



***Choices and Responsibilities:
Higher Education in the Knowledge Society***

Programme on Institutional Management in Higher Education (IMHE)

**Civic Mission and Social Responsibility
New challenges for the practice of public relations in higher
education**

Helena Kantanen

The question is: what is the civic mission of the research university in a modern society? How does it challenge the PR professionals of the universities?

The Finnish Higher Education Evaluation Council, a specialist organ of the Ministry of Education, has conducted several university evaluations with special emphasis on the regional role of Finnish universities. In February 2004 the Finnish university legislation has been changed to include the civic mission as the third basic function of the universities, as a parallel concept with research and teaching. This change can be seen both as a challenge and as a recognition to the PR professionals of Finnish universities.

The paper in question intends to clarify the concept of the civic mission, and to find eventual connections to and similarities with the concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR).