Aims of Conference

- Opportunity to reflect on role of HEIs in regional development
- Help regional and national governments develop strategies for ensuring global excellence and local focus of HE
- Explore strategic role of HEIs as drivers of regional economic, social and cultural development
- Agree on international follow-up work
- About 150 delegates mainly from Europe plus USA, Korea, Brazil, Canada, Nepal, Puerto Rico, Mexico, Australia, Japan, Jordan, China, Chile, Israel, Phillipines and Gauteng government
First phase of OECD project

- 14 regions in 12 countries participated in the OECD project “Supporting the Contribution of HEIs to Regional Development” (2 from Asia-Pacific, 8 from Europe, 2 from Latin America, 1 from North America)

- Aim of project: synthesise experience into a coherent body of policy and practice to guide planning and policy and share good practices

- Methodology: steering committee chaired by non-HE person, external panel inc someone with national perspective of HE in country, formal review of a week, developmental focus to review report (similar to audit process)

- Community of practice established with 14 regions
In globalising knowledge economy OECD countries turning to knowledge-intensive products and services to enhance competitiveness

Global success often based on local excellence

HEIs important sources of knowledge and innovation

Governments rethinking how to maximise benefits from HE for skills and development at regional and national levels

Switch in most OECD countries towards indigenous development in regions emphasising skills, entrepreneurialism and innovation
Innovative contributions to regional business innovation

- Target drivers of growth and lagging regions
- Increasing emphasis on commercialisation
- Help small firms overcome obstacles to technology absorption and growth via access to specialised information services, seminars, exchange of material and reports (Knowledge House, MIT Industrial Liaison Office, clubs - Cambridge’s Computer Lab, Centre for Software reliability in Newcastle, Cyd in Spain)
- Support industries undergoing transition (North East England energy sector, Valencia ceramics)
- Target clusters (Finland, Spain, Japan, France)
- Special funding for universities with industry focus (Korea)
- Help graduates and staff to start companies (Twente TOP programme)
- Science and technology cities - embed business in university (Monterey International Centre of Knowledge in Mexico)
- HE networks to support growth of knowledge based economy (Australia, Denmark, Canada, Spain)
Contribution to Regional HRD

- Strong focus on widening access and “knowledge transfer on legs”
- Promoting lifelong learning esp. skills upgrading in targeted sectors and targeting gaps in particular kinds of skills
- Creating new labour market intelligence and using this strategically for enrolment and academic planning
- Promoting work-based learning (internship programmes and provision of academic mentors for designated firms)
- Exchanging experts between industry and HEIs (matching high potential graduates with organisations needing innovative staff whilst training continues e.g. Twente Fast Forward initiative)
- Fundacion CyD (broker between business and Spanish universities through annual reports on HEIs contributions to development, provision of CE, promotion of seminars and workshops to debate HE-bus/gov relationships)
Contribution to Social, cultural and environmental development

- Neighbourhood renewal and community development (massive part of HE but scale often overlooked) (Northern rural network with 600 researchers and rural development practitioners, Canada, Netherlands)
- Research based work in health and welfare (NW Eng, Durham, Denmark)
- Work with long term unemployed (Wellness industry, Finland)
- Regions reinventing themselves as “creative places” (quality of life, economic benefit to attract and retain creative classes and direct contribution to creative industries e.g. in UK fastest growth area of economy, China, Queensland, New Zealand, Hong Kong and Singapore)
- Expertise on sustainable development and setting examples (Institute for Sustainability, Health and Regional Engagement in Sunshine Coast)
- Mandatory student social service as a graduation requirement (Mexico)
- In general softer and longer term community development and cultural issues remain relatively under-developed
Building capacity for collaboration

- Consider legal and regulatory changes
- Re-form discipline based structures that prevent engagement with trans-disciplinary problems of real world
- Develop leadership skills (OECD and new HE programmes)
- Establish regional office to manage regional interface and scale up individual good practice cases
- Review recruitment, hiring, workload, and reward systems (new promotion policy at Sunshine Coast)
- Regional engagement requires co-operation and division of tasks between individual institutions and common HE vision to policy makers
- May need a one-stop shop to systematise regional engagement and play a brokerage role (Unis4NE)
- Need systematic mapping and monitoring of regional and external links to raise profile of HE as region builder (Finland evaluation template, Spain, UK Community Interaction Survey, HEFCE research)
- Diversification among HEIs may provide countries with wider capacity
- Establish a source of funding to support conjoint actions or invest jointly
Barriers

- Lack of territorial dimension to HE policy and lack of joined up policies
- Neglect of role of teaching and learning in knowledge transfer and HRD
- HE not domain of regional government
- Third role not part of core funding and funding poorly connected to regional needs
- Intra regional competition
- Absence of appropriate institutional incentives
- Regional engagement not mainstreamed
- Inadequate involvement of senior management in HEIs
Benefits of participation in OECD project

- Most regions felt the process had been very useful and beneficial
  - The process of doing the self-evaluation with other stakeholders can help strengthen relationships
  - Connection with OECD can raise status of third role of HEIs in region and in institutions
  - Can be part of an emerging community of practice
  - Access to information about good practices
  - Gain advice from review panel (perceived as less valuable by several participants)
  - *Widen global knowledge base of role of HEIs in community development (acknowledged weakness in OECD project) - using the local to advance global knowledge production*
Concerns about participation in Second Phase

- Not yet identified a group of regions
- Linkages with first phase not clear
- Big costs (60,000 euros) plus additional research and support costs inc coordinator
- Ability to get a suitable panel with sensitivity to African and developing context
- Territorial review process already underway and possible tensions with IMHE project
- Capacity at institutional level to manage work associated with the project
- Need high level commitment from institutions and province to make it worthwhile
Way Forward

- IMHE preparing a prospectus to send to CHEC with budget breakdown
- Initiate exploratory discussions with province (possible expansion of scope of territorial review)
- Investigate other avenues for exchange of ideas e.g. visitors from key regions - based on good practices - rather than formal participation in project/or organisation of conference in W Cape
- Possible collaboration with Gauteng
- Participate in IMHE leadership development programmes
- Raise funds for participation - view as SA pilot (raise in Presidential Working Group)