



Community Perspectives on Partnerships with Universities: Survey and Dialogue Report – Girona (Spain)

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1. INTRODUCTION

About the SPACE project

Community engagement in higher education refers to how universities address societal needs in partnership with their external communities. Community engagement is emerging as a policy priority in higher education, reflecting increasing pressure on universities to demonstrate how they deliver public benefits. At the European level, the European Commission's key policy documents *Towards a European Education Area* features 'service to society' as the 'fourth mission of higher education', and there are increasing expectations for universities to contribute to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), an expectation that is now reflected in a special university ranking for SDGs (the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings) (Farnell, 2020).

The University of Girona (UdG) is participating in the EU-funded project *Supporting Professionals and Academics for Community Engagement in Higher Education* (SPACE), a three-year project (2023-2026) that aims to build the capacities of academics, professional staff, and community partners to strengthen community engagement in higher education across Europe. The SPACE project is a follow-up to the successful projects *Towards a European Framework for Community Engagement in Higher Education* (TEFCE, 2018-2020) and *Steering Higher Education for Community Engagement* (SHEFCE, 2020-2023), whose results are gathered on the European web platform www.community-engagement.eu. The project is led by the Institute for the Development of Education (IDE, Croatia) and involves nine partners from four countries (Belgium, Croatia, Ireland and Spain). The project is also supported by four European-level associations and university alliances, as well as by two university networks from Catalonia and Ireland.

One of the approaches adapted by the SPACE project to achieve its objectives is to listen to the perspectives of community partners on the success factors and obstacles to effective collaboration with universities, and subsequently to formulate recommendations to assist universities in enhancing these partnerships. We therefore invited representatives of 34 organisations that are currently involved or have previously worked in a partnership with our university, of which a total of 20 participated. They provided us with open and critical reflections on how these partnerships worked, what their successes and pitfalls were, and how we can improve our engagement with community organisations for mutual benefit in the future. These reflections were collected via a university-community partnership survey and through discussions in the form of in-depth interviews held in November 2024.

Community engagement at the University of Girona

The UdG is a public institution and part of the Catalan public university system. It is devoted to excellence in teaching and research and involved in social development and progress through the creation, transmission, dissemination and criticism of science, technology, the humanities, the social and health sciences and the arts. It is an economic and cultural driver of the region with a universal mission, and it is open to all the world's traditions, advances and cultures.

As a socially committed university, the UdG believes that one of the basic aims that all its actions need to be imbued with is a commitment to society. As a public institution, the UdG ensures its actions end up bringing improvements and benefits to every citizen, and it is committed to doing this by putting the emphasis on overcoming inequalities and working to create living conditions that contribute to the well-being of the whole of society.

That is why the UdG promotes and safeguards such values as health care, care for the environment, social justice and access to an inclusive quality education for everyone in all its policies (the ones affecting the university community, teaching, research and knowledge transfer), not only taking account of its immediate social environment, but also the international contexts where the UdG can make significant contributions.

Since 2006, the University of Girona has established the "Sectorial Campuses," relational structures designed to foster and support interactions between society and the university. These interactions are based on mutual prior knowledge and the promotion and maintenance of an ongoing relationship through a personalised and unique channel of communication with the University of Girona.

The campuses have a thematic focus oriented toward specific economic and/or social sectors, namely Water, Tourism, Food and Gastronomy, Cultural and Corporate Communication, Composites, Health, Cultural and Natural Heritage, Social Cohesion and Engagement, Robotics, and Industrial Innovation and Technology.

Currently, the coordination and promotion of the Campuses is managed by the Girona Region of Knowledge Foundation. For this reason, the Foundation was charged in the SPACE project with the coordination and implementation of the community partnerships survey and structured dialogue.

