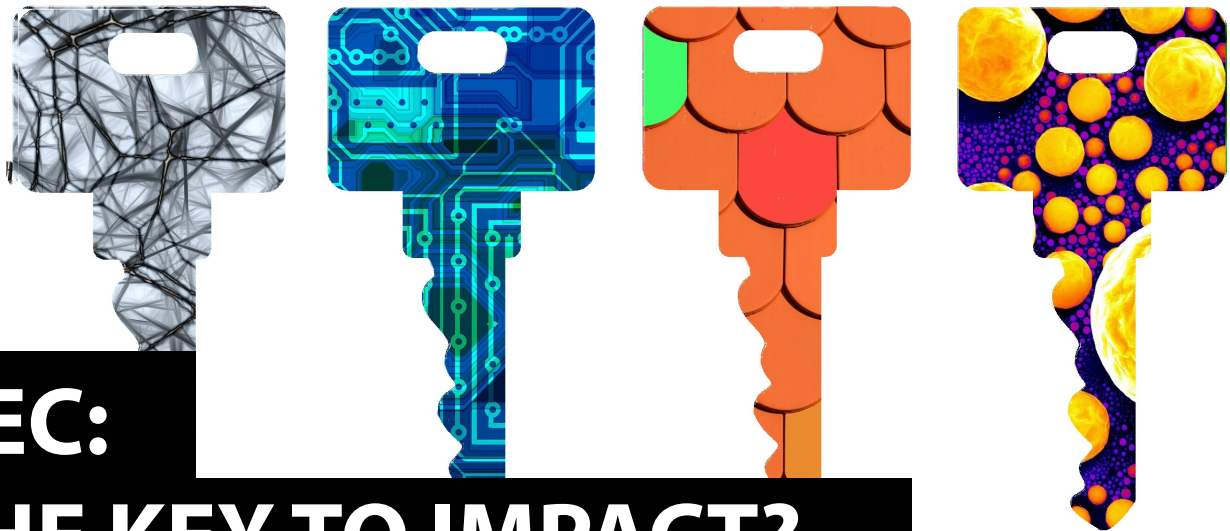


# KEC matters

The magazine of PraxisUnico



**KEC:  
THE KEY TO IMPACT?**



**Inside this issue:**

**PraxisUnico.**  
Impact through innovation

- KE Framework
- Thought Leading in Brazil
- The Research & Enterprise Director's Forum
- Developing Strategic Partnerships — the Importance of the Rear View Mirror
- KEC: The State of the Profession in HE
- How the IP System is Supporting Technology and Innovation Businesses
- How Oxford Vacmedix Overcame a Challenging Road to Market
- KEC Effect: Centre for Eco-Innovation (Lancaster Impact Award)

**NEW  
COURSE**

# Knowledge Exchange in the Social Sciences, Arts & Humanities

While the principles of knowledge exchange are the same as other KE/TT sectors, the emphasis, application and role of the SSAH KE professional in orchestrating the activity are distinctly different from that of e.g. a STEM professional. This course focuses exclusively on examples and activities from the SSAH field.

**Dec 1–2  
London, UK**

## The two-day course will cover:

- The different types of 'intellectual assets' possessed by researchers in SSAH
- The drivers for knowledge exchange in the sector
- The nature of the third party relationships that help facilitate exchange & impact
- How value is captured and ways of measuring success
- Best practice in structuring, incentivising and resourcing the activity
- As well as examining examples of success

**BOOK YOUR PLACE ONLINE AT [WWW.PRAXISUNICO.ORG.UK](http://WWW.PRAXISUNICO.ORG.UK)**

# FROM THE EDITOR

The second edition of KEC matters comes to you in a post EU referendum landscape with new Government ministers, a reshuffle that splits departmental responsibilities for universities, a Higher Education Bill being debated in Parliament, and the House of Commons Science & Technology Select Committee currently considering written evidence for their Inquiry into 'Management of IP and technology transfer'. This coincides with HEFCE's own 'deep dive' into technology transfer undertaken by a group of experts led by Professor Trevor McMillan, Vice-Chancellor of Keele University.

The McMillan Group's report was released at the start of September and provides answers for many of the Select Committee's questions. Particularly

pleasing for tech transfer professionals is that the review found the UK to be operating at global standards. We should, it said, worry less about comparing ourselves with others and do more to pursue our "distinctive innovative approaches". On the flip-side, although tech transfer offices provide essential services the nature of the work means that the "odds are stacked against technology transfer staff being popular" – sometimes it is to say 'no' to a proposal rather than taking an uncertain proposition to market. This is partly why a strong professional community is so important and PraxisUnico is working hard to deliver that for practitioners at all levels. One of the best ways to meet professional colleagues is, of course, to come to our annual conference; reports from which are now available

on our website. Professor McMillan's was one of our keynote speakers this year, as reported in our Policy Piece (p.4).

PraxisUnico will be responding to the Science & Technology Inquiry on behalf of our members and the submissions from around the sector will make for interesting reading. Meanwhile, the day job continues regardless and on pages 10-13 we look in more detail at the kinds of organisational structures used for KEC across the UK, and explore sector data from our membership survey.

Finally, there are the regular KEC success stories that we are keen to promote on your behalf: it's good to focus on the positive, and as McMillan has asserted, there is a lot to be positive about in KEC.

