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**Abstract**

As important knowledge organizations, universities and other higher education institutions can play a key role in driving growth and development in their cities and regions. This article highlights the content and meaning of this role, the benefits of regional partnerships for both a higher education institution and the city/region in which it is located as well as the way for a higher education institution to embark on a journey of institutional transformation and become an engaged institution with an active role in local and regional development. Using examples from different countries, the article highlights practical approaches that higher education institutions have taken in their cities and regions. Finally, it outlines the ten necessary steps for developing and implementing an engagement strategy and a regional partnership. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)