

YEAR 1 PROGRAMME SUMMARY

Aberystwyth University

Innovation & Knowledge Exchange
Strategy 2023-28 Implementation

Funded by the Research Wales
Innovation Fund



Contents

Introduction	3
<hr/>	
Theme 1: Commercialisation and income generating activity	4
<hr/>	
Marketing Strategy Implementation	5
External Communications Strategy Implementation	6
Internal Communication Strategy Implementation	7
Intellectual Property Portfolio Commercialisation	8
Consultancy Portfolio Development	9
Continuous Professional Development to Industry: Portfolio Development	10
Engagement with Wales Innovation Network (WIN)	11
Increasing Innovation Infrastructure in Digital Green Technology	12
Improving our Collection & Use of Performance Metrics	13
Improving our Service Subsidiaries - Review	14
Theme 2: New business growth and skills support	15
<hr/>	
Enterprise & Knowledge Exchange Hub	16
Developing Entrepreneurship & Commercialisation Capability	17
Encouraging and Enabling Social Enterprise	18
Theme 3: Civic Mission and Public Engagement	19
<hr/>	
Hay Festival 2024	20
Growing a Community of Practice in Dialogue and Facilitation	21
Establishing UNESCO Literary Recognition	22
Innovating Democracy with Knowledge Exchange	23
Theme 4: Investment in skills, staff and services	24
<hr/>	
Overarching Training Framework	25
Customer Relationship Management System Development	26
Streamlining Contracts Services Through Digital Technology	27
Investment Planning and Commercialisation of Facilities	28
Full Commission of a Research Management System	29
Cybersecure and Visible Research & Innovation Expertise	30
Collaboration Pathway Support Programme	31

Introducing the Aberystwyth University Innovation & Knowledge Exchange strategy 2023-2028

Knowledge Exchange involves transferring good ideas, research results and skills from universities to the wider community to enable innovative products, services, policies and processes to be developed. This benefits the economy and society, and public funding is awarded to Universities proportionately with their capability in knowledge exchange and the resulting innovation.

Aberystwyth University released its new strategy for improving its institutional performance in innovation and knowledge exchange in 2023, and uses the Research Wales Innovation Fund (RWIF) grant to implement that strategy.

Our strategy runs for five years and focuses on three key objectives for improving knowledge exchange and innovation capability.

- Ensure our resource **capacity** serves our ambitions of growth in volume, quality and value of our innovation and knowledge exchange.
- Increase our **competency** in innovation and knowledge exchange through skills programmes that increase our performance across multiple channels of activity.
- Develop a **culture** that propagates and promotes innovation and greater levels of knowledge exchange internally and externally using improved collaboration with industry, community, and the Higher Education/Further Education sector.

As a bilingual university, our constant attention to Welsh legacy, language, and culture also remains a priority throughout the delivery of the innovation and knowledge exchange strategy.

Aberystwyth University's Department of Research, Business & Innovation (RBI) is responsible for delivering on the programme of work required to achieve the strategic objectives, and utilises a rigorous framework of project lifecycle management and stage-gate methodology to manage the programme's pipeline of projects.

This ensures all project ideas are captured effectively, decisions are transparent and governed well, budget and risk are managed well, and our project quality and value for money continually improves.

The portfolio of projects filling the pipeline in the first year of this strategic period are summarised in this programme summary.

The projects vary in length and follow four key themes as set out by Medr (formerly HEFCW), our regulator and administrator of the Research Wales Innovation Fund (RWIF):

Theme 1 Driving innovation through commercialisation and services to industry and/or communities.

Demand for our services is measured by income from such services.

Theme 2 Regenerating the economy through new business support & skills.

Theme 3 Engaging communities and society in our innovation, which is part of our civic mission.

Theme 4 Developing people skills (competency & culture), our resources and systems (capacity).

Strategic Projects 2023-2028:

Theme 1 - Commercialisation & income generating activity

Our income generating activity includes the following knowledge exchange services and funding avenues:

Collaborative Research with organisations

Contracted Research delivered for organisations

Consultancy Services, this includes testing, and advice from experts in their field

Continuing Professional Development open courses for learners employed by organisations and

Continuing Education open courses for learners, not yet employed by organisations

Commercialisation & licensing of Intellectual Property, bringing our inventions to life

Facilities or Equipment Provision that aid innovation & knowledge exchange and

Economic Regeneration through innovation and knowledge exchange infrastructure (also referred to as structural or capital funding schemes)

Public and Community Engagement that involves knowledge exchange and speaks to our civic mission.

In this strategic period, growing the commercialisation of our expertise, assets and innovation infrastructure is concentrated around our cross-disciplinary Centres and Hubs.

We recognise this requires an increase in commercialisation competency (skill) and capacity (people, processes and systems) as well as culture (changes in behaviour and perceptions) surrounding these vehicles of knowledge exchange.

Firstly, a clear understanding of what knowledge exchange channels are compatible with each centre or hub was outlined in the 2023-28 strategy:

	Collaborative Research	Contract Research	Consultancy	CPD & CE	IP & Commercialisation	Facilities	Regeneration	Public & Community Engagement
Dialogue Centre	■			■		■		■
Knowledge Exchange & Enterprise Hub				■	■		■	
National Spectrum Centre	■	■	■	■		■		
VetHub	■	■	■			■		
AberInnovation						■	■	
Green Futures Innovation Park				■		■	■	■
Crop Innovation Hub	■	■	■		■	■		
Rural Futures Hub	■	■	■		■			■
Worlds We Want Hub	■	■	■		■			■
AI Enabled World Hub	■	■	■		■			■
Old College Enterprise Hub				■	■	■	■	■

From an economic regeneration perspective, our immediate environment - the Mid Wales private and public sector organisations and not for profit businesses - are influenced by a high proportion of small and micro-businesses, are set in rural locations and bilingual settings, and express a need of workforce skills to meet the changing work environment and future innovation.

The following projects are designed to improve the awareness of our knowledge exchange offer by strategically marketing and communicating the services we provide to industry and communities, improving the transparency and trust in our services to encourage engagement with the services internally and externally to the university, and also improve how we govern, measure and refine the demand for our services, which on a national level is measured by income from such services.

Marketing Strategy Implementation

5 year Project

Project Sponsor: Hatty Stiles [has181]

STRATEGIC BENEFIT

Increases the number of innovation partners and knowledge exchange customers.

Improves the quality of our customer engagement that drives up the value of our knowledge exchange.

Promotes the university expertise, the impact it generates in society, and how it engages with communities, industry and government.