Survey structure and participants

The SPACE university-community partnerships survey was developed following a literature review on the key factors influencing inter-institutional collaboration, with a focus on university-community partnerships. The SPACE survey contains two sections:

- **Section A: Case study:** this section includes questions relating to the partnership/collaboration that organisation is currently (or has previously been) involved in with the university, its goals, activities and results.
- **Section B: Assessment:** this section includes an assessment rubric allowing respondents to provide assessment scores (from level 1 to level 5) to a series of questions relating to 3 dimensions:
 - Dimension 1: Process (the way the partnership is planned and implemented)
 - Dimension 2. Ethos (attitudes and values that characterise the partnership)
 - Dimension 3. Outcomes (results of the partnership)

Respondents were requested to describe and reflect on one specific collaborative initiative/joint project with the university. The surveys were completed by a single member of

a community partner organisation with direct experience of the partnership, through consultation within the organisation. Based on their experiences in the partnership, respondents were requested to complete an assessment rubric (see annex), providing scores of 1 to 5 for each dimension / sub-dimension that is assessed. Scores are provided based on level descriptors for levels 1, 3 and 5 (while level 2 and level 4 indicate "in between" levels). After collecting the data, pseudonymised data was used to calculate average scores.

In preparation of the partner survey, a mapping was carried out of potentially interesting partners to reach out to. We were able to identify 34 partners together with UdG researchers and the vice-rector for territory and social commitment. The aim was to do a partner sampling which is reflective of all the sectorial campuses of the UdG.

The facilitators of the sectorial campuses from the Girona Region of Knowledge Foundation contacted representatives of various institutions by phone and/or email. Fourteen institutions were unable to collaborate due to time constraints, while a total of twenty did participate. These institutions came from a diverse range of fields, including five citizen initiatives, two non-governmental organisations (NGOs), eight local government bodies, three foundations, and two private companies.

Out of the 20 community partners, 5 are engaged in a single joint initiative with the university, while 15 participate in multiple initiatives, 3 being involved in university advisory roles. In the thirty projects for which the organisations responded to the survey, the contributions of the community partners were primarily through networks and contacts (26), knowledge and expertise (25), and organisational support (22). Additionally, 10 partners provided funding, and only 1 reported other types of contributions. On the university side, the most common forms of support included academic mentoring (23), organisational support (22), and communications and promotion (18). University funding was provided to 7 partners, and 5 received other unspecified types of support.

Focus group with community representatives

To ensure a more balanced, nuanced and in-depth understanding of the strengths and challenges of university-community partnerships, the survey was followed by a structured dialogue in the form of a focus group with surveyed community representatives. A total of 7 community representatives collaborating with the University of Girona participated in the focus group.

The structured dialogue that took place within these events focused on four questions that were asked of participants, with the aim of identifying both success factors and obstacles to quality partnerships:

1. "How would you assess the quality of **individual interactions** with your partners at the university? e.g. to what extent is the communication and cooperation with your university partner contact constructive and fulfilling for all involved? If it is not purely positive, what aspects are problematic?"

2. “To what extent do you think the scores you gave are also a result of institutional factors, rather than just individual ones: i.e. related to the **university or your organisation as an institution** are able or not able to share?”
3. “Are there any **broader factors**, other than the individual relationships and institutional factors, that affect the possibility of setting up high quality university-community partnerships (e.g. social or political climate, economic situation, cultural differences)?”
4. “If you could suggest **the top three actions** that the university could take to improve university-community partnerships, what would they be?”

This report presents the results of surveys and the focus group held with community representatives.¹ The report concludes with key findings and recommendations to make concrete improvements to practices and policies for management staff at the UdG to further improve community engagement partnerships.

¹ Given that the focus group was conducted and the data analysed by different individuals, and that the author of this report only had access to the focus group transcripts, the analysis may be incomplete — for example, it was not possible to determine whether the views expressed correspond to different participants or were reiterated by the same individuals.

2. UNIVERSITY-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS SURVEY

Survey overview

As described in the introduction, a total of 20 community representatives completed the SPACE university-community partnerships survey. Two community representatives completed the survey for different partnership projects, which we therefore process as separate inputs in the assessment of the different partnership dimensions, obtaining a total of 30 completed questionnaires. In this section of the report, we present a table describing the dimensions and sub-dimensions assessed by community representatives in the survey, followed by a summary of the scores provided.

