Leadership Foundation
for Higher Education

Leadership for improved academic enterprise

Stimulus paper

Emeritus Professor James A. Powell OBE DSc, University of Salford
Dr Andrew Clark, University of Salford

Stimulus Paper Series

The Leadership Foundation is pleased to launch its new series of 'Stimulus Papers' which are intended to inform thinking, choices and decisions at institutional and system levels in UK higher education. The papers were selected from an open tender which sought to commission focused and thought-provoking papers that address the challenges facing leaders, managers and governors in the new economic environment facing the UK.

The themes addressed fall into different clusters including higher education leadership, business models for higher education, leading the student experience and leadership and equality of opportunity in higher education. We hope these papers will stimulate discussion and debate, as well as giving an insight into some of the new and emerging issues relevant to higher education today.

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The words 'Reach-Out', 'Outreach' and 'Academic Enterprise' are used interchangeably in this paper to represent what is called, in Britain, the 'third stream' of a university mission. You will realise from the text that we see this as an equal 'First Mission' for universities and not a lower level activity. For us it represents a rich form of relationship between universities and their external partners from business, industry, the civil and voluntary services and the community. We prefer the term Academic Enterprise as the key term for this activity because it suggests universities becoming more enterprising in their ways of Reaching-Out/ Outreach, where knowledge sharing between all parties in any partnership is virtuous. Academic Enterprise is the main term used throughout the text, but Reach-Out & Outreach are also used in the writing for variety and to add colour.

Abstract

This paper is a contribution to the debate on how to improve the leadership, governance and management of Outreach in British Universities. It addresses the development of best practice with respect to 'Reaching-out' to business, industry, civil and voluntary services and the community, or, to use an umbrella term, Academic Enterprise[1]. The paper draws on the reflections of 67 university leaders and academic entrepreneurs, from interviews undertaken between 2009 and 2011.

Our findings suggest that leaders of Academic Enterprise are confident, ambitious, passionate and focused about developing real impact for their chosen area of interest; they have often worked out a clear and underlying strategy for delivering improvements in the 'real world' and demonstrate an ambition to contribute something tangible from their work as academics. They are sensitive to contextual issues; recognise the importance of relationships with others, including external partners, colleagues in their own institution, and the teams they work within; draw upon their own experiences; and are driven by underlying values and beliefs that encourage them to seek out collaboration with the wider community.

Context: the current state of academic enterprise

A recent report by the EU Committee on the Regions[2] outlines the 'need for renewal of societal and industrial structures and processes' to improve 'the welfare and quality of life of [EU] citizens' and further suggests 'the gap between latest research knowledge and real life practice is huge'. Markku Markkula, advisor to CoR and actively involved in leading University-led societal innovation at Aalto University, believes 'cities and regions must... create platforms for change where universities, public bodies and those from private and third sectors [...] operate together in a new and creative mood'[3]. In the UK, the Coalition Government similarly believes university Reach-Out can play its part in the global knowledge economy. It is important that universities understand how the work they undertake can be turned into sustainable products and processes which are 'useful' to the broader society, and can help to create and contribute positive improvements for all[4] for as David Willetts[5] recently said 'Universities... contribute to the health and wealth of our nation through their deep involvement in wider society and the economy'.

In spite of significant recent pressure and financial support from government and the Higher Education Funding Council (Hefce) for England[6], Reach-Out has not become the third major stream, equal to teaching and research, of university missions in terms of importance, recognition, size or status[7]. Moreover, while almost all universities now claim they are reaching-out to their local partners effectively, this rhetoric rarely translates into real 'impact'[8].

As a key 'Innovation and Productivity Report'[9] reveals, the objectives of industry and academia are often distinctly different. Abrue et al argue that: '... what industry and the community want from academia are 'ideas and talent, rather than a cheap way of outsourcing R&D activities'. Academics, however, often pursue objectives from the perspective of their own discipline, underpinned by research-oriented rationales – many lack the desire to commercialise or create impact from the outcomes of their studies. In attempting to form better relationships with external partners, some universities are now beginning to engage in a variety of ways. It is hoped that the reflections reported here will help to better understand those universities, and more specifically the activities and strategies undertaken by Academic Enterprise leaders who are considered successful by their peers, and who can offer new insights into the practice and people behind the leadership of Academic Enterprise.