DESCRIPTION

This project implements the Research Marketing Strategy developed in 2023. The strategic objectives are:

- To promote the University's Research, Innovation & KE strengths to Aberystwyth University's current and potential audiences by:
 - Fully understanding the brand recognition of the University's Research, Innovation & Knowledge Exchange so that marketing can be tailored to appropriate audiences.
 - Identifying Research, Innovation & Knowledge Exchange champions upon which effective marketing campaign strategies can be developed, including building of compelling narratives.
 - Developing expertise to deliver marketing communications content that effectively strengthen the University's research narrative through a range of channels.
- To clearly identify audiences with which the University should engage. This is achieved by:
 - Understanding our audience's interests, engagement with the University and the channels through which they can be reached – and that they will positively respond to.
 - Ensuring a fully effective audience segmentation is undertaken that sets out the key target audiences and their priorities.
- To raise the profile of great research and researchers delivering the widest possible impact that benefits our society.
- To ensure the Aberystwyth University brand is synonymous with research excellence, innovation and thriving knowledge exchange.
- To leverage our research strengths and build on legacy projects that are meaningful to the identified audiences to further enhance the university's reputation and secure future income streams.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

1. Develop a set of target areas to promote through managed campaigns.
2. Develop branding for Aberystwyth University's Research, Innovation & Knowledge Exchange.
3. Produce a calendar of marketing campaigns and establish audience feedback mechanisms.
4. Ensure the campaigns are linked with a customer relationship management system that enables accessibility to internal stakeholders and external audiences.

External Communications Strategy Implementation

5 year Project

Project Sponsor: Hatty Stiles [has181]

STRATEGIC BENEFIT

Increases the number and quality of collaborator and customer engagements.

Improves the university reputation for excellence in research, innovation, knowledge exchange and customer service.

DESCRIPTION

This project runs in conjunction with the delivery of the Research Marketing Strategy and establishes the methods and timing of:

- Promoting the University as a partner of choice in research, innovation, and knowledge exchange.
- Communicating approved messages about the university's capability and knowledge across the optimal channels that ensure this information is readily accessible to target audiences.
- Maximising opportunities for translating the university's research with the maximum positive impact on society.
- Developing regular and meaningful interactions with strategic partners that convey the university's service will be quicker, easier, and more fruitful than comparative organisations.
- Creating and maintaining two-way channels of communication that seek to understand the problems that the university's knowledge and capability can solve.
- Stimulating new and high growth businesses associated with the university's knowledge, entrepreneurs, and business support services.
- Supporting improvements in our university ranking and reputation for research excellence, knowledge exchange excellence, innovation and customer service.
- Sharing the right information, in the right way, at the right time, to the right audiences

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

To communicate to external stakeholders such as organisations, groups, or individuals in a regular and timely fashion:

Why they should work with the university, how to work with the university & what to expect when working with the university.

Communicate as broadly as possible to all accessible audiences, that Aberystwyth University:

- is open for business
- produces world leading research
- is easy to work with
- values you as a customer, partner, investor, or community
- operates with honesty, transparency, and integrity.

Internal Communications Strategy Implementation

1 year Project

Project Sponsor: Mathew Jones [maj57]

STRATEGIC BENEFIT

Increases visibility of the support for research and teaching staff in the areas of research, innovation and knowledge exchange, which then increases the efficiency and effectiveness of the RBI interactions.

Increases the number and quality of collaborator and partner engagements for researchers.

Improves funding avenues and opportunities for research, and increases researcher confidence to reach externally for funding, partnerships, impact and support.

Improves the university reputation for excellence in research, innovation, knowledge exchange and customer service.

DESCRIPTION

This project delivers the objectives set out in one of the enabling strategies of the innovation & knowledge exchange strategy and is a key factor in promoting our researcher's capabilities and driving the demand for our innovation services and collaboration.

The research, innovation & knowledge exchange *Internal Communications Strategy* addresses how the RBI professional service support team could better connect with their internal 'customers'. The strategic objectives are to communicate to the Aberystwyth University researchers and professional service audiences the value of:

- Generating competitive and compelling grant applications to external research & innovation funders.
- Consistent delivery of ambitious research projects.
- Engaging with enterprise, entrepreneurship and innovation as part of each research project.
- Developing a sustainable and continuous funding path for a long research career.
- Higher ranking for the University in the Research Excellence Framework.
- Improvements to the University's ranking in the Knowledge Exchange Framework.

Ensuring academic and professional service staff understand:

- What the department of Research, Business & Innovation does: FUNCTION
- Who belongs in the Research, Business & Innovation department: PEOPLE
- Why it's better to work with RBI and what to expect from their service: PERFORMANCE

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

To improve communication with our internal stakeholders and customers by:

- Understanding our target audiences, our resources and channels for communication and planning our annual cycle of communication and its performance measurement.
- Improve the quality of our researcher engagement and optimise our digital interaction through our website and multimedia content.
- Improve the resources and opportunities for our researchers to communicate with collaborators, funders, customers and investors.
- Integrate all systems that capture and process our audience information, using the Microsoft Office Dynamics customer relationship management system as the central point of data.
- Establish an evaluation and revision process to ensure continuous improvement.

Intellectual Property Portfolio Commercialisation

2 year Project

Project Sponsor: Hatty Stiles [has181]

STRATEGIC BENEFIT

Increases scalable innovation and incentivises inventor-ship.

Builds external partnerships, enterprise activity & culture on an institutional level.

Increases the number of start-ups originating from the institution & region.

Increases external income from license royalties and spin-out equity.

Diversifies the institution's knowledge exchange activity - measured as income.

DESCRIPTION

The project will identify all available intellectual property, establish licensee market engagement, implement marketing strategies for each available IP family and negotiate agreements for at least 70% of the portfolio.

Aberystwyth University has a portfolio of IP, most of which is currently not licensed and is therefore an under-utilised opportunity to create impact and generate income. We also lack processes to effectively track license status and create expense projections, as well as monitor licensee revenue reports to follow up on royalties owed. In 2023, the department of Research, Business & Innovation performed an audit of its intellectual property. Following that, this project aims to license available IP, establish a management system for the intellectual property (to track rights available/licensed and agreement expiration), and implement a process to follow up on outstanding revenue.

This project will focus on licensing the existing portfolio. We recommend another project to create an overall IP strategy and focus on growing the IP pipeline by increasing engagement with academics.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

- 70% license or paid option rate on the intellectual property portfolio.
- All portfolio intellectual property families are promoted publicly through the University website.
- All intellectual property/patent protected families are visible and resulting income and expenses tracked digitally.

Consultancy Portfolio Development

2 Year Project

Project Sponsor: Tim Dowling [tid16]

STRATEGIC BENEFIT

- Increases the amount of knowledge exchange & innovation through consultancy projects.
- Improves our relationships with organisations experiencing knowledge gaps & looking to innovate.
- Increases our knowledge exchange activity as measured by the HE-BCI survey.
- Builds industry partnerships that help to deliver innovation and impact.
- Builds enterprise activity & an entrepreneurial culture on an institutional level.
- Diversifies the institution's knowledge exchange activity and income.

