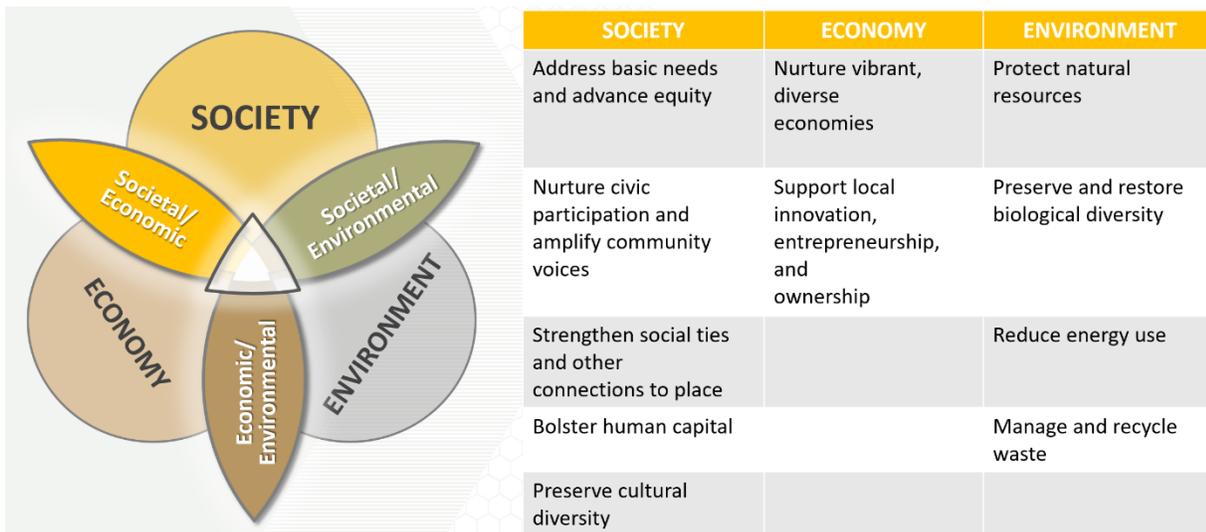


SLS Partnership Strategy

[Serve-Learn-Sustain](#) (SLS) is a campus-wide academic initiative working with all six colleges to offer students opportunities inside and outside the classroom to collaborate with diverse partners - across the community, non-profit, government, academic, and business sectors – to tackle key sustainability challenges as they play out in the context of local communities. SLS is the central clearinghouse and coordinator of course-related community partnerships at Georgia Tech. We also regularly connect faculty with community partners related to their research projects. (Faculty and other units also regularly coordinate their own partnerships.) SLS collaborates closely with the other offices on campus that work with community partners, including with the [Office of Government and Community Relations](#), which is the Institute’s primary connection to federal, state, and local government, and with [Civic Engagement in the Center for Student Engagement](#), which works with student groups to coordinate events, service projects, and engagement programs outside the curriculum.

SLS approaches sustainability as an integrated system (see figure below), with a special focus on society and social sustainability. Through SLS-affiliated courses and our [Signature Programs](#), students learn to use the knowledge and skills they are acquiring at Georgia Tech to help “[create sustainable communities](#)” where humans and nature flourish, now and in the future.



*Model adapted in part from Jeffrey C. Bridger and A.E. Luloff, "Toward an interactional approach to sustainable community development," *Journal of Rural Studies* 15 (1999): 377-387

What We Care About – Our Partnership Principles

Our partnerships are guided by seven principles. We do our best to embody these principles within SLS and to educate GT faculty, students, and staff about these principles. We seek partners who embody them as well. We see these principles as key to forging and sustaining partnerships that create or support sustainable communities here and abroad. We have a number of [examples on our website](#) of long-term partnerships that we feel exemplify these principles; there are photos throughout this document of some of those partners and their student and faculty collaborators.

