented institutionalization are produced
by institutions with long histories of engagement, and as such do not so much demonstrate deep institutional and cultural change as much as codification of existing practices. Even publications produced by community-university engagement networks often succumb into the trend of promoting individual programs/institutions, as facilitating cross-institutional studies is a more costly and time-consuming process. Given this, Facer et al. argue for more meta-analyses which look at engagement practices and structures across multiple institutions and even across borders to create international comparisons. Few studies exist which compare institutionalization processes across multiple institutions (Bringle & Hatcher, 2000; Bell et al., 2000; Sandmann et al., 2009) and even fewer make detailed comparison of change processes at institutions in different national higher education sectors. Bivens’ analysis of both British and American universities is one example of such a comparative work.

A typology of community-university research partnerships has evolved within the Canadian context which refers to four types of partnerships. A Type I research partnership refers to a partnership between single academics and their community research partner(s). This is the most common form of CBR as it depends on no institutional support. Type II structures are either disciplinary, sectoral or single centre based arrangements, such as a Social Sciences research shop, a science shop in a Chemistry Department or arrangements within a single school of social work or Indigenous Studies. A Type III structure is an all university structure such as the Office of Public Engagement at Memorial University of Newfoundland or the Community University Partnership Programme of Brighton University in England. A Type IV structure refers to a multi university structure such as UNISUR (Universidad del Sur) in Mexico or COEP (the Committee of Entities in the Fight Against Hunger and for Life) in Brazil (Hall et al., 2009). In this case several universities and community organizations have created a larger multi-institutional structure to deal with specific regional issues or specific sectoral concerns arising from the communities.

Taking into consideration the research on the institutionalization of engagement, in its broadest sense, the literature points to the influence of both external and internal factors. As universities exist in highly regimented and competitive sectors, they often move en mass in response to incentives and pressures from the wider environment. External actors such as governments, foundations and accreditation agencies can wield significant influence over universities’ efforts to expand and institutionalize engagement activities. Jackson (2014b) calls this analysis of the wider systemic forces an “eco-system perspective” (p. 51) to understanding the institutionalization of engagement. Often multiple forces converge on universities simultaneously in order to spur them toward intentional processes of engagement. A few of the major external actors that can drive change include governments, private foundations, international development agencies, and accreditation and assessment bodies.
Governments. As most higher education sectors are dominated by public institutions, government policy can have significant and immediate impacts on universities. Countries like Indonesia have mandated all universities carry out a specified amount community engagement work (Warhani & Asri, this volume). However governments have additional tools beyond policy mandates through which they can incentivize change. Funding is a highly catalytic motivator and enabler. Canada’s Community-University Research Alliance Program (CURA) has played a significant role in expanding engagement across the higher education sector there by providing $128 million in grants to support engaged research since 1998 (Jackson 2014b, p. 50). Governments can also establish parastatal entities that focus on mainstreaming engagement practices across the sector. The National Coordinating Committee for Public Engagement (NCCPE) plays such a role in the UK, supporting individual universities while conducting and supporting collaborative research that explores engagement at the sectoral level. In India, the Planning Commission set up a Sub-committee on ‘Strengthening Community Engagement in Higher Education in India’, in September 2011 (Tandon, 2014b). The recommendations of this committee finally led to the University Grants Commission launching a scheme for fostering Community Engagement in India. This scheme provides for the establishment of a Centre for Fostering Social Responsibility and Community Engagement in the universities eligible under the scheme (University Grants Commission, 2015).

Private foundations. Resourcing engagement programs is often a serious challenge. Support from foundations can help universities launch new initiatives. However, funders also want to achieve a sustainable result that lasts beyond the funding cycle and therefore stress institutionalization as part of their efforts. The Bonner Foundation has concentrated for two decades on creating institutionalized student service-learning programs at liberal arts colleges in the U.S. One of the UK’s best known engagement programs, the Community-University Partnership Program (CUPP) at the University of Brighton was started with a multi-year grant from the American-based Atlantic Philanthropies. The CUPP program was subsequently core-funded by the university when the original grant was exhausted. Foundations can also promote institutionalization by establishing certifications that denote a high level of competency. The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching has had a widespread impact on the institutionalization of engagement at U.S. institutions through the creation of an ‘engaged institution’ classification that requires extensive self-study, analysis and evidence of substantive investment in engagement programs and structures. Over 300 universities have received the Carnegie classification since it was inaugurated in 2009 (Jackson, 2014a).

