

# Demonstrating Impacts: General Election 2015

## Introduction

This case study gives an example of how the 2015 General Election provided students' unions across the UK with the opportunity to *ENGAGE* their members, *DEVELOP* their activities and demonstrate the *IMPACTS* they could have on their learners, their college and wider society. This example comes from New College Lanarkshire Students' Association and their efforts to engage their members in the #GenerationVote campaign.

## Activity

New College Lanarkshire Students' Association engaged many of their members through various activities in relation to the #GenerationVote campaign which ensured that many of their members were able to vote in the 2015 General Election. Specific activities included:

- using tablets to encourage online voter registration
- a *Voter Registration Roadshow* across college campuses
- using a *Social Media Booth* to reach beyond the college
- utilising free merchandise to engage students face-to-face

## Impacts

The campaign activity had a number of positive impacts both within college and across the local community. One of the key strengths being the wide reaching area that was covered.

The campaign engaged and influenced students and other young people from; three separate council areas; six constituencies in the immediate areas of the college sites; and a further five neighbouring constituencies too. The *Voter Registration Roadshow* supported the campaign across seven separate college campuses and led to the engagement of 30,000 students, either face-to-face or digitally.

Around 1000 pieces of campaign merchandise was distributed and each distribution led to an instance of face-to-face engagement regarding the campaign giving student representatives many opportunities to educate and encourage students on the importance of voting and the registration process.

Student representatives also spent time trying to engage staff within the college too to widen the impacts of the campaign by using internal email networks and other communications such as newsletters and bulletins.

Social media interactions from approximately 800 people, and a further 2000 views were another example of how student representatives attempted to engage people inside and outside of their college.

Whilst the earlier Scottish Independence Referendum had led to an increase in the political agency of many voters linked to the college, it was clear that the activities conducted by the Students' Association had a further impact on people both internally as well as external to the college.

Data collected in a pre-election poll conducted by the students' union in the run up to the election showed that 91% of students at the college were registered to vote and that 100% intended to use their vote in the election. If this was the case, this would result in 16% increase in voting. These statistics speak for themselves and demonstrate the way in which this campaign had positive impacts in enriching the lives of students in the local community.