

***Social responsibility and outreach:
training “even more concerned” citizens or
towards citizens enablement:***



*After Covid-19, Academics should Enable/Empower
Citizens to achieve their aspirations*

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Executive Summary

Academics have the capability to enable citizens' self-learning in order to empower them to achieve more for themselves. Those in current need must own their problems and issues, and by practical means, learn to embrace them & enact solutions. The innovative capabilities of both academics and citizens can be combined to solve almost any issue facing a community. My studies of best practice show what can be achieved across a broad range of problems. For significant changes to occur, the values and behaviour of all collaborative partners - who have often in the past come from competing sub-cultures - must be combined, using a questioning framework, so they share ideas that lead to sensible working practices, and then enact feasible outcomes.

1. Introduction

Like Yehuda Elkana, a team of Leonardo Ambassadors care so deeply about *our social responsibility and outreach to citizens, developing training, with the help of caring academics, to become even more concerned” about their world so they begin to take control of their own future by themselves.* To help this process we have developed a step-by-step, highly supportive, citizen respectful self-education approach towards the world of Citizen Enablement. It is our hope to create a deep, meaningful and lasting empowerment for all citizens and communities, to enable their own self-development, in order to achieve their desired ends. It is based on over two decades developing an approach which truly enables University Academics to develop a better way of empowering disenfranchised and often poor citizens, so they can control their lives in a more fulfilling way, for their benefit and those of others in their communities; case studies are shown at the end of the proposal which confirm the proposed way. The approach tries to lay down a few ‘home

truths', to those who wish to develop a more appropriate way of supporting citizens in an important new journey hopefully enabling their personal wealth to increase, as well as their well-being and contentment.

2. 'Why' do we need Citizen Enablement

After Covid 19, we believe many **Citizens** will try to develop 'new normal ways of working'. They realise no one size fits all any longer, and they want to become **Enabled/Empowered** to change their local world, for personal benefit and that of their fellow citizens. We believe we are now at a time, and stage, where new ways of working are now entirely possible and by way of example look at the current take up of video conferencing/zooming during Covid 19, when the technology has already been available for over 25 years. The journey of self-development and enablement, as with anyone wanting to make it, starts with *oneself* and *locally*, and at any time people are



Marcus Rashford and his proud Mum

For Citizens, now may be their only chance of ensuring they can develop a future relevant to themselves, or people like themselves, as we begin life after Covid. And it is already happening, look at how Marcus Rashford, footballer and the number 10 for Manchester United, campaigned for free school meal vouchers to continue over this summer holiday. As a child he was raised in a single parent family and knew what it was to be hungry and how dependant his family was on such vouchers. With the experience of his own childhood he wrote *with passion yet humility to the Prime Minister and achieved a reversal of government policy* and what most people felt to be right. He knew his own 'why' in this context and has even financially supported a charity providing food for vulnerable families. This will be the first of many such citizen controlling events. However, most citizens will need help to give them the confidence to try, the willingness to work in collaboration to tackle some of their larger problems, and learning support to ensure they have the skills necessary to deliver appropriate working solutions. And this is where insightful and willing academics, or other sensitive learning enablers, need to help and support them; so, for instance, the Salford Innovation Forum, revealed in Case Study 9 (in Part II), provides just the facility and the enablers to match to ensure citizen focused innovation can start, grow and flourish.

3. 'Why' do Academics, and other learning providers, need to help Citizen Enablement

Developing Citizen Enablement is however no longer simple, predictable, orderly and defined, because the future is volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous and this requires those of us with skills, who want to help citizens, to think more systematically and systemically, about how we might drive changes where the enablement/empowerment needs to be personally contextualised. And this is at a time when education often seems increasingly narrow in what it offers, down to the lowest common denominator, for reasons of economy. In particular, we will have to use our improving teaching and learning skills, resulting from meaningful research, to lead citizens towards *learning to learn* for themselves. This is now possible, and perhaps even necessary, at a time when our societal context is so open, where the future situation is almost experimental, and everything can at last be at stake. So, it might well now just be worth a try. However, we will all need to be optimistic and keep trying in the face of adversity, when trying to make necessary change. What we will also need is 'excellence in diversity' for our educational and learning support so it is fit-for purpose at the individual level.