DESCRIPTION

The project will increase awareness amongst staff and business of the benefits and potential for providing/utilising consultancy services. This will include creating clear pathways and processes for external parties to engage with the university, plus guidance for Aberystwyth University staff on how to increase their consultancy activity.

Engaging an external partner in a consultancy contract is often the first step for a knowledge exchange relationship between a researcher and an organisation, as is short term, has defined outputs and builds trust between each party as well as the RBI team that helps to define and contracts the service.

Development of Aberystwyth University's consultancy portfolio increases innovation and market advantage for the industry partner, as well as provides income for the researcher and their departments, it raises the profile of Aberystwyth University in the industrial field and helps to advance academic careers. Furthermore, consultancy is an established mechanism by which Aberystwyth University can ensure that the results of its scholarly teachings and research are used for the benefit of wider society and economy of Wales and beyond.

Consultancy practice within Aberystwyth University has great potential to be undertaken by a much larger proportion of individuals across a broader range of academic areas or disciplinary/research strengths.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

- Resolve administrative burdens of the current consultancy contracting process.
- Revise and refine the guidance for staff for developing consultancy opportunities and partnerships.
- Relaunch the consultancy service and its benefits to university staff, increasing service visibility.
- Identify a greater number of researchers with interest in providing consultancy services.
- Raise the profile of the university externally for consultancy services.
- Increase the amount of knowledge exchange through consultancy services - measured by income.

Continuous Professional Development to Industry: Portfolio Development

4 year Project

Project Sponsor: Tim Dowling [tid16]

STRATEGIC BENEFIT

Improves the relevance of our skills & training capability to regional skills gaps.

Improves our relationships with organisations experiencing workforce skills gaps.

Increases our knowledge exchange activity as measured by the HE-BCI survey.

Increases our income for CPD services to industry and the third sector.

Increases our volume and scale of research impact through the medium of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) provision.

DESCRIPTION

This project intends to clarify, refine and promote the university portfolio of open courses to industry that help organisations to meet their Continuous Professional Development goals. In the context of the innovation and knowledge exchange strategy and the measurement framework: the Higher Education Business and Communication Interaction (HE-BCI) survey, measured annually, this project addresses Continuous Professional Development courses that are supplied as open courses to learners, employed by organisations outside of the university, that are paying for the learner to attend the course and improve their professional skills relevant to their existing or future job. For clarity, this project *does not* address academic credit bearing courses, *does not* involve courses that require registration through academic registry, and do not result in a graduate or post-graduate qualification from Aberystwyth University.

Open courses within the portfolio scope *may* offer an accreditation from, but this will be subject specific and where the open course has been co-developed with an industry body of relevance.

Utilising the university's subject expertise and teaching skill, this project will establish a framework for creating and delivering open courses of a high quality that match the open market CPD demands.

This project intends to address the following areas for improvement:

- Limited engagement with industry around CPD.
- Limited ability for university staff to develop CPD as a knowledge exchange avenue.
- Skills gaps in West Wales (& wider area) that are already visible to the Regional Skills Partnership consortium.
- Unestablished reputation for CPD quality, quantity, relevance or value.
- Untapped potential to deliver on-line CPD course, hybrid CPD courses, residential CPD courses, industry-endorsed CPD courses and accreditation not currently exploited.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Increase connectivity between CPD offerings & industry.

Establish a registration and commercial framework for supplying CPD to industry.

Increase student numbers, learner days and value of those days to learners.

Launch open courses in areas of expertise and industry demand, in variable delivery formats.

Develop a web-based customer interface for open course browsing, purchase, registration & qualification.

Engagement with Wales Innovation Network (WIN)

1 year Project

Project Sponsor: Mathew Jones [maj57]

STRATEGIC BENEFIT

Improves cross collaboration of innovative researchers in Wales.

Increases the scalability and success rate of grant funding in thematic areas of research & innovation.

Increases the exposure of our innovative and impact-achieving academics to industry and funders in areas of national importance.

DESCRIPTION

The Wales Innovation Network was established by Universities Wales to raise the profile of Welsh Universities' research & innovation, facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration and foster better relationships, infrastructure -sharing and partner expertise.

Aberystwyth University pays WIN an annual subscription of ca £34,000

This project aims to map our current links and promote further interactions, build partnerships with relevant groups and priority sector groups, understand the opportunities for engagement and to promote these opportunities such that we improve our funding capture and collaborative prospects.

WIN focuses on six themes of research strength, already established in Wales: Digital transformation, net-zero & decarbonisation, Agri-tech and rural economy, Creative industries and media, Population health and biotech, materials and manufacturing.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Forge a strategic partnership between Aberystwyth University and the Wales Innovation Network.

Administer the small grant award programme funded by WIN.

Successful co-ordination of our university contribution to WIN events & its promotion of our research & innovation strength.

Effective contribution to the WIN steering and operational groups

Consolidate and connect the university researchers addressing WIN agenda and available for interdisciplinary research & Innovation collaborations.

Support grant bid writing to aid the submission of two £500k+ bids submitted with WIN collaborators.

Curate and co-ordinate WIN visit to Aber and ensure there are key meetings curated booked in advance for the monthly visit.

Increasing Innovation Infrastructure in Digital and Green Technology

2 Year Project

Project Sponsor: Mathew Jones [maj57]

STRATEGIC BENEFIT

Increases our capability to drive research, development & innovation in the region and nationally.

Economic regeneration through job creation, workforce training and service to industry & academia.

Develops a regional industry cluster in radio-spectrum communication technology, Agri-Tech & Bio-innovation that drawing investment and increases employability options for our graduates.

Generates upwards of £43million in capital grants for economic growth related to innovation, investment and industry cluster growth.

DESCRIPTION

The project continues the university's effort to acquire a broad stakeholder and customer base for the National Spectrum Centre and Green Futures Innovation Park, as well as acquire major capital funding through the Mid Wales Growth Deal.

The Outline Business Case (stage 2 of 3) of the capital funding request for both projects were submitted to the Mid Wales Growth Board in Nov '23. Funds would be used to develop a network of multi-site test, research and observation facilities as well as a 'development hotel' for innovative small businesses and new businesses.

The outline business case review, revision and resubmission will occur in this strategic period, with the progression to Full Business Case (stage 3 of 3) planned for the next strategic period.

Project work streams include targeted bid writing, parallel funding acquisition, partnership development on a national level, operational modelling and promotion to future customer and collaborators.

The proposals address the workforce skill development, employment demands and high-functioning business space of industry and a growing business cluster.

The digital (spectrum technology) aspect of this project is steered commercially and academically by the Professor of Spectrum Technologies and Director of the National Spectrum Centre that took up their post in March 2024 and is also funded through this grant award.

The targeted release date of capital funding is in the 2024/25 financial year.

The National Spectrum Centre's economic regeneration offer?

The Aberystwyth region hosts a unique set of terrains and 'quiet space' that has limited interference for radio frequency digital communication, and makes it ideal for testing, development and innovation in the field of radio spectrum technology.

