

Career, community, place and locality

Career is a concept which is concerned with the way in which we link life, learning and work and past, present and future. This kind of thinking about career can often lead us to a level of abstraction which sits in opposition to our everyday experience of career. Day-to-day and even year-to-year career is lived in spaces and places. We go to school, we move to university, we commute to work, we sit hunched at our desk or toil under the burning sun. Work, learning and life do not take place in an abstract no-place, but rather in geographical (and increasingly in digital) spaces. Not all spaces are the same and nor do they offer the same kinds of opportunities or contexts for career thinking, exploration and decision-making. This issue of the NICEC Journal foregrounds the issue of space and place and explores how it impacts on career.

The geography and materiality of spaces and places also have a major impact on the way that career guidance and other forms of career support are delivered. Career guidance is necessarily situated in place as it seeks to link individuals to opportunities and educate them about the local, national and international labour and learning markets. It is also situated within institutions and enacted within diverse spaces including interview cubicals, classrooms, community centres, factories and a growing range of online spaces. The issue therefore also grapples with the question of how these spaces reframe and enable different kinds of career support.

We begin with a piece from **Bill Law** which explores the issues of space and community theoretically. Bill proposes the concept of the 'enclave' as a way to organise our thinking about career and our ideas about how best to organise careers work. **Rie Thomsen** also explores the issue of how career guidance is enacted within places and communities. She argues that this has been ignored for far too long and demonstrates how the nature of the activity is reshaped by its movement into different kinds of spaces and places.

The next three papers all explore the way in which living in a particular place shapes both the career thinking of individuals and the practice of career guidance. First **Kim Slack and Katy Vigurs** look at the career and learning journeys of a group of young people in a working class, urban area in the English midlands. They show how a range of career decisions all emerge out of the intersection between

individuals and place and argue that this is something that needs to be recognised in thinking and acting on careers. Next **Siobhan Neary** discusses career and career guidance within Sri Lanka. She introduces the Sri Lankan concept of 'foundation' as a concept that Sri Lankan career practitioners have used to connect the needs of the individual with those of the wider community. **Shaun Morgan** also explores the intersection between community, place and career; this time in a small rural community setting within the UK. Shaun argues that career support workers need to make use of their own cultural capital to propel young people towards social action.

The final three papers look at the relationship between moving place and career. **Rosie Alexander** explores the careers of graduates living in the very rural location of Orkney. She highlights the difference between incomer, loyal and returner graduates and notes a tension between the 'rural' and 'graduate' identities that may need to reframe the way in which careers advisers relate to such clients. **Nancy Arthur** examines the experience of international students coming to Canada. For this group challenges abound in relation to career support, particularly in helping them to navigate questions about staying or returning and providing advice and guidance on remote labour markets and culturally diverse approaches to recruitment and work. Nonetheless, there are considerable challenges for this group which require sensitive handling by careers professionals. Finally the issue closes with an article from **Colleen Reichrath-Smith and Roberta A. Neault** who discuss the experiences of the 'global careerist'. They argue that global careerists (those who pursue their careers across two or more countries) have unique career development needs which career professionals need to better understand in order to be able to help them effectively.

All of these papers explore the importance of space and place in career. Whether it is about how our careers are pursued or how career support is delivered, about staying put in our communities or moving on to new countries, it is clear that space and place need to be considered as a central part of career theory, research and practice.

Tristram Hooley, Guest Editor
