

UUK invites your organisation to get behind Universities Week: What's the big idea?

Higher Education and the output from our higher education institutions is often an unsung or unheard success story. To highlight their impact, we are launching [Universities Week: What's the big idea?](#) a pilot campaign that aims to tell the hidden stories from people within the sector and those whose lives have been influenced by the sector.

From the training of teachers, doctors and sports professionals; to the development of future fuels, miracle medicines, new technologies, or improved food nutrition – together they build a picture of the many and surprising ways that our students, academics and staff make a difference in the UK.

[What's the big idea?](#) will mainly take place from 14-20 June 2010, and we hope activities will take place both in the run-up to the week and afterwards. A total of **100** higher education institutions have signed up so far to run activities in June, and the campaign is supported by a range of organisations across the sector, including the university mission groups, the unions and other higher education stakeholders.

For the first time there is an opportunity to bring the achievements of UK higher education under a single banner. We hope to get as many UK universities, colleges, HEIs and other stakeholders behind this, to ensure our messages are heard. Below is an overview of how the week is shaping up and how your organisation can play a role (Please click on the links below or just scroll down).

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What's the plan?

Starting with a national launch event, a week of media and online activity will comprise of a different theme each day. The campaign will be designed by our appointed agency [Kindred](#) for you to be able to link your activities under the national themes. The national themes are just a guide and you can still run activities relating to each theme on a different day to those listed below.

Monday – Launch activity

The value of higher education; universities are not just 'nice to have'; they're central to the UK's success.

Tuesday – Open universities

Dispel 'ivory tower' and 'dumbing down' myths by showing the reality of modern university teaching and learning and the inclusive nature of universities.

Wednesday – Discover discoveries

Proving how the research that goes on in universities is relevant to everyday life.

Thursday – University changed my life

Show how universities have a transformational effect on the lives of individuals, dispelling the myth that it's all about getting into debt, and showcasing some of the professions which wouldn't exist without university.

Friday – Better University, better Britain

Show that universities have a knock-on effect on national achievement, touching many areas of society we're proud of (sport, the arts etc).

Saturday – Universities in the community

Demonstrate the value of universities to their local communities, demonstrating how they can improve a region.

How can you help?

Whether you are a university or an organisation in the higher education sector, the strength of the campaign depends on **your** support. Please consider whether any of your existing activities, events or announcements would fit under the banner of the campaign, to benefit from increased publicity and strengthen the campaign voice. Just email ian.morton@universitiesuk.ac.uk

What do we need from you?

- Any **major research/development announcements** (i.e. newsworthy on a national level) coming up that you would be prepared to hold on to until the week itself
- **High-profile business spokespeople or organisations** (existing relationships who can be brought on to support the campaign) – either for national media activity or for you to use at your event to attract local media interest
- **High-profile university spokespeople** (including Chancellors, Vice-Chancellors, academics) – again, same as above
- Organisations and people with whom you are in regular contact in order to increase support for the campaign, such as **charities, businesses and partner establishments**
- **Organise events and launch other activities/initiatives** (ideally w/c 14 June) under the days' themes and the overall campaign umbrella
- **Share your facilities with us** and others to communicate the campaign more effectively e.g. video podcasting, event space
- Use **your website's homepage** and other communication networks to link to the campaign micro-site
- **Video podcasts** demonstrating the work you are doing under each of the above themes
- **Well-known 'friends' of the University** (e.g. celebrity honorary degree recipients and successful alumni)
- **Your logo** to use on the website as a supporter of the campaign

Providing you with a toolkit

A toolkit, including promotional material, carrying the campaign logo and strapline, will be available for you to use, for both internal and external publicity materials. This has begun to become available to download from the UUK website. Please visit www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/universitiesweek for further information.

Ideas bank

We will provide updates featuring **examples** of how HE organisations and partners are supporting the campaign. In the meantime, below are some of the ideas we've received so far. A directory of events taking place will be available in due course on the UUK website, which we will also promote nationally.

Open days

A number of universities are badging their pre-existing open days under the banner of the Universities Week, and making them open to the public as opposed to just prospective students. Some will also invite their high-profile spokespeople and third party advocates to speak to try and attract local media.

Hidden treasures

Some are also considering opening up a 'hidden treasure', such as a historical building or research centre, while others will invite influential spokespeople on the day to help attract local media coverage.

Local shopping centres

One university has told us that they'd like to hold their open day off-campus at their local shopping centre to further ensure members of the public know what's going on.

Public events

One university is looking to host a debate at their town hall, open to members of the public.

Your case study material and spokespeople for the media

Please could you send us your suggested case studies and spokespeople, for the opportunity to obtain media coverage for your institution. We are happy to receive these in a range of formats (e.g. past press coverage, emails, weblinks, direct contacts or video podcasts). We hope to use these in the national media campaign and also publicise them through our campaign website and our social media, so a great opportunity to disseminate your success stories more widely.

We hope the campaign case studies and spokespeople will cover a wide range of themes to illustrate the far-reaching benefits of universities, including:

- **University associates, Chancellors and famous alumni** that would be willing to be spokespeople
- Case studies of the impact universities have had on the **local community and economy**
- Examples of **businesses** that your University has worked with (including those that have benefitted from student placements, community schemes or University research)
- Ground-breaking **research projects** (from any discipline) and their impacts
- Inspiring **student stories** e.g. "How university changed my life"
- Partnerships with **charities** that rely on your research departments
- **Renowned academics** who have made an impact on the national and world stage

Want to find out more?

We want to enhance the public understanding of the value of universities and begin a discussion with the public that will help to shape our future. UUK will be hosting the campaign on their website, and will also provide regular updates to stakeholders.

To get involved with the campaign and find out more please contact Ian Morton or Nigel Semmens at Universities UK for further information on 020 7419 5424/ 5410 or email ian.morton@universitiesuk.ac.uk / nigel.semmens@universitiesuk.ac.uk