2
CoR - 22nd May (2011)

3
from CoR (2011)

4
Cable and Willett (2011)

5
David Willetts (2011)

6
HEFCE (2009)

7
Ulrichson (2009)

8
Powell (2011)

9
Abrue et al. (2009)

10
Powell (2011a)

11
The Appendix also outlines
in more detail the spread of
countries, institution types
and roles performed by those
interviewed

12
Kvale and Brinkman (2008)

13
Mason (2002)

14
Those interested in a more
detailed discussion are
directed to Powell and Clark
(in preparation for 2012)

Methodology

This paper was conceived after reflection on a series of earlier findings from
a qualitative research project exploring the leadership, governance and
management skills of those academics identified by their peers to be good
leaders and effective academic entrepreneurs[10]. From this, 67 peer-identified and
'successful leaders' of Academic Enterprise were interviewed for this paper – these
included Vice-Chancellors/Presidents, Pro Vice-Chancellors, Deans, Directors
of Innovation and Reach-Out, Academic Enterprise project leaders, Support
Staff and one former Chair of a Governing Board (further details are shown in
the Appendix). Each interviewee was nominated by other academics for being
particularly successful in Academic Enterprise and its leadership. The comments
of those interviewed are shown in italics throughout the paper.[11]

The research design is based on the interpretation of real life, 'lived' experiences
and the interviews enabled research participants to articulate in their own ways[12]
what Academic Enterprise, its leadership, and leadership practices meant to
them. The interviews addressed issues surrounding: leadership style and practice
including the experience of good and bad leadership; the influences of and
relationships with others; the team(s) surrounding the interviewees; and the
barriers and challenges to good leadership in Academic Enterprise.

Analysis of the data collected through the interviews was undertaken through a
multi-stage qualitative analysis including thematic content analysis, and coding
of text and annotations according to terms identified by participants and the
researchers[13, 14].

Key themes arising from the interview data

Academic Enterprise is about 'doing' not just thinking

The leaders we spoke to recognised Outreach as a different type of academic activity; not about 'looking', 'seeing' and 'writing', but 'looking', 'seeing' and 'doing' something. Hence Academic Enterprise leaders see themselves as following an 'alternative' path to the 'conventional academic role/career':

"We have detractors to the notion of enterprise, but if we keep doing what we are doing to our agreed vision and goals, and we are successful, then the voices go quiet, and more often than not they come back and ask us how we are doing it. So you've just got to lead by example and just do it." (PVC)

"The mentors I've been privileged to have are all doers, they are all facilitators." (Dean)

Interviewees were clear that Outreach is not, and should not be, just about economic developments or simply adding to the bottom line (for example with regard to opportunity for patents or gaining research monies). They viewed Academic Enterprise as helping to make an active, real and sustainable difference to society – and as a 'noble academic art'.

Motivation and personal commitment

The interviews suggest that successful Academic Enterprise leaders are driven by a strong sense of personal motivation. These are academics who want to do - and lead - Outreach, not because it has been forced upon them through university mission statements or (as discussed above) because of their own career ambitions. The interviewees talked of a desire to add 'real meaning' to how they help people better their own lives, particularly in the way they engage with external partners. Many leaders talked of their passion about their chosen area of Academic Enterprise, as well as a determination to achieve something 'real':

"I'd always been bothered by social issues and the things happening to communities... I needed to do something about it." (AEPL)

"I began to realise I could make real changes for myself in Outreach for academe." (AEPL)

This motivation frequently develops from past experiences and encounters with others. Most leaders recognised the personal context within which their interest in this area had developed and felt that certain 'life chances', 'crossroads' and 'turning points', had contributed to the development of a broader philosophy

about 'needing to make a difference'. Many were also concerned to ensure that their university played an important role in shaping how the world is and could become:

> *"As a working class boy in the war I got the opportunity to get out... I believe in the power of collective action and how it can achieve remarkable things." (VC)*

> *"On an educational working trip to Nigeria, early in my career, I learned about different cultures and ways of engaging which totally changed my life." (Dean)*

> *"I ran a demonstration well, after reading 'Catcher in the Rye' and I saw how powerful collective action could become." (AS)*

> *"I witnessed community protests against the University and it made me think how I could help the community, especially the poorer do things for themselves." (AS, 2009)*

These leaders have developed a broad range of skills and capabilities throughout their lives, for example understanding different contexts; being able to work in unfamiliar settings; developing positive relationships and appreciating and being able to engage with individual and organisational histories. These skills are extremely useful to those undertaking Academic Enterprise and these successful individuals appear to be good at making connections between, and utilising the skills learned through, their lived experiences and their role reaching out to businesses and communities.