International development agencies. In regions such as Asia, Africa and Latin America, it is common to find the intervention of external agencies such as the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation and the Inter-American Development Bank on the higher education sector. They outline an international agenda, which is sometimes used by universities and civil society organizations to either draw up
new projects to access the available funding or put forward their extant projects to apply for funding. For example, in Bolivia the AGRUCO initiative was created by the University of Cochabamba and was initially funded by the Agency for Development Cooperation. In a later stage of the initiative there was university investment in the institutionalization of services such as the creation of formal and informal educational programmes and courses in agriculture that targeted rural populations and students of the university.

*Accreditation and assessment bodies.* Accreditation is the existential test of universities. As such, significant human and financial resources are mustered around accreditation and re-accreditation processes. The U.S. has a particularly elaborate accreditation system composed of six regional accrediting agencies all with their own specific standards. However, each agency review process requires evidence that the university is advancing along its own institutionally specified goals for improvement. In the southern region of the U.S., universities develop an institutional improvement program organized around a single thematic area. In the past several years some dozen universities have developed their Quality Enhancement Plans (QEP) explicitly around community-university engagement. Such a QEP commits the university to a five year plan of work to enhance its engagement capacities. The university must make substantial progress toward its targets in order to maintain accreditation. As such, significant resources are made available to engagement programs when QEPs are being implemented. In the UK the Research Excellence Framework (REF) has played a similar role in furthering engagement. The REF is a competitive comparative assessment across all British universities. Research funding is distributed according to the success of this ranking exercise. In 2011, a criterion was added to the REF which considered research ‘impact’. While this requirement has in some instances spurred new applied and collaborative research at some institutions, it has also been heavily criticized within the British higher education sector for undermining the normative ethos of community-university research, forcing universities and researchers back into the position of dominance in these projects because the outcomes and outputs are seen as crucial for the future funding of the university.

Similarly, in other countries like Colombia, there exist bodies such as Colciencias which are the supreme regulatory authority in the higher education sector. Colciencias serves as the accreditation body of journals and research groups, and oversees the research agenda of most universities. Colciencias funds initiatives to “generate and integrate knowledge to social, economic, cultural and territorial development of the country,” (see www.colciencias.gov.co/sobre_colciencias) as outlined within the National Development Plan created by the national government. In India, the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), now includes community engagement as an essential criteria for accrediting universities, under the broader criterion of Governance, Leadership & Management (GJUST, 2015). NAAC was charged with the responsibility to serve the quality
cause in higher education, is also engaged in documenting the ‘best practices’ of community engagement in Indian HEIs (NAAC, 2006).

While this external ecosystem of forces described by Jackson (2014a; 2014b) is visible to the keen observer, the internal university processes which support the institutionalization of engagement are more nuanced and idiosyncratic. Because such processes are opaque to outside stakeholders, most of the work in this area arises from researchers embedded in their home institutions, documenting the evolution of processes and goals and cataloguing the development of structures and programs. Furco (2009, 2014) documented a 15 year institutionalization process at the University of Minnesota and from this body of information developed a five category framework for the construction and implementation of system-wide institutionalization efforts. His categories include: (1) philosophy and mission (2) faculty involvement and support (3) student involvement and support (4) community partnerships and support and (5) institutional support. Within this framework Furco takes into consideration 22 specific indicators of change (2014, p. 265).

Based on their analysis of the original cohort of 56 applicants for the Carnegie classification, Sandmann et al. (2009) also put forward a list of enabling factors which contributed to the successful institutionalization of engagement. These include: (1) leadership (2) coordinating infrastructure (3) internal and external fundraising (4) assessment and measurement (5) planning (6) faculty development (7) community voice (8) professional recognition (9) curricular embeddedness (10) student voice (11) engaged scholarship and (12) partnerships (2009). The list links clearly with Furco’s analysis.

Bivens (2011) takes a more nuanced look at the emergence and institutionalization of engagement programs in three different universities, two in the UK and one in the U.S. Rather than focusing on specific structures or procedures within the universities, Bivens’ analysis focuses on the processes of institutional change which were parallel across all three institutions in spite of differences in size, structure and context. Bivens’ findings corroborate with Furco and Sandmann et al. on the importance of institutional leadership, faculty development and student engagement, but Bivens also points to other significant forces such as the creation of new roles and positions which bring professionals from the community into the university as staff, the importance of institutional history as a narrative for change, and the importance of iterativeness in the development of programs and infrastructure.