The Green Futures Innovation Park's economic regeneration offer?

Again, location. The park will be based alongside IBERS, an internationally recognised research centre and house new, innovative companies. With facilities to prove new concepts, and enable new technologies, in an agile and supportive environment this has a national demand from industry and government, as well as attracts investment into the region.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Embed the new Director of the NSC into the project operations and centre promotion.

Procure external expertise in navigating the funding path.

Develop a strong relationship with the Mid Wales Growth Deal programming team.

Establish a multi sector partnership cohort through event management and business development.

Develop opportunity channels of funding to complement the public and private investment.

Complete operational modelling and promote the offering to future customer and collaborators.

Improving our Collection & Use of Performance Metrics

1 year Project

Project Sponsor: Chris Heidt [cah]

STRATEGIC BENEFIT

Improves visibility and knowledge of the business and community interactions.

Increases the accuracy of our reported data to HESA and Medr that justifies our future RWIF grant allocation.

Increases the strategic allocation of resource by knowledge exchange performance area.

Increases the visibility of external income derived from knowledge exchange.

DESCRIPTION

This project reviews the baseline metrics specifically the national measures against other universities using, primarily, Higher Education Business and Community Interactions (HE-BCI) data.

Mapping our knowledge exchange (KE) performance against other universities will use the same format as the knowledge exchange framework (KEF). This data will be used to inform our project plans, and interventions for increased growth in KE activity year on year, as well as predictions for the University's Executive Committee and Medr in relation to the top national measures.

Baseline metrics for each performance area defined in our innovation & knowledge exchange strategy, as well as the national measures collected via the Higher Education Business & Community Interaction (HE-BCI) survey will be benchmarked against other universities to determine our areas of strength and weakness. Continued collation of data and comparison with our baseline will demonstrate how, or if our interventions are delivering the desired growth results (KPIs) presented to Medr in our innovation & knowledge exchange strategy.

This will require collation of data from a number of university systems and departments and rely on a close working relationship with the Planning department and any transformation or change programmes underway at the university during the project term.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Creation of the Research, Business & Innovation's metric tracking system and reporting format that aligns with the submission of national measure estimates to HE-BCI survey and KEF.

Produce the HE-BCIs comparisons report against the 33 institutions - comprising the two key institution clusters.

Publicise the results to relevant internal and external stakeholders and use to promote university strengths through the External Communications Strategy Project activity.

Develop intervention plan for future KE quintile support that achieves maximum performance with the most efficient use of resources.

Improving our Service Subsidiaries - Review

2 year Project

Project Sponsor: Chris Heidt [cah]

STRATEGIC BENEFIT

Increases the volume and value knowledge exchange activity and income.

Improves the quality and speed of our partnership interactions.

Reduces the risk of our commercial interactions and commercialisation investments.

DESCRIPTION

This project reviews the university relationships with its subsidiary companies that channel knowledge exchange and innovation to external organisations.

As part of a governance assessment, it establishes the existing visibility, efficiency and governance of knowledge exchange services across the university, identifies areas of improvement and recommends a prioritised list of changes to implement at the institution.

This work brings the subsidiary activity in line with the principles of the KE concordat, improve our Business & communication interactions, and increase our total knowledge exchange service volume and value.

This project will confirm which university activities go through which subsidiary and how those subsidiaries will be managed, in the long-term. Aberystwyth University has three knowledge exchange related subsidiaries, that require a formalised process of interaction with the university and complementary business growth plans to be developed.

AberInnovation has a board of directors and is currently developing their growth strategy independently of the Research, Business and Innovation support planning at the university, however greater benefit would be gained from a more connected approach to business development.

With an external review Aberystwyth University will gain visibility of the growth opportunities available and how to operationalise these plans with ABC, AberTrading and AberInnovation with the finite resources currently available.

The project will include a plan for how the university supports each subsidiary, how we interface transparently and ethically, how we adopt sound processes and systems to ensure the smooth transactions and increase flow of KE services to customers to achieve performance improvements at scale.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

To establish sound governance measures, effective reporting systems, a plan for resource planning and efficient delivery from the University's subsidiary companies such that we increase our:

- Number and value of consultancy contracts
- Continuing Professional Development course users and customers
- Number of innovation facility users and customers
- Software Applications portfolio size and value to future users
- Office space occupancy of new businesses start-ups, spin-outs and scale-ups
- External funding for start-up / incubator support programmes.

Theme 2: New business growth and skills support

Promoting innovation includes enabling new, innovative businesses to thrive. The Mid-Wales industry landscape is dominated by small to micro-businesses, with proportionately few local, larger, or corporate organisations to support new and growing businesses.

Over the five-year strategic period our support infrastructure will therefore consists of four key services:

- Access to business skill development and mentoring.
- Space provision for business activities, collaboration, innovation and growth.
- Facilities, expertise & equipment access for developing, testing, validating, refining and accrediting innovations.
- Facilitated funding and R&D support for young companies innovating solutions that align with the [Welsh innovation strategy](#).

There are three main points of university engagement & support during a businesses' lifecycle that are facilitated by the university Innovation & Knowledge Exchange Strategy and RWIF grant-supported activity.

- Creation - helping staff to develop a commercial idea and students to foster a desire to start a new business after their studies.
- Incubation - helping university entrepreneurs to convert their developed idea to a functioning business model and enable access to funds, facilities and expertise to advance their ambitions.
- Launch - helping university entrepreneurs to register, scale and mature their business, access networks of mentors, innovation collaborators and investors.

Two key departments drive support for enterprise and entrepreneurs at Aberystwyth:

The Careers Department - having a focus on student skills, experience and employability, the team deliver the AberPreneurs programme and support budding entrepreneurs with an annual programme of events and their network of Academic Enterprise Champions embedded in each teaching department.

The Department of Research, Business and Innovation - has a broader scope, supporting enterprising staff as well as students through a wide range of activity, sharing valuable knowledge and increasing accessibility to support for enterprise ambitions via the Knowledge Exchange & Enterprise Hub.

The Hub aims to build awareness and skills around commercialisation, knowledge exchange, innovation, engagement and entrepreneurship, as well as being a point of introduction to industry. The Hub works with the Dialogue Centre to bring regional industry clusters and new skill providers closer to each other as well as closer to the university staff and students.

Our new business creation projects equally supports SHAPE and STEM subjects and a key goal of the projects funded in this theme is to put our staff and students on a path where national programmes of enterprise and entrepreneurship support become more visible and attainable.

All projects also look to boost the future regional and Welsh economy by enabling new businesses to grow at scale, contribute to a developing innovation ecosystem and maximise the government incentives to inspire individuals and involve other organisations in their journey.

Enterprise & Knowledge Exchange Hub

2 year Project

Project Sponsor: Tim Dowling [tid16]

STRATEGIC BENEFIT

Institutional culture change that creates a more enterprising environment for staff, students and collaborators.