Table 1: Overview of the university-community partnerships survey

Dimension / Sub-dimension	Description of topic of assessment
1. Process	
1.1. Strategy/goal setting	Extent to which the goals of the partnership are jointly defined by the university and community partners.
1.2. Decision-making	Degree of shared influence in defining roles and making decisions across the partnership.
1.3. Communication and interaction	Frequency and quality of communication and interaction between all partners.
1.4. Resources (time, expertise, funds)	Fairness and balance in resource contributions relative to the benefits received.
1.5. Disagreements in the partnership	Presence and quality of mechanisms to acknowledge and manage disagreements constructively.
1.6. Partner responsibilities	Clarity and mutual agreement on the division of roles and responsibilities.
2. Ethos	
2.1. Mutual trust	Level of trust that exists and is maintained between university and community partners.
2.2. Openness and participation	Degree to which community partners are actively involved in shaping decisions and processes.
2.3. Acknowledgement of difference	Extent to which differences in resources, needs, and motivations are recognised and addressed.
2.4. Recognition	Visibility and appropriateness of recognition given to community partners for their contributions.
2.5. Tolerance for ambiguity and uncertainty	Flexibility and openness to navigate ambiguity and adapt during the partnership.

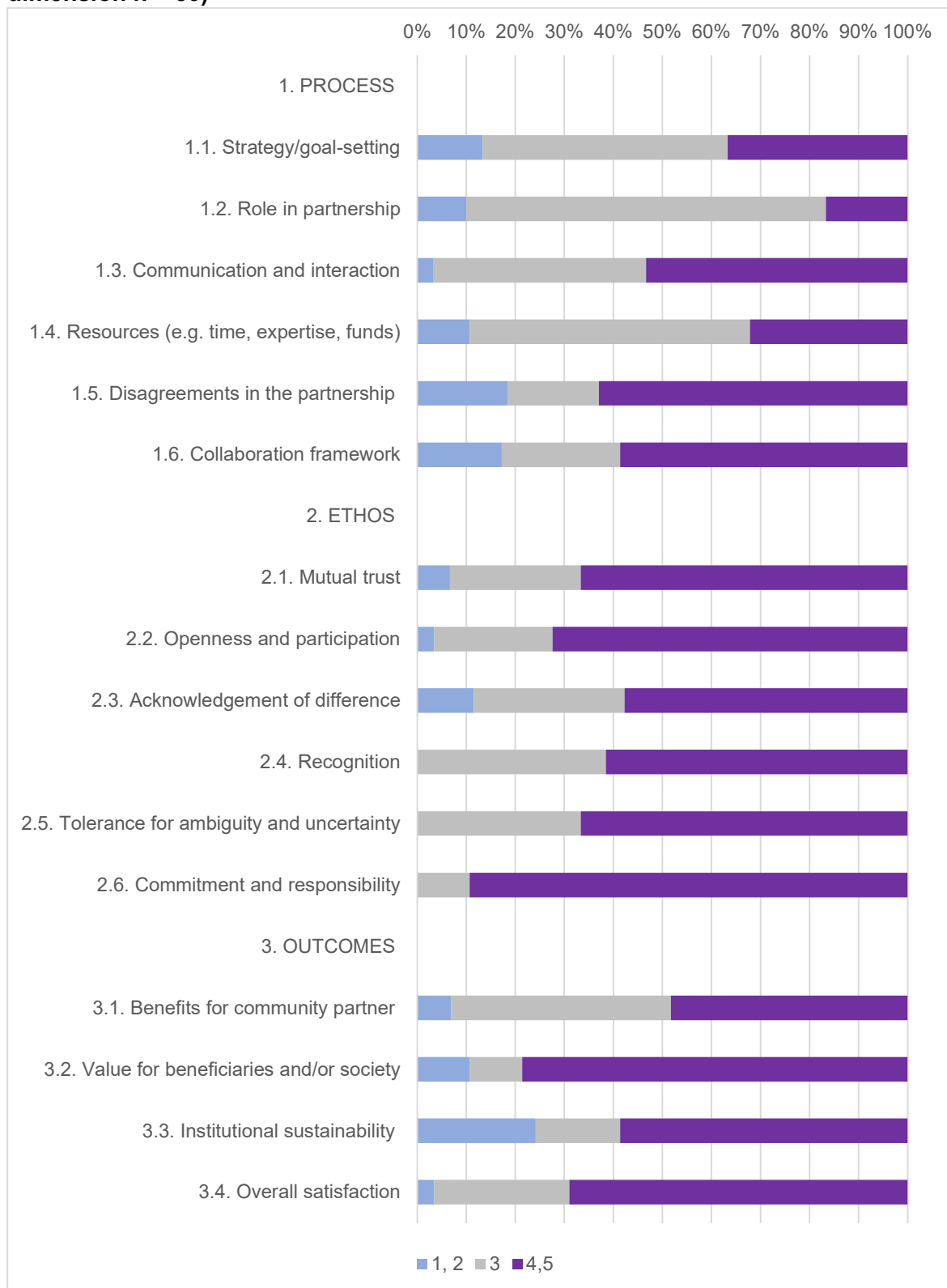
2.6. Commitment and responsibility	Strength of mutual commitment and shared responsibility for the success of the partnership.
3. Outcomes	
3.1. Mutual benefits for partners	Extent to which the partnership provides benefits to both the university and the community partners.
3.2. Value for beneficiaries and/or society	Degree to which the partnership generates value for intended beneficiaries and broader society.
3.3. Institutional sustainability	Extent to which the partnership is embedded in institutional structures and supported over time.
3.4. Overall satisfaction	Overall satisfaction of all partners with the functioning and results of the partnership.