To ensure our work has substance, we believe we needed a sound sociological perspective for this proposal, '**the cultural why**' upon which we could base our present arguments; this is important because academics need to understand 'why' they need to change their existing ways of working as they drive towards Citizen Enablement, becoming more active listeners and indeed *learning academics* once again, not just the learned; and we clearly include in the word citizens, all the disenfranchised, including Black, Asian, Minority and Ethnic groups and the young, but for simplicity we will only use the term citizen for all such communities in the remainder of this proposal; it also goes without saying, our thinking also recognises

that not only do Black Lives Matter, but also Women’s Lives Matter, or All Lives Matter or even “ALL LIFE MATTERS.”

We also believe the work of social anthropologist, Mary Douglas (1966) gives us a further clue of how we should act; she indicates that different cultures have different ways of seeing the world, and thus acting in it. Her research comprehensively revealed there are four constructive alternative ways of seeing and acting in the world. So, when academics start collaborating with citizens, they have to recognise the different values and actions that others have and which may be different from their own. Douglas’s work should help them understand why they may need to act differently themselves. Such cultural constructed world views explains, at least to the present authors, that whatever skills academics possess in developing human futures, they should try to truly reflect what others want, and not just what they want for themselves, alone.

So academics who would wish to come on this new journey with us will need to be well grounded in what Gramsci (Forgacs, 1999) would call ‘good sense’. Such ‘good sense’ is shown in almost all the Cases I have undertaken. The academics, and other providers, enabling these developments have used a myriad of their skills to ensure these citizens can do things they never thought was possible before. Finally in this section, until now we have largely built our educational and economic system based on highly “competitive individuals.” We also believe we will have to move from ‘money to meaning’, and from ‘profit to purpose’, in this new era, while recognising wealth will still be necessary to make any developments work in the real world. It is also clear from the successful cases we undertook that the most effective progress starts by tackling small and handleable projects first, within the grasp of all collaborators, but being aware of global consequences. Small steps first, by small teams, and then growing collaborations for larger scale problems.

So, as Socrates so rightly said, and for both Citizens and their Enablers, the key must always be to understand where your purpose lies; this is at the heart what we believe everyone must do as they learn to work together in future, but it does beg a further question about the kind of leadership needed to make it happen. You first must know your own ‘Whys’ - why you are doing what you do, how it fits with your values, and then how it enables you to create a deeper and more enduring sense of purpose. And for the leaders of collaborations for change they have to do things ‘on purpose’, as it requires a sheer force of will, determination & persistence otherwise the vision will remain a mere dream. So to those who decide to come on the journey with us, they will need to develop more appropriate ‘Whys’ for themselves in this the new Citizen Enablement challenge.

In this project we found out the ‘Whys’ of our Enablers and Citizens by asking them about their motivations for becoming involved. To ease understanding here we undertook a simple analysis to reveal its essence of their motivation, now shown as a simple Wordle diagram. Below are the top words used by Academic Enablers to describe their motivation for Citizen Enablement:



Using the 15 most frequently used word only, an ideal type sentence, empathising with enablers’ motivation, would be as follows:

“Academics from universities developed and motivated citizens through leadership & learning to help their local community”.

We did the same analysis for Citizens Motivations and it showed the following Wordle:



The ideal type sentence for citizens' motivations, in this case is:

'Citizens become motivated to help their local community through developing people & small businesses by involvement with learning enablers with their work'.

While these analyses are far from scientifically rigorous, they do suggest some reasonable suggestions to the present authors of 'Why' Academic Enablers and Citizens actually became involved in Citizens Enablement in this work and what will also convince them to do so in future.

