

## Preparing International Students for Community Engagement: Laying the Foundations

International students face considerable difficulty in engaging with the wider community. There are various reasons for this. However, a significant factor preventing international students from engaging fully with the communities is that they don't have the skills that engagement opportunities require.

These skills are identified in this paper are based on the author's rich experience of engaging in community activities herself as an international student. They are based also on her experience as an educator and international student advisor working closely with the wider community and international students.

In order to prepare international students for community engagement, the author has developed various initiatives to help international students gain the required skills. These projects have brought important benefits to international students, domestic students, the university and the wider community. Two recent volunteer projects will be presented in this paper. The discussion of these projects will illustrate their benefits and practical ways of preparing international students for community engagement.