Working with others and developing trusting relationships

Leaders rarely achieve success by acting alone. Those we spoke to recognised that this was particularly true in Academic Enterprise and highlighted the importance of working in good teams with the support of senior academics, project leaders, their Heads of School/Department, Deans and other colleagues:

> *"It's about developing a collective and collaborative vision for the future... and then working with highly committed people to embed enterprise across the University." (AS)*

> *"[Good Outreach...] will only work if it is done with support from senior academic leaders and in harmony with the university mission."(CGB)*

> *"We are very blessed, we have a terrific support staff here who wish to do whatever it takes to allow us to make a difference." (Dean)*

The problems and obstacles dealt with in Academic Enterprise projects are complex, fluid and normally go beyond any institutional barriers or university mission statements. Those we spoke to aimed to build trusted and sharing relationships with a wide range of individuals, often in creative trans-disciplinary teams. Open and honest conversations, and being receptive to new ideas, were considered important:

> *"I try to build up trusted relationships by being approachable, listening and acting as an ambassador." (AS)*

> *"I am in continuous discussion with 'the boss' forming a developing relationship with him... It's a true partnership of knowledge sharing and shared action because we trust each other." (DAE)*

> *"...trust-building through honesty and reinforcing constructive improvements based on the views of others... this leads to collaborative development." (VC)*

> *"It's not so much about the action man concept but about trust and reliability... You want somebody who you know is going to make a commitment with you on something that is important and deliver on it." (Dean)*

The interviewees also highlighted a deep commitment to finding good solutions through collaborative co-creation with their external partners:

> *"I have the rather naïve belief and trust that people working together can achieve anything." (VC)*

> *"Co-creation with the community is my driving aspiration and vision." (AEPL)*

> *"I know how to facilitate academics to work collaboratively to make a real difference." (AEPL)*

Building a trusted team was also mentioned by all as being necessary prerequisite for the democratic leadership they wished to engender.

Direct contact and open networking - enabling meaningful conversations

Interviewees recognised the importance of face-to-face contact within, and beyond, the university, through what might be termed 'outward facing' leadership. They had found that in Academic Enterprise particularly, being 'in the same room' as external partners and closely networking to develop new contacts and relationships were a key part of the role of a successful Academic Enterprise leader:

> *"My staff and I meet with civic and business groups and societies to work out the best interactions with the University... I find an action learning approach encourages the best collaboration for mutual benefit." (Dean)*

"Get out and talk to people because then you'll realise how you're perceived and it will probably challenge your expectations quite strongly." (Dean)

"It's actually being part of the conversation, you have to be there and you have to be in the group." (AEPL)

"I do have this running joke about all I do is shake hands and have lunch with people. But when you speak to people you start to understand their motivations far better than if you sit in your office and think what I'm doing is great therefore everyone else must think it's great as well." (Dean)

Developing the right relationships was found to take a great deal of thought and effort. This was not necessarily a completely organic process, but involved careful planning and a focus on structures, processes and how to gain the maximum output for the investment of time:

"We did a lot of work trying to understand the nature of the relationships we wanted to construct, the mechanisms through which they might be developed, and what we would need to be doing to actually make it happen." (Dean)

"If you're working with a large government department... you look for the most senior key [person] because then you can rely on their endorsement and legitimacy right down through their organisation. So that notion of leverage... that you're going to get the greatest range of opportunities for investment in time, energy, perhaps resources." (Dean)

All successful leaders recognised the need for simple, clear, consistent and compelling communications.

Developing a supportive and enabling environment

To succeed in Academic Enterprise, interviewees noted the importance of creating a supportive environment where academics feel able to focus on Outreach, where enterprising individuals feel comfortable to innovate with external partners, and where those with a passion feel they can develop their skills:

"I tried to create the right environment and focus where young staff and students could explore exciting futures." (DAE)

"The Innovation Forum is a place where local people come together with University colleagues to discuss potential projects in a supportive environment, and it really works." (PVC)

Many felt fortunate that they had been nurtured, mentored and supported through their careers, (suggesting that this had helped them to achieve the position they were in today). Others had found (or placed) themselves in social and inter-relational contexts where they felt rewarded - and were purposefully creating similarly

'rewarding' social contexts and relationships (if they could) in their own institutions, with their own projects, and their enterprise teams.

Non-authoritarian leadership

The leaders interviewed tended to understand their own leadership role in terms of listening, supporting and working alongside their staff and partners, rather than directing and dictating to others:

> *"It's not about authority and power, but... about trust and enabling people."(VC)*

> *"The thing that I think about the most is how to manage the dialectic of authority and participation." (AEPL)*

> *"... the power of supporting rather than the power of controlling." (Dean)*

Many viewed setting and defining a vision for Academic Enterprise, and ensuring that others were involved in setting that vision – as well as buying into it - as a key leadership role:

> *"Leadership is about having a clear vision and knowing how to get there, by having a team that can find a route." (VC)*

> *"The person who does not have a position of authority conferred on them but yet manages to lead others is someone who is able to articulate a set of objectives for a group, goals of some sort, to assist that group, feel that they are actually working together around those objectives and to be able to tell the story to others about how important those objectives are." (AEPL)*

> *"I try to create a more relevant collaborative vision aligning it to the strength of the majority of the staff – meeting alternate external demands." (VC)*

Having agreed their vision and overall architecture for any project, each member of any successful Academic Enterprise team must be allowed to set their own goals, and be given the personal freedom to explore opportunities within them. Again, the most successful democratic leaders have to trust team members to develop their own creative component of any project to enable their own, and the team's joint activities, to shine to the full. Furthermore, members of successful teams said there had to be an:

