

# VICE-CHANCELLOR'S AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

## Recognition for Community Engagement (CE)

### 1. Introduction

Qualified candidates will not compete, but will be nominated for their exceptional contributions in line with the rules stipulated below.

The recipient(s) of the award will be selected on a number of community engagement activities relating to the following:

- Activities that have resulted in *demonstrable mutual benefit* to the external non-academic constituency (community) and the academic enterprise.
- Evidence of *shared planning and decision-making practices* in the initiative/activity.
- Evidence of the way in which the initiative has enhanced teaching/learning or research/innovation and sustainable development processes must be presented by the applicant clearly demonstrating this integration.
- Documented excellence in extending knowledge production, dissemination, integration and application of knowledge through community engagement, including publications or post graduate outputs.

Depending on the nature of the activity the following **criteria** will be considered:

- ❖ Sustainable impact of the project/intervention on all stakeholders but first and foremost the community.
- ❖ Contribution to brokering and facilitating relationships which have enhanced the University's engagement with local, regional, national or continental development challenges.
- ❖ Contribution to new notions of professional practice designed to meet the needs of the South African in terms of change or impact and learning.

### 2. Definitions and terms

#### Defining community:

*The following definition is used for the wide range of communities that are served and includes 'communities' at various levels of society:*

- *The more immediate communities of the university close to the different campuses, e.g. those communities that benefit directly from activities and services.*
- *International, national, regional and local users of expertise and services of the university.*
- *The public and private sector (e.g. SASOL and other companies, state departments such as DTI, DST, Department of Sport and Culture, NGOs, communities of practice etc.).*

## Defining the activity / engagement:

The HEQC broadly defines community engagement as “initiatives and processes through which the expertise of the higher education institution in the areas of teaching and learning are applied to address issues relevant to its community. Community engagement typically finds expression in a variety of forms, ranging from informal and relatively unstructured activities to formal and structured academic programmes addressed at particular community needs”. The University uses the term **implementation of expertise** as an umbrella term for this activity, as it embraces the work done over a wide range, from commercialization of expertise to pure community service. The emphasis here is on ‘not for profit’ activities that can contribute to change.

**Terms: Demonstrable mutual benefit:** The impact on sustainable change in status of recipients of the activities, for example better access to information, training, changes in behaviour, better quality of life as new job creation was facilitated etc. Impact on the university with regard to research outputs (publications), training of students, new information obtained, whether its baseline or the scientific proof and measurement should be available for verification. Therefore – the impact/change/benefit achieved in the community must be measurable – it is however up to the recipient to prove the benefit or return – in order that every programme or initiative can be measured on its own merit.

### Terms: Shared planning and decision-making practices:

Shared planning and decision-making should include needs assessments, methods used, proof of meetings such as minutes etc. Community stakeholder engagement and dialogue should be demonstrated.

## 3. The award

3.1 **Name:** The award is known as the Vice Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Community Engagement.

3.2 **Eligibility:** The award is open to individual staff and formal or informal groupings within the university. Staff must be employed either on a permanent basis or under a limited term contract of at least two years and must have been employed for a period of not less than 12 months prior to the date of nomination. A candidate is only eligible for re-nomination after a two year cycle. More than one candidate can be nominated from a management unit. Senate has the authority to decide if *other people* may be considered for the award from time to time, other people could be people not in the employ of the NWU or students.

3.3 **Number of awards:** Every year, the University usually makes 9 (3 x3 campus nominations) awards for excellence in community engagement, based on open invitation within each faculty and each NWU campus. The Rectors and Vice-Rectors will drive the selection process at campus level of the three top community engagement recipients for teaching/learning, research and professional advice based on not- for- profit activities.

3.4 The specific circumstances under which community engagement takes place within the various faculties and departments are acknowledged.

3.5 The award is embodied in a certificate of recognition.

3.6 The award may not be made to the same person two years in a row. The Director: Community Engagement is responsible for updating the record of all awards made in terms of these rules.

## 4. Procedure

- 4.1 For each campus, the campus Rector, or his delegate, sends an open invitation to all full-time staff members of the University, and who qualify for the award, to be nominated to the relevant dean. The nominees and their nominators must sign the attached application form. **Submissions must be submitted to the Rector or his delegate, by 20 June 2016 for recommendations to be submitted to the Institutional CE support office by 30 June 2016. (See paragraph 5 for application requirements.)**
- 4.2 The final responsibility for the assessment of candidates within a faculty resides with the relevant dean, with the aid of his management. If preferred (by the dean and his/her management), he/she may also act on the advice of any other acceptable body, e.g. external assessors, the faculty's Community Engagement Committee or any new campus body to be formed for this purpose.
- 4.3 Reports of community partners, other reports on community engagement input and output and performance evaluations are taken into account.
- 4.4 Both staff members who have nominated themselves, as well as those who have been identified by the deans in conjunction with their management, will be invited by the relevant dean to submit a short curriculum vitae and other material specified below by the dean for use in the evaluation.
- 4.5 On completion of the evaluation, each dean submits the name of the candidate who has been nominated for the award, together with a brief motivation, to the campus Rector so that the formal requirements, including periods of service and previous awards of the nominees, may be checked.
- 4.6 The campus Rector and campus management elect the three top candidates for the award and submit the names and applications in electronic format of the successful candidates to the Executive Director Research, Innovation and Community Engagement for submission to the Vice Chancellor for final adjudication.
- 4.7 Candidates are recognised and honored at an annual NWU function where excellence in research, innovation and implementation of expertise is celebrated.

