Guide to Industry-University Collaboration

Delivering innovative solutions to complex challenges
Industry-University Collaboration

In today’s economic environment it is crucial for businesses and public sector organisations to continuously innovate products, processes, and services.

Industry-university collaborations provide the perfect foundation for innovation. By working with a university partner, businesses gain access to cutting-edge expertise and techniques that they don’t have in-house, enabling the development of new approaches.

Equally, working with industry enables academic institutions to test the practical applications of their research on real-world problems and informs future research.

It is a mutually-beneficial partnership that can result in powerful solutions to challenges faced in our complex and rapidly-changing world.

“The University of Bath can match your business needs with the most relevant experts to deliver exceptional results.”
Bath Institute for Mathematical Innovation

The University of Bath's Institute for Mathematical Innovation (IMI) was established in 2015 to strengthen university-industry collaboration within the University of Bath.

Unique to Bath, IMI has built a team of experienced Commercial Research Associates, who use data analysis, statistics, and mathematical modelling to help industry and the public sector understand complex phenomena, simulate outcomes, improve processes, and optimise resource management.

Our Commercial Research Associates work on short- to long-term industrial projects, ranging from consultancy services to larger joint research projects.

Based at the University of Bath, we are ideally placed to draw on cutting-edge subject-specific academic expertise from any discipline across campus to best suit the needs of your business.

“The [work] developed by Dr Augustin [University of Bath] in collaboration with the Forest Research Institute was crucial in assessing the cost-efficiency of the sampling scheme for monitoring tree health. This resulted in a yearly cost saving of €100,000.”

Klaus von Wilpert
Head of Department,
Forest Research Institute of Baden-Wuerttemberg

“IMI is a new investment by the university which enables our research community to respond more rapidly to external enquiries.

Mathematicians and statisticians from IMI work with academics from across natural science, engineering, social science, and management disciplines, to collaborate with industrial partners to address challenges and provide them with relevant and timely solutions.

I’m delighted to see already how the new institute is delivering significant benefits to our partners.”

Professor Jonathan Dawes
IMI Director

IIMI services

- Analysis, modelling and testing
- Process validation
- Expert advice and opinion
- Scoping or feasibility studies
- Bespoke specialist training
- Problem-solving workshops
- Grant writing and project development
- Project management
- Student placements

Contact Dr Joanna Jordan, Manager of Bath IMI, to discuss how we can best help your business.

Email: j.f.jordan@bath.ac.uk
Working with the University of Bath

Whether you are an SME, established multinational, public sector, or a not-for-profit organisation, the University of Bath can match your needs with the appropriate expert to deliver results.

We offer a wide range of consultancy-based services, or you can work with us in a more collaborative manner. This can either be in the form of a joint research project designed to solve a specific challenge your business is facing, or we can work together by leveraging funding schemes for industry-university collaboration.

Our consultancy services include:

- Scientific and technological advice and guidance
- Data evaluation and assessment
- Laboratory-based testing
- Speaker agreements
- Expert witness services

At the University of Bath, consultancy services are defined as the use of existing academic expertise to solve specific problems.

Another way to work with the University of Bath is through research partnerships or by applying for funding schemes to support industry-university collaboration. A selection of the available funding schemes is listed in the next section of this guide.

The University is committed to excellence in research, with a focus on real-world impact and a true spirit of interdisciplinary collaboration.

Research & Innovation Services

The Research & Innovation Services (RIS) at the University of Bath provide a series of professional services to help companies innovate to gain a competitive advantage.

In parallel to this, RIS helps researchers at the University of Bath develop proposals, run projects, and disseminate their findings.

University of Bath Innovation Centre

The University of Bath Innovation Centre provides a unique environment that combines work space, business support, and inspiration for high-growth companies and the entrepreneurs that create them.

The Innovation Centre has established a thriving entrepreneurial network which reaches out from the City of Bath across the UK and beyond into the principal centres of innovation around the world.

If you want to be part of the University of Bath Innovation Centre you can become a member, join networks, or develop your business skills through the Bath Entrepreneurship Programmes.
Funding schemes for Industry-University Collaboration

Knowledge Transfer Partnerships

The Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) scheme is a UK-wide programme that helps businesses to access knowledge, skills, and technology from UK Universities.

Aimed at helping businesses to grow and innovate, a KTP is a three-way project partnership between a business, a university, and a graduate. KTP projects can last from one to three years depending on the specific business needs.

By taking part in a KTP, businesses can gain access to up-to-date research-based expertise they don’t have in-house. The scheme is part-funded by the government. SMEs taking part in a KTP are expected to cover a third of the partnership’s costs (approx. £20k per annum), whereas large companies are expected to contribute up to half of the costs (approx. £30k per annum).

Did you know?

> An SME can claim up to 230% of its R&D costs against tax.

> Businesses will achieve an average increase in annual profit of more than £240K after taking part in a KTP and create two new jobs.

> There are grant schemes that offer funding to SMEs to engage in R&D projects in the strategically important areas of science, engineering, and technology.

> University research equipment can be accessed by businesses.
Innovation Vouchers

Innovation Vouchers are a UK government scheme that provides up to £5,000 to help small or medium-sized businesses access external expertise. This can be used to receive advice on how to develop new products or services, how to use a new design within a business, or how to make the most of intellectual property rights. Innovation vouchers can also be used to gain access to specialist equipment or facilities.

Industrial Cooperative Awards in Science & Technology

Industrial Cooperative Awards in Science & Technology (CASE) are doctoral student grants which give businesses and public sector organisations the opportunity to have a highly capable PhD student undertake research relevant to their organisation’s priorities and objectives. CASE grants are awarded within the context of a research collaboration between a university and business or public sector organisation. In order for an organisation to qualify for a CASE grant, a PhD student must spend between three and eighteen months in total on-site at the organisation.

Industry Fellowships - The Royal Society

This scheme is for scientists in industry who want to work on a collaborative project with an academic organisation and for academic scientists who want to work on a collaborative project with industry. It aims to increase knowledge exchange in science and technology between industry and academia in the UK. The scheme provides a basic salary for the researcher and a contribution towards research costs.

The scheme is currently funded by the Royal Society, the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council, and Rolls-Royce plc.
The European Union (EU)

The EU offers a range of funding schemes, including the Horizon 2020 and COSME programmes:

Horizon 2020 is an EU funding programme for research and innovation running from 2014 to 2020 with nearly €80 billion of funding available for projects that:

• involve ground breaking research or new technologies
• improve research training and development, or research infrastructure
• create growth in sectors like advanced manufacturing, materials, biotechnology, information and communication technology, nanotechnology, and space
• increase private investment in research
• respond to challenges like climate change, food security or healthcare for an ageing population

SMEs can also get help from a coach or mentor, for example to improve management skills, create a marketing strategy or raise finance.

COSME is the EU programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises running from 2014 - 2020 with a budget of €2.3 billion. The European Commission aims to promote entrepreneurship and improve the business environment for SMEs to allow them to realise their full potential in today’s global economy. COSME aims to make it easier for SMEs to access finance in all phases of their lifecycle – creation, expansion, or business transfer.

Proximity to Discovery Industry Engagement Fund – Medical Research Council

This fund can be used to support activities that promote the value of academic-industrial partnerships, and improve academic and industry researchers’ understanding of each other’s needs and capabilities. This can be through staff exchanges, creation of technology demonstrators, showcase events, commercialisation workshops, and ‘entrepreneurs in residence’ schemes.
The University of Bath is one of the UK’s leading research intensive universities with an international reputation for academic excellence.

Contact us

If you would like further information or to discuss how your organisation might work with the University please contact us.

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