Enhances innovation networking for university staff and industry.

Increases support for enterprising staff, students and smaller businesses.

Increases inventor-ship, commercialisation, start-ups, spin-outs and licenses.

Increases knowledge exchange: including CPD open courses, consultancy, testing, collaborative research, contract research and public engagement.

Improves oversight of Aberystwyth University enterprise programmes that are externally funded and require sound reporting measures.

Improves awareness and brand recognition of Aberystwyth University enterprise to external stakeholders.

DESCRIPTION

This project establishes the Hub venue, the staff and skills supporting enterprise & knowledge exchange, and the related programme of activity to ensure sustainable support for:

- Inter-disciplinary innovation initiatives at Aberystwyth University involving enterprise goals.
- Correct governance through the Aberystwyth University Enterprise Board using a data driven approach.
- The creation of an Enterprise 'menu' of activities for staff, students and external stakeholders to engage with.
- Direct connection between the future Aberystwyth University entrepreneurs, Aberystwyth University-grown-businesses, and the Dialogue Centre.

This aims to deliver:

- Better monitoring, coordination and promotion of all Aberystwyth University enterprise activity involving students, staff and graduates.
- Better use of enterprise activities to compliment and deliver greater impact from Aberystwyth University research.
- An improved and increased Aberystwyth University enterprise "ecosystem", locally, regionally and nationally.
- Increased brand awareness and recognition of Aberystwyth University being synonymous with high value enterprise activity.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Complete and understand the enterprise "mind map" of all Aberystwyth University enterprise support provisions.

Collate relevant data from Aberystwyth University personnel on their enterprise activities, events and barriers to enterprise.

Coordinate, package, brand and promote enterprise activities and events for staff, students and graduates.

Sponsor and attend a local business awards to promote the Aberystwyth University brand and network.

Increase external engagement with non-HE organisations forming stronger ties and partnerships.

Support the delivery of new business creation and growth initiatives such as AberSEED and AberTHRIVE.

Developing Entrepreneurship & Commercialisation Capability

5 year Project

Project Sponsor: Chris Heidt [cah]

STRATEGIC BENEFIT

Institutional culture improves to a more enterprising environment for staff, students and collaborators.
Increases the scale and significance of research commercialised - measured by impact and income.
Increases inventor-ship, commercialisation, start-ups, spin-outs and licenses.
Improves awareness and brand recognition of Aberystwyth University enterprise, research innovation and knowledge exchange to external stakeholders.

DESCRIPTION

Innovation to Commercialisation of University Research (ICURE) - is an Innovate UK funded programme for entrepreneurship that has been running since 2013.

This project delivers a "mini" ICURE competition and programme similar to ICURE Explore is open to all subjects and ideas but makes extra effort to involve non-STEM/SHAPE departments and latent talent, historically difficult to reach within Aberystwyth University and limits our potential to benefit from the iCURE programme.

The competition is branded AberSEED, named so as offers **S**upport for **E**nterprise and **E**ntrepreneurship **D**evelopment and represents the very start of the growth journey for our staff and students in the area of commercialisation.

Working together with contracted experts in this field, this project delivers training followed by ongoing mentoring for the successful candidates for the duration of the scheme.

At the end of the 3-month scheme period, applicants present their journey, findings and commercial opportunities to a judging panel for open discussion and feedback (in a Dragon's Den format). If there is commercial potential identified through the candidate's work, the department of Research, Business & Innovation help to source further funding to pursue the next commercialisation stage.

Even if the programme concludes with the participant not pursuing their original idea, the experience develops a new appreciation of the impact derived from commercialisation and changes the participant's approach to future exploration of a new idea or innovation.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Deliver two AberSEED competitions each year of the strategic period.

Facilitate follow on funding and support for successful competition candidates

Promote the benefits of entrepreneurship and commercialisation as a means to achieving impact from research & innovation.

Co-create with the Innovate UK team a proposal for an AberSEED equivalent in the iCURE suite of programmes.

Encouraging and Enabling Social Enterprise

2-3 year Project

Project Sponsor: Chris Heidt [cah]

STRATEGIC BENEFIT

Institutional culture improves to that of a community-connected enterprising environment.

Improves the university civic engagement with communities and the social enterprises supporting those communities.

Increases support for enterprising staff, students and smaller businesses that return to the university to collaborate with researchers and mentor our students.

Improves recognition, support and reward for civic contributors linked with the university, and promotes the connected community experience for future entrepreneurs.

Increased throughput of new businesses at AberInnovation and University enterprise spaces that will extend into the enterprise space at Old College.

DESCRIPTION

An award scheme for staff, students & graduates recognising and rewarding social entrepreneurs.

Aimed at early stage enterprises with a non-profit, transformational or community-focused benefit.

The project delivers an annual competition and award to a social enterprise organisation based on community nominations, to establish their operation at AberInnovation or other University business space, that allows them to strengthen their resources, assess new directions and growth plans, access

the university expertise to enable their business to innovate, and have exposure to new partnerships with membership of the University's business network through the Knowledge Exchange & Enterprise Hub.

This project starts in 2024/25 to ensure there is no conflict with the AberPreneurs project cycle, and is branded AberTHRIVE, as represents the growth phase of a business which is fuelled by optimal environmental conditions.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Increase the number of social enterprises connected with Aberystwyth University.

Promote civic/mission-based entrepreneurship at Aberystwyth University.

Increase the recognition of social entrepreneurs and future business incubation and acceleration activity linked with the University.

Theme 3: Civic Mission and Public Engagement

Engaging communities and society in our innovation forms part of our civic mission as a university.

Driving our community-connected knowledge exchange and innovation projects is the Aberystwyth University Dialogue Centre—an innovative engagement and impact unit dedicated to working across communities.

The centre is led by an international expert in dialogue programming and facilitation and is supported by the department of Research, Business & Innovation.

In line with the goals of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act, the Dialogue Centre also actively explores ways to integrate Welsh culture and language into its activities. By promoting the use of the Welsh language and incorporating Welsh cultural practices, the centre contributes to preserving and celebrating Welsh identity.

The following projects in this theme increase our scale and significance of public and community engagement.

They support regional skills development and visibility of the knowledge and connectivity the university can bring to communities by enabling access to different community leaders, as well as groups, commercial innovators and policymakers, on complex issues facing Wales that can be informed by the University's excellence in research and capability for innovation.

Hay Festival 2024

1 year Project

Project Sponsor: Jen Wolowic [jew51]

STRATEGIC BENEFIT

Improves university reputation for multi-disciplinary research, innovation and community engagement. Develops, refines or amends a strategic partnership with an internationally renowned brand.

DESCRIPTION

This project enables the University to feature its impactful researchers and practitioners on an international stage.