1. START WITH ASSETS	Recognize and start working with communities from their assets, or strengths, rather than their problems. Engage with community partners as experts who bring important knowledge and skills to the table.
2. FOCUS ON EQUITY AND JUSTICE	Keep equity and justice at the forefront of all of our work aimed at making communities more sustainable. Highlight marginalized voices and bring them to the center of the conversation.

3. CHAMPION SYSTEMS CHANGE	Address the root causes of today’s biggest challenges.
4. SUPPORT COMMUNITY INNOVATORS	Support community innovators to deepen and broaden their impact.
5. PRIORITIZE PROCESS BEFORE OUTCOMES	Establish processes for collaboration that emphasize reciprocity, co-learning, and co-creation. Remember that the journey impacts the outcome.
6. CONTRIBUTE TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD	Cultivate change in our own backyard, as responsible and engaged community members. Proximity to community partners also allows for extensive and meaningful participation of faculty, staff, and students.
7. APPLY TECHNOLOGY IN SOCIAL CONTEXT	Tailor technological interventions to local conditions and possibilities, and use technology to advance the principles above.

(See below for further elaboration on some of these principles.)

How We Work – Service-Learning & Community Engagement (SLCE)

Our primary method for engaging in partnerships is incorporating service-learning and community engagement (SLCE – pronounced “slice”) into undergraduate courses across Georgia Tech’s curriculum. Service-learning scholars argue that SLCE should seek to impact three groups: students, institutions, and communities (see Chupp and Joseph 2010). Our **long-term goals** for each group are to work with our partners on and off campus to:

STUDENTS:

- Graduate global citizens who are grounded in local knowledge and equipped with the competencies required to be sustainable systems changemakers. Education for Sustainable Development defines these competencies as: Systems Thinking; Anticipatory; Normative; Strategic; Collaboration; Critical thinking; Self-awareness; and Integrated problem-solving (UNESCO 2017).

INSTITUTIONS:

- Create a collaborative educational culture at Georgia Tech in which local community partners are treated as co-educators and faculty are rewarded for their efforts to incorporate SLCE into their courses.
- Together with other higher education institutions in the region, create coordinated systems for engaging in community partnerships, and partnerships across higher education, that are streamlined and beneficial to everyone involved.

COMMUNITIES:

- Advance community partners’ sustainability agendas that benefit their communities.
- Nurture regional multi-stakeholder efforts for collaborative action aimed at systems change.

To accomplish these goals, we put our Partnership Principles into action. Here is a bit more detail about what that looks like:

Focus on equity and justice

SLS emphasizes equity – and the justice work necessary to achieve it – as key to sustainability. Social science research has demonstrated a positive correlation between equity and sustainability overall (see Agyeman 2011). Equity acknowledges the impact of the past – of structures that favored certain groups and suppressed or disadvantaged others – on the present. Justice work supports policies, innovations, and structural changes that specifically aim to improve the lives of groups and communities who have had the least access to opportunities and resources. This focus is especially important in Atlanta, which is singled out every year as having one of the largest wealth gaps in the U.S. This gap is also racialized: as of 2017, almost 75 percent of Atlanta residents living below the poverty line were Black (see [American Community Survey/Fact Finder](#) and <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/atlanta-ga/>). Working in this context, and drawing on the rich legacy of Atlanta as the birth place of the Civil Rights Movement, SLS prioritizes partnerships with Black and/or People of Color-led organizations in parts of the metro area where such disparities are most pronounced. In connecting these – and all

– partners to SLS, we strive to cultivate SLCE opportunities that lead students to examine the root causes of structural inequity and contribute to social change on a broader scale.

Engage rather than serve

We emphasize “engagement” more than “service.” “Serving” depends on a power hierarchy: it situates one group as having expertise, skills, or resources to give and the other as needing these things. In contrast, we seek to integrate SLS and Georgia Tech faculty and students into collaborative partnerships that yield reciprocal learning and mutual benefit. We continue to use the term “service-learning” because it helps people understand what we do – and “serve” is of course in our name – but our preferred term is community engagement.