Survey results summary

The chart on the next page presents a summary of the average scores for each of the sub-dimensions of the university-community partnerships survey, showing the proportion of respondents providing low (levels 1 and 2), middle (level 3) or top scores (levels 4 and 5).

Please note that top scores not always mean a desirable situation. The full survey framework, including level descriptors, is available as an annex to this report and can provide context on what each score represents in terms of success and/or challenges. Average scores received for each sub-dimension are also included as an annex.

Chart 2: Survey results – Girona (proportion of respondents providing scores for each dimension n = 30)



On the first dimension, scrutinising the partnership and collaboration process, the data indicate a high level of satisfaction with the procedural aspects of the partnerships. Most respondents rated sub-dimensions such as communication and interaction, collaboration framework, and communications and interactions at levels 4 or 5, reflecting frequent interaction, a clear division of responsibilities, and that conflicts are generally managed constructively. Nevertheless, these categories were also rated at the lowest levels by some respondents, meaning that continued efforts are necessary to ensure that the process functions satisfactorily in all cases. Although strategy/goal setting and role in partnership show slightly more variation, the majority still lean towards strong agreement, suggesting that goals and roles are often jointly defined.

The ethos dimension, which looks at the attitudes and values that characterise the partnerships, is highly valued, with its overall sub-dimensions rated at the highest levels by most respondents. This reflects a strong foundation of trust, appreciation, and shared accountability between university and community partners. Nevertheless, the dimensions of openness and participation, as well as acknowledgement of difference, show slightly broader distributions, with some responses at lower levels, indicating that, as with the first dimension, further efforts are needed to ensure that differences between partners are appropriately addressed.

Regarding the third dimension, partnership outcomes are perceived very positively. Sub-dimensions such as overall satisfaction and value for beneficiaries and/or society are rated particularly highly, with nearly all respondents selecting level 4 or 5. Benefits for community partners and institutional sustainability also receive strong ratings, though with slightly more variation, implying room for improvement in ensuring long-term structural support and balanced benefit sharing. Overall, the partnerships are seen as impactful, rewarding, and aligned with societal goals.

3. COMMUNITY DIALOGUES: MAPPING FACTORS THAT SHAPE PARTNERSHIPS

Factor 1: Individual factors

Good practices

The personal commitment of researchers and other university staff was highly appreciated by participants, who identified it as a key factor in enabling and ensuring the success of joint projects.

Participants emphasised the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration and mutual knowledge sharing as central elements of successful individual partnerships. These were perceived as essential to producing meaningful outcomes and fostering mutual learning. As one participant pointed out, *"Diversity of thought enriches (...) what matters is creating spaces for dialogue where we can learn and mutually feed off each other"*.

