

Building a two-way street: Challenges and opportunities for community engagement at research universities.

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Abstract

Recent reforms in the Carnegie Foundation classification system and regional accreditation standards have fueled momentum for community engagement in higher education. This study employs a knowledge-flow conceptual framework to identify barriers and facilitators that influence the adoption of an engagement agenda at land-grant and urban research universities. With data drawn from six cases, broad themes related to institutional setting, history, epistemologies, leadership, structures, and boundary-spanning roles of faculty and staff emerged as key levers or inhibitors of community engagement at research universities. Implications for practice and future research are discussed.

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Building a Two-Way Street: Challenges and Opportunities for Community Engagement at Research Universities

David J. Weerts and Lorilee R. Sandmann

During the last decade, a national movement has emerged to renew the civic mission of U.S. colleges and universities. Major professional organizations, including the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges, the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, and the American Association of Community Colleges, have developed significant initiatives to promote a civic-oriented agenda among campus presidents, faculty, staff, and students with community stakeholders and partners. Foundational works such as *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate* (Boyer, 1990), *Scholarship Assessed* (Glassick, Huber, & Macroff, 1997) and *Making the Case for Professional Service* (Lynton, 1995)

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