- Purpose:
  - efficiency/effectiveness in use of public funding
  - continuous improvement in university practice
- Two main workstreams:
  - Benchmarking – IP Pragmatics report
  - Good practices – Research Consulting



## 4 KE FRAMEWORK

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# THE POLICY PIECE



## KE FRAMEWORK

**Professor Trevor McMillan opened this year's PraxisUnico conference with a keynote on HEFCE's KE Framework project. This multi-strand initiative was launched in 2015 in response to the 2014 Science and Innovation Strategy and reinforced by the subsequent Productivity Plan and HE White Paper.**

The KE Framework is built on the premise of guiding 'continuous improvement', reflecting the excellent work that the sector clearly does. It has two work streams: benchmarking (how do we know what is good?) and best practice (what is out there that exemplifies best practice?). Additionally, Professor McMillan has convened a group (The McMillan Group) to take a 'deep dive' into specific aspects of the KE process; the first of these dives concerns IP commercialisation and particularly spin-outs. One of the main challenges with discussions around KE is the high profile given to issues around commercialising IP, such as issues around equity share raised by mainstream press and focused on by Ministers. Even though

this activity is small in terms of overall KE income, one only needs to look at the underlying issues of BIS's recent National Innovation Plan consultation to see the importance attached to the activity by government. The usefulness of HEFCE's work is to get the sector's voice heard in what has become a negative debate, to counter criticism with evidence and explanation.

One tactic to address these issues has been to look to other mature markets – namely the US – to determine what strategies underpin activity there. What is the good practice that can be shared? The problem with looking to the US is that even the leaders of MIT and Stanford recognize that those systems stand out within their own country system. Stanford's Kathy Ku visited the UK recently and underlined the importance of looking at the ecosystem within which as university sits, not simply how the individual institution runs activities[iii]. However, comparing the US and UK systems – as two world leaders in KEC – is tempting. However, when the data is analysed more closely, the story is much more positive: the UK receives

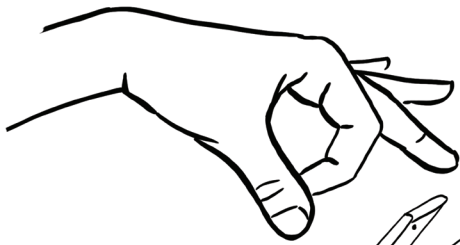
proportionally more research income from industry than the US, and is just as efficient as the US in terms of creating spin-outs[iv].

These points underline the need to increase communication of the range of drivers and motivations that the various players bring to KEC from both inside universities and outside. The messages that the government hears need to be more unified, but the messages that HEFCE's work is bringing out should not be unexpected or surprising to the KEC community.

Professor McMillan and colleagues are giving us plenty of food for thought. PraxisUnico, AURIL and ARMA members debated some of these issues at our joint Directors' Forum in April (see page 7), and we will continue to work together and with HEFCE to develop outputs from the work streams and present conclusions to our stakeholders in government and beyond.

**Read more online at [praxisunico.org.uk](http://praxisunico.org.uk).**

# THE NEW KE FRAMEWORK



## RESEARCH

*disconnect between  
policy and practice*

## IMPACT

what are  
WE MEASURING,  
and AGAINST  
what?

BE MORE  
proactive

ENGAGE IN  
Conversation  
WITH BUSINESSES

WE INVOLVE  
THE COMMUNITY

explain ourself  
TO GOVERNMENT

INCREASE  
Convergence

NURTURE  
talent

RISK  
MANAGEMENT  
not avoidance

HOW DO WE  
show  
PROGRESS?



## THOUGHT LEADING IN BRAZIL

**PraxisUnico International Director, Nessa Carey speaks on her 9 day visit to Brazil in which she was invited to speak at FORTEC's Annual Meeting.**

// Tall and wan, Not young but lucky, The geek in Ipanema goes walking and as she passes, each one she passes goes “Are you really walking along Ipanema beach fully dressed and wearing shoes?” To which of course, the answer was yes. That was the start of a recent 9 day visit to Brazil for PraxisUnico’s International Director, Nessa Carey. Nessa was invited to visit by FORTEC, the Brazilian network with which PraxisUnico has a long and cordial relationship. Nessa was a keynote speaker at FORTEC’s Annual Meeting, held in Coimbra, where she presented on the complexities and importance of measuring impact. The UK is seen as a real thought leader on this topic and it generated a lot of interest. Our Brazilian colleagues are keen to avoid creating perverse incentives by imposition

of inappropriate metrics of success, and the UK’s experience is proving really helpful. Nessa also spoke on the importance of accreditation in our profession. One of the other speakers was Mary Albertson from Stanford, the President Elect of AUTM, and this created opportunities to discuss how professionalization is perceived in the UK and the US. In addition to the conference presentation, Nessa also ran training seminars in Rio de Janeiro and in Porto Allegre.

The sheer scale of Brazil is jaw-dropping. The trips between different cities all involved two flights of at least two hours each, and the cities vary enormously. It’s a complicated environment for KEC professionals, as the size means that there are multiple layers of government – local, regional and national – whose agendas may not be entirely aligned. Nessa’s visit coincided with the presidential impeachment proceedings and the announcement that the science ministry would merge with the telecoms ministry.

Although conference delegates raised some concerns, they also expressed the opinion that there are an awful lot of ministries in Brazil and that this isn’t economically rational.

There were interesting parallels between some situations – actual or potential – in the UK and Brazil. Influencing policy in Brazil can be very complex because of regulations around lobbying, and this may act as a barrier to informing politicians of the effects of initiatives. There has also been a dilemma in the allocation of research funding, as industrial and academic governmental R&D support comes from the same “pot”, resulting in competition by the two sectors.

Three of our FORTEC colleagues – Shirley Coutinho, Marli Elizabeth R dos Santos and Pascale Chaise de Veiga joined us at PraxisUnico’s annual conference in Stratford-Upon-Avon this year. They shared knowledge of the Brazilian landscape and opportunities, and how the UK had helped inspire them.