> *"... unshakeable bond of trust with their leaders – a trust borne out of mutual respect".*

Autonomy and freedom to explore all options

Those we interviewed felt they worked best when they were 'left to get on with things'. Of course, these individuals are not literally left alone, and they increasingly have to account for their actions, not just to their university, but to society. However they do appear to have a personal preference for autonomy – being able

to pursue their own personal vision, getting on with activities that they believe will yield success, and being able to access or identify unusual pockets of funding which others may consider inaccessible. Key motivators for these Academic Enterprise leaders were freedom and autonomy to pursue the development of their chosen area of activity in their own way as they strive for the highest excellence and supreme stewardship (Benneworth, 2012):

> *"I am left to get on with Outreach, encouraging good ideas of others and protecting my team." (Dean)*

> *"The big challenge was being able to convince people to leave me alone to get on with what I knew was right." (Dean)*

> *"I try to maximise the autonomy and power of my enterprise teams." (VC)*

> *"The University allows me to develop effective programmes which reflect Aboriginal needs in my own way and I am also building up financial independence of the project and its processes for the future." (AEPL)*

Along with Amabile and Kramer[15] we found that a "key aspect of autonomy is a feeling that one's decisions will hold" and a leader that overrides team members decisions will de-motivate their team and inhibit progress.

Financial resources

The leaders interviewed, by and large, stressed financial difficulties, caused by a lack of readily available funding to pursue Outreach, as a real barrier to progress. This is despite attempts (e.g. by Hefce, 2009) to offer financial support (including pump-priming) to universities. However, those interviewed also discussed their own 'entrepreneurial' success in finding money, where others had not necessarily even 'thought to look'. From early in their careers, these individuals recognised the importance of acquiring continuous funding, so it becomes another challenge - rather than them being reliant on 'the traditional funding system'. Many also noted that being able to locate the necessary resources was a key skill for Academic Enterprise and were prepared to coach their junior staff in funding acquisition from a variety of potential sponsors:

> *"Finding the resources to make the enterprise work just became one of the challenges, but increasingly a very important one." (AEPL)*

> *"I think it's very hard in a university because... a budgetary requirement is so overwhelming now, [and...] most of our money doesn't come from government anymore, it comes from being astute in a commercial and corporate world... [leaders] have got to be Janus faced." (AEPL)*

> *"Leaders take on the pain and marshal the resources to actually get to our required destination." (PVC)*

Scale

Projects in Academic Enterprise need not involve grandiose objectives or large-scale activities to be influential to the individuals or partners involved. Many of our interviewees related stories of small-scale, seemingly mundane and quite localised projects, or activities, that were particularly influential in driving their current activities and decision-making. Some also noted that much Outreach activity in universities is allowed to take place 'under the radar' as long as it 'does not get too big':

> *"I am allowed to develop the programme because it's small in scale and doesn't cut across anyone." (AEPL)*

In this respect successful leaders used small scale projects with clear outcomes to promote intrinsic motivation of their creative team or broke up larger scale projects into linked shorter ones with progress events forming a powerful handover to the next stage in any development.

Impact, monitoring and benchmarking

Monitoring the impact of projects, benchmarking and considering outcomes were all mentioned as part of the role of a good Academic Enterprise leader. Interviewees were involved in assessing financial impact of project where possible, and where the impact was for social or public good, then short case studies were often used to articulate success. Such monitoring activities were vital to the process of assessing progress and strategy - and could also be used to broadcast successes locally, regionally and nationally, thus raising the profile of the project and the university:

> *"Outcomes for me are the most fruitful way to nail down both a sense of vision but also a basis for checking on how you're going." (PVC)*

> *"Undertaking proper benchmarking on enterprise helps staff understand their progress… and at the early stage in our development knowledge of outputs, outcomes and impact were both aspirational and real." (PVC)*

> *"I became involved in developing impact criteria… because I could see their value in driving for improved relationships between the University and its partners." (DAE)*

Reflections on leading others to achieve successes in Academic Enterprise

In addition to discussing how they themselves managed to achieve success in this area. The leaders reflected on their leadership of others in relation to Academic Enterprise. They largely had an open, communicative and inspiring style of leadership which involved setting a positive example, ensuring staff are empowered to succeed and having high expectations of what others can achieve:

"Leadership is about inspiring, supporting, encouraging. It's about setting directions and giving people a clear sense of what kinds of outcomes you want for the organisation and then to deliver them and then provide them with the resources to work out how to deliver them." (PVC)

"I try to make my staff more successful and then they see this office differently." (DAE)

"I build in very high expectations." (PVC)

"I try to be exemplary in what I do." (AEPL)

