MAPPING ENGAGED EDUCATOR CAREER PATHWAYS

This project supports universities in recognising and incentivising engaged educators, fostering educational innovation and enhancing student employability

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Strategic Roadmaps & Support Mechanisms:
Turning Engagement into Institutional Practice

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From Vision to Implementation: The Next Step in Recognising Engaged Educators

By ***Rimante Rusaite,*** UIIN

Following the development of the *Engaged Educator Matrix*, the MapEEC project have introduced a practical resource that helps institutions move from commitment to action — the ***Strategic Roadmaps and Support Mechanisms.***

These roadmaps provide a structured yet flexible approach to embedding engagement across universities. They respond directly to one of the challenges identified by the project team: ensuring that *engaged education is not left to individual enthusiasm but supported through systemic structures and incentives.*

The resource outlines two complementary pathways for change:

Bottom-Up

empowering educators to build visibility, networks, and advocacy

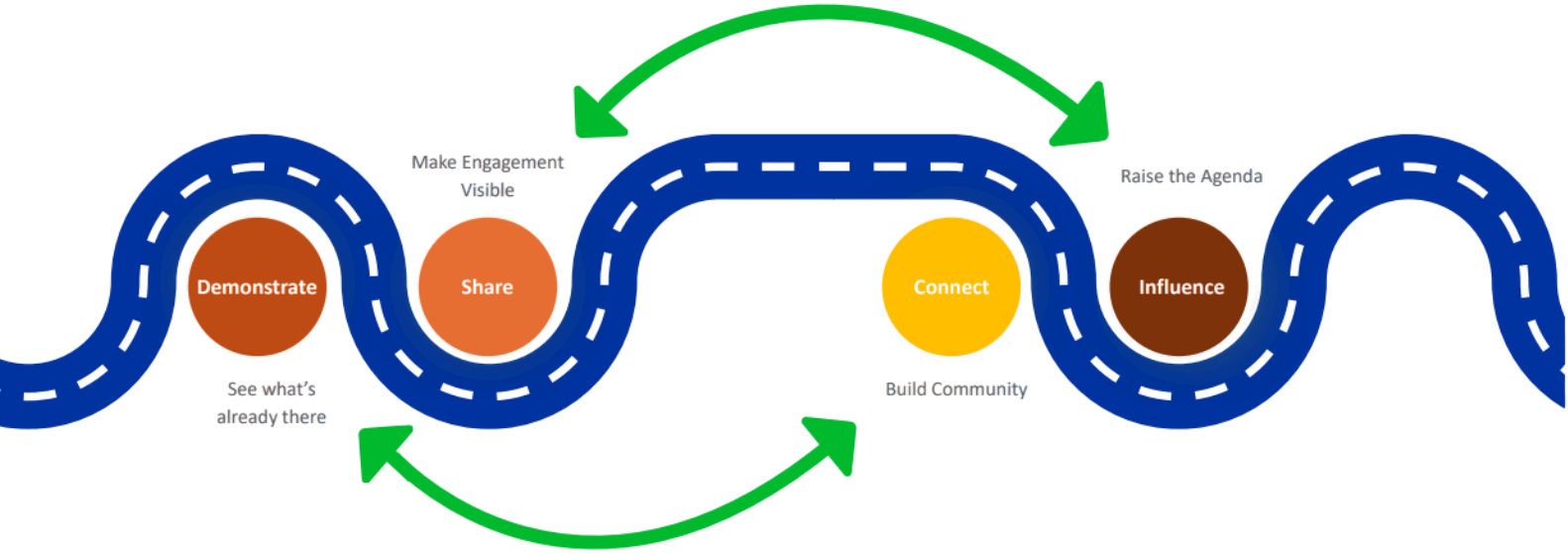
Top-Down

enabling leaders to align engagement with institutional missions, HR systems, and strategy

Together, they form a practical blueprint for transforming how engagement is recognised and sustained.