Work with partners over the long-term

Rather than focusing primarily on matching faculty and courses with projects in a piecemeal fashion, we aim to get to know partners and to build long-term relationships based on trust. This impacts our approach to projects. While some of the projects that our courses work on last only for a semester, our goal is to support projects with long-term partners, over multiple semesters, and to bring to them the different support needed at different points in their evolution, by advancing them to different courses and programs and supporting the transfer of knowledge to new faculty and students.

Connect organizations and work through communities of practice and social change networks

For practical reasons, many of our courses pursue projects with single organizations. However, whenever possible, our preference is to work with multiple organizations together, to develop new understandings about our regional sustainability challenges as they play out in communities, and then work together to develop and implement more innovative solutions that address the root causes of our problems.



Students taking courses in the 2019 iGniTe summer session tour the Atlanta BeltLine with guides from SLS’s partner the Grove Park Foundation, as part of the SLS Equitable & Sustainable Development Linked Courses Program.

Often a project that engages multiple partners under one theme is more beneficial to all parties – as a learning experience for students seeking to hone technical, disciplinary skills that require a “big challenge” and for partners seeking collaborators on an issue that requires a systems approach. We strive to do the same approach internally with faculty and students: bring them together across disciplines to work on projects from a more holistic perspective. Systems change will only come about through multi-stakeholder collaborations across issue, institutional, and disciplinary silos.

Our most ambitious effort in this area is [RCE Greater Atlanta](#), officially recognized by United Nations University. Co-founded and co-led by SLS, this multi-stakeholder sustainability network brings together higher education institutions, government, business, nonprofit, and community partners to advance Education for Sustainable Development in the Greater Atlanta region through training and education on the U.N. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Specifically, RCEs are charged with working on SDG 4: Quality Education and achieving target 4.7: “By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development.” SDG 4 is one of seven SDGs identified as priorities for RCE Greater Atlanta, based on our region’s challenges and the assets we have in place for addressing them. The other priority SDGs are: SDG 1 - No Poverty, SDG 2 - Zero Hunger, SDG 3 - Good Health & Well-being, SDG 9 - Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure, SDG 11 - Sustainable Cities and Communities, and SDG 13 - Climate Action.

Push engineering/technological education in new directions

While industry partnerships have long been a central part of engineering and technological education through programs such as co-op and capstone design, community partnerships – and partnerships aimed at social change – have not been central. In fact, they challenge some of the dominant approaches to engineering education, namely, strong emphases on technological innovation and institutional expertise as well as client- and problem-based approaches to partnerships. SLS’ partnership program tailors SLCE methodologies to identify ways for students (and faculty) to contribute their technological expertise to social change work while also helping students work with partners as collaborators, recognizing and building on community-based expertise to develop socio-technical solutions to community sustainability challenges.

What We Work On – Our Priority Issues

Through our work with faculty, students, and partners during our first three years, we identified four Priority Issues for SLS:

- Community Health
- Green Infrastructure
- Equitable & Sustainable Development
- Climate Change & Energy

These are issues where we believe Georgia Tech – and SLS and its faculty and courses in particular – can make significant contributions to systems change work being carried out in the region, through partnerships focused on community-level change. SLS’ major partnership efforts and our Signature Programs primarily address these issue areas. For example, our [Linked Courses Program](#) brings courses together to learn across disciplinary boundaries and work on projects with community partners, focused on one of these issues each semester.



Students working with SLS’s partner the Center for Sustainable Communities through the SLS Summer 2019 Internship Program visit the Hampton Roads EcoDistrict in Virginia.



Students participate in a food security workshop run by SLS’s partner the Atlanta Community Food Bank as part of an SLS Community Health Linked Courses Program in Fall 2018.