"It's about, I think, making the workplace enjoyable and fun... it's about the culture being set." (PVC)

"I act with honesty and empathise with staff... and staff really listen to me because they know I take them seriously." (VC)

They also mentioned that they worked to instill in those working with them entrepreneurial attitudes, and a willingness to work collaboratively and take some risks:

"I try and show people what's possible by taking risks, by working closely with others co-operatively, by not being competitive, by being generous and giving away." (AEPL)

"It comes down to empowering the individual to have the confidence to challenge conventional thinking." (Dean)

The future of Academic Enterprise

There was a perception among interviewees that Academic Enterprise is still undervalued in many institutions – highlighted by the fact that extrinsic rewards and incentives were few and far between. Those interviewees who had been promoted noted that this was usually due to their successes in traditional university areas, rather than their (sometimes extensive) achievements in Academic Enterprise. Many felt they had taken risks by pursuing their careers in this area. Some felt that their own institutions were not in a position to afford such rewards - others suggested that because Academic Enterprise leaders are so driven by intrinsic motivation and clearly care about the Outreach they do, their superiors assume that rewards or incentives are unnecessary:

"The staff are increasing in confidence but there is still a general belief that thing that gets you promoted is [research] in the [top] journals... there's a lot of people who have done a lot of [Academic Enterprise] for a long time with little recognition." (Dean)

"It has taken me a long time to get on in academe as someone interested in Reach-Out... whereas in industry you grow your talent, incentivise it and promote it... universities don't seem to do that." (AEPL)

"We recognise the need for a reward's scheme to reinforce progress and are developing criteria centrally for this... but it is difficult." (AS)

Some felt that it will take a long time before universities realise the importance of Outreach and value it alongside other university activities:

"There is a very deep challenging role to getting academics to orientate themselves away from their day-to-day work with their books and their students and get them to think about and understand what's happening in a particular industry." (Dean)

There was also considered to be a great deal of 'untapped expertise' within universities in relation to Academic Enterprise and greater support and knowledge sharing across all roles and departments was called for:

"We need VCs, PVCs, other senior university leaders and lay members of [Governing Boards] to support Academic Enterprise." (CGB)

"What works well is Deans sharing their knowledge of what to do and how they can convince their paymasters." (Dean)

Across the leaders interviewed there was a sense that there does need to be a culture change within universities about how Academic Enterprise is carried out, how it is planned and how it fits within the mission and goals of the University.

"I recognise people are set in their ways, so cultural change is needed... and to encourage staff to take part in new enterprise developments." (AS)

"Some of the processes are very slow here... they are too slow for a modern university... incredibly bureaucratic and I don't think we have the time for that." (AS)

"I know what I am doing and trying to achieve and am in no sense afraid of change... in fact I thrive on it... and know what needs to be done." (DAE)

However, the outlook was positive for many of our interviewees. Some had found that the broader benefits were increasingly being recognised in their institution, other individuals were increasingly buying in to the importance of Academic Enterprise and that the required cultural change was beginning to take place:

"[People are] understandably cynical about whether things are going to change but it's getting better... changing institutional strategy is a long term thing, you don't switch it on overnight." (Dean)

"[Academic Enterprise is...] becoming a very good reputational benefit, helping make the University internationally renowned, and providing credible evidence of social impact." (PVC)

"I am building an alternative set of values around the talented in the University and basing the future on what is actually happening here... I enable and celebrate success... creating a new reputation." (VC)

"I see myself a setting off on a journey and taking people with me." (AS)

What works when leading academic enterprise: learning from experience

This section summarises some of the characteristics and experiences of the Academic Enterprise Leaders we interviewed, which they consider to have contributed to their success.

Team-working: Successful leaders recognise the importance of team working and strive to develop their own creative teams. They create complementary 'team roles' that enable creativity by fully harnessing the multi functionality among team members in a harmonious way. In doing so, successful leaders often enlist people with views alternative to their own to offer new, frequently trans-disciplinary perspectives, which therefore enable imaginative ideas to progress. Crucially, they too form part of the team-conversation in order to ensure knowledge sharing between all members.

Authorise, not authority: These successful leaders recognised that people, not money, are key to improved performance in coordinated and collaborative Academic Enterprise. They described the ability to listen, authorise and enable as important, not being an authority over people, or demonstrating what some termed "leading from the back of the room". Thus they felt leadership in this area is about becoming a 'servant leader'[16] and the 'channel of authority'; they are essentially enablers, coaches and facilitators.

Autonomy: These leaders worked hard to enable their academic staff to have freedom and autonomy, as they had often been given themselves early in their careers. Many noted that they are still now trusted with the autonomy to work and lead relatively undisturbed. Trust is a key term used by all those we interviewed in this respect. Some leaders actively 'coached' their own staff, and assembled teams that, they considered, worked well within the social contexts of which they were a part. In this way they reproduced the social contexts they found to have worked in the past. In creating this type of interpersonal context with those they worked closely with, they actively sought out like-minded people, affirming their identities as particular kinds of academics with particular kinds of leadership styles.

