

Research Wales Innovation Fund

Civic Mission and Public Engagement: template for case studies

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| Institution: | Wrexham Glyndwr University (WGU) |
| Civic Mission Theme (select from drop down list) : | Leading place |
| Vision for Research and Innovation Pillars (select those that apply): | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Place <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Innovation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Collaboration |
| Title of case study / project / initiative: | Leadership and whole system change: Working in new ways |
| <p>Summary description: (max 150 words) [Briefly describe the project, including groups within the community who were engaged and how it was funded. Was the project evidence-based / informed by research?]</p> <p>WGU is a partner in the North Wales 2025 Social Movement ["2025 Movement"]. The movement's vision is to tackle avoidable health and housing inequalities in North Wales, where people in the most deprived areas are expected to live thirteen years less than those in the least deprived areas (NHS Public Health Wales , 2017).</p> <p>The 2025 Movement approach, founded in systems leadership, aims to transform the way we work, think and deliver in North Wales through 'Just Do' teams [JDT].</p> <p>WGU is the lead JDT for Leadership and Learning with Visiting Industrial Fellow Ken Perry of Do-Well (UK) Ltd who facilitated the development of the movement with leaders in housing, health and local government. Over 2018-2019 we co-created a systems leadership education programme with over 120 partners, including a short course offered to all Governors across Wales to support them in implementing the Curriculum for Wales 2022.</p> <p>Both projects were backed by HEFCW's Civic Engagement Fund and when supporting leadership for Governors saw us work collaboratively with OU and Cardiff University, engaging across a wide spectrum of skills and support systemic change.</p> | |

Project / initiative impact: (max 200 words)

[Describe the actual impact of initiative, including insights gained, and positive outcomes (whether planned or unforeseen)]

Working with 2025 Movement to co-create a leadership approach highlighted the role of a university as a facilitator and enabler of collaborative and applied ways of working.

2025 Movement has achieved significant strategic impact:

- The movement has grown to over 500 members.
- It was a finalist in the Guardian Public Services Awards 2019 public health and wellbeing category.
- As part of its civic mission, WGU co-authored, alongside Clare Budden, 2025 Chair, and Ken Perry, of WGU and Do-Well, a chapter in: 'University-Community Partnerships for promoting social responsibility in Higher Education' (due July 2020), focusing on: Addressing Avoidable Inequalities: the Role of One University in Place-based Transformational Change.

The systems leadership short course and leadership/learning co-created with 2025 has grown a community of leaders:

- A masterclass event in November 2019 engaged over 75 school leaders and governors from across Wales and generated follow-up discussions with Governors Cymru Services.
- Working with OU and Cardiff showcased the tri-university approach with elements of systems leadership.
- We have developed a community of leaders in North Wales of over 80 individuals across a range of organisations and worked with health, mental health, housing, police, public health and third sector organisations, as well as Public Service Boards (PSBs). This led to the development of a new model for the JDTs in 2025 Movement, underpinning approaches with applied research and evidence and a new model and way of working for the University's civic mission.

Future activity: (max 150 words)

[Is the project now sustainable, or are there plans for follow-on projects – if so how will these be funded?]

The focus on systems leadership will continue in a number of ways across North Wales. Using the new Research Wales Innovation Fund, we aim to strengthen links with the 2025 Movement by supporting Just Do Teams - focusing on the research and evidence of their impact.

Learning from the 2025 Movement, WGU has designed a co-created framework for our new civic mission with a clear focus on ending social inequality by 2030 – something we know we cannot achieve alone.

Our ambitious mission is to work in partnership, focusing our resource and time on three key priority areas, including leadership, governance and whole system working.

This will include supporting leadership in schools - especially Governors – in the implementation of the new Curriculum for Wales 2022. This work will happen through a co-created North Wales Public Service Lab, an intellectual and physical space bringing people and communities together to explore societal challenges and develop solutions - underpinned with applied research and innovation.

We will work with:

- Existing and new projects
- North Wales PSBs and the Regional Recovery Group for COVID19
- 2025 Movement teams focused on social loneliness/isolation and mental health/hoarding.

We will also develop a pilot approach with Public Health Wales and National ACEs Hub to become a Trauma Informed University with our community partners.

Quote(s) e.g. from external project partner: (around 60 words)

[There is potential for HEFCW to publish this case study – please provide a quote that helps demonstrate the impact of engagement]

Ken Perry, Visiting Industrial Fellow (WGU) & Director Do-Well Ltd.

“The 2025 movement started with a small group of leaders from health, housing and local government who were angry that avoidable health and social inequalities still exist in our society. Their passion and dedication has continued to engage a growing movement across organisations and boundaries in North Wales of over 500 people that want to work together and think differently to create a more equal region that creates opportunities for all.”

Jane Morris, Director Governors Cymru Services

“The master class attended by school governors from across Wales in Nov 2019 was an excellent way for school governors to gain an insight and understanding of systems leadership. There was much enthusiasm and interest in the programme. The need for governors as key leaders to think and work differently with partners to bring about transformational change, particularly as the New Curriculum is implemented has never been greater.”

Vicky Jones, ACE’s Hub Partnership Lead North Wales, Public Health Wales

“My experience of participating in the introduction to systems leadership course was not merely attending a training course but as a whole new way of working, which supports shedding the confines of working exclusively within traditional organisational boundaries and in fact makes leaps across them to tackle complex and deep rooted issues.

It has transformed the way in which I approach complex issues and has removed some of that fear that says this is too big and too difficult. It has created an environment for collaboration and growth to work with like-minded and enlightened people to work collectively and innovatively to make positive changes with far reaching impact.”

Contacts:

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| <p>How did the activity help support the Well-being of Future Generations Act goals (select those that apply):</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A prosperous Wales <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A resilient Wales <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A healthier Wales <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A more equal Wales <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A Wales of cohesive communities <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A globally responsible Wales |
| <p>[Briefly outline how the project helped support the goals of the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015]</p> | |

The whole approach to co-creating the systems leadership programme was based on the need for new leadership across departmental, organisational and sectoral boundaries, which is the main focus for the five new ways of working set out in the legislation. The system leadership approach mirrors the five ways of working outlined by the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (2015) Wales and given the scale and scope of who we have worked with and developing a community of leaders we are all actively working together to contribute to the seven well-being goals and more importantly facilitate and enable the five ways of working to deliver against these goals.