4. Where might the difficulties in delivering Citizen Enablement lie

Unfortunately, Citizens Enablement rarely occurs either in the UK, or throughout the world. Two main reasons for this come to the fore: academics are normally very traditional and really only want to be part of a Harvard or Oxbridge university; they want to be left in their ivory tower, getting on with their studies and research. Similarly citizens don't have the confidence to even think they could become empowered to enact a better future for themselves. As Mary Douglas in *Purity and Danger* (1966) would say 'to most citizens life is like a lottery' – only a lucky chance could ever make any real difference to their lives. When we started work with such citizens, at the early stage of our project, few of them actually felt they had any real control, but by hard work of an insightful Enabler – a person who makes things possible - this always changed positively, for nearly all of citizens. Those who had been unaligned became true stakeholders in their own futures and began sharing a real vision with fellow citizens of what they could achieve, and for the first time came to know precisely what's at 'stake' for themselves. So, for instance, in both the Community Banking and Community Land Trusts projects (Case Studies 1 and 7) show, after a little initial but important external support, citizens began to develop professionally managed facilities, normally only open to those from a very different culture and a different power base.

And Academic Enablers have to be supported by their Universities. The present author was enabled when he was a Pro Vice Chancellor, because both his Vice Chancellor and Chair of Council believed in his approach and also because the local authority was a working class city which wanted to give its citizens hope for the future. As a result Salford now has the renowned Media City, home to BBC Northern, has a University on the international map and is talked about regularly on the national media. Citizen Enablement can be done, but it requires some 'heavy lifting' to initiate it and then embed it in everyday life. So, this is the real problem for those wishing to adopt the approach suggested here. They will need a strong commitment to even try, a belief it is possible and then a passion to keep going when obstacles are put in their way, which they undoubtedly will be. All who become involved in developing their own version of the presently suggested approach will also have to be patient, persistent and politically astute, to tackle the range of problems that will face them. And the reason why we have included so many examples of best practice citizens enablement/empowerment in part II is to show that what we are suggesting *is possible*.

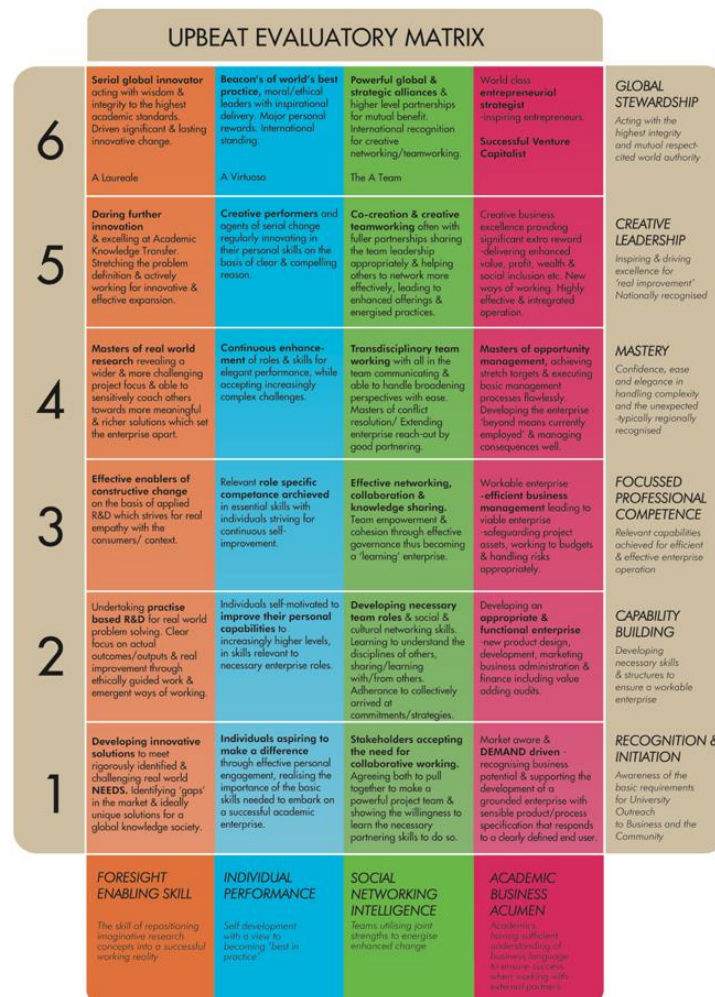
However, even when initially tackling small issues as we suggest for Citizens Enablement, no one should underestimate the cultural change that must take place to ensure successful collaborative working between citizens and academics especially when there are **deeper 'why' questions for all now in society**. While it's beyond the direct remit of this paper to consider sustainability issues any such development must bear in mind that there is only a TEN YEAR Window of profound rethinking left, to explore the very foundation of our human civilization, otherwise we will be drowned in our irresponsibly and humanly created CO². Such a challenge, and those of the citizens we are trying to help is **HUGE**, and indeed these are the sort of large issues that Academics are often fond of and good at considering. However, such considerations must be borne in mind, because they will set some underlying parameters of what should work for the future, on any project, for both the citizens themselves and the planet as a whole, is critical .