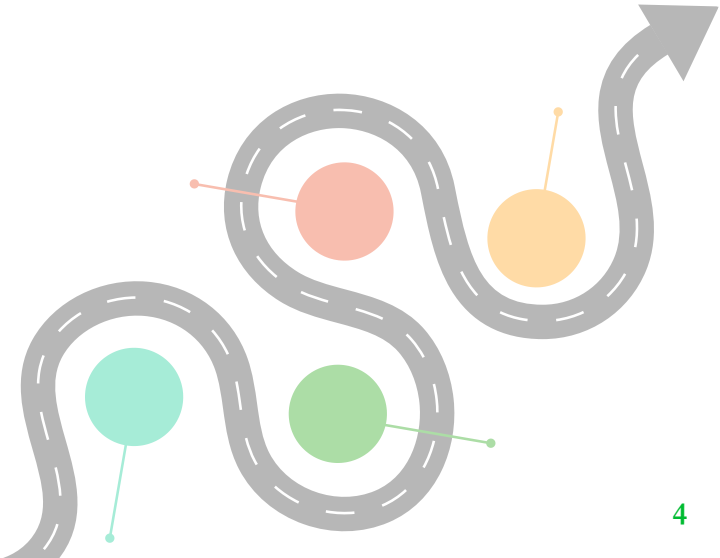
Empowering Change from Within: The Bottom-Up Roadmap



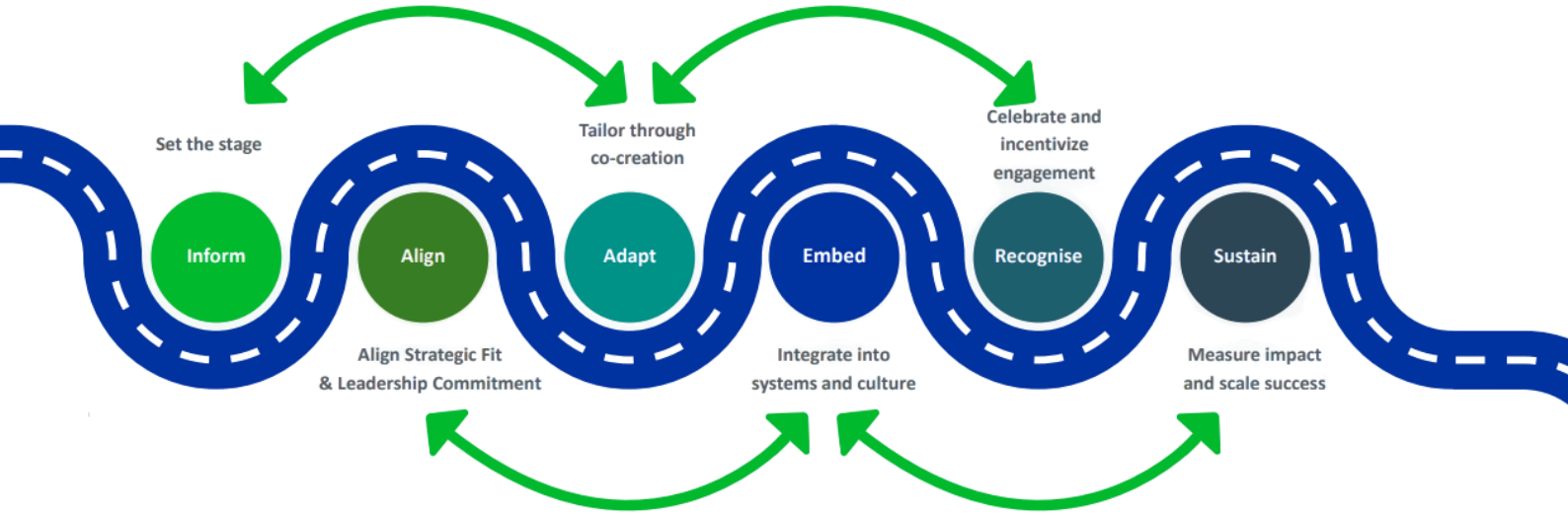
The Bottom-Up Roadmap begins where meaningful transformation always starts — with educators themselves. It encourages reflection on current engagement practices and helps individuals make their often-invisible contributions visible.

The process unfolds through four iterative phases — **Demonstrate, Share, Connect, and Influence.** Educators may enter at any point, progressing in multiple directions depending on context. The aim is to grow a culture of collaboration and advocacy that positions engagement as a shared institutional value.

It reminds us that large-scale change often begins with small acts — a lecturer integrating community projects into coursework, or researchers co-creating learning experiences with external partners. The roadmap provides structure to such innovation and connects individual enthusiasm to institutional development.



