



Community-Campus Engagement Canada – Halifax Roundtable

May 17th, 2018 – 1.30-4.30pm

Welcome remarks by Patty Williams (FoodARC, Mount Saint Vincent University):

- Community-campus engagement (CCE) work that is done in Atlantic Canada and specifically by FoodARC.
- Goals and expectations for the day: to connect; explore successes and challenges; contribute ideas, recommendations and networks; gather experiences; contribute to the national conversation.
- Activities and presentations planned.
- Overview of the agenda, the tools that are going to be used.

Introductions

- Representing organizations, experience in community-campus engagement, reasons to attend the event, expectations.
- Expectations brought up: opening up campuses to more connections, ways for academia/businesses/non-profits and communities to collaborate, how to make partnerships stronger and more effective in different communities, community-based research opportunities, networking, funding opportunities, getting new ideas, learning from the experiences of others, policy and other solutions to the local issues.

Presentation by Peter Andree (CFICE, Carleton University)

- Overview of the CFICE project and CCE, goals, phases, work that is done, national and international connections and networks, roundtables across Canada, policy change perspectives, local projects, evaluation and analysis.
- Insights from the CFICE symposium, perspectives of community-based organizations and funders (how to make sure that community needs are addressed through partnerships with academia), possible funding opportunities for community-based research.
- Questions brought up: Canada's food policy project, partnerships with provincial governments (local specifics need to be tuned in the national dialog), university courses that require integrated learning experiences.

Story sharing activity

- Participants partner up and share the experience in CCE, trying to catch the underlying values and key components of the experience that inform the engagement, as well as the key challenges.
- Participants put the values and challenges on the wall for everyone to see, Peter highlighted main themes.
- Values brought up: adaptation, collaboration, building relationships, sharing work, listening to communities, having fun, professional training, collaboration with indigenous communities
- Challenges: institutional constraints, tired communities, funding, pace and purpose (misalignment of community and academia), power struggles, matching skills and needs, student only-oriented experiences, time struggles, finding partners, continuity (with the cycle of students), decolonization (value of two-eyed seeing as a research tool), challenges in engaging with Indigenous communities (ethics, power, ownership of the results, research through the intersectionality lens).
- Question raised: how do we keep a conversation about CCE without a proper representation of communities? Peter recognized that it is a challenge in CFICE as well due to the time constraints and shifts in priorities. There is a valuable work through organizations, such as Volunteer Canada, National Association of Friendship Centers

SOAR exercise (Future Visions and Actions) – Group 1

Results:

- Call-in line for communities to get in contact with universities and people
- Clarity in language (more approachable language) to create a more welcoming and comfortable space, decrease the use of acronyms
- Frameworks for articulating community needs in a way that everyone understands
- Allow communities to become living laboratories
- Community identify the needs, university facilitate what is needed (ties in the transdisciplinary approach beyond just academia and community – include industry)

Aspirations:

- Ongoing authentic partnerships can be developed so that groundbreaking change will be achieved
- Interdisciplinary/transdisciplinary research and partnerships (e.g. industry, social sciences and communities), engaging beyond disciplines, integrating approaches
- Communities partnering with communities and stop working as a single unit

Strengths:

- Learning from the successful examples: partnership of Shannex with the University of Moncton in relation to retirement living
- Expertise of economic development services
- Benefits in work with engaged communities

Opportunities:

- Connection of communities to funding opportunities, as well as the assistance with the applications
- Reform economic development services (e.g. business associations, assistance for small businesses) to play role in the supporting community engagement
- Identify the impact of the community engagement with the business mindset to make it an easier sell for funders

Top recommendations: (in addition to the results from SOAR)

- Use of social capital instead of just financial benefits
- Utilization of positive international and national experience (Nepal, Newfoundland)
- Transdisciplinary approach beyond the partnerships of community and academia (include industry and share the methods)
- Change the way we value the process and view the engagement and create a shared language that supports it and have the CCE in heart and mind that can also be maintained over the course of action

SOAR exercise (Future Visions and Actions) – Group 2

Recommendations:

- Change the name (participants indicated that it feels wrong)
- Find a common fundamental purpose of the work to decrease tensions in relation to evaluation and research (the evaluation of work is different in academic world and in the communities, therefore, there is a need to find common ground)
- Strive to lead the work from "in-between" (communities and academia) rather than from one or another end
- Identify and address challenges to ensure productive collaboration
- Co-create a healthy ecosystem of action (no redundancy or replication but variety – there is diversity and distinctiveness)
- Understand the root causes of the campus vs community divide (why people will go to the public library but reluctant to come on campus) - the lack of the effective community institution satellite. We have to democratize knowledge, to allow people outside of academia to have access to databases.

SOAR exercise (Future Visions and Actions) – Group 3

Aspirations:

- CCE as a two-way street and a pathway for students to become global citizens (rather than academia cultivating little bubbles)
- Create more opportunities for students after graduation and ensure greater awareness
- Better communication across the board
- Create a toolkit

Opportunities:

- A lot of resources available but the awareness is low ("All the ingredients are there but we haven't made the cake")
- Learning from previous CCE research champions

Strengths:

- Nova Scotia has strong academic presence
- Health and wellness are on the provincial agenda
- Policy support, political goodwill
- A lot of people that are willing to help and participate

Recommendations:

- Advocacy on the federal level
- Utilizing the opportunities – more students into community-based research (directed by communities)