5. How should we now act to ensure Citizen Enablement

We now propose to reveal a step-by-step approach showing firstly '**what**' and then '**how**' to achieve **necessary change**. The process must start with a reflective period where the relevant citizens are invited to join, with others of like-mind, and their (academic) enablers - who must identify the citizens needs and wants, their capabilities and the actual change development their teams are required to make. The key for all this is simply **active listening** to each other, which is necessary on all sides to make real progress. What all should be aiming for is true collaborative working, where everyone becomes part of a team, not the competitive ones of sport, but more 'reflective communities' [or RefComs as Charles Savage (2020) would call them]. The passions and visions of each team member of a joint enterprise is also a vital first step, and will set the scope and boundaries of any potential venture.

Members of such a joint venture have to understand their aspirations first, then those of their colleagues, and finally how to get the best from team working. They have to learn 'how to learn' to undertake the skills missing from their team or find someone who can complete their 'change needs', and also recognise they

may well have to be politically and socially astute if they are to enable change to be possible at all and then become empowered to fully enact it. Evaluating a development teams' own situation regularly, is also necessary and can be achieved, using easily available and cost effective tools; this will help all understand the development processes, first hand; academic and citizens might well need such evaluations, related analyses and any other feedback to be in their own, readily accessible, language. The matrix shown over, called UPBEAT is the one we have successfully used for this purpose as it provides a questioning framework which allows Enablement Collaborators to systemically explore necessary steps in any development, but in a way that suits them. We would commend it to you and you can find out how to use it by going to the PASCAL International Observatory for Life-Long-Learning's web site at <http://pumr.pascalobservatory.org>.



The matrix shown above underpins the successful evaluatory process used in UBEAT to drive improved engagement with citizens, small businesses and the community

This evaluatory tool has been shown, in a comprehensive evaluation undertaken by Lockett (2007), to enable citizens and their academic enablers to continuously develop projects leading to real and meaningful improvements. As a questioning framework it shows a representation of the fine sequencing of the approach we are proposing; for we have found that asking the right questions, in the right sequence is the easiest way to achieve success. You start by asking the questions posed at the lower levels of the diagram and then work up step-by-step until you reach the highest honour of becoming a Global Steward.

Our studies also show the importance of the **leadership** of Citizen Enablement projects as it can empower citizens to become wiser as developers, especially if the academics collaborating deeply with them show them better ways of working. So, for instance, many collaborations start by finding out whether the present solution sought has ever been achieved before, because everyone can learn from those who have done it already. Also maturing conversations between all members of any collaborative development ensures better overall understandings are shared, and citizens begin to understand precisely what is being achieved and what needs to be done to satisfy exact aspirations. However, development leaders must always recognise that success must only be for the citizens themselves to decide, and in their own terms, and they must never cease to drive them towards their own continuous improvement. And, from a university perspective, our

proposed approach will need to turn them more towards becoming “reflective centres” for all ages (not just “Executive Education”), so we can tap the wisdom of the past and envision a wiser future.