## THE RESEARCH & ENTERPRISE DIRECTORS' FORUM

**ARMA, AURIL and PraxisUnico came together for the first combined Research & Enterprise Directors' Forum in April 2016, with members of all three organisations sharing views from across the sector. Key themes which emerged included:**

- The UK has an enviable track record and a trend of success in commercialisation outputs: the NCUB collaboration monitor, Global Innovation Index and HEBCI data evidences the scope of activity undertaken. Industry interactions are increasing in value and volume.
- Continuous improvement is ongoing – but benchmarking needs improving. We heard how the KE Framework will support this.
- Knowledge Exchange is under constant scrutiny from Government: there is a role for university leaders to take in leading this agenda. University voices need to be heard, particularly around how activity is resourced and run.
- While there is continuity in Government views of Science and Innovation, the turnover of staff means that there is often little understanding of the mechanics and inter-dependencies of the workings of the sector. We heard how this can create a risk of unintended consequences, but there is an overwhelming positivity and willingness from the sector to work together to support effective knowledge exchange practice.
- Academic motivation is a key challenge... but not impossible. There needs to be a strategic alignment of the internal organisation and leadership engagement to increase willingness and ability of academics to collaborate. The main constraint on engagement is lack of time – not IP/culture.
- Organisational emphasis needs to be on the collective portfolio, not individual transactions. A good knowledge exchange and commercialisation professional will manage risk, not avoid it.

The event was well attended, with positive feedback from delegates. Over the course of two days, speakers included Dame Julia Goodfellow, President, Universities UK and Vice-Chancellor, University of Kent; Rosa Fernandez, Director of Research, National Centre for Universities and Business; David Cairncross, Senior Policy Adviser, Confederation of British Industry; and Alice Frost, Head of Knowledge Exchange policy, HEFCE, among others.

# KEC CAREER PROFILE



## Rhian North

Technology Transfer Project Officer, Cardiff University's Research and Innovation Services

Rhian has been working in technology transfer for 2 years, joining Cardiff University as a TTPO in August 2014 and previously working indirectly in the field with an SME.

**“A large part of my role involves ‘mining’ for opportunities.”**

### How did you get into technology transfer?

I gained an undergraduate Biomedical Sciences degree with Cardiff University, followed on with a Masters in Biomedical Sciences, specialising in Immunohaematology, at Cardiff Metropolitan University. Before graduating from my Masters degree I started to work for a local SME who were looking into the commercialisation of research outcomes of their Research Director, based at Cardiff University..

### How has your career progressed from that point to where you are today?

As a Research Assistant at a local SME, I helped out with their patent portfolio – carrying out due diligence, performing patent searches and looking into collaboration and commercialisation opportunities. When the opportunity arose to join the Technology Transfer team at Cardiff University I jumped at the chance. Since working at Cardiff University I have built upon these skills and my previous role in industry has been advantageous.

### What training have you had which has been particularly useful?

The majority of my training has been on the job, and I have been lucky enough to attend both internal and external training courses with patent and Technology Transfer professionals. The Fundamentals of Technology Transfer course offered by PraxisUnico allowed me to consolidate my knowledge learned during the first eight months in the role and provided me with plenty of training material for any future problems I may encounter. As no two projects are the same I'm sure many more training courses will follow!

### What does your day-to-day role involve?

Quite a large part of my role involves ‘mining’ for opportunities which involves going out to different schools and speaking to researchers about their work and assessing whether there is potential for a commercial outcome. In order to assess their work I have to carry out due diligence and often arrange meetings with patent professionals to discuss specific projects to determine if there is potential for IP protection. I interact with the University's legal team in order to put together collaboration agreements, NDA's and MTA's for researchers wishing to work with external institutions and companies. I also help researcher's complete translational funding applications, providing them with a supporting statement.

### Which achievements would you describe as career highlights?

I recently worked on a collaborative project with another university and a Welsh government run registered charity. During this project, we all had to work together to understand the underlying background issues associated with the project, in order to gain IP protection. Working on this project gave me great experience in seeing how different institutions interact with one another and allowed me to make contacts which I have gone on to re-use for later projects.

### What do you enjoy most about your role?

I enjoy seeing how each project progresses from an initial idea, to gaining proof of concept data, protection of the technology and through to commercialisation.

PraxisUnico is the UK's leading professional association for research commercialisation practitioners. For further information about careers in technology transfer and knowledge exchange visit [www.praxisunico.org.uk](http://www.praxisunico.org.uk)



# LET'S TALK TRAINING



## DEVELOPING STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS THE IMPORTANCE OF THE REAR VIEW MIRROR

**B**uilding strategic partnerships is high on the agenda of many organisations across a variety of sectors, but how do you go about developing these deep, long-term, mutually beneficial interactions? Phil Elstob, course director of Developing Strategic Partnerships, reports back from the course.

Over a day and a half in Peterborough in mid-May we guided a group of delegates through the jungle of establishing strategic partnerships, with an experienced group of guides enthusiastically sharing their stories, best practices and tools to deliver long-lasting partnerships.

Whilst a number of sessions were led by senior knowledge exchange and commercialisation (KEC) practitioners, including an informal Q&A discussion, not all of our guides were from a KEC background. There was an interactive video interview with two academics where we heard first-hand the real value academics place on the role of the KEC

manager, and the importance of building trust with your academic. They also flagged in the nicest possible way to “avoid those super-dumb comments that can compromise a relationship” and to “get out of the way of the academic”. . . .we’ve all been there!

The highlight of the course for me was the ‘Question Time’ panel with a group of strategic partners from IBM, GSK and Jaguar Land Rover. Expertly chaired by our own ‘Dimbleby’, delegates received candid responses to a series of questions that provided a real industry insight into developing and maintaining strategic partnerships, and how to get it right from their perspective.

Longer-term strategic partnerships are about so much more than just research projects (even research projects that cross faculties), they often encompass teaching, professional development, graduate recruitment, alumni and wider public engagement. Steve Legg from IBM said we should take

a “rear view mirror” approach to developing alliances, take a look at what you’re already doing with a partner (often those smaller interactions) and use these as the foundations for something bigger and better.

