Welcome to the first edition of “Knowledge Transfer @ Bath”, the newsletter with the latest developments on the Knowledge Transfer Account.

Knowledge Transfer is how we, as researchers, can collaborate with external organisations so that our research can contribute to society and the economy. At the University of Bath, we have been successfully engaged in these activities for many years and our Knowledge Transfer Account, funded by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC), provides us with support to further enhance and stimulate our collaborative working.

The Knowledge Transfer Account (KTA) aims to:

- Embed a Knowledge Transfer culture through the KT Forum and KT Champions
- Increase the volume of EPSRC funded research being taken up by external organisations through funding collaborative activities
- Celebrate the impact of EPSRC funded research through showcasing events and case studies.

The EPSRC awarded £3.4m for Bath’s Knowledge Transfer Account. We are only one of twelve universities who have secured KTA funding, and we are also a partner in the University of Cambridge’s KTA. We have committed £1.4m of funding since 1st October 2009 and are keen to commit more over the next 12 months (see page 2 for more information).

Knowledge Transfer is more than commercialisation and KTPs. It is about how we exchange our knowledge and expertise with external organisations for our mutual benefit. The goal is to maximise collaborations with external partners and build up ongoing relationships.

If you would like to know more, please contact in the first instance, Dr. Denise Cooke, Project Manager for the Knowledge Transfer Account (d.cooke@bath.ac.uk) or Dr Jon Hunt, Project Director for the Knowledge Transfer Account (j.hunt@bath.ac.uk)
Impact Assessment Group

The KTA in its first year has been very successful with 20 projects going live through a healthy combination of its funding mechanisms and with £1.4m of available funding committed.

Year 2 funding budgets will be open in October 2010 for Expressions of Interest for Proof of Concept, Partnership Development Awards (PDAs), Knowledge Transfer Fellowships along with funding through the KT Champions. EPSRC has further awarded the University £123k Knowledge Transfer funds to use in developing greater Knowledge Transfer activity, so now is an excellent time to think about developing your collaborations with external organisations and accessing KTA.

KTA Funding Mechanisms

Funding is available for:
- Partnership Development Awards - Match funding investment from external organisations, e.g. collaborative development projects (the D of R&D or co-developing specific training materials)
- Knowledge Transfer Fellowships - Secondments into, or from, external organisations
- Proof of Concept - Market research or feasibility testing towards prototype technology or new ways of doing KT
- Knowledge Transfer Mentors - Mentors from industry, trade bodies or policy making organisations
- KT Champions - funding available for secondments, events, visits to trade shows or external organisations, through your Departmental KT Champion

A Word of Support from EPSRC

Over the last 15 years EPSRC has sponsored more than £160 million of research and associated postgraduate training at the University of Bath. As well as its obvious intrinsic value, this body of knowledge has potential to be a rich source of positive impacts for the UK’s economy and society.

Bath’s EPSRC Knowledge Transfer Account will unlock this potential. By making the outputs of the portfolio of projects funded so far more visible, accessible and valuable to users, researchers and Knowledge Transfer staff at Bath will be realising tangible benefits to the UK.

While every part of public spending is being examined as never before, these benefits will help to make the case for continued funding of research. We believe that the rationale for sustained EPSRC investment in research is sound and we are delighted to be able to help Bath to demonstrate this.

Alex Hulkes
EPSRC Knowledge Transfer Accounts Manager

The World of KTA Projects

There are myriad of different projects funded by KTA and its collaborative external partners:
- Developing diagnostic techniques for Alzheimer’s with the Royal United Hospital, Bath
- Improving fuel economy measurement with Ford Motor Company
- Developing anti-microbial coatings for medical applications
- Delivering low carbon buildings with BRE
- Encouraging teachers to use mobile sensors in science education
- Improving the forecasting of storms with the Met Office
- Providing knowledge from data with Babcock International
- Exploring if DC networks can deliver energy savings with HWE Ipswich
- Developing electricity charging software for Western Power Distribution
- Developing laser technology to create a spin-out company
- Developing smart systems for rehabilitation and assisted living with the Bath Institute for Medical Engineering and the Brain Injury Rehabilitation Trust
- Developing new catalysts for the production of bio-based and degradable plastics with Johnson Matthey and Purac
- Improving the Forecasting of Storms
- Developing laser technology to create a spin-out company
- Developing smart systems for rehabilitation and assisted living with the Bath Institute for Medical Engineering and the Brain Injury Rehabilitation Trust
- Developing new catalysts for the production of bio-based and degradable plastics with Johnson Matthey and Purac

For a better idea of the types of projects which the KTA has engaged in, go to the KTA website at www.bath.ac.uk/kta.

Local power could mean cheaper bills - Bath Energy Charging Software

Dept of Electrical Engineering and Energy Distribution Network Operators

A KTA Partnership Development award for 1 year is looking at progressing the commercial viability of University of Bath developed Long Run Incremental Charge (LRIC) network charging software for use by national energy distribution network operators such as Western Power Distribution (WPD). This charging system has been developed by Dr Furong Li.

This project could have economic impact by enabling distribution companies to move to a more economic network charging system that offers fair prices, encouraging more energy generation from local renewable energy sources and helping distribution companies to comply with their licence obligations in a more timely fashion.

Users of energy supplies generated nearby could pay less than those living further away. This would help establish greater incentives for energy produced locally through renewable sources. It would help attract investment in local supply networks and encourage them to operate cost-effectively.

“Our long-term vision is to provide ready-to-adopt solutions for a range of supply industries,” says Dr Li. “It will help with delivering a low carbon economy and give better value for money.”