Such openness to dialogue and diversity was regarded as a necessary condition for high-quality individual relationships.

Challenges

While the strong personal involvement of researchers is highly valued, it is also seen as a potential risk, as it can make partnerships vulnerable to personnel changes. As a respondent put it: *"Many collaborations stem from individual connections, which can be affected by job changes"*.

Participants expressed concern that this individual dependency may lead to a lack of continuity in collaborations, which were sometimes perceived as overly reliant on specific individuals. When these individuals left their roles, the relationships often dissolved. The absence of systematic mechanisms to sustain these collaborations resulted in frustration and a loss of momentum in joint projects.

Moreover, despite positive examples, several participants expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of their individual interactions with university representatives. In some cases, relationships were described as superficial or symbolic. One participant remarked: *"Although I've had a close relationship with the University of Girona, I haven't felt the collaboration (...) it hasn't really happened in most of the projects we've started together"*.

While this perception should not be overlooked, it is important to note that such experiences were not widely echoed across the full range of participants. The overall evidence suggests that these cases, although significant, may not be representative of most partnerships evaluated, although one is to take into account that interpersonal ties alone do not guarantee effective partnerships, particularly when not backed by sustained engagement and follow-through.

Factor 2: Institutional factors – university

Good practices

At the institutional level, the university was praised for its commitment to social inclusion and support for participatory research. Several participants acknowledged UdG's involvement in projects aimed at empowering marginalised groups. One respondent said: *"Through community projects, the university commits to promoting inclusion and the participation of traditionally marginalised groups"*.

The university's structural capacity and its ability to offer organisational support that community entities lacked were also noted positively: *"The university has a structure and capacity that organisations don't have"*.

Participants also observed an emerging openness within the university to engage in more dialogical processes, suggesting a shift toward more participatory institutional practices: *"I know that new avenues have opened, and the university is aware of it."*

The presence of methodologies that enabled early-stage community involvement in research design was viewed as another promising institutional practice.

Another good practice noted was the co-creation of knowledge through collaborative research efforts that directly impacted society. These practices were especially valued in competitive projects that involved both the university and public administration, which resulted in tangible, shared benefits. As one respondent put it: *"There is knowledge generated through collaboration between us, as public administration, and the university, which materialises through knowledge sharing (...) this is what we understand as shared knowledge or mutual benefit"*.

Participants also stressed the importance of transparency and trust in sustaining collaborative relationships, particularly in settings where knowledge dissemination was an explicit goal.

Challenges

Nonetheless, multiple challenges at the institutional level were identified. Participants reported that community knowledge was often undervalued or dismissed when filtered through academic frameworks. This created a sense of unequal power in the co-creation of knowledge. The university was also criticised for maintaining a physical and symbolic distance from certain local neighbourhoods and social realities. For example, one participant remarked: *"The university has no presence there (...) especially regarding cohesion between neighbourhoods."* and *"The university remains at a more reflective level, far removed from social reality".²*

² The University of Girona is organised across three main campuses: Barri Vell, Montilivi, and Centre. Both Barri Vell and Montilivi are situated on elevated sites, which may contribute to perceptions of

The institution's perceived rigidity and slow responsiveness were additional obstacles. Participants noted that the university's structures were not sufficiently flexible to respond to concrete proposals from civil society: *"The university doesn't have the structure to respond to specific demands that might come, for example, from an association"*.

While this perception reflects real frustrations, it is worth noting that the University of Girona does in fact have specific structures dedicated to community engagement—such as the Vice-Rectorate for Territory and Social Commitment, the Social Commitment Office, and the Girona Region of Knowledge Foundation—as outlined later in this report. This suggests that the challenge may lie not only in institutional responsiveness but also in the visibility and accessibility of these existing mechanisms.

Concerns were also raised about transparency in partnership selection. Participants called for the establishment of ethical and strategic criteria to guide university collaborations: *"The university should be careful about who it collaborates with"*. Lastly, there was a widespread demand for integrating community perspectives into the academic curriculum in a more systematic way, including transversal training in community engagement and the promotion of inclusive language and values: *"There should be training on community engagement, and it should be transversal across all courses"*.

