Choosing wisely: strategies to defend international cooperation in turbulent times

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Turbulent times:

Political earthquakes in 2017
Effect on universities and internationalization

• Three international perspectives:
  • Utrecht, the Netherlands
  • Sydney, Australia
  • Edinburgh, Scotland

• Universities/academia: out of touch, leftwing/liberal, science is just another opinion, facts don’t matter

• Internationalisation: under threat because of nationalism, xenofobia, antiglobalism
How do we engage with our adversaries on and off campus?

• Example Netherlands: backlash against international students
• Issues: housing and language of instruction

It's a bit shocking to see the 'No Internationals' sign posted basically everywhere. Also, bit sick of hearing the wide stereotypes given by the Dutchies for basically all international students as an excuse for all of this.
Quality argument: are international students good or bad for education?

• Language of instruction in some BA and all MA programmes changes to English
• At UU only 10% int. students
• Concern: quality of English of teachers and students
• Concern: survival of Dutch as language in science
Building successful and sustainable partnerships

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Partnerships Director
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Building successful and sustainable partnerships

Do your homework

- Be sceptical about databases
- Speak to people!
- Set aside lots of time
- Seek out hidden gems
Building successful and sustainable partnerships

Create a joined-up strategy

• Get friends on board
• Sign up internal partners
• Get the message across
Building successful and sustainable partnerships

Be prepared to invest
• $624,000, 68 projects, 138 researchers

Measure your progress
• Checklist of achievements

Plan for the future
• Leverage external funding
• Create new synergies
International Partnerships: Edinburgh perspective

Professor David Weller
International Dean, SE Asia & Australasia
What are we looking for in a partner?

Brexit and university partnerships

- What message does BREXIT send to the world?
- How can we minimise negative impact?
- Edinburgh response to date
Our global engagement plan
A map to deliver our strategic goals

2017 - 2020

• Global exchange
• Global Partnerships
• Global Community
Globalisation: priorities at Edinburgh

- long term, ‘wide & deep’ partnering activity
- aligning ‘bottom-up’ and ‘top-down’ activity
- delivering & measuring global impact
- underpinning partnerships with funding
- overcoming differences in regulations/legislations
- making the most of our networks
- importance of relationship-building and investing time
Discussion questions

• How do you convince the sceptical of the value of international collaboration/the presence of international students?