

A roadmap for the next phase of our University's development





Visualisation of the proposed new heart of our main campus. Our ambitions will preserve and enhance the area as a public space.

### **Executive summary**

This Strategic Plan captures the collective ambition and imagination of our staff, our students and the wider Bristol family including our alumni, supporters, partners and benefactors. It provides a roadmap for the next phase of our University's development.



'Our vision is to sustain and improve upon our world-leading reputation for research, and embrace educational innovation that will nurture skilled, adaptable and resilient graduates.'

**Professor Hugh Brady** Vice-Chancellor and President

Our ambition is to be globally renowned both for the quality of our teaching and learning environment and for the excellence and breadth of our research and scholarship – as well as for the strength of the partnerships that underpin them.

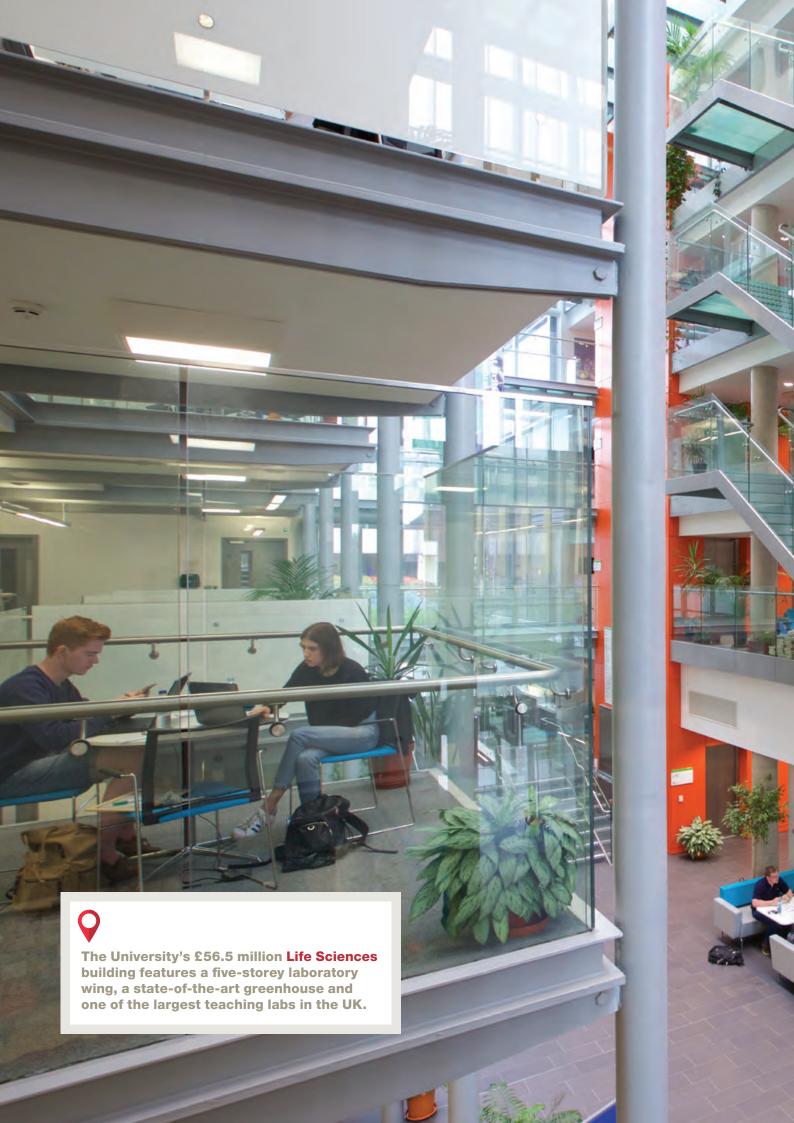
For over a century, we at the University of Bristol have inspired generations of students, pushed back the frontiers of human knowledge and served our city-region and the nation with distinction.

Today, our University is ranked among the top 40 universities in the world and in the UK's top five for research. We are also one of the top five targets for the UK's leading employers of graduates. Our University's

global reputation is testament to the quality and achievements of our staff, the highly talented students we attract and the success of our graduates. Excellence is the benchmark for everything that we do.

The culture within our University is highly collegial, which facilitates academic collaboration in both teaching and research. This spirit of partnership extends beyond the University: we enjoy strong links with other world-leading, research-intensive universities, industrial partners and organisations in the UK and across the world.

We are fortunate to be located in one of Europe's most creative, dynamic and liveable cities with which we enjoy a close and synergistic relationship. For many Bristol scholars, the city is an unending source of research opportunities and a laboratory within which to test solutions with