The key messages from the course were ones that we often hear in our industry; that it’s all about people, trust, communication, setting expectations and delivering. But these are so much more important if you’re seeking to maintain a healthy and productive partnership over 5-10 years.

Applying some fresh new approaches to training delivery, the course was a bit of an experiment for PraxisUnico, but it was a success as summed up by one of our delegates: “I found the course to be a very valuable learning experience, and the interactivity throughout the sessions to be enjoyable and engaging”.

# KEC IN THE UK: STRUCTURES FOR SUCCESS

In the UK, publicly funded research takes place within Public Sector Research Establishments such as The National Physical Laboratory and within Higher Education Institutions. In this issue we look at the profile of KEC functions within the University sector.

There are distinct segments within UK universities. The 6 universities at the top of the Russell Group are quite different, being larger operations – these include the Universities of Cambridge, Oxford, Manchester, Edinburgh, UCL and Imperial College London, and are much more likely to have a dedicated commercialisation arm (e.g. Cambridge Enterprise, Imperial Innovations, etc.).

The other 18 Russell Group universities are research intensive, but more likely to have a combined Research & Enterprise function. Universities which were established post 1992 are unlikely to have a commercialisation arm, but this is not to say that knowledge exchange is not an important and successful part of their remit, as the research impact ratings in the REF demonstrate. For instance,

Bournemouth University, which we look at in this issue, had 70% of its research impact deemed to be “outstanding (4\*) or very considerable (3\*)” in the recent REF results. Universities pre-1992 are a heterogeneous group of 45 universities established prior to the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 but which are not part of the Russell Group. In addition there are 19 Higher Education Institutions which are smaller than non-specialist HEIs and include institutions such as the Royal College of Art.

We take a look at how award-winning universities from different segments, recognised for their KEC success, structure their activity. This diverse, vibrant landscape caters for varying needs of industry and society, while allowing institutions to best enable and support interactions between business and communities, appropriate to their expertise, heritage and size. KEC success and contribution to the UK takes many forms, and is an asset we can be proud of.



## BIRMINGHAM UNIVERSITY



- **University research income: £126m (2014/2015)**
- **Number of academics: 3216**
- **Number of Knowledge Exchange & Commercialisation (KEC) staff: 35**
- **Location and KEC structure within institution: The University’s technology transfer company, Alta Innovations and the Research & Innovation Services and Business Engagement Teams are based at Birmingham Research Park, on the edge of the main University of Birmingham campus in Edgbaston.**  
**The University has a dedicated commercialisation function, Cambridge Enterprise, with other staff embedded within departments of the university.**
- **% of research rated world-leading or internationally excellent: 81% (87% of our research has global impact REF 2014)**

The University of Birmingham, as a research-intensive university, has a committed Research and Knowledge Transfer Strategy and a strong track record in successfully commercialising research innovation. We are currently 5th of all universities in the UK for successfully identifying and protecting inventions with a steady pipeline of new opportunities. Our vibrant portfolio includes 365 active patents and 35 spinout companies valued at over £200m, and we recently announced a new £5 million co-investment fund to support the growth of the portfolio. The University of Birmingham contributes more than £1 billion to the West Midlands economy. <http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/generic/alta-innovations/index.aspx>

## UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER



- **University research income: £345m**
- **Number of academics: 6,490 (including 2,440 teaching-only staff and 2,080 researchers)**
- **Number of KEC staff: Approximately 50**
- **Location and structure of KEC within institution: The University has a dedicated central function to support KE, as well as a commercialisation function, UMI3, to support licensing, spin-out and enterprise.**
- **% of research rated world-leading or internationally excellent: 83%**

The University of Manchester is one of the leading research institutions, with a strong history of KE and intellectual property commercialisation, generating more than 100 spin-out companies and collaborating on more than 250 KTPs. Whilst embarking on one of the largest capital programmes in UK higher education, through a £1b campus investment, the university is addressing some of the world's biggest challenges, including global inequalities, cancer, advanced materials, energy and industrial biotechnology. To find out more, or to get in touch, please visit <http://www.manchester.ac.uk/collaborate>.

## UNIVERSITY OF EAST ANGLIA (UEA)



- **University research income: £31m**
- **Number of academics: 480**
- **Number of KEC staff: 23**
- **Location and structure of KEC staff: We are based within the Research and Enterprise Division alongside Research, Careers and Post Graduate Research Services.**
- **% of research rated world-leading or internationally excellent: 82%**

Since 1963, UEA has pioneered an innovative, interdisciplinary approach to research and teaching, and was the first institution to establish the formal study of creative writing and environmental sciences. Ranked in the top 1% of the world's universities, UEA's world-leading research influences global policy in all areas, from climate change to social work, making a genuine economic and social impact. Based on the Norwich Research Park and home to the iconic Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, UEA plays a pivotal role in the economic and cultural life of the region. The University makes a contribution of over £500 million to Norfolk and Suffolk and supports over 8,000 full-time jobs in the region. **To find out how we can work together visit [www.uea.ac.uk/business](http://www.uea.ac.uk/business).**