Who We Work With – Our Partners

Geography: Work Local, Connect Global

SLS facilitates partnerships in the Atlanta region and across Georgia, with a special focus on the neighborhoods in our backyard, including Home Park, Midtown, and the Westside [specific neighborhoods TBD]. Our partnerships also extend to other West Atlanta neighborhoods in the Proctor Creek watershed, which is a key focus for our Green Infrastructure partnerships.

We also support faculty-led [study abroad programs](#) that take sustainable development as a central focus and incorporate SLCE into their courses through projects and activities with local partners in Asia, Europe, and Central America. Our local and global foci come together through RCE Greater Atlanta, which connects us with over 160 other RCEs around the world through the [Global RCE Network](#). Our partnership with the [Atlanta Global Studies Center](#), jointly run by Georgia Tech and Georgia State University, also helps us take advantage of Atlanta’s growing reputation as a global hub for higher education. Together, these initiatives help both Georgia Tech and its partners understand sustainability from different cultural perspectives, thus opening up new worlds of possibility for imagining alternative futures.

Types of Partners

SLS engages with a variety of partners, including community-based groups, nonprofit organizations serving a specific neighborhood or working across the city, region, or state, local and federal government agencies, and for-profit businesses. Our closest partners:

- Embody our partnership principles
- Are either community-based groups or engage deeply with the local community as equal partners
- Work on different aspects of our priority issues
- Focus on addressing root causes and enacting systems change

We also engage with businesses partners committed to advancing sustainability beyond their own operations. In particular, we seek to partner with large corporations that aim to effect social and environmental impacts in ways that are aligned with their core mission by supporting community-based initiatives with similar goals. We also look to community-based businesses and social entrepreneurs as partners with strong vested interests in their communities and innovative approaches based on deep community knowledge.

Finally, through RCE Greater Atlanta, we partner with other higher education institutions to co-create and co-sponsor joint educational programs and activities and to build the capacity of our institutions to partner more respectfully and effectively with community-based groups and other stakeholders to educate our students, benefit communities, and build a more sustainable region.

Learn More and Contact Us!

Visit the [Partners](#) section of our website for more information. For examples of partnerships, scroll down to “SLS Collaborations – A Sampler.”

We are always interested in discussing our Partnership Strategy and exploring new partnerships. We would love to hear from you! Contact us at any time:

- Rebecca Watts Hull, SLS Service Learning and Partnerships Specialist: rwattshull@gatech.edu
- Ruthie Yow, SLS Service Learning and Partnerships Specialist: ryow6@gatech.edu
- David Eady, SLS Industry Engagement Manager: david.eady@scheller.gatech.edu

LEARN MORE

Our Partnership Strategy is informed by the larger national and global fields in which we work, including their scholarship and the conversations, teaching, research, and practice of both our colleagues and ourselves in these fields. Specifically, we are engaged in and influenced by work taking place related to five themes, listed below. For example, we draw on asset-based approaches to inform our work with faculty, students, *and* partners, and we use recent scholarship around critical service learning to shape both how we think about the role of service learning in the curriculum and how we build meaningful community engagement experiences for students. The centrality of networks to our partnership work is evident in this list, as is our emphasis on equity and social change. In each section, we provide brief annotations of some of the publications that are most influential in the field and/or have been most influential in our work. We hope that you will be intrigued by a few of these publications and explore them further.