The project includes the identification of research experts to speak at three 2024 Hay Festival theme related events, then identification, creation and coordination of 1.5 day itinerary for each speaker that connects them with key sectors, creatives or individuals around their talk at Hay Festival.

Promotion of each event and future collaborative opportunities included creation of a communications strategy and marketing materials around each researcher's field of expertise, its application and impact in the non-academic world.

Part of this project also included a review of the relationship with the Hay Festival organisation and event, identifying opportunities or limitations for future sponsorship, hosting or collaboration with Aberystwyth University Old College, university researchers and the Aberystwyth University Dialogue Centre.

Identify long term strategy for Hay Festival collaboration, facility provision for hosting the festival and its future related events for Old College.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Deliver three speaker events at Hay festival with associated promotion campaign.

Deliver the relationship review report and opportunity assessment.

Growing a Community of Practice in Dialogue and Facilitation

5 year Project

Project Sponsor: Jen Wolowic [jew51]

STRATEGIC BENEFIT

Increases institutional skill in engagement, innovative facilitation and dialogue methods leading to knowledge exchange and innovation.

Improves engagement network for the University across fifty researchers, teachers and thirty staff as part of the annual training cycle.

Improves assessment of the viability and demand for the Dialogue Centre as a University income and impact generating service.

DESCRIPTION

This project involves the design, co-ordination and delivery of training to university researchers, staff and stakeholders in constructive dialogue and facilitation practice.

Working closely with the Department of Development & Alumni Relations, the Dialogue Centre continues to strengthen our relationship with the world leading Simon Fraser University Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue, as well as Virginia Tech, and Durham University to share innovative methods of collaboratively solving problems in a workshop environment.

The project was led by our Dialogue Centre Principal Lead, that hosted the events, was also trained and is the primary initiator of strategic partnerships in the field of facilitation.

The project aims to:

- Position the University in the longer term, as a leader in facilitation design and delivery.
- Create and strengthen facilitation cohorts to improve their facilitation capability.
- Bring new methods, ways of working and impact to the university.
- Bring leading experts to Aberystwyth University to lead train the trainer opportunities.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Train 40+ academics and staff in facilitation and the need for participant centred workshops by month 18 of the project.

After month 18, record the staff and academics applying learnings in teaching, international research, department meetings and internal/external workshops.

After month 24 bring international best practice to the University to fold into research and impact focus areas.

Ensure the project is resourced with a high standard of internal or procured expertise for centre scale-up and feeds into institutional training workstreams.

Plan and co-ordinate professional support or a future 'facilitator in residence' visit each year of the project.

Establishing UNESCO Literary Recognition

2 year Project

Project Sponsor: Jen Wolowic [jew51]

STRATEGIC BENEFIT

Improves University, town, region, national reputation.

Increases economic benefits resulting from the improved reputation.

Increases local community pride and loyalty.

Increases student, researcher, innovator and industry attraction to the university and region.

DESCRIPTION

Aberystwyth is the literary heart of Wales and as such is in a strong position to gain the prestigious status of becoming a UNESCO City of Literature.

The bid for Aberystwyth to become a Dinas Llên UNESCO City of Literature was initiated in the Department of Welsh and Celtic Studies in 2021, was developed by the University's Creative Exchange Network and since had gained traction within the wider community.

With unanimous support from the Town Council and swiftly adopted by Ceredigion County Council as part of its strategic plan, a stakeholder group was established and partnership building has continued with the Books Council of Wales, National Library of Wales, UNESCO Cities of Literature in England and beyond, and various departments within Welsh Government.

With this title, Aberystwyth would join a prestigious network of 295 creative cities worldwide and the first of its kind in Wales.

Activity includes a feasibility study to identify potential local economic benefits that includes the potential to attract industries and investment, as well as social benefits of greater community cohesion for hosting current and future literature-based events.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Submit the bid by the 2025 application cycle deadline with:

- Evidence of the historical merit for becoming a UNESCO City of Literature status.
- Collate evidence from the past 3-5 years of literary initiatives in the area.
- Collate evidence to demonstrate this activity's relationship with the 17 UN sustainable development goals and the seven Well-being of Future Generations Goals.
- A four-year plan of activity to promote the designation.

Innovating Democracy Differently with Knowledge Exchange

2 Year Project

Project Sponsor: Jen Wolowic [jew51]

STRATEGIC BENEFIT

Creates our University civic mission strategy and it's delivery programme

Increases support for the regional civic mission network and plan.

Increases alignment of civic mission activity with Commission of Future Generations strategic delivery plan and its team's activity.

Increases institutional involvement with regional community groups.

DESCRIPTION

Doing Democracy Differently is the phrase and project the university is using to position Aberystwyth University as an active contributor in global movements that improve participatory and deliberative democracy, that is - citizen engagement in government decision-making in between elections.

The project sparks collaborations that support public engagement innovations that strengthen active citizenship in Wales and the work of Aberystwyth researchers focused on polarisation, rural and community innovations.

Following an emergent strategy that responds to needs of the sector, this project will support the development and delivery of the University's civic mission plan.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

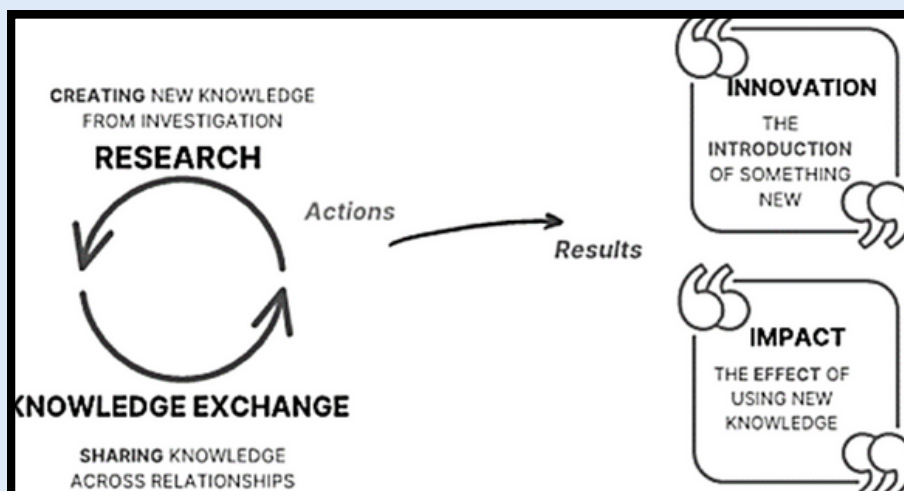
Month 1-6 of project development, deliver:

- A toolkit for arts-based workshops launched at the Hay Festival.
- Democratic engagement content for local Aberystwyth App after receiving external funding.

Month 6 and beyond, capture:

- External contracts for research on the application of democratic innovations in Wales.
- Grant funding for a national gathering of democratic engagement practitioners with a targeted return of 2:1.