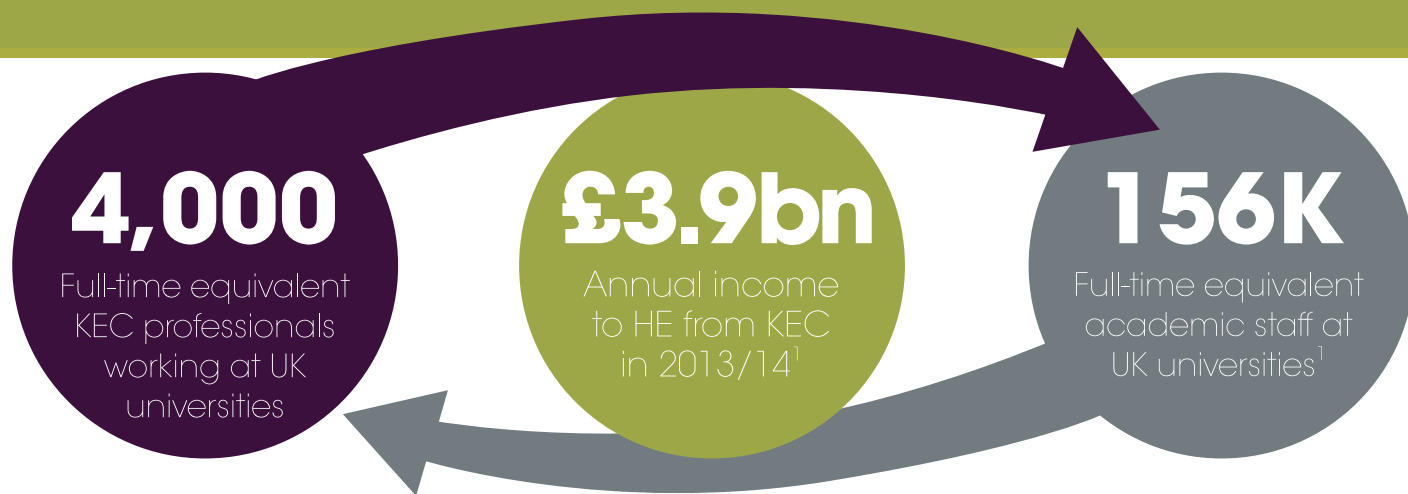
## COVENTRY UNIVERSITY



- **University research income: £10m**
- **Number of academics: 3063**
- **Number of Knowledge Exchange & Commercialisation staff: 30**
- **Location & KEC structure of the organisation: Coventry University's Knowledge and Commercialisation teams are based within the Enterprise & Innovation Group at Coventry University Technology Park.**
- **% of research rated world leading or internationally excellent: 61% of our research was rated as 4\* or 3\* in REF 2014 (compared with 27% in RAE 2008) this is a significant increase. 92% of our research was rated as 4\*, 3\* or 2\* in REF 2014 (compared with 62% in RAE 2008).**

Coventry University's Enterprise & Innovation Directorate (E&I) is responsible for driving forward knowledge exchange and commercialisation activities across the range of sectors covered by the university's twelve research centres. E&I have KEC professionals working to exploit commercial ideas and support businesses of all sizes through the formation of spin-out companies, establishing knowledge exchange projects, developing long term strategic initiatives and managing international collaborations. It is this pioneering spirit and innovative approach to working with business which has recently seen the University awarded the title of 'University of the Year' by the Times Higher Education magazine. The University has also been awarded the 'Modern University of the Year' accolade by the Times and Sunday Times' "Good University Guide" for three successive years.

# KEC IN FIGURES



## KEC: The State of the Profession in UK Higher Education

**The focus on taking research knowledge into commercial products and services, policy and social interventions is intense. PraxisUnico has represented professionals working at the interface between researchers and external organisations for almost 15 years. During that time we have seen the work of such intermediaries become increasingly recognised and respected.**

In order to improve understanding of the current state of the KEC profession in UK higher education, PraxisUnico undertook a national survey of KEC practitioners and institutions in late 2015. The consultation obtained the views of 37 UK Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), representing 54% of the total research income to UK universities, and 232 individuals working in 76 UK HEIs.

As the first comprehensive survey of the KEC

profession in UKHE, the study was exploratory in nature. However, it provided valuable new insights into the role and experiences of KEC professionals, and the institutional environments in which they work.

The KEC profession has grown to a community of over 4,000 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff members in the UK HE sector, delivering a wide range of activities and playing a critical role in the delivery of impact. The survey found KEC work is usually co-ordinated by central departments offering dedicated skills and services, but the form of these functions varies widely, reflecting differences in institutional size and mission. Only the most complex and specialist activities are outsourced to external service providers.

KEC professionals tend to be highly educated individuals in the middle of their career. Most combine an excellent understanding of research with prior experience working in a commercial environment.

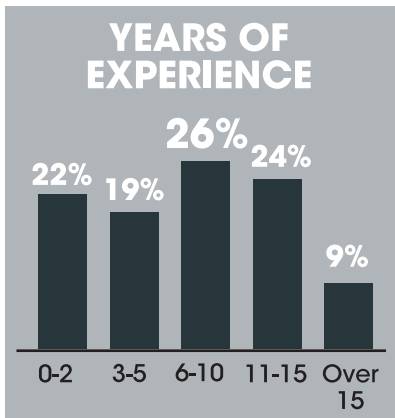
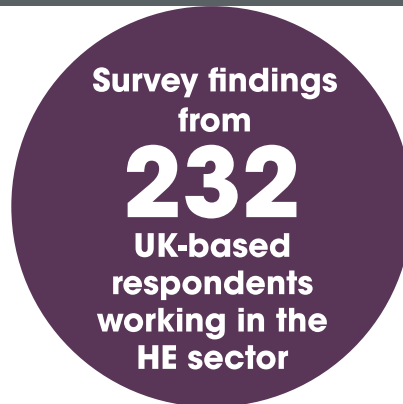
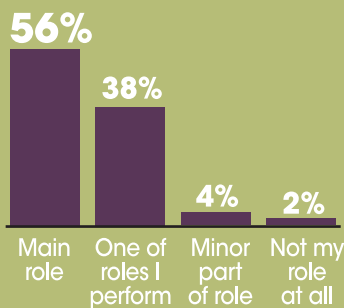
Performance in KEC has historically been assessed in financial terms, but today non-financial measures such as the number of strategic partnerships and contribution to impact are increasingly common. The vast majority of KEC functions have seen their remit broaden as KEC becomes embedded in institutional goals. It is clear, then, that the KEC profession has an increasingly central role to play in enabling UK universities to deliver and demonstrate economic and societal impact.