Although the literature on institutionalization is limited, particularly in light of the overall body of literature on engagement, the studies mentioned above do provide some key insights into the leverage points and processes which enable institutionalization. However, it is important to note the limited scope of these analyses in that these studies were conducted exclusively in universities in
the global North. Much further work needs to be done to consider the institutionalization processes in universities in the wider higher education sector, particularly in the South.

In addition, these analyses explore engagement activities in a very broad sense. As the focus of this volume is community-university research partnerships, it is worth noting the literature theorizing the institutionalization of these specific kinds of collaborative practices. Gaventa and Bivens’ work (2014a; 2014b), reflecting on a 10 year global research collaborative on citizenship provides insights into the evolution of the research design and infrastructure, the shifts in power to partners from the global south and the iterative reframing of the research questions over time. The issues highlighted in this paper clarify the process of knowledge co-generation within a very large, and diverse research collaborative. While this work was conducted within a research centre within a larger institution, the groups’ work and the principles distilled from it offer detailed guidance on the development and institutionalization of community-university research partnerships which intentionally aim to support knowledge democracy through “intercultural collaboration in the production of knowledge” (Mato, 2008, p. 28) with larger aim of generating ‘transformative knowledge’ (Gaventa, 2013; Hall, 2014; Bivens, 2014).

This volume will mine more deeply into the practice of community-university research partnerships, surfacing the various practices that exist across the diverse set of global cases included in this research. This comparative analysis across institutions, countries and continents will enrich our understanding of this way of working both methodologically and conceptually.

A Framework for Institutionalizing Community-University Research Partnerships

University structures implicitly demonstrate that different forms of knowledge exist. The emergence and growth of academic disciplines over the past two hundred years are a demonstration of the breadth of knowledge that exists simply within academia. Differences between disciplines are not simply a matter of content. Each is an epistemological lens, which at once clarifies by seeing precisely through recognized frameworks, and validated methodologies, yet while also distorting by ignoring that which lies beyond the scope and focus of each lens. While these lenses do provide insights, they are bedevilled by what they do not see and take into account. Across the whole of academia, research is increasingly premised upon interdisciplinarity and partnerships, because the complex issues of our time are systemic and beyond the scope of any single lens or discipline. Even as interdisciplinarity in research and teaching becomes mainstream, it is painfully apparent that these efforts are insufficient; the combined forces of the academic-technical knowledges are still failing to find an adequate response to the crises of our time. As such, universities must recognize the limitations of their knowledge, however
advanced, and admit that their elite, exclusive knowledge is representative of only 1 or 2% of the population who have historically entered the space of university research and academic knowledge creation. Beyond the borders of university life and academic knowledge lies the embodied and experiential learning of the other 98% of the human race and their ancestors before them. Knowledge democracy calls upon us in the university to normatively and practically look to the wider world as collaborators and allies in the quest to address the world’s great challenges. We must be called back to the original meaning of the world ‘encyclopaedia’—the great circle of knowing—and recognize that we academics are an important but tiny sliver of that circle and that more must be done to include the vast diversity of knowing that exists outside of the professional bubble of the academy. Firstly drawing on these other knowledges in our own research and teaching, but going far beyond that to open the university to this knowledge, to build the structures, policies and professional appreciation in the academy of what we can learn and achieve by working together with the wider ecosystem of knowledges that lies just outside the bounded industrial knowledge production zone we inhabit (GUNi, 2007; 2008; 2012).

The community-university partnerships featured in this volume represent examples of how these boundaries between the academy and wider world can become more permeable. While each case is reflective of the national, institutional and programmatic policies and structures within which they operate, we draw upon these and our own experiences in such partnerships in proposing a normative framework to establish a standard for what operating within a paradigm of knowledge democracy would look like in the university sphere, in order to institutionalize such practices.

This framework includes four major components: policy, infrastructure, mainstreaming in teaching and research, and accessibility.

Policy

In order to make space for such work, the university leaders must make clear and visible commitments to collaborative knowledge creation. Policy has two distinct aspects—governmental policy at provincial/national levels; and policies at institutional levels. These have been treated separately in the framework of the case studies.

- Public engagement and social commitment are included in university mission statements and strategic plans.
- University policies recognize the existence and value of multiple types and forms of knowledge, within and outside of the university.
- Policies acknowledge value of multiple modes/sites of knowledge production—conventional, co-creation, popular/indigenous.
- Policies recognize methods for knowledge co-construction as valid.
• Policies require that engaged and partnership research demonstrates mutual benefit to all collaborators.