Factor 3: Institutional factors – community partners

Good practices

Although less explicitly discussed, community partners demonstrated a strong willingness to engage in long-term collaborations and showed considerable adaptability in participating in joint research and educational initiatives. Their ability to co-produce knowledge and contribute practical insights was acknowledged as crucial to the success of many projects.

Challenges

However, community organisations often faced structural limitations that hindered deeper collaboration. These included a lack of internal resources, limited administrative capacity, and difficulties navigating complex university systems. Additionally, their contributions were sometimes reframed or diluted through academic interpretation, resulting in a perceived loss of authenticity or impact. Despite strong intentions, community partners often lacked the institutional recognition or authority to influence agendas on equal terms.

Factor 4: Broader societal factors

Good practices

Participation in European projects was regarded as an important opportunity for university-community collaborations to gain visibility and societal relevance. These projects enabled partnerships to access funding and networks that would otherwise remain out of reach and were seen as contributing to broader social impact.

Challenges

Nonetheless, the broader systemic context posed significant challenges. Chief among them was the bureaucratic complexity of public funding mechanisms, which often excluded smaller community organisations due to excessive administrative demands. As one participant put it: *"Improvements should be made to funding mechanisms (...) Bureaucracy makes it difficult for many community organisations to gain access"*.

These structural barriers limited the scope, accessibility, and sustainability of collaborative initiatives, particularly for under-resourced actors.

Other findings

Good practices

Curricular internships were highlighted as an effective mechanism for mutual knowledge exchange between the university and its external partners. These placements enabled students to gain practical experience while contributing meaningfully to local organisations. As one participant noted: *"Students go on mandatory internships in companies, which also provide them with practical knowledge"*. Another added: *"The link that connects the university with companies through curricular internships is very positive"*. These practices were seen as enriching not only for students, but also for community stakeholders involved in their training.

Challenges

Despite the benefits of internships, participants emphasised the limited integration of social responsibility into the broader academic curriculum. Occasional collaborations with community members in teaching activities were appreciated but viewed as insufficient. There was a clear call for a more systemic approach to embedding community engagement within university education, ensuring that all students receive training in inclusive values and civic responsibility throughout their academic journey.

Participants expressed a desire for their perspectives to be integrated into university curricula: *"So that our perspective/proposal could become part of the university curriculum"*. Although sporadic guest lectures by community members were noted, they found that insufficient and made a call for transversal training in community engagement to ensure future graduates are socially conscious and prepared to address societal challenges. Also, there was a perceived need to embed inclusive language and community commitment

across all courses: *“It’s important to include an inclusive vision and language at this stage of education”. “There should be training on community engagement, and it should be transversal across all courses”.*

Additionally, participants felt that university–community collaborations often fail to reach broader society, and that communication about ongoing projects is often insufficient. Similarly, the fact that some participants pointed to the lack of concrete university structures to promote community engagement and to gather societal needs suggests either a lack of awareness about the university or a failure in university communication strategy. This is particularly relevant given that the university has a Vice-rector for territory and social commitment, a dedicated area for community engagement, as well as the Girona Region of Knowledge Foundation, which is specifically designed to foster innovative, territorially rooted projects in collaboration with the quadruple helix.

Therefore, communication—both regarding the projects carried out in collaboration with other societal actors and the university’s systems for gathering and responding to societal needs—is an area for improvement.

4. LESSONS LEARNT AND WAYS FORWARD

Lessons learnt

The University of Girona's community engagement efforts have demonstrated significant strengths, as reflected in high levels of overall satisfaction across the dimensions of process, ethos, and outcomes. A particularly well-regarded feature has been the methodological openness displayed by university actors, as well as the consistent efforts to include community partners at the earliest stages of research design. These practices have helped ensure that projects reflect both academic rigour and societal relevance. Focus group participants highlighted these elements as key to building trust and mutual accountability, facilitating co-ownership of research, and fostering innovation grounded in real-world contexts.