Theme 4: Investing in Skills, Staff & Services



Projects falling under this theme concentrate on developing the right talent, capacity, processes and tools to continually improve our innovation and knowledge exchange capability.

Aberystwyth university has earmarked the portion of the RWIF grant that is dedicated to building capacity to developing the skills, staff and systems that drive up our performance and build on the improvements we achieved in the programme of RWIF-funded work in the 2019-23 strategic period.

To ensure the best value for money in developing skills and culture around innovation & knowledge exchange at the University, group training was prioritised, to develop staff knowledge, enable sharing of information, practice and cross-colleague support.

The Department of Research, Business & Innovation aims to prepare its staff as practitioners and trainers, in order to effectively and efficiently pass on their new expertise to others in a scalable, sustainable fashion across the University. This activity was designed and measured under an overarching training framework.

Annual calendars of training for wider audiences are mapped by the department for future years in this strategic period.

An up-skilled workforce need the tools to operate with a new level of expertise, in a flexible, efficient and effective manner. This is achieved with a comprehensive digital transformation of the operating practices of the department, the cascading benefits include the following objectives:

- To ensure our resource capacity serves our ambitions of growth in volume, quality and value of KE.
- To increase our competency in KE through skills programmes that increase our performance across multiple KE channels.
- To develop a culture that propagates and promotes KE performance internally and externally using improved collaboration with industry, community, HE & FE.

Overarching Training Framework

5 Year Programme

Project Sponsor: Karen Presacane [kdh]

STRATEGIC BENEFIT

Increases the level of staff skills that raises our quality of service, our productivity and our capacity for knowledge exchange activity as well as propagates a culture of best practice for the long term.

DESCRIPTION

Following a detailed recruitment drive in the previous strategic period to acquire staff and systems that improved our efficiency and efficacy in knowledge exchange, this strategic period sets a path of continuous improvement. This requires a structured plan of training over the forthcoming years, to budget and ensure value for money, as well as ensure a reporting mechanism that evaluated training providers, and the optimal delivery methods.

The framework ensures equality & inclusivity of development opportunities for staff servicing the Innovation & Knowledge Exchange activities

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Visibility of all training supported by RWIF via one umbrella project.

Survey staff feedback on the selection and prioritisation of training.

Establish shared accountability across the RBI group to deliver training across more staff with customised in-house training and group training opportunities.

Evaluate training content and provider quality, as well as the strategic significance and value of the training to ensure a fair assessment of future in house training capability, and shared support for developing staff.

Record staff skill development across the departmental career progression matrix and monitor the increased use of improved processes and systems.

Year 1, key training target areas include:

- Business Development
- Intellectual Property & Commercialisation
- Project Management
- Leadership
- Presentation and pitching projects, proposals and products.
- Developing high quality funding bids.
- Facilitation

Customer Relationship Management System Development

1 Year Project

Project Sponsor: Varied RBI staff

STRATEGIC BENEFIT

Increases our visibility and contact with our customer/collaborator/partner/investor base.

Increases our potential to exchange knowledge and innovate with delivery partners.

Improves the quality of our institutional and individual relationships with customers & collaborators, increased levels of trust, transparency and willingness to commit resources, funding and assets to innovation.

Improves the integration between internal communication and data systems.

Increases external engagement.

DESCRIPTION

This project enables the use of a knowledge exchange and engagement tool: a configured module of the Microsoft Dynamics system, designed for customer relationship management (CRM), this module being dedicated to business development with external organisations.

The Microsoft Dynamics product is used by the entire university. Across different departments, different modules of this product are used in different ways, for different purposes. The business development module becomes an element of that whole system.

The business development module featured in this project is launched to integrate with our Finance & Human Resources System (Unit 4/Agresso/ ABW) and the grant development system (Worktribe) in 2022/23.

This second phase of RBI's system launch, project ensures the relationship management system is supported with a super-user team within the department of Research, Business & Innovation that are proficient in using, guiding others, and maximising the use of the customer relationship management system (CRM). This project crosses over our training framework project as it increases our overall departmental and institutional digital capability.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Increase the number of regular users of the CRM Dynamics system within the department of Research, Business & Innovation.

Increase the business development activity and engagement with industry through effective relationship management.

Increase the visibility of customer and collaborator relationships across the university.

Create intra-department connections related to external relationships through use of the system.

Reduce the customer contact fatigue and increase the perceived value of university communications.

Streamlining Contracts Services Through Digital Technology

1.5 Year Project

Project Sponsor: Chris Heidt [cah]

STRATEGIC BENEFIT

Increases throughput of contracts, reduced waiting time for contracts processing, shared accountability for establishing contract terms if engagement.

Improves reliability and security around the contracts database and processing system (using an external server and support system).

Increases commercialisation and income-bearing activity.

DESCRIPTION

This project will make use of the Inteum Major Account Program (MAP) to:

- Host the database on the Inteum servers
- Establish Single Sign On security access
- Integrate compatible university data from existing software systems
- Add portals to allow academics to request contract drafting services and supply information required by the contracts team to supply that service quickly and accurately
- Launch an Invention Disclosure portal aimed at academic departments.

This work will be performed by the Inteum Company, co-ordinated by RBI, and the project outcome will be visible through the department of Research, Business & Innovation's website.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Establish automated updates for the Minuet software system.

Establish a clear, visible process for requesting CDAs and MTAs (other agreements to follow in due course).

Create a platform to market technologies.

Create a smooth & simple system for academics to disclose inventions.

To increase the number of inventions disclosed

To streamline the agreement support service.

To market all our available technologies for licensing quickly, on-line and reach targeted customers/licensees.

Investment Planning and Commercialisation of Facilities

1-2 Year Project

Project Sponsor: Tim Dowling [tid16]

STRATEGIC BENEFIT

Increases the visibility of the high specification equipment used by researchers across the university. Showcases our research, knowledge exchange & innovation environment alongside our world leading research.

Increases the sustainability and availability of our income-bearing knowledge exchange and innovation facilities as well as testing services offered to industry.

DESCRIPTION

This project will make use of the Elsevier "Equipment monitoring service" to create linkages between research equipment and the research expertise and outputs (that is, the new knowledge) which arose from the use of that facility.

This work will be performed within the PURE CRIS system and the results will be visible through the Aberystwyth University Research Portal.

The accessibility enabled by the portal will then be commercialised.

The project creates a mechanism by which to measure the impact of equipment and facility investments in our research & innovation infrastructure, plus justify and calculate the future maintenance requirements of that equipment that the university should account for in future planning rounds. It will showcase this research infrastructure effectively to collaborators in the higher education sector and industry. This will stimulate greater partnership opportunities, drive up service demand for our testing and equipment services and facilities.

This diversified income will support the future maintenance of facilities, and growth the critical mass of research & innovation expertise.

The same information will also enable a greater level of strategic decision-making on the spend of external grant funding for research equipment: Higher Education Research Capital Funding.