The report also looks at challenges, trends and activities in the sector. Overall the survey shows a picture of a profession well placed to take on these challenges and deliver value and impact to the academic and business communities, and indeed, to the UK economy as a whole. The full report can be viewed on the PraxisUnico website.

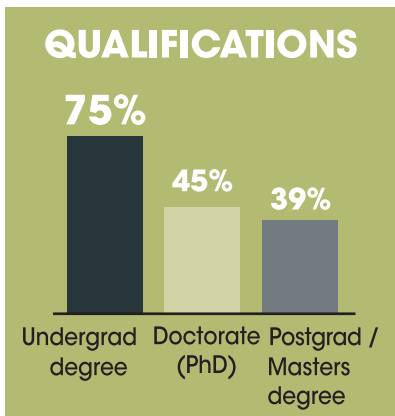
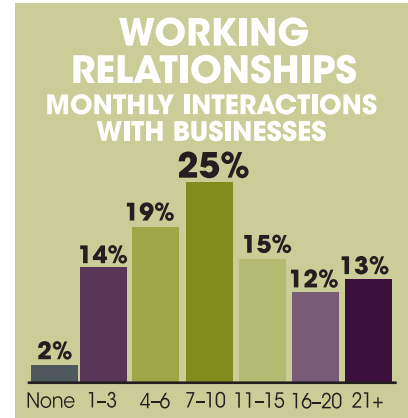
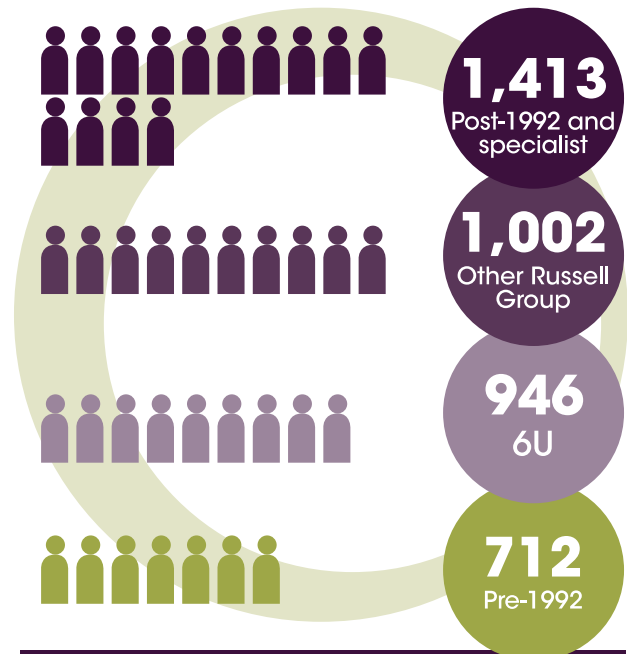
# KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE AND COMMERCIALISATION IN UK HIGHER EDUCATION

## THE STATE OF THE PROFESSION

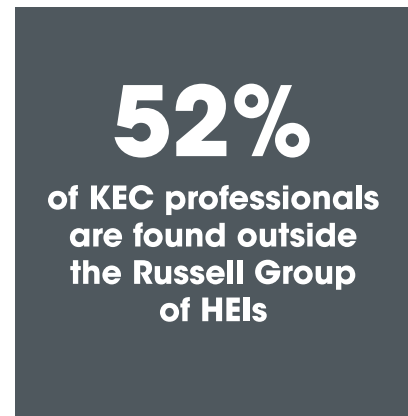
### ROLE AND IDENTITY KEC AS MAIN ROLE



### NUMBER OF KEC PROFESSIONALS IN UK HE



**FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT KEC PROFESSIONALS IN UK HIGHER EDUCATION** **4,073**



### TOP FIVE SKILLS FOR KEC PROFESSIONALS





# HOW THE IP SYSTEM IS SUPPORTING TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION BUSINESSES

**In celebration of World IP Day, Lesley Evans, Chief Executive of major European intellectual property firm, Haseltine Lake, reflects on how global IP systems are supporting and encouraging innovation.**

**T**he UK has a strong reputation throughout the world for many types of technology and innovation including precision engineering, medtech, software and renewable energy. It is vitally important that the legal systems in place to support Intellectual Property are effective to enable innovation in these sectors, allowing high-tech businesses to compete in global markets without the fear of copying and infringement.

The problem of course is that there is no unified global IP system – each country operates a separate system with its own rules, procedures and time frames, and in some cases even with different IP rights. In most jurisdictions you see some form of protection for patents, designs, trademarks and copyright. These different forms of intellectual property enable people and businesses to differentiate their ideas, protect their innovation and secure financial benefit from what they invent or create. And whilst these protections have many local differences around the world, they have sufficient similarities to enable inventors and

creators operating in any one mainstream system to have a broad understanding of how similar rights may work elsewhere.

One form of IP right which can be relevant in the Technology Transfer sector and which is perhaps less well known and understood internationally is the Utility Model. This is an exclusive right granted for a specific invention, allowing the inventor to prevent others from copying or infringement for a specified period of time. It's a sort of mini-patent, but of shorter duration (typically 10 years) and generally with less stringent patentability criteria to be met than for a conventional patent. This means that they are usually easier, quicker, and cheaper to apply for.

Utility Models (sometimes also known as utility patents) are often sought in respect of smaller incremental changes or developments affecting quite narrow aspects of technology capability, particularly where there is the likelihood of fast moving or frequently changing technology issues in the development of the product.

The drawback is that the Utility Model is not as widely available as patents and other IP rights and indeed is not available in the UK, the USA or within the European Patent System. It is however available in a number of other countries including Germany,

Italy, Japan and China (including Hong Kong). A number of Western businesses are starting to evaluate the use of Utility Models in China as a way to gain faster cheaper IP protection in the challenging market. Depending on where in the world businesses are innovating, manufacturing or distributing, the utility model may have a place alongside other better-know IP rights to improve a company's web of protection.