Improving the Forecasting of Storms

Dept of Mathematical Science and The Met Office

Currently small scale intense storms are difficult to predict accurately. The global community would benefit from more accurate localised weather forecasts with greater flexibility and faster response to extreme events which could lead to flooding, transport disruption, power disruption and financial implications.

This KTA Fellowship project for five months at the Met Office looks to oversee the transfer and embedding of adaptive mesh based technology into the Met Office’s Weather Prediction software. The two KT Fellows, Emily Walsh and Prof. Budd, will work with the Met Office to integrate this code which was developed during Emily’s PhD.

It is anticipated that this adaptive numerical software code would enable the Met Office to more accurately predict localised storm and severe weather events. This would enhance the potential ability of the Met Office to forecast small scale local weather events improving predictions of time, location and strength of storms.
The KTA is introducing a new initiative to embed Knowledge Transfer within the University – Knowledge Transfer Champions

Departmental Knowledge Transfer Champions will be responsible for enthusing colleagues to engage in Knowledge Transfer and will have access to KTA funding, £140k over two years. Although the money is from EPSRC, this funding is made available across the University to embed a University-wide collaborative culture. Plans are already underway in some departments to run pan-University activities to stimulate collaborative activities with employers.

This funding can be used for secondments, visits to external organisations, workshops and to hold events, to encourage and stimulate new collaborations with external organisations such as companies, third sector organisations, hospitals, etc.

The KT Champions are:-

Tim Mays
Chemical Engineering
Pete Walker
Architecture & Civil Engineering
Andrew Plummer
Mechanical Engineering
Cathryn Mitchell
Electronic & Electrical Engineering
Chris Feast
Chemistry
Rachid Hourizi
Computer Science
David Hough
Biological & Biochemistry
Rob Price
Pharmacy & Pharmacology
Jon Dawes
Mathematics
William Wadsworth
Physics
Danae Stanton-Fraser
Psychology
Afrodi Stathi
Health
Peter Crossley
SBS
Alan Reid
Education
John Sessions
Economics
Sue Millner
ESRC
Jeroen Huisman
School of Management

The Knowledge Champions will be awarded the position by the Vice Chancellor at the 2010 KTA@Bath Showcasing Event in October.

KTA Influencing Council on Knowledge Transfer

The KTA aims to embed KT at all levels of the University and in response to this aim, has been reporting to the Vice Chancellor’s Group and Council. At the most recent Council meeting, members were impressed by the University’s commitment to engage with external organisations.

KTA Project Manager joins University Research Committee Sub-Group on Impact

In response to the increasing emphasis on knowledge transfer within the University, the KTA Project Manager was recently asked to join the University Research Committee Sub-Group on Impact, in order to be able to reflect the current activity, experience and best practice within the KTA into the wider university strategy.

The University Research Committee has created a sub-group to look at the topic of impact at the University of Bath. The group’s aims include: developing mechanisms for sharing good practice to enhance research impact; monitoring the role of impact in the forthcoming REF; and looking at how we disseminate information about our research impact beyond the University. The group is chaired by Jane Millar and draws its membership from across the University with representatives from each of the Faculties and Schools as well as RDSO, Bath Ventures and Corporate Communications.

In its first 6 months the group has viewed impact in the broader sense and has looked at topics including the RCUK Pathways to Impact statements, the HEPCE impact pilot exercise and tools that can be used to record impact during the research process. A key future focus for the group is disseminating information about the impact agenda effectively across the University; are planned a series of activities, the first of which is a website to bring together information about impact, to be released shortly.

Enthuse and Engage in Knowledge Transfer

The KTA Project Manager presented the University of Bath’s KTA project at Auril’s Enthuse and Engage Event on 8th July 2010. The purpose of the workshop was to review best practice and experience in engaging and enthusing academic staff in knowledge transfer.

Methods included fellowships, grants for KT projects, secondments, skill development and rewards, all of which are being supported at Bath through the KTA.

Secondments were found by many universities to be a great way of gaining insight into end-user needs and of building sustainable relationships. Academics’ experiences were very positive with follow-on funding secured in many cases for R&D and consultancy. The KTA is keen to fund secondments through KT Fellowships and also through its KT Champion fund.

New Look KTA Website launched in October 2010

The new look KTA website now has information on the projects we have funded and the stories of how people have got involved in KT and the benefits they’ve received. Check it out at www.bath.ac.uk/kta

You can find more information about Knowledge Transfer and external relationships from the new look KT website (www.bath.ac.uk/kta) and also on the University’s Research and Development Office (RDSO) website (www.rds.o.bath.ac.uk). The website is available for anyone to access: no passwords or logins required.

Getting Funding for Collaborative Activities

Part of the KTA is looking to affect the culture of the University of Bath to consider Knowledge Transfer as “collaborative activities” which are part of the job for most academic staff in delivering Research and Teaching. One reason to do this is that EPSRC will not be funding dedicated collaborative activities in the future, e.g. no more KTAs or Follow-on Funding. EPSRC have reassured us that collaborative activities will be funded via the Pathways to Impact as part of normal applications to them, so start asking for funds now! To prepare for what collaborative activities you could do and what funds to ask for, please engage with us now, liaise with your KT Champions and be part of the Pathways to Impact workshops run by RDSO (dates to be released soon).

Dr Jon Hunt
Celebrating Collaboration

Mobile science education adoption through knowledge transfer

“...you want to have industrial partners.

Last word

In a sense we're...