Rhodes University
Community Engagement
Vision
Rhodes University’s vision is to be an outstanding internationally-respected academic institution which proudly affirms its African identity and which is committed to democratic ideals, academic freedom, rigorous scholarship, sound moral values and social responsibility.

Mission
In pursuit of its vision the University will strive to produce outstanding internationally-accredited graduates who are innovative, analytical, articulate, balanced and adaptable, with a life-long love of learning; and to strive, through teaching, research and community service, to contribute to the advancement of international scholarship and the development of the Eastern Cape and Southern Africa.
DEFINITION OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

‘Community Engagement can be defined as initiatives and processes through which the expertise of the institution in the areas of teaching and research 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.’

- Council for Higher Education
2003 - Community Engagement Subcommittee of Senate established with the responsibility to:

‘Enhance, co-ordinate, develop and give visibility to the many community initiatives at Rhodes University’. 
RHODES UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

To date this Committee has:

• Undertaken a full audit of Rhodes University community engagement activities and published the ‘Community Engagement Review’
• Set up a website at www.ru.ac.za/community
• Developed a Vision and Mission statement to guide community engagement
• Drawn up a Community Engagement Policy
• Created two new posts - CE Manager and CE Assistant
• Designated the CSD as the interface between the University and its communities.
Vision

Rhodes University will be recognised for its vibrant interaction between institution and community, leading to their mutual enrichment.
Mission

Rhodes University is committed to the three core pillars of teaching, research and community service. It expresses its commitment to community service by:

• Working actively to improve the quality of life of individuals in Grahamstown and Eastern Cape communities, adding value through the sharing of its knowledge resources.
• Fostering an ethos of voluntary community service within its staff and student body, leading to well-rounded graduate citizens who will be active agents for positive social change.
• Encouraging the establishment of service-learning programmes which are integrated with academic coursework.
RHODES UNIVERSITY
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

FUNCTION OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OFFICE: STRATEGY

To drive and facilitate the formulation of a strategy of the University’s Community Engagement activities involving its community development partners which include NGOs, CBOs, the private sector, institutions and the government.
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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

LIAISON and CO-ORDINATION

• To be the contact point for meeting and networking with NGOs in order to establish in what ways Rhodes can use its existing resources to add value to their work.

• To liaise with departments and institutes regarding community needs, and how best these can be met and to ensure co-ordination between the different initiatives.

• To liaise with those staff involved in curriculum development for service learning to co-ordinate their programmes.
• Encourage a spirit of volunteerism amongst Rhodes staff and students
• Survey of Rhodes staff and students interested in Community Engagement.
• Promotion of community engagement initiatives through ongoing communication within the institution and also with the public and Rhodes’ donors via the Communications and Development Division.
• Ensure knowledge of Community Engagement Policy by all staff and students.
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ADMINISTRATION and MONITORING

• Maintain an up to date database of Rhodes’ community engagement initiatives.

• Establish and maintain a database of existing Rhodes staff that volunteer and participates in community engagement and outreach.

• Monitoring of activities of the Community Engagement Function.
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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

PROVISION OF SUPPORTIVE TRAINING

• Offer ad hoc training by volunteers to meet the needs of NGOs and community groups, e.g. on fundraising or organisational skills.

• Ensure that NGOs and community groups are trained on how to get the most benefit out of volunteers.

• Ensure that volunteers are trained beforehand in line with good development practice to ensure quality contribution to the community.
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROJECTS

• Anthropology
• Art
• Biochemistry
• Botanical Gardens
• CADRE
• Computer Science
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROJECTS

- Centre for Social Development
- Drama
- Education
- Egazini outreach project
- Entrepreneurship
- Environmental Education
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROJECTS

• Environmental Science
• Ethnomusicology
• Geography
• HR matric school
• Human Kinetics and Ergonomics
• Ichthyology
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROJECTS

• Information Systems
• Institute for Water Research
• ISEA
• ISER
• Journalism
• Legal Aid Clinic
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROJECTS

• Makana Meadery
• Mobile Biology Lab
• Pharmacy
• PSAM
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROJECTS

• Psychology
• RUMEPLP
• Sport Admin
• SRC, Halls, Residences
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROJECTS

SCHOOLS:

Rhodes University has over 15 departments or units actively involved in ongoing initiatives that build the resources and teaching capacity of teachers in local schools. These engage directly with learners in disadvantaged schools within the province and that share its physical resources to assist learners.
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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

STUDENT VOLUNTEER PROGRAMME

• Working with the NGOs and CBOs to clarify their exact needs and identifying suitable skills and contributions required from staff and students.

• Promoting the volunteer support programme amongst students and staff and recruiting participants for the programme.
RHODES UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

STUDENT VOLUNTEER PROGRAMME

• Co-ordinating the initial visits by students and staff to the organisations to which they have been matched.

• Liaising with the Dean of Internationalisation’s Office re students from foreign universities who wish to be involved in community engagement work.
The Community Engagement office links with universities in the United States to develop credit-bearing service components at Rhodes to accommodate students who are required to do service as part of their study abroad programmes.
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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

SERVICE LEARNING

• Journalism and Media Studies
• Pharmacy Community Experience Programme
• Counselling Psychology
• Sociology
• Law students (Legal Aid Clinic)
• Drama students (Drama for Development course)
Quality Assurance

- Comprehensive records of all Community Engagement initiatives are kept.
- Mechanisms have been put in place to ensure the regular updating of these records.
- A full audit is conducted on an annual basis to ensure that details and skills/abilities etc captured on a database are up to date and accurate.
- 18-monthly Community Engagement Review is published.
QUALITY ASSURANCE

• Monthly report is submitted to the University’s Management Committee
• Quarterly report submitted to the Community Engagement Committee.
• Constant contact is kept with partner NGOs and with students in order to ensure that Student Volunteer Programme is implemented in line with quality, sound community development practice. Use is made of community development experts in this regard.