

GROWING IMPACT THROUGH CONSULTANCY - IS CONSULTANCY A PRIORITY IN YOUR INSTITUTION?

With the push for greater impact from the research base and more academic-industry partnerships, will consultancy finally come out of the shadows and become fully appreciated for its role in enabling collaboration and impact?

There has always seemed to be a misconception that consultancy is against academic principles, with the notion of fully valuing your expertise and charge for this know-how at a commercial rate is wrong. However the reality is opposite, consultancy enhances academic life, creates new challenges and collaborations which enable future investment and create impact.

This can be achieved through developing new relationships with end-users; this helps to reframe issues and look at research questions in a different light. Taking an end-user centric view can influence how fundamental research can be planned and in turn opens new doors and funding opportunities. The types of activity can range from developing new policies for governments, optimising technologies for not for profit organisations, all the way through to straight commercial technical problem solving. All of these activities have the ability to demonstrate social as well as economic impact for the academics and their universities.

As the amount of academic consultancy grows, there are different models that have been developed by universities to realise all the benefits from undertaking this activity. As well as traditionally getting paid for consultancy, researchers often waive their fees to allow these funds to be reinvested into fundamental research. In some cases, universities are now fully recognising this activity and including this as part of their promotion criteria as well as fundamental research. A true win-win situation.

Whatever the future for academic consultancy, there is market demand for expertise in a knowledge based economy. The development of [Konfer](#) and other expertise based directories will only increase this demand. Universities need to consider their consultancy models in terms of how they motivate and reward their staff to enable them to maximise the opportunities which can enable growth in research collaborations.

If you would like to explore these ideas more, the PraxisAuril [Consultancy course](#) in January 2018 has been designed with these considerations in mind. Additional support can be found in the [Practical Guides](#).



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