Furthermore, the integration of marginalised groups within engagement activities has underscored the university's commitment to inclusivity. This, alongside well-recognised practices such as interdisciplinary collaboration, shared goal setting, and the creation of dialogical spaces has led to a perception of meaningful partnership among most community actors.

The involvement of students has also been a cornerstone of successful collaboration. Through adapted curricula, internships, and participatory teaching, students have not only contributed to community engagement initiatives but have also developed civic responsibility and practical skills. These interactions have strengthened the link between the university and its wider social ecosystem.

Finally, while individual commitment—especially from researchers—remains a driving force, its prominence also highlights the fragility of partnerships that depend too heavily on personal connections rather than institutional structures.

Ways forward

Despite these achievements, there is room for improvement to ensure that quality practices become the norm across all partnerships.

First, not all community partners reported the same level of satisfaction. Issues were raised regarding inconsistent recognition of contributions, occasional undervaluing of local knowledge, and instances where power asymmetries limited meaningful participation. These findings point to the need for deeper institutional reflection and a more systematic commitment to inclusion and empowerment.

Second, while the university possesses structures such as the Vice-Rectorate for Social Commitment and the Girona Region of Knowledge Foundation, these are often unknown or invisible to external stakeholders. The lack of visibility undermines their potential impact and limits accessibility. Similarly, the process by which projects are selected remains opaque to

many community partners, suggesting a need for increased transparency and the co-creation of strategic criteria.

Third, communication remains a challenge. Many collaborative initiatives are insufficiently publicised, both within the university and externally, limiting their broader societal impact. Improving communication channels and storytelling around these initiatives would amplify their value, build institutional reputation, and reinforce trust.

Finally, while some positive examples exist, the integration of community perspectives into the curriculum remains limited and scattered. There is a need for a more transversal approach to embedding community engagement across all academic programmes.

Considerations for university management

- Enhance institutional visibility and transparency: The university should actively promote and make more visible its existing structures for community engagement — such as the Vice-Rectorate for Territory and Social Commitment and the Girona Region of Knowledge Foundation. In parallel, it is important to clearly communicate how collaborative projects with societal actors are selected and prioritised. This process should be guided by strategic criteria that are co-developed with community stakeholders, in order to ensure transparency, legitimacy, and shared understanding of institutional priorities.
- Invest in systemic support: Reduce dependency on individual commitment by strengthening institutional frameworks that enable and sustain partnerships, especially those involving marginalised communities.
- Strengthen communication: Develop dedicated communication strategies to better disseminate the results of joint initiatives, both to internal stakeholders and to the broader public.
- Mainstream curricular engagement: Advance curricular reform that embeds community engagement transversally across disciplines, aligning it with inclusive and civic-oriented educational goals.

Considerations for academic staff

- Design with engagement in mind: Integrate community engagement goals into course design, teaching activities, and research practices from the outset.
- Foster co-creation: Promote participatory research and learning methodologies that value community knowledge and perspectives as equal to academic insight.
- Encourage student participation: Engage students in real-world projects that contribute to societal transformation and provide learning beyond the classroom.

Considerations for community partners

- Be proactive and assertive: Engage with the university not only as beneficiaries but as co-designers of knowledge and practice. Take initiative in shaping projects and research.
- Claim visibility and recognition: Make the value of your contributions known and advocate for formal acknowledgment within the university framework.
- Invest in co-learning: Participate actively in methodological development and evaluation processes to help shape collaborative practices that are inclusive and empowering.