We realise Citizen Enablement might well be our Utopian dream, but we feel now might be a good time to help create a different future for citizens and communities and accept the recent studies undertaken by the Royal Society Arts who are beginning to reveal how this could be achieved through their ‘Bridge to the Future’ programme. They realise that no matter how difficult the cultural change we are suggesting, the future will demand different cultures and a different type of societal contract, for the world does not any longer create a linear perspective of development for anyone. But now is at least the time to try to enrol and engage citizens in a better way.

6. So ‘How’ do we do Citizens Enablement with the right sensitivity.

The base line for the sort of citizens empowerment we are striving for must begin with enablement itself, since those taking part, and especially the Enablers, have to have a selfless desire to help others, to truly help them define what they want for themselves and then achieve it. We realise it will be difficult to achieve the full, more radical and politically questioning form of Citizen Empowerment, since it will require a redistribution of power from those who have it already. Enablement, on the other hand, can at least be achieved without radically upsetting the status quo, although any change impacts the status quo to a greater or lesser extent. You only need to listen to the aspirations of citizens to realise those in power rarely cede their authority to others, and this clearly includes citizens and communities.

Once Enablers are clear of their own values and why they want to become involved in Citizens Enablement, they then have to make sure other like-minded people, especially the citizens who need support, are engaged to work with them, to ensure a successful project. It is important for those wishing to help others, collect as many facts as they can about those they work with – including understanding what it is in their circumstances that prevents them from achieving their aspirations and the social, economic and political constraints on their actions and skills that can be used to help them; whether they be citizens, small businesses or communities; you really need to get to know their needs desires and wants. You have to see what each citizen in any community is already, or could be, capable of achieving by themselves, what they never will be able to do and how professional skills can be used to help citizens learn how to do things for themselves.

So one of the key things all collaborations need is good leadership, especially by the enabling originator; then this leadership must be passed down through the team, until the citizens have learned to lead for themselves. This initial leader of any development needs to imbue citizens, who don’t already have the confidence, to try the new and then lead their colleagues to new heights; and they can learn to do this for themselves, if a good initial leader listens carefully to them and works out the best way. The questioning framework mentioned earlier will help them do this. We believe the simplest way to describe the main requirements of good leadership is the ‘Leadership’ star figure shown below.



The above figure confirms that successful leaders normally take a collaboration through the following steps:

1. The first action in any development should always be for the Enabler to *invite relevant citizens* to work on the proposed joint development. Recognition and initiation are the next key steps to ensure that: it is a project citizens want to undertake for themselves; or after, active listening to the citizen's needs by the Enablers, something the citizens would really like to learn to consider as something worth changing.
2. *Then they must define the problem carefully*, and get key citizens to work on it. It is the citizens themselves that must be at the centre of defining the problem, then lead the change development, or at least learn to lead its development. This will often lead to a problem definition that differs from the outside "expert" opinion of the situation.
3. *Determine any individual citizens*, or groups in the community, that are already practicing a working solution, and thereby showing a good example to follow - what we called before, a 'positive deviance'.
4. *Discover uncommon practices or behaviours*: so the community can find other best practices and identify positive deviants, and set out to use the relevant other behaviours (and attitudes or beliefs) to improve their approach, thereby giving it a chance to succeed.
5. Then properly *design the working project*: once the community has identified successful strategies, they must decide which ones they would like to adopt, they should design activities to help others access and practice these uncommon, positive behaviours. Project design is not focused on the professional spreading "best practices" but helping community members "act their way into a new way of thinking and acting" through hands-on activities with their own best practices.
6. *Monitoring and evaluation is key to success* and this comes next: The UPBEAT tools (Generic Process A, in Part II) will enable the monitoring and evaluation of their project through a participatory process and support decision making in planning, designing and overseeing their progress in project development.
7. *Cascading improvement*: As each citizen focused project develops, the citizens should strive to gain mastery over the role each of them plays in the team, gaining confidence, ease and elegance in the handling of complexity and the unexpected that will always come with any project development. They should then seek to use their own developing and creative leadership skills to inspire others, driving excellence for 'real improvement'.
8. Finally Enablement teams must learn to *scale up all their activities for the future*. The scaling up of projects may happen through many mechanisms: the "ripple effect" of other communities observing the success and engaging in this project itself, through coordination of NGOs, or organizational development consultants.