• Tenure and promotion policies acknowledge engaged and partnership work as a recognized mode of scholarship.

As this volume will make clear, mainstreaming this work at the sectoral level also requires national policy efforts as well. UK, Canada and Indonesia also provide examples of overarching polices, programs or research funding which seeks to mandate and/or incentivize engaged practices by higher education institutions across the whole of their national sectors.

Infrastructure

Community-university partnership work is invariably a labour-intensive proposition, which requires more time, coordination and attention to process and relationships than research conducted by a single individual or a group of similarly trained academicians. More often than not, academics working in partnerships with community groups are acting alone and/or under the radar of their institutions. They do not count on university systems to back them up. Even where they can do this work without penalty, university systems are often not conducive to supporting work that involves a variety of different stakeholders and needs, especially those stakeholders who are not part of the university system. Furthermore, from the community side, universities are often impenetrable black-boxes or no-go zones where they do not consider themselves to be welcome. In cases where they do think the university might be an important ally or resource, community leaders frequently cite not knowing where to start or with whom to speak. There is no entry point or welcome sign. In light of these common challenges to effective community-university partnerships, mainstreaming such activities requires new infrastructure and processes within the university to facilitate this work more easily.

• The university has infrastructure such as a ‘Community Help Desk’ or phone number in order to receive and be responsive to community-based/civil society inquiries.

• Staffing is available to support faculty in engaged activities by establishing connections with relevant institutions/organizations in the community.

• Such infrastructure is not siloed in one discipline, department or college, but is rather linked to all colleges and disciplines within the institution.

• University systems and processes facilitate easier partnering through simplified payment/reimbursement systems that are flexible and can accommodate non-university staff.

• Development/fundraising bodies solicit resources/grants for engaged research/teaching.
• Community engagement activities are evaluated regularly to maintain high standards.

• Governance of such engagement infrastructure is shared with community stakeholders.

Mainstreaming in teaching and research

While universities have traditionally produced proprietary research that is owned by the researcher, small changes in culture and procedure could enable universities to produce far more collaborative research through community-university research partnerships. Making engaged, collaborative practices available to all students and faculty who are drawn to this work would build university capacity in the area of partnerships and sustain this work into the future.

• Engagement activities are linked with curriculum and teaching so that undergraduate and masters level students are exposed to the theory and practice of engaged scholarship.

• Post-graduate research capacity is matched with community research needs through a ‘science shop’ mechanism.

• Resources/training are available for faculty development in CBR and community engaged scholarship and teaching.

• Need to separate teaching and research since our focus is primarily on CURP.

Accessibility

Universities have long been seen as closed, ‘members only’ spaces, both physically and intellectually. Community-university partnerships require that both of these barriers be broken down. Partnerships are not collaborative and balanced if partners are not able to draw upon the physical resources of the university—faculty, meeting space, and knowledge tools such as the library, email, academic journal subscriptions. Likewise, as mentioned previously in this piece, the knowledge such collaborations produce should be freely available, not placed behind the Internet paywalls of academic journal publishers.

• Policies are conducive to community group activities happening on the university campus.

• University knowledge resources are available to groups in active collaboration with university partners.

• All engaged and partnership research is published as open access.

With regard to this final point, we are not only calling for institutional action but for sectoral action—for the creation of shared digital spaces where community based knowledge, knowledge from the global South and the excluded North can be freely available in downloadable forms for anyone who wishes. We call for
researchers and research teams to put energy into finding easy to understand and mobilising approaches to getting research knowledge back into the hands of those who want to change their communities.

Conclusion

This chapter has synthesised literature on institutionalizing engagement and community-university partnerships within universities. This is a thinly researched topic in a field that is historically weighted toward grassroots practice rather than towards theory or structural analysis. Nonetheless, we suggest here the structural significance of community-university partnerships and other engaged practices for opening the university to a wider universe of epistemic communities that lie outside of the academy. By engaging with these other ways of understanding the world, we suggest that universities can more effectively address the looming challenges that lie ahead by working in partnership to generate transformative knowledge which is broader and more holistic than has been traditionally produced by universities. We believe that community based research also leads to stronger theory in areas of social, economic and political studies. This signification of and engagement with diverse epistemologies we term as ‘knowledge democracy’. We concluded the chapter by proposing a framework, which lists key policy, structural and procedural changes which can facilitate the institutionalization of these ways of working and make such collaborations and partnerships more feasible and productive.

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