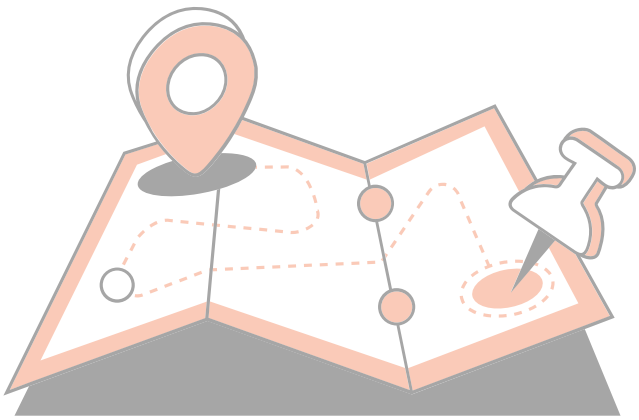
Enabling Change at Scale: The Top-Down Roadmap



While bottom-up initiatives provide momentum, institutional transformation requires leadership alignment. *The Top-Down Roadmap* offers six interlinked phases — **Inform, Align, Adapt, Embed, Recognise, and Sustain** — to guide systemic change.

It helps leaders link engagement to strategic goals such as employability, innovation, and societal contribution, ensuring that the work of engaged educators becomes a visible and measurable component of institutional success.

This roadmap builds the foundation for sustainable recognition frameworks — embedding engagement in promotion criteria, performance evaluation, and institutional planning.



From Strategy to Practice: Support Mechanisms that Make Change Real

By ***Luca Barbera,*** UIIN

Transforming the recognition of engaged educators requires more than frameworks and aspirations — it demands structures that bring these principles to life. The *MapEEC Support Mechanisms* accompanying the strategic roadmaps play this critical role. Developed alongside the Strategic Roadmaps, they offer tangible ways to implement engagement systematically across institutions.

These mechanisms are not one-size-fits-all; rather, they are flexible models that institutions can adapt to their context. They provide the connective tissue between institutional strategy and academic practice — helping universities measure, celebrate, and sustain engagement in the long term.

Support mechanisms such as the **Engaged Educator Award**, the **Engagement Recognition Framework,** and **Co-Creation Spaces** exemplify this bridge between vision and action.



The *Engaged Educator Award* was inspired by the **ENLIGHT Alliance's Impact Awards**, which celebrate societal engagement across ten European universities.

The *Engagement Recognition Framework* reflects good practice from the **University of Glasgow**, where civic engagement is integrated into teaching and promotion policies.

The *Co-Creation Spaces* draw from ***Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam's Community Service Learning initiative (see the text box)***, creating environments where educators, students, and external partners work together on real-world challenges.

Good practice example

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (VU Amsterdam) has implemented a university-wide Community Service Learning (CSL) approach that integrates societal engagement directly into the curriculum. CSL supports co-creation between students, educators, and community partners—allowing students to apply academic knowledge in real-world contexts and contribute meaningfully to social issues.

CSL is a core part of VU's "Broader Mind" initiative, aimed at educating students not just academically but also as responsible contributors to society.

These examples — all documented in the *Book of Case Studies* — demonstrate how real institutions are already bridging the gap between commitment and action.

Together, the support mechanisms show that reform is not only about policy; it is about practice. They help universities translate strategy into daily action, strengthen recognition structures, and cultivate a culture where engagement becomes a defining feature of academic excellence. As evidenced in the case studies, these mechanisms make engaged education visible, measurable, and sustainable.

Looking Forward

By ***Rimante Rusaite,*** UIIN

As MapEEC enters its final phase, attention turns from developing institutional tools to informing policy, sharing and sustainability. Building on the *Engaged Educator Matrix, Strategic Roadmaps, Support Mechanisms, Book of Case Studies, and Supporting Document,* the consortium will host a Policy Workshop bringing together higher education representatives and the project team.

Insights from this dialogue will feed directly into the **Policy Recommendation Brief for Recognition of Engagement in Academic Careers** — the final output of the project. This brief will summarise the evidence gathered through MapEEC and propose practical policy-level guidance to help embed engagement within academic career frameworks across Europe.

Through this next phase, MapEEC connects institutional practice with policy development — ensuring that the recognition of engaged educators becomes not only a matter of good institutional practice, but a shared European priority for the future of higher education.



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- MapEEC Discovery Report
- MapEEC Book of Case Studies

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