## 5. The nominations/applications should include the following:

- 5.1 A short curriculum vitae.
- 5.2 A narrative (no more than **1500** words) describing how the nominee/applicant(s) fulfil(s) the stated criteria. The narrative should include aspects like an outline of the history, aims, scope and impact and outcomes of the CE initiative, its methodology and the nature of partnerships involved.
- 5.3 A letter of commendation/reference from an external constituency commenting on the nature of the CE activity in which the candidate(s) has/have excelled, the developmental and reciprocal nature of the initiative, the nature of partnership, and the impact of the activities. (The Office of the Director: Community Engagement can assist with this aspect upon request).
- 5.4 For service learning programmes, comment will be invited on their structure according to sound educational principles in order to supplement and complement the theoretical components of the curriculum; demonstration of adequate supervision of participants; their thorough training/preparation for the project or programme and the regular and adequate assessment of the initiative with recorded evidence.
- 5.5 A completed copy of the **application form**.

## **6. When a submission is considered or evaluated, the following criteria should be used:**

- 6.1 the impact, level of depth and continuity in the staff member's community engagement programme;
- 6.2 the extent to which scientifically-justified methods and techniques are used;
- 6.3 the extent to which a staff member is informed of new community engagement topics that are of current importance within his/her discipline and fields of specialisation respectively;
- 6.4 the extent to which a researcher /lecturer takes note of the community engagement plans and programmes of other institutions beyond the University, and as far as possible has used the opportunities these plans and programmes present;
- 6.5 the extent to which a staff member pursues dialogue and collaboration with other community engagement practitioners in South Africa and abroad;
- 6.6 the extent to which meaningful output is produced by the staff member, taking into account the specific environment in which the staff member works ;
- 6.7 the extent to which a staff member communicates his/her community engagement via papers at national and international conferences and/or via publication in journals and other media, and where possible also in ways that are accessible to the public;
- 6.8 the extent to which the staff member's community engagement has been acknowledged – taking peer reviews into account;
- 6.9 the extent to which the staff member's community engagement has contributed to the extension of community engagement expertise in the particular environment;
- 6.10 the extent to which the staff member's community engagement has improved the profile of the University through the quality of his/her community engagement and its publication,
- 6.11 the extent to which staff member's community engagement has contributed to sustainable change in the public sector, civil society or governmental policy.
- 6.12 the extend of the community partnership with a clear indication of a consultation process followed with stakeholders to ensure a participative approach.

## APPLICATION FORM FOR THE VICE CHANCELLOR'S AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

<b>NAME OF APPLICANT:</b>	
<b>FACULTY / SCHOOL:</b>	
<b>CONTACT INFORMATION</b>	
<b>EMAIL:</b>	
<b>TELEPHONE:</b>	
<b>TITLE OF PROJECT:</b>	
<b>NOMINATOR: NAME AND SIGNATURE. Dr B.M.P. SETLALENTOA</b>	

See evaluation form below:

**EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR NWU VICE CHANCELLOR'S AWARD**

<b>Category 1: Basic/procedural indicators</b>	<b>Yes = 1; No = 0</b>
Is the applicant eligible for the award? <sup>1</sup>	
Is the applicant supported by his/her campus managers? <sup>2</sup>	
Is the project supported by a community partner/ constituency? <sup>3</sup>	
Did the applicant include a short CV or description of the team?	
<b>Total for category:</b>	

<b>Category 2: Feasibility indicators</b>	
Is the project based on (a) an actual need in a particular community; (b) a particular development challenges; or (c) social justice? <sup>4</sup>	
Is/was the community involved in all aspects of the project (e.g. planning, implementation, evaluation, etc.)?	
Are the project's goals clearly defined and measurable?	
Is the project furthering or positively improving the circumstances of the NWU and its constituents?	
<b>Total for category:</b>	

<b>Category 3: Impact and significance of Project- Sustainability indicators</b>	
Is the project mutually beneficial to the NWU, its partners and the beneficiaries?	
Is there appropriate feedback provided to all partners involved in the project and are appropriated methods of communication used to inform internal and external parties of the progress?	
Is the project linked to the NWU's strategic plans and/institutional CE's vision, mission and goals?	
Does the project enhance teaching and learning and research? (Is the project integrated into the core academic functions of the NWU?)	
Do this project/its outputs have the potential to influence national/international policy?	
Did the project result in any outputs for the university (students, articles, conference presentations, etc.)?	
<b>Total for category:</b>	

<b>Grand total</b>	/14
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<sup>1</sup> NWU staff or member of formal or informal group linked to the NWU, no limitation from recent previous awards (See rules).

<sup>2</sup> Letter of support and/signature from rector/vice rector and dean.

<sup>3</sup> Letter of support.

<sup>4</sup> Any one of the three aspects can qualify for a point.