THEME 1: ASSET-BASED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

1. Hirsch, J. & Winter, A. (2014, January-February). Engaging Diverse Communities in Climate Action: Lessons from Chicago. *Solutions*, 5(1), 35-39. Retrieved from <https://www.thesolutionsjournal.com/article/engaging-diverse-communities-in-climate-action-lessons-from-chicago/>
SLS' founding director, Jennifer Hirsch, is nationally and internationally known for her work as a scholar-practitioner engaging communities and universities in sustainability and climate action using an asset-based community engagement approach. In this article, Hirsch and Winter – a former colleague from The Field Museum of Natural History – discuss their work as consultants to the City of Chicago, engaging four communities from across the city in implementing the Chicago Climate Action Plan in different, culturally-driven ways that built on their community assets to address community concerns and simultaneously advance the City's strategies to tackle climate change. See more publications and presentations about Dr. Hirsch's work [here](#).
2. Kretzmann, J.P., & McKnight, J.L. (1993). *Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets*. ACTA Publications.
Asset-based Community Development – commonly referred to as “ABCD” - is an approach to working with communities starting with their assets, or strengths, rather than their deficits or problems, and engaging community leaders and residents in envisioning and building the community they want to live in. This approach was largely developed and popularized by [The ABCD Institute](#), formerly housed at Northwestern University and now located at DePaul University in Chicago, together with their affiliated “faculty.” This book, written by ABCD Institute founders John McKnight and Jody Kretzmann, is basically the Bible of the ABCD field of practice. Based on McKnight's and Kretzmann's research into successful community-building initiatives across the U.S., it introduces the basics of ABCD and, as a workbook, provides hands-on exercises for identifying and mapping community assets. Fun fact: the book is fondly referred to by affiliated faculty and many ABCD practitioners as “the green book” due to its green cover.

THEME 2: RE-ORIENTING ENGINEERING EDUCATION FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

1. Bridger, J.C. & Luloff, A.E. (1999). Toward an interactional approach to sustainable community development. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 15, 377-387.
This article applies concepts of community to sustainable development and lays out criteria and a conceptual framework for achieving sustainability at the level of local communities. It was crucial in helping us develop our approach to sustainable community development presented in this Partnership Strategy.
2. Leydens, J. A., Lucena, J. C., & Nieusma, D. (2014, June). What is design for social justice. ASEE Annual Conference and Exposition, 26, 24.1368.1 - 24.1368.30. Retrieved from <https://peer.asee.org/what-is-design-for-social-justice>

In this paper, Leydens, Lucena and Nieuwsma offer a cogent overview of four forms of design, in order to introduce and contextualize “design for social justice.” They cover four forms of design: design for technology, HCD for users, HDC for communities, and design for social justice. The authors explore where and how social justice has been integrated into or left entirely out of design contexts; they target design within engineering education and lay out ways for scholars and teachers to bring social justice substantively into design education.

3. Lucena, J., Schneider, J., & Leydens, Jon A. (2010). *Engineering and Sustainable Community Development*. Morgan & Claypool Publishers. Retrieved from

<https://isfcolombia.uniandes.edu.co/images/documentos/lucena.pdf>

Lucena, Schneider and Leydens’s text is a touchstone for scholar-practitioners and teachers seeking guidance and two excellent case studies on community-engaged engineering projects. Lucena et al helpfully include an overview of engineering as related to the histories of colonialism and the politics of international development, helping readers and students to understand the complex legacies of engineering projects executed by Westerners in the “developing” world. They offer many tools for preparing engineers to work with and listen to community members. Crucially, they include student reactions to and reflections on taking a collaborative approach that centers on the expertise that already resides in every community.

4. Ottinger, G. (2011). Rupturing Engineering Education: Opportunities for Transforming Expert Identities through Community-Based Projects. *Technoscience and Environmental Justice: Expert Cultures in a Grassroots Movement*. MIT Press, 229-248.

Scholar Gwen Ottinger points toward the constituting and mobilizing of “expertise” as key to intervening in traditional relationships between universities and communities and between students and knowledge production. In this article, Ottinger argues that intentionally sharing expertise produces new ways of interacting and collaborating outside of a client-consultant or client-provider model. Challenging the widely-held notion that scientific knowledge is “predictable and enduring” and instead asserting its mutability as a “cultural creation, made and remade through the daily practices of scientists and engineers,” Ottinger builds her argument that engineers can “find room to maneuver” and refashion their relationship to knowledge, to problem-solving, and to the communities with which they work.