A form of Utility Model known as the "Innovation Patent" was recently introduced in Australia, as a result of extensive research there into the needs of small and medium-sized enterprises. The stated aim is to provide a 'low-cost entry point' into the intellectual property system. This illustrates the way in which IP systems throughout the world continue to develop and evolve.

As we celebrate World IP Day, we can perhaps feel reassured that IP rights continue to change in line with changing innovation landscapes and also that the enforcement of the well-established IP rights of patents, trademarks and designs is becoming stronger, more consistent and more closely aligned across the developed world than ever before.

**For more information about IP, please visit: [www.haseltinelake.com](http://www.haseltinelake.com).**



**Dr Angela Calvert**

## How Oxford Vacmedix overcame a challenging road to market

**With an expert KEC team in the driving seat, this spin-out succeeded in overcoming obstacles and achieving impact.**

**W**hen lead academic Dr Shisong Jiang, was awarded matched funding to set up a business in China, based on a novel vaccine production methodology, the team at Oxford Innovations had a challenge on their hands to get the spin-out up and running.

When the funding was awarded there was no business plan or commercial management in place to help build the vision and lead the opportunity post-spin out. The funding came with a number of conditions, and Dr Angela Calvert, Senior Technology Transfer Manager at Oxford Innovations, undertook to ensure that these conditions could be met satisfactorily for all the stakeholders involved.

Angela is typically involved in management of the more complex portfolios and situations; on this project, she had to achieve a lot quickly. A condition of the funding was that the academic had to set up the company in a specific location in China.

The University could not agree to this due to the complex obligations and

risk management entailed with being a shareholder in a non-UK company. A business plan had to be devised that would tick the boxes required to access the funding in China and fulfil the needs of the University and key stakeholders – not forgetting that it must do all this while also achieving the commercial aims for developing the core technology.

Angela had to work hard to demonstrate to the University that the risks involved were being carefully mitigated and managed, and ensure that the CEO and external investors were comfortable with the proposed model, before the project could move ahead.

In parallel, the business proposition was being developed, identifying appropriate management to lead the spin-out pre- and post-investment, raising investment and establishing an acceptable structure to all stakeholders.

A lot of time went into understanding the legal implications of being shareholders in a Chinese company and developing a commercial structure that would be acceptable to the University, the investors and the academic founders.

And if this wasn't complicated enough, a further issue in the spin-out process arose following the requirement to resolve an IP challenge from a US academic institution... Fortunately, thanks to the expert handling of the team, involving detailed discussions and enquiries, and reverting back to original lab book records, a resolution was finally agreed and the necessary inter-institutional agreements and submissions to patent offices were implemented.

This resolution was achieved thanks to proactive management of the communication between the different groups, which was essential for ensuring the challenges were appropriately resolved and accounted for in the agreements, and that all parties stayed committed to the ultimate goal of creating the spin-out to commercialise the IP.

The company has now successfully completed pre-clinical investigations and continues to be supported by Oxford University Innovation through the licence, and by Oxford University Spin Out Equity Management in managing the University's shareholding and supporting the spinout in optimising value.



# KEC EFFECT: CENTRE FOR ECO-INNOVATION (LANCASTER IMPACT AWARD)

**T**he Centre for Global Eco-innovation is a collaboration between Lancaster University, the University of Liverpool and Inventya Ltd, working with 300 small and medium enterprises in the North West. Winner of the 2015 Impact Award for Contribution to Business, it has made a real difference to the local economy through supporting local businesses through research expertise and support in developing services, products and processes. Over 80 academics and 150 research students have been involved in the SME-led collaborative partnerships to deliver positive environmental impacts and business benefit.

Projects supported by the Centre span a huge range of businesses, products and processes. Projects have included: improving wind and tidal renewable

energy; reducing potential water pollution at airports; developing smart electricity grids; exploring stress responses in crops; improving carbon capture in soil and developing radar systems to improve coastal navigation and fuel efficiency.

Professor Nigel Paul, from Lancaster Environment Centre, who is Director of the Centre for Global Eco-Innovation, praised the “joined-up” approach to collaboration which the Centre embodies, bringing together universities and innovative businesses.

Professor Paul said, “The Centre provides companies with a single access point to a variety of options, from short-term undergraduate projects to three-year in-depth doctoral research. In doing so it meets the needs of businesses and universities, plus leads to positive benefits on both the economy and the environment.”

Dion Williams, Director of Enterprise & Innovation said: “By working together across an innovative programme of collaborative research and development, the Centre for Global Eco-Innovation is already achieving significant impact in introducing low carbon products and services into the global marketplace, driving UK business growth and supporting positive environmental benefits.”

