

11.1.2025

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**Title**

Lost in the "third space" : the impact of public engagement in higher education on academic identity, research practice and career progression / Richard Watermeyer

**Publication year**

2015

**Source/Footnote**

In: European journal of higher education. - 5 (2015) 3, S. 331 - 347

**Inventory number**

38659

**Keywords**

Ausland : Großbritannien : Hochschulwesen allgemein ; Hochschule und Staat : allgemein

**Abstract**

Public engagement (PE) is habitually recognized and advocated across the higher education (HE) community ? especially by regulator and funder constituencies ? as an intrinsically good thing. In the UK, a number of initiatives focused on embedding a culture of PE within universities have sought to further this claim, yet have done so without considering or reporting upon some of the less positive elements of its undertaking. In this paper, we report upon evidence from interviews with n = 40 UK academics, drawn from across the academic hierarchy, disciplines and a diverse range of higher education institutions. The testimony of respondents points towards a number of issues for public engagement in higher education (PE-HE), specifically the deleterious effects of its undertaking on academic identity; research practice and career progression. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)