Identity: These leaders were self-starters, self-enablers and acted consciously and repeatedly in pursuit of their values. They were keen to act as role-models to give confidence to others; While, of course, many are driven and ambitious, they nonetheless present themselves as apparently 'humble' rather than 'in your face' leaders, perhaps because of the importance they place on the social relationships they nurture. The interviewees did not see leadership as a personality cult, but about empowering and encouraging others. To achieve this, they drew on personal anecdote and experiences; including stories of chance meetings with others who changed their direction or actions in life. They also regularly encouraged new

opportunities for this "serendipity" to occur for themselves and, more importantly, for those they led.

Vision and values: Successful leaders had strong and clear values and visions that they understood and articulated well to others. They recognise they could not do the kinds of complex future developments alone. Their values appear deeply set and based on experience hard won over time and they recognise the need for collaboration to achieve goals, know how to relate their vision to others, and recognise the importance of respect, and humour, when working with their teams.

Potential challenges facing academic enterprise and those who lead it

Scaling up and scaling out. The successful Academic Enterprise leaders tended to be self-selecting, driven by their own goals, surround themselves with those whom they believe they can form good working relationships with, and those who share their goals and ideologies about Outreach. This raises three concerns.

❙ First, they may concentrate on those projects or issues they are most passionate about, at the expense of other issues and communities important to the university and its other external partners. As Reach-Out may be considered less relevant than teaching and learning, it may proceed outside of the core university mission statement or vision. It may also occur in a potentially piece-meal fashion targeting efforts on a few preferential themes and not lead to well researched, designed and developed solutions delivered through a larger development team.

❙ Second, there may be limited scope for other communities, beyond the university, or indeed groups of academics within universities, to engage with Academic Enterprise teams, limiting the ability to extend activities across departments and/or disciplines.

❙ Third, if Outreach leadership falls to a relatively small number of committed individuals, there may be difficulties 'scaling up' activity, making it difficult for successful small-scale projects to grow because of a lack of awareness, resources or person-power.

Rewarding Outreach: Since Outreach is rarely seen as equal to research, publishing or teaching, those involved may be overlooked or feel less-well valued or rewarded[17]. In response, many may seek out alternative recognition or reward through peer-support and respect from senior colleagues. In this way, successful Outreach leaders often surround themselves with those they can work alongside and gain non-monetary rewards. However, this does not mean that they should not demand, or deserve, external motivators and reward structures. Expecting fair and reasonable institutional rewards and external recognition for their efforts remains important and might help to further develop excellence in this area. Furthermore, as Amabile and Kramer[18] say academic 'scholars "are" their academic papers and awards'; in the future, if Academic Enterprise is to gain momentum within universities, academic entrepreneurs would also be 'recognised' for their sustainable, high impact and successful solutions as reflected in a different set of rewards.

Imposing Outreach: Passion and self-motivation are key to successful leadership of Academic Enterprise. Consequently, specifying that academics 'must do Reach-Out' will typically be met with significant resistance and may not result in successful projects. Seeking out those in their institutions who have demonstrated, or expressed interest in, Outreach may offer a better outcome for all involved, rather than imposing activities on reluctant others, even if this requires explicitly recruiting external candidates to demonstrate this passion.

Academic Enterprise and mission statements: Individuals cannot determine university ideologies and mission statements alone. Academic Enterprise leadership needs to be understood in relation to other kinds of leadership being done by/ in the university. Different sorts of university leadership exist in any university and this needs to be recognised alongside the tensions in terms of how to meet different, potentially competing, university goals at the same time. Some interviewees expressed uneasiness that, should it become a core university activity, Academic Enterprise would be more about rhetoric and auditing, than delivering demonstrable outcomes. It is vital that if Outreach is to become more prominent in university missions, then senior leaders need to be clear about why this is the case, how it will be facilitated, and how it will be rewarded.

The external environment: It is important to recognise the wider nexus or web of relations and activities in which Academic Enterprise takes place both within and beyond the university. Its leadership operates at boundaries not encountered by other types of university activity. It should be remembered that business and community leaders and others dealing with Outreach teams, will be positioned in their complex contexts, with their own relationships to negotiate and barriers to overcome.

Paternalism: There is an implicit assumption that communities want to engage with universities and that engagement will be good. But is this necessarily, or always, the case? Does the community see engagement with universities as worthwhile? Moreover, do communities actually want to be engaged? One of the difficulties our interviewees observed about Outreach was how individuals and institutions could locate communities who wanted to engage.