A service offered by Elsevier, the developers of our CRIS system - PURE, will link our research output records to the relevant research equipment and be our partner in this project.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

To commission the equipment monitoring service, launch the results on the university research portal, create a report of cross-referenced data and deliver insights.

Data and insights will be used by a subsequent project to create the commercial service portal, planned start in FY2025.

Full Commission of a Research Management System

1 Year Project

Project Sponsor: Ellie Morgan [efm3]

STRATEGIC BENEFIT

Increases visibility of our research and knowledge exchange income.

Improves resource management and prioritisation of funding applications.

Distributes accountability for grant capture success rates and continuous improvement.

Improves financial governance of funding partnerships and project proposals.

Improves visibility of total income as recorded by the national measures and the Higher Education Business and Community Interaction survey (HE-BCIs), directly affecting our RWIF grant income.

DESCRIPTION

The University purchased a license to the Worktribe research management system in 2022. The original license terms included four modules, but due to a system review initiated by the university executive group, only one module has been approved to launch to date: this is the pre-award module that manages costing and risks associated with grant application and contract development activities.

With the pre-award module launched, a number of organisational processes require improvement to ensure we maximise the benefits from the system and also maximise our grant funding and external income capture potential.

These organisational improvements require cultural change and leadership.

This project addresses the environment in which this system works, integrates revised business processes and other compatible systems that manage Financial processes, customer relationships, research ethics and governance and human resources. The project also launches the reporting element of the module to enable the university to monitor performance, prioritise potential improvements in practice, plan appropriate interventions and forecast it's future income growth as documented in the National Measures.

As a bilingual university, the final element of the project is to establish a Welsh interface on the system for all users.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Deliver the Worktribe system reporting functions.

Establish a continuous improvement register for pre-award peer review processes and training for academic departments.

Establish pre-award funding pipeline planer boards by faculty.

Integrate the ethics system data feed.

Integrate the bilingual interface.

Cybersecure and Visible Research & Innovation Expertise

1 Year project

Project Sponsor: Hannah Payne [hep]

STRATEGIC BENEFIT

Creates a safer digital environment for our research outputs and evidence of the university expertise in innovation and knowledge exchange.

Ensures continued accessibility of our research and innovation data.

Reduces the risk of cyber-attack.

Increases the uptime of our research software: PURE

DESCRIPTION

This project ensures continuous access and support for the PURE software application and database that acts as our research output data environment.

The visibility of the university research expertise is fundamental to attracting relevant, reputable and a diverse range of collaborators and innovation delivery partners.

The current on-site hosting of this digital technology support is vulnerable to cyberattack and fluctuations in low support resource.

The parent company of the PURE system -Elsevier- are withdrawing support for on-site hosted licenses.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Transfer of the PURE application and database to the Elsevier cloud hosting environment by the end of the financial year.

Collaboration Pathway Support Programme

7 Month Pilot Project

Project Sponsor: Jen Wolowic [jew51], Jenny Deaville [jff], Hannah Payne [hep]

STRATEGIC BENEFIT

Increases external partnership potential across research and knowledge exchange.

Increases academic knowledge exchange awareness and capability to engage.

Improves academic confidence to initiate, engage and capture innovation partnerships that lead to scalable impact through knowledge exchange.

Establishes the basis of replacing and refining the historical incentive scheme (Impact Fund) to a more tailored and knowledge exchange enabling programme.

DESCRIPTION

A pilot project resulting from a review of the academic use of the University's internal support funding to achieve economic and societal benefit from research, innovation & knowledge exchange.

All existing support schemes for researchers that promoted research impact development were assessed and the cycle of support mapped.

This identified the majority of requested support was for facilitating engagement with collaborating partners to exchange knowledge. This project pilots a package of support resource, expertise and funding for researchers to increase and improve their capability in designing, planning and delivering collaborative working environments or events between researchers and external partners for the purpose of knowledge exchange, impact and innovation.

Core to the initiative is a competitive funding call that results in training and prescribed support from a team including RBI staff and contracted services to deliver funded activities.

The scheme was branded AberCollab and is designed using Theory of Change methodology, linking the identified needs with desired outcomes to plan and evaluate the programme. This also provides a framework for evaluating and improving the programme over time.

At each stage of the pilot, from initial AberCollab pilot development through to the final lunch, researchers were asked to provide feedback and advice to RBI to ensure AberCollab met their needs.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Promote the funding call and scheme, assess all applicants, complete training events, support costing processes, co-ordinate external resources and plan future event and communications plans that support for each applicant. Use the pilot results to identify core resources, key support and opportunities that can be created by an annual support program to help researchers build or expand collaborations at key areas of their researcher journey and/or research cycle.

Develop a proposal for the annual delivery of the scheme if the pilot is successful.

Each scheme awardee receives:

- Up to £2,500 for collaborative workshops and events intended to facilitate collaboration between AU researchers and external partners.
- A one-day in person 'Facilitation got Successful Collaboration' training course.
- Attendance at Support Surgeries hosted by the Dialogue Centre as well as individual coaching from the Dialogue Centre and the Research Impact and Knowledge Exchange Officers (RIKEOs) as needed, throughout the programme.
- Access to external contractors to provide content writing, graphic design, and AberWorks personnel (casual staff sourced from self-nominated students) to provide 'day of event' support.
- Attendance at a wrap-up lunch featuring stakeholder mapping training, and AberCollab pilot evaluation to strengthen research culture, identify outcomes, and improvements for the programme.

Responsibility for scoping, managing and delivering the Innovation & Knowledge Exchange Strategy funded by the Research Wales Innovation Fund lies with the Department of Research, Business & Innovation. The work is led by the Director of the Department, Helen Jones.

As a professional support service, our aim is to provide guidance to research staff and equip them with the tools they need to help find funding, develop applications, cost proposals, manage grant awards and advance collaboration with academic partners, business and industry. We also monitor and record research impact and offer professional development opportunities, including workshops and sandpit events for developing inter-disciplinary projects.

If you're interested in discovering more about how you can work with us to harness the power of research and bring about positive change, visit our [website](#) or email us at drbi@aber.ac.uk. We look forward to hearing from you.


Innovation & Knowledge Exchange Strategy Lead

Helen Jones

Director of Research, Business & Innovation

drbi@aber.ac.uk




 +44 (0) 1970 622385

 drbi@aber.ac.uk

 @RBIAber

 aber.ac.uk/rbi

 Ymchwil, Busnes ac Arloesi /
Research, Business & Innovation

Research, Business & Innovation
12 Science Park
Aberystwyth
SY23 3AH

Mae cyhoeddiad yma ar gael yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg. Os nad yw'r copi hwn yn eich dewis iaith, cysylltwch ag drbi@aber.ac.uk ac fe anfonwn gopi arall.

Designed by Research, Business & Innovation; June 2024.

All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.