ANNEX: SURVEY FRAMEWORK AND RESULTS

Survey results – Girona

DIMENSION 1: PROCESS (The way the partnership is planned and implemented)						
Sub-dimensions	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Achieved level
1.1. Strategy/goal-setting	Partnership goals are defined by the university, and do not consider community partner goals.	Partnership goals are jointly defined by both university and community partners.	Partnership goals are defined by the community partners.			3.4
1.2. Role in partnership	Community partners have little influence over how the partnership roles are defined and allocated.	The university and community partners have shared influence over how the partnership roles are defined and allocated.	Community partners take the lead in defining how the partnership roles are defined and allocated.			3.2
1.3. Communication and interaction	Partners do not meet and communicate enough, resulting in disengagement from the partnership.	Partners meet and communicate regularly, resulting in satisfactory cooperation.	Partners meet and communicate regularly and frequently, resulting in a high level of engagement in the partnership.			3.9
1.4. Resources (e.g. time, expertise, funds)	Community partners invest more time and resources than is appropriate considering the benefits of the partnership.	Community partners invest significant time and resources in the partnership, but with a satisfactory level of mutual benefit.	The benefits of the partnership outweigh the resources invested by community partners.			3.3
1.5. Disagreements in the partnership	Disagreements between partners remain unnoticed and/or unacknowledged.	Disagreements between partners are acknowledged and partly managed, but underlying issues remain unresolved.	Disagreements are openly discussed and become a catalyst to generate new possibilities for the partnership.			3.9
1.6. Collaboration framework	The partnership works on an informal basis, with no formal definition of expected tasks of community partners.	The partnership has a basic framework (e.g. written agreement) defining the expected tasks of community partners.	The partnership has a comprehensive framework defining expected tasks of all partners, as well as guidelines and support mechanisms.			3.7

DIMENSION 2: ETHOS (Attitudes and values that characterise the partnership)						
Sub-dimensions	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Achieved level
2.1. Mutual trust	There is insufficient trust between the university and community partners.	There is sufficient trust between the university and community partners.	There is full trust between the university and community partners.			4.1
2.2. Openness and participation	The partnership is led in a top-down manner by the university, with little space for community partners to take part in decision-making.	The partnership is led by the university, but community partners are regularly consulted to influence its development.	The partnership works on a participatory basis, with community partners playing in equal role in decision-making.			4.1
2.3. Acknowledgment of difference	There is no specific acknowledgement in the partnership that community partners have different resources, needs and motivations compared to the university.	Differences in community partner resources, needs and motivations are acknowledged, but not enough is done to address identified challenges.	The partnership critically discusses differences in partner resources, needs and motivations, and takes steps to mitigate those differences.			3.7
2.4. Recognition	Community partners are not provided with adequate recognition (formally or informally) for their role in the partnership.	Community partners are provided with informal recognition for their role in the partnership, and with some degree of formal recognition.	The partnership is provided with high-level, formal recognition for its achievements, and community partners are highlighted in this recognition.			4.0
2.5. Tolerance for ambiguity and uncertainty	Uncertain situations and ambiguous processes are the source of dissatisfaction and disagreement among partners.	The partnership shows some flexibility and adaptability in handling uncertainty, but there is preference for predictable and well-defined processes.	The partnership works intentionally in a flexible and exploratory way, embracing ambiguity and uncertainty as a basis for defining new solutions.			4.1
2.6. Commitment and responsibility	Most partners do not demonstrate sufficient commitment and responsibility, which damages the partnership.	Some partners do not demonstrate sufficient commitment and responsibility, but the partnership remains stable.	All demonstrate clear commitment and responsibility, making the partnership highly cohesive.			4.6

DIMENSION 3: OUTCOMES (Results of the partnership)						
Sub-dimensions	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Achieved level
3.1. Benefits for community partner	The partnership brings significantly more benefits to the university than to the community partners.	Both the university and community partners share certain benefits.		Community partners have significant benefits thanks to the partnership.		3.7
3.2. Value for beneficiaries and/or society	The results of the partnership are not of great value to beneficiaries and/or society.	The results of the partnership are of some value to beneficiaries and/or society.		The results of the partnership are of great value to beneficiaries and/or society.		4.1
3.3. Institutional sustainability	The partnership is a one-off initiative and there is no indication of its continuation and sustainability.	The partnership is sustaining its activities, but primarily due to individual drive rather than institutional support.		The partnership is long-standing and there is institutional commitment by all partners to ensure resources to sustain it for the foreseeable future.		3.6
3.4. Overall satisfaction	Community partners are dissatisfied with this partnership.	Community partners are satisfied with this partnership, but improvements could be made.		Community partners are completely satisfied with the partnership.		4.0