Governing Boards: Although 'lay members' of Boards could become a real force for constructive change in Academic Enterprise, this requires the agreement of Vice-Chancellors and other senior leaders. While such a role can work, if the Executive and Board are at one on how this will be achieved, we recognise that this will not be the case everywhere.

Recommendations

Encouragement from senior leadership: Senior leaders need to encourage
academics who want to undertake Academic Enterprise to creatively relate with
business and the community. Academic Enterprise leadership cannot be managed
in the same way as other types of University leadership. Universities need to
recognise the qualities of individuals with the experiences to make things happen
in the 'real world' and encourage the development of supportive contexts where
co-creative and workable enterprise practices can happen.

Harnessing entrepreneurial experience, allowing leaders to flourish:
Academic leaders must recognise what they are good at, buttress themselves
against their weaknesses and learn how to develop smarter relationships with
those from business and the community - harnessing each others' skills for the
benefit of all. Universities should avoid 'hero' leadership for the activity of Academic
Enterprise, and favour creative, collaborative and collective and 'servant' leadership
where the leader is the servant of his team and partners[19]. Universities need to
recognise the 'humaneness' of this kind of leadership: it is not about 'teaching'
leadership skills, but about harnessing experience, adopting a more open
philosophy of action, and valuing the good practice which are routed through
people: it is interpersonal and systemic. So, 'de-objectifying' what is often portrayed
as good leadership, and enabling more inter-personal leadership is central to the
success of Academic Enterprise. Successful Outreach leadership is about potential
leaders learning how to articulate their passion and focus, and how to 'walk the talk'
with their fellow creatives, while at the same time ensuring others understand their
own clear vision.

Support and recognition: Successful Academic Enterprise leaders need to
feel supported and recognised for their work through endorsement, material
encouragement, access to resources, influence, and alternative recognition such as
promotion. The opportunity to expound values upwards, with a reduction in the
barriers of hierarchies or systems, is key in this. Supportive behavior from academics'
line managers, especially senior ones, actually enhances the likelihood of success.
Key to success in this is leaders recognising real progress in any Academic
Enterprise development, no matter how small, as and when it occurs, but regularly,
transparently and continuously.

Recognise passion: Good leadership in this area is practiced through, and
identified by, passion. Successful Academic Enterprise leaders are able to surround
themselves with those they can work alongside and give them support. This
implies an important role for recognising experience, expertise and passion
in recruitment processes, while remaining aware of the dangers of creating
'personality silos' among Academic Enterprise teams.

Managing leaders: Ours has not been a project specifically about good university
management. However, Academic Enterprise leaders have revealed problems they
have had with their own managers, not as individuals or groups of individuals, but
as a category of activities and practices associated with 'Managerialism'[20]. The best

Academic Enterprise leaders also recognise the need for managers in their own enterprise teams; this is in order to ensure deliverables and outcomes are met, and impact is ensured. They not only recognise this need, but actively seek to recruit managers for their teams who will fulfill these tasks.

Effective integration across the university system: There is a need for an integrated and coherent approach to the delivery and governance of Academic Enterprise. Effective processes must be developed to ensure trans-disciplinary working across the university. This includes organisational structures, particularly relating to Human Resources that support rather than impede career progression. There should be a transparent career path for Academic Enterprise employees and leaders, with fluid structures enabling better coaching and education where individuals can move in and out of Outreach.

Rewards and incentives: Recognised transparent rewards and incentives schemes for those asked to lead Academic Enterprise should be developed. This has as much to do with its status and recognition in university values and goals, as it does with financial returns on investment. Rewards, however defined, must become a part of the means of getting visions realised by those working 'for' or 'under' these leaders.

Governing Boards: The position of Governing Boards needs to be recognised. Boards can work closely with their VC's supporting a richer and more relevant form of Academic Enterprise. VCs, and other senior university leaders, are busy delivering the core activities of their Universities. Lay Board members could therefore have a real role in supporting this emergent aspect of university capability. Outreach represents many of the values and aspirations that brought Board members to their university role in the first place. These can be better tapped – but not at the risk of taking VCs away from their wider vision or cutting across their views. To undertake such an enhanced role, Governing Boards would need to become more fully representative of their local communities, ensuring that they include those who could benefit from the Academic Enterprise offered by the University. Boards will need support and guidance to engage sensitively. A 'mutual coaching' position could be entered into between lay governors and university colleagues in which knowledge is virtuously shared and each learns from the other how to develop more effective ways of working.

21
OECD (2009)

22
PASCAL International
Observatory for place
management, social capital
and learning regions (2011)

23
EU Committee of the Regions
(2011)

24
EU Committee of the Regions
(2011)

25
Yigitcanlar et al (2012)

26
Jackson (2012)

Conclusion

Studies by the OECD[21], the PASCAL International Observatory for place management, social capital and learning regions[22], and the European Committee of the Regions[23], reveal the gap between relevant university research knowledge and 'real life' practice, which has demanded universities undertake a cultural change in Academic Enterprise for real improvement by EU political leaders[24]. A recent Melbourne Congress[25] also shows the desire from cities and regions throughout the world to partner with universities to change working culture and deliverables.