To put it another way to the star figure shown earlier, our Case Studies show that to be successful, Academic Leader Enablers, in such collaborations, must:

- be professional, but have personal humility
- have a clear view about what they are trying to achieve and the courage to show the way
- learn how to harness their own ability to influence others to follow them, by being motivator and team builder, while being able to actively listen and respond to their needs
- be Servant Leaders in all their collaborations, where those they lead actually seek guidance and council because of the service they provide to them
- ask challenging & penetrating questions of the status quo
- learn to live with risk because the organisation/project needs this as opportunities develop
- learn to lead themselves and then spread that leadership to other team members, so they too can help the team shine by leading themselves where appropriate
- develop people to their maximum capacity
- deliver their practice, into everyone's practice, which become *the practice*; create contexts where the positive successes of any development can be seen by others providing separate motivation and network building to good effect
- facilitate others, by being able to clearly/simple explain what needs to be done
- make processes as effective and efficient as possible

7. When do we know Citizen Enablement/Empowerment is successful?

As we have said already the sole recognition of success is when the citizens themselves show they have actually achieved their aspirations and, ideally, start driving this enablement process onto others – in turn becoming leaders of their own Citizens Enablement. All the projects shown in our Case Study portfolio are extremely successful in their own terms, especially to the citizens who have been a major controlling part of them and who own these developed products and facilities, which should be a sign for the readers here.

In order to empower citizens to find solutions to their problems and issues that will work in their real world, and then ensure whatever is developed will also actually work for all communities, will demand them earning

the authority to enact a solution, allowing it to exist and/or make wealth for a community. When this actually occurs, in terms of overall achievement, the hundreds of cases of best practice cases I have explored with citizens leadership indicates undoubted success and what the developers of the projects collectively believed to be their greatest achievements. Here using the same Wordle summary as before, we show those achievements below; these words are the most frequently used by the Enablers to show their best results achieved from their joint working with citizens.



It is good to see that high on the list of achievements are words like: Community; Development; People; Business; Learning; University; Local; Homes; Innovation; Support; Work and Support. Using the 15 most frequently used words only, an ideal type sentence empathising with ‘What was Achieved’ would be as follows:

‘People and communities have been developed by local universities providing support for citizens on their innovations at work, businesses or in their homes’.

So the general view is undoubtedly that this Citizen Enablement approach does fulfil its existing aspirations with respect to citizens and universities learning together to deliver improvements and change.

These findings are very encouraging, and it might also lead onto something we are suggesting overall; that is a new model of active welfare, in which, as Charley Leadbetter from DEMOS suggested in 1997, ‘citizens are encouraged to take more responsibility for their lives.’ In such new ways of working, ‘schemes of development will no longer be seen in terms of a sum of money or package of entitlements. Rather, they will embrace a philosophy where welfare and wellbeing become inseparable from self-control and self-confidence. It could become the new creative individualism, which is at odds with most citizen’s normal passive, recipient culture, provided in the Western world by most welfare states and ‘mass consumption capital’ appears to have the same stultifying effect in terms of dependency ‘culture’. BUT in this new post Covid-19 era, the university’s role should be profoundly different’. It will need to become a “reflective centre” for all ages, so we can tap the wisdom of the past and envision a wiser future’. Here we are shifting from SMART to WISE. And so much more. Certainty is a thing of the past and the agreements we now need to arrange to remain sane are complicated, and must respond to chaos wisely, if they are to be sustainable. I live in ‘HOPE’, learning to be ‘WISE in the way we live, and more in TIME, not the linear clock time, but in human consciousness, rather than as OBJECTS in SPACE (Savage, 2020)’.

So, in terms of social responsibility and outreach: I believe citizens can become “even more concerned” in developing their communities for their own good and that of others and, in my terms become both enabled and empowered to succeed on their own terms. For those who would want to learn more about the above please access URL <http://citizenenablement.net/>