THEME 3: NETWORKS FOR SOCIAL IMPACT

1. Fadeeva, Z., Galkute, L., Chhokar, K. (2018). *Academia and Communities: Engaging for Change - Learning Contributions of Regional Centres of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development*. Tokyo: United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability. Retrieved from

<http://collections.unu.edu/view/UNU:6601#viewAttachments>

This online book includes case studies from 17 Regional Centres of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development (RCEs) around the world describing their work to advance Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in their regions, as part of the Global RCE Network coordinated by United Nations University. The Foreword introduces the structure and purpose of the RCEs and the importance of working through multi-stakeholder networks to create regional change. The Introduction discusses the meaning, goals, and learning competencies of ESD – including the ways in which ESD is intended to transform higher education institutions themselves. With SLS being a co-founder of RCE Greater Atlanta, we have found this publication invaluable in helping us both connect with other RCEs and start to envision how our work on sustainability, and through RCE Greater Atlanta and the Global RCE Network, might significantly impact our institution in the future.

2. Plastrik, P., Taylor, M., & Cleveland, J. (2014). *Connecting to Change the World: Harnessing the Power of Networks for Social Impact*. Island Press.

This practical book, written by three veteran practitioners in network consulting, describes why and how to establish and run networks for social impact and provides case studies of successful social impact networks around the country, both sustainability-related and otherwise. It is particularly helpful in thinking through the differences between a network and an organization and how and when network structures in particular can advance social change in ways that organizations cannot.

THEME 4: SERVICE-LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

1. Bringle, R. G., & Hatcher, J. A. (1995). A service-learning curriculum for faculty. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 2(1), 112-122. Retrieved from: <https://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/mjcs/3239521.0002.111/1>
Bringle and Hatcher, long-time leaders in service learning research, offer that faculty development is key to robust and high-impact service learning curriculum. In this piece they argue for the importance of supporting and preparing faculty to “implement new pedagogy” that engages service learning experiences and integrates them well into academic courses. The series of faculty workshops that they propose and describe supports faculty new to service learning in building syllabi and service learning experiences that are founded on best practices and relevant research, as well as offering insight about the connection between faculty development and the institutionalization of service learning.
2. Brundiers, K., & Beaudoin, F. (2017). *A Guide for Applied Sustainability Learning Projects: Advancing Sustainability Outcomes on Campus and in the Community*. Retrieved from https://hub-media.aashe.org/uploads/A+Guide+for+Applied+Sustainability+Learning+Projects_v1.0_03.03.17_Final.pdf
Brundiers and Beaudoin, through their respective work at Arizona State University, which houses one of the leading sustainability programs in the nation, and Portland State which boasts a deep and fruitful sustainability and community engagement partnership with the City of Portland, have created a compelling and thorough guide to building programs for real-world sustainability projects. Through laying out distinct stages, they invite readers to locate their own work within a development continuum, and they discuss the benefits and challenges of project-based learning with outside partners, offering substantial insight into the program infrastructure that makes such projects successful.
3. Chupp, M. G., & Joseph, M. L. (2010). Getting the most out of service learning: Maximizing student, university and community impact. *Journal of Community Practice*, 18(2-3), 190-212. Retrieved from: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10705422.2010.487045>
Service learning scholars Chupp and Joseph offer a helpful overview of the service learning field, and its major trends and shifts (such as “experiential” and “social justice” service learning) over the past three decades. They persuasively argue that “service learning should seek to promote social change through authentic relationships and impacts at three levels: the student, the academic institution, and the community.” In their case study of the Case Western Reserve School of Social Work, they unfold how this three-level model informs a service learning program based on strengthening relationships with Cleveland neighborhoods surrounding campus.
4. McNall, M., Barnes-Najor, J., Brown, R., Doberneck, D., & Fitzgerald, H. (2015). Systemic Engagement: Universities as Partners in Systemic Approaches to Community Change. *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement*, 19(1), 7-32. Retrieved from <http://openjournals.libs.uga.edu/index.php/jheoe/article/view/1390>
McNall et al focus in this piece on how to shift the approach of universities from “isolated” to “systemic” impact, suggesting that it will be impossible to effect change on broad scale challenges without the leverage provided by networks of diverse partners sharing a focus. The authors outline six principles of systemic impact (systems thinking; collaborative inquiry; support for ongoing learning; emergent design; multiple strands of inquiry and action; and transdisciplinary learning) and use the example of Wiba Anung partnerships, forged between Michigan State University, Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan, Bay Mills Community College, and nine Michigan tribes, an alliance formed to address entrenched educational inequality among white and native children in Michigan.
5. Mitchell, Tania D. (Spring 2008). Traditional vs. Critical Service-Learning: Engaging the Literature to Differentiate Two Models. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 14(2), 50-65. Retrieved from: <https://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/mjcs/3239521.0014.205/--traditional-vs-critical-service-learning-engaging?view=image>