Our study of successful leaders of Academic Enterprise reveals that these are individuals with the passion, skill and commitment to build productive and fulfilling relationships with business and the community. Good Academic Enterprise leaders are encouraged by environments that offer the autonomy and freedom that is desired by most academics. They also provide well articulated visions, listen to feedback, make their team feel included in the vision and support them. By developing co-creative team-working they can also ensure Academic Enterprise projects of real impact. But this depends on their Universities recognising and supporting their efforts.

As a relatively new area to academe, successful Academic Enterprise leaders have often gained their skills through experience; frequently working in business or the community, or in undertaking initially small-scale projects with such external partners. Since research has shown it is difficult to intrinsically motivate academics to want to work in this area[26], the most important thing a university can do is to locate among their staff, and recruit new staff, with a demonstrable desire for the kinds of Academic Enterprise that exemplify the mission of their university, and who show a real commitment and capabilities for achieving a 'real' impact. Moreover, leaders in this area must be supported and nurtured not only by their local managers, but also by senior university leaders and members of Governing Boards.

Few universities reward academics for specialising in this area of university leadership and this often leads to a disincentive for potential future leaders. Greater recognition by government, by the Funding Councils and by senior university leaders, of the importance of this area to the university, and providing transparent rewards are therefore important. Engendering better leadership in Academic Enterprise is not something easily taught, rather it is a capability which can be encouraged through nurturing, coaching and mentoring.

Acknowledgements

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Appendix

Academic Enterprise Leaders Interviewed

Sixty-seven **leaders** were recommended by their peers for their excellence in leading Academic Enterprise and interviewed by the first author of this paper from 2009 to 2011. These leaders come from different management levels within their universities to cover the necessary range of leadership skills and capabilities:

There were: **6 Vice-Chancellors**, Rectors or Presidents (shown as VCs in the text); **I former Chair of Governing Board** (shown as CGB in the text); **7 Pro Vice-Chancellors**, Pro Rectors or Vice Presidents (shown as PVCs in the text); **10 Deans** or equivalent (shown as Deans in the text); **11 Directors of Enterprise**, Academic Enterprise or Reach-Out (shown as DAEs in the text); **7 Relevant Academic Enterprise Support** people (shown as ASs in the text); **28 front line Exemplary Academic Enterprise Project Leaders** (shown as AEPLs in the text).

They came from the following Universities shown in alphabetical order against continent of origin: **United Kingdom** - University of Glasgow, Lancaster University, University of Leeds, Leeds Metropolitan University, Plymouth University, Teesside University and University of Westminster; **Rest of Europe** - Central European University, Maastricht University and Limburg Catholic University; **Canada** - The University of British Columbia, Simon Fraser University and University of Victoria; **North America** - North Illinois University; **Australia** - University of Western Sydney and Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology.

Biographies

Eur Ing Emeritus Professor James A Powell OBE DSc

CEng BSc MSc PhD AUMIST FIOA FIMgt FCMI FRSA FCIOB FASI MInst D
Academic Director of PASCAL Universities for a Modern Renaissance
The Universities of Salford and Glasgow,
UK Ambassador for Social Entrepreneurship in Higher Education
Ambassador for the Leonardo European Corporate Learning Awards
Managing Director of UPBEAT (Manchester) Ltd
Member of the New Club of Paris

James Powell is a Chartered European Engineer with specialisation in Design, Academic Enterprise, Human Communications and Team Building, and has written over 300 papers and books on a variety of topics related to this. He was Managing Director of Britain's first commercial videodisc company, worked for ICI's Building Development Group, was Head of University Schools of Architecture and Manufacturing System and finally was Pro Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise and Regional Affairs), responsible for Salford University's "Reach Out" initiatives. He is now Professor Emeritus at Salford, researching into all aspects of the *leadership, governance and management* of university Reach-Out to business and the community; findings from these studies are leading to the development of learning tools to coach traditional academics to become enterprising ones. He is also presently developing his notion of 'Universities for a Modern Renaissance' for the PASCAL International Observatory for *place management, social capital and learning regions*; this development will be used to focus universities' developing strategies towards purposeful engagement with business and the community. James was awarded the OBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours list of 2006, for "*services to science and to engineering research and education*".

Dr Andrew Clark

Andrew Clark (PhD) is Lecturer in Sociology (Research Methods) in the School of Humanities, Languages and Social Sciences at the University of Salford. He has previously worked at the Universities of Leeds, St Andrews and The Open University. His interdisciplinary research focuses on the relationships between social networks, community and urban space. He also has a keen interest in methodological creativity and public engagement in and through social research.

Stimulus paper