How to...

Engage with industry

This guide is an introduction to industry engagement for researchers. It provides some answers to most frequently asked questions and signposts you to further support.

1. Why engage with industry?

Engaging with the private, public or third sectors can help you to:

- achieve impact with your research;
- provide additional income to fund your/your department's activities (e.g., conference attendance);
- lead to academic publications;
- grow contacts and networks relevant to your research.

Engaging with industry is a key way to achieve research impact, defined as "the demonstrable contribution of research to changes that bring benefits to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life".

2. Who do academics in the College engage with?

Our private sector partners include companies in the financial services, building and construction, educational technology and the wider creative industries.

We work with a wide range of public and third sector organisations involved with cultural heritage, public service delivery and policy advocacy.

3. What does industry engagement look like?

Academics in the College provide consultancy, are commissioned to do research, design continuing professional development (CPD) training, get involved in commercial teaching partnerships and community outreach programmes funded by industry. See Box 1 for examples.

4. Where do I start?

You can start by considering four key areas:

- **Your core skills and expertise:** What is it that you're doing or could be doing that is of interest to external organisations? Try not to limit yourself to the framework of your research field. Would you be willing to apply your skills in a different field, for example outwith an exclusively HE environment?

- **Your target audience:** Who is the target audience for your skills and expertise? Do you already have contacts within the potential target audience? If not, do you have any routes to contacts in this audience? Remember the University already engages with multiple external partners through many of its departments, including Careers and Development and Alumni. The CAHSS KE office can help you access and exploit these contacts.

- **Your time, enthusiasm and commitment:** Can you, and do you want to, prioritise this activity? Do you have time to devote to attend external meetings, and to develop ideas and/or proposals? Once you begin discussion with an external partner it's important to offer a high level of flexibility, including adapting to their timescales. The CAHSS KE office can help co-ordinate meetings but commitment and availability is required from you in order to maintain and develop discussions with external partners.

- **Your timescale:** It may take some time for income to be forthcoming, particularly from new partnerships. You need to establish dialogue with external partners, understand their needs, and even help them formulate their problem, before any collaboration is formally in place.

What do we mean by "industry"?
Organisations, outwith traditional research funding sources (ESRC, AHRC, SFC), who are willing to pay for a service or knowledge you can offer as an employee of the University. This may include public and third sector organisations as well as the private sector.

Box 1. Examples of Industry Engagement

Consultancy

Researcher: Dr Mark Hellowell, School of Social and Political Science

Industry partner: World Bank

Dr Hellowell partnered with the World Bank (funded by DfID) to deliver an online course for policy makers charged with commissioning healthcare in developed countries, to help them make better informed decisions and improve quality of provision. This draws on his own research as well as a global network of researchers in this field. This was a two-stage consultancy project, and involved expertise from Information Services and digital education at Moray House.

Industry-funded community projects

Researcher: Professor Remo Pedreschi, Edinburgh College of Art

Industry partner: Network Rail

Prof Pedreschi was commissioned to provide a community art installation at the new rail station at Gogarburn in Edinburgh. The project involves designing and making concrete trees, supervising local school pupils to create concrete panels, and working with the Royal Botanic Gardens of Edinburgh who are providing planting to complement the concrete art installations.

Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP)

Researcher: Dr Nicola Galloway and Ruby Rennie, Moray House School of Education

Industry partner: Nosebleed Interactive

Academics from the Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) section of Moray House School of Education have embarked upon a Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) with computer games company Nosebleed Interactive. Dr Nicola Galloway and Ruby Rennie are co-supervising the KTP Associate to create a curriculum to teach Chinese children English via Nosebleed's new digital learning platform.

For more examples, see our industry engagement case studies at http://edin.ac/2jeqcsw.

5. Is there any funding for industry engagement?

There are several sources of funding available for industry engagement:

- Innovation vouchers
- Construction Scotland Innovation Centre (CSIC)
- Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP)
- Innovate UK thematic funding calls
- Research Council Impact Acceleration Accounts

You will find up to date details about all of these schemes at http://edin.ac/2jDL498.

You can also apply to the CAHSS KE and Impact Grant for projects to increase the impact of research through engagement with industry at http://edin.ac/2aOCdyT.

6. Is there any support for industry engagement?

Yes, we are here to help! The CAHSS Knowledge Exchange Office can support you to grow existing relationships and to develop new ones.

Your first point of contact is Clare Sowney, Business Development Manager for CAHSS. Based in the Knowledge Exchange Office, and working closely with Edinburgh Innovations (EI), Clare offers advice and support with:

- Managing industry relationships, including putting you in touch with companies and organisations for collaboration
- Applications to funding schemes for industry collaboration
- Commissioned research from government or industry
- Studentships funded by industry or government
- Industry or government funded teaching/CPD
- Commercialisation through licensing and spin-out companies.

Contact Clare on:
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