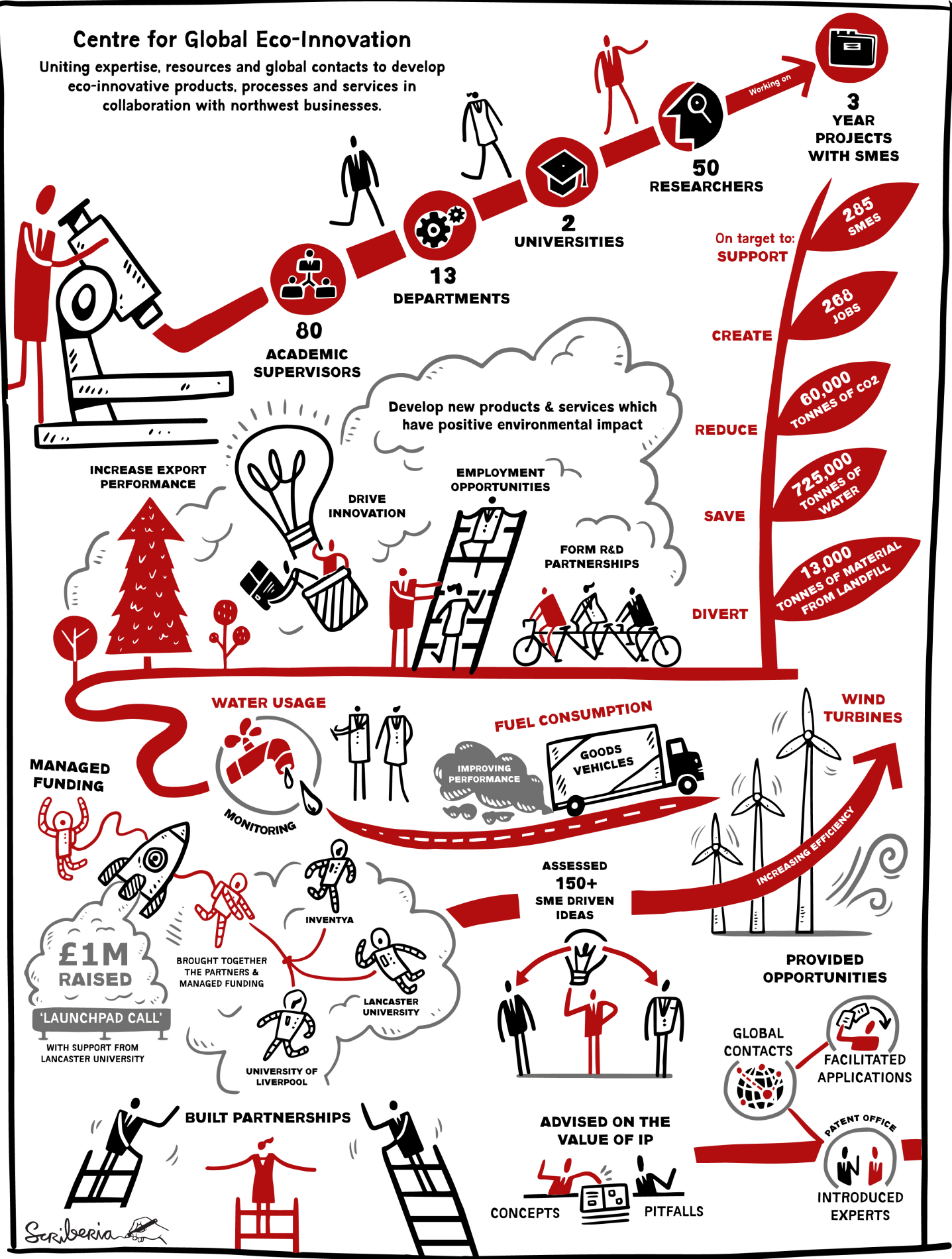
The Centre for Global Eco-Innovation is the only centre of its kind in Europe, and offers a flexible approach to support to cater for different business types and needs, and is working to increase the innovation performance of the region’s SMEs and the economic performance of the region as a whole. It has ambitious objectives to deliver against by 2017, and is making great strides towards those goals.



# Lancaster University: Knowledge Exchange and Commercialisation Team

## Centre for Global Eco-Innovation

Uniting expertise, resources and global contacts to develop eco-innovative products, processes and services in collaboration with northwest businesses.





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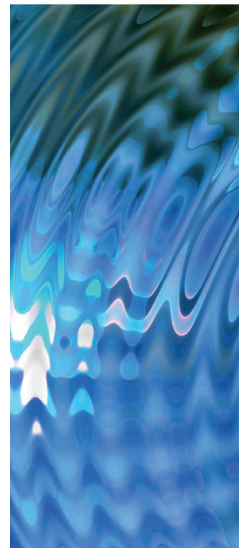
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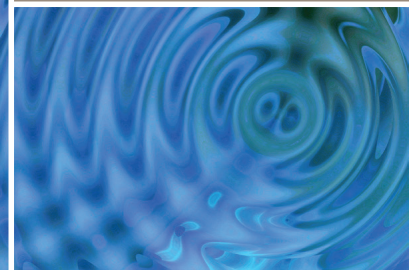
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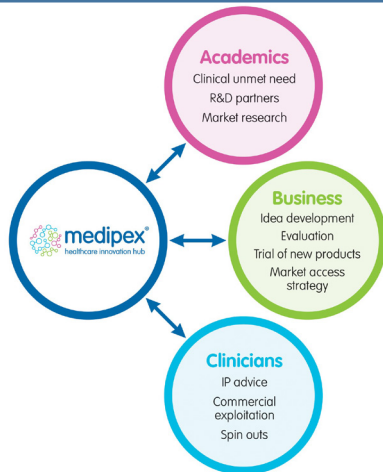


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Medipex is the healthcare innovation hub for NHS organisations across Yorkshire & Humber and East Midlands and industry and academia internationally. We connect the NHS with industry and academia sharing our knowledge of the NHS and commercialisation processes to facilitate the innovation cycle.



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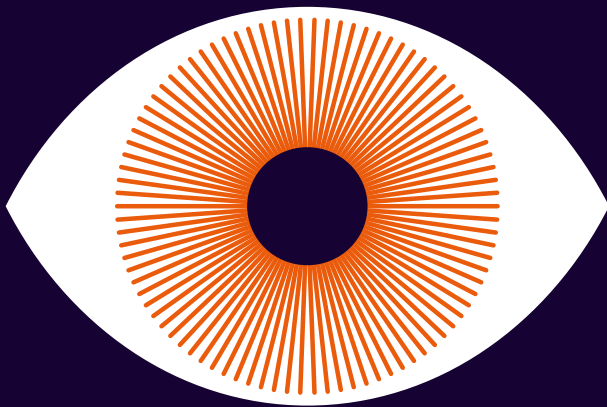


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