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# Place making: The Role of Universities in supporting Social Mobility and Regional Development

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# Philosophy and key points

*Universities have always focused on the needs of society – in the 21<sup>st</sup> century we are seeing another major change in our economic and social environment.*

So...

- Changing Higher Education (HE) and the role of Universities in a changing environment
- Universities needs to take some responsibility for their region



# Philosophy and key points

*Movement between groups in a society is a sign of more equality.*

So...

- Upward social mobility grew very strongly in Western societies during the 20<sup>th</sup> century
- University expansion has supported this but HE does not simply create it – it is about jobs in society
- In the early 21<sup>st</sup> century it looks like social mobility has stalled



# Philosophy and key points

*Universities do have a role in supporting social mobility in society although not necessarily explicitly.*

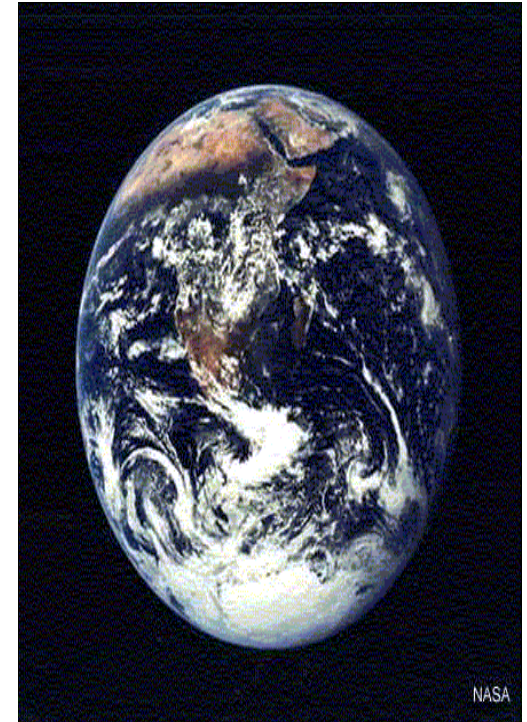
So...

- From Widening Participation (global concern) to creating the space for social mobility now
- I want to argue we need to take an **explicit** role in seeking to create more opportunity for the next generation



# Economic and social uneven redevelopment – major changes in the structure of Western societies

- Growth of London and the South East in 1980 / 1990
- Industrial Redevelopment off-shoring
- Creating 'left behind' places
- Industry 4.0 – impact on jobs / HE education



# Changes in HE

*Wider policy environment - market environment and value for money agenda.*

So...

- Importance of building on the values of HE as an agent for social good
- Widening participation – getting a broader base into HE
- Student success – helping diverse student groups progress successfully through their studies
- HE's role in Social Mobility – supporting graduates into 21<sup>st</sup> century graduate jobs

# The role of leadership in HE

- *Watson et al, 2013 The Engaged University*
- Active in our communities on ALL fronts
- Collaborate with other sectors / agencies and businesses to advance a better society
- This was always key to Universities foundations but got lost – the role of leadership in HE is to re-establish that mission now



# The role of a University in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

*A community of scholars, staff and students, working responsibly as a positive catalyst for change within their communities.*

- At Lincoln we talk about creating and building a University together (amazing opportunity not often available)
- Lincoln is a project not yet fully formed – student engagement at the heart of everything we do
- A campus university in a city with a rural hinterland
- A city that had been dying
- Some real cold spots for HE participation





# From the theory to the practice

University of Lincoln's Strategy...

*'A University looking to the future' where we serve and develop our local, national and international communities by creating purposeful knowledge and research, confident and creative graduates.'*

*'We will develop our role as an anchor institution across our region. We will work locally and regionally to provide the environment for graduates to stay in the region after graduation.'*



# Partnerships to support Education and widening participation



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# Place and Universities supporting inclusive growth

*Environment in which institution is located.*

- Students located within local area
- Employment culture in region
- Level of skill in dominant employment sectors
- Cultural atmosphere in area
- Recognising different students engagement in area





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# Strategic approach to engagement

*Creating Graduation Jobs – supporting movement from a low skill and low wage economy.*

- Since 2009 growth in STEM from less than 10% of the University to 30% of the University
- A new approach to learning and business engagement
- The creation of an Innovation Quarter at the heart of the city across our campus and Science Park
- Cultural Engagement – the Lincoln Cultural and Arts Partnership (LACP) – refocusing our Arts and Humanities provision
- Active leadership in Economic and Social Development in region - Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership (GLLEP)





# The Lincoln School of Engineering

- Established in 2009, a £37.5M collaboration, retaining the city's largest private sector employer
- Developed a partnership that is recognised as an innovative model and sector leading
- Enables student engagement in the workplace while studying
- Established and promoted the credentials of the School as a centre for knowledge exchange and transfer between the University and industry.

**SIEMENS**



# Place making for cultural and social development

- Role of the Arts and culture in supporting social mobility
- Vibrancy of place (LCAP)
- Lincoln Imps (Uni Imps)
- Heritage and stories of community - we have many stories to tell – we have been different (Bricks and Bones, Magna Carta, Charter of the Forest)
- Excellent Aging Project – pop-up social science park
- Anchoring aspiration, offering expertise and opportunity



# Universities need to work beyond teaching and research

- Our role with our local communities is vital
- We are place shapers and makers and we should be responsible in our work in our regions
- We should bring the world to our regions responsibly
- We should work with employers not only in developing research but in creating the graduate jobs for our students



*University community should value its wider engagement as part of what all community members do.*



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Thank you