In this important article that had a huge impact on the service learning field, Mitchell challenges the ways that “traditional service learning” leaves structural inequality unexamined, failing to guide students toward an understanding of its roots. What Mitchell calls “a social change orientation” and an aim to “redistribute power” distinguish critical service learning from traditional service learning.

6. Tinkler, Alan, Barri Tinkler, Ethan Hausman, and Gabriella Tufo Strouse. (2014). Key Elements of Effective Service-Learning Partnerships from the Perspective of Community Partners. *Partnerships: A Journal of Service-Learning and Civic Engagement*, 5(2), 137-152. Retrieved from: <http://libjournal.uncg.edu/prt/article/view/944/703>

This collaboratively written article helpfully urges readers on the instructor/professor side to consider what makes for a successful and reciprocal relationship for the community partner. In concert with their own local partners, Tinkler et al identify six main characteristics of successful partnerships, pointing out that the development of an “effective relationship” is different from the creation of an effective deliverable. Effective relationships are the product of intentional work, which places considerations such as partner resources and partner mission at the center of relationship-building between instructors and community organizations.

THEME 5: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT – EQUITY & HIGHER EDUCATION

1. Agyeman, J. (2011). Equity? That’s not an issue for us, we’re here to save the world. Retrieved from <https://julianagyeman.com/2011/08/24/equity-thats-not-an-issue-for-us-were-here-to-save-the-world/>

There are many publications explaining the centrality of equity to sustainability. [Julian Agyeman](#), a Professor of Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning at Tuft University, developed the influential concept of “just sustainabilities” and has become one of the most well-known scholars in this area among sustainability practitioners. In addition to his scholarly publications, he blogs about equity and sustainability and regularly presents at practitioner conferences around the U.S. and the world. This blog post is one of his most succinct publications on the importance of equity in advancing sustainability and also references a major literature review related to equity and its societal impacts overall.

2. Trencher, G., Yarime, M., McCormick, K. B., Doll, C. N., & Kraines, S. B. (2013). Beyond the third mission: Exploring the emerging university function of co-creation for sustainability. *Science and Public Policy*, 41(2), 151-179. Retrieved from: <https://portal.research.lu.se/ws/files/3123266/4393557.pdf>

In this article, the authors argue that there is an emerging new role for universities around the world, surfacing in response to the global sustainability crisis: acting as conveners of multi-stakeholder, regional collaborations aimed at advancing sustainable development in the university’s geographical region. Based on research into universities around the world that are assuming this role, the article lays out a conceptual framework and then presents two in depth case studies, one from the U.S. and one from Europe.

3. UNESCO (2016). Education 2030: Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. Retrieved from <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000245656>

Advancing SDG 4: Quality Education is the central purpose of the work of all RCE networks. This document from the United Nations is a thorough description of SDG 4 and its targets and also lays out recommendations for implementation. Importantly, Target 4.7 is the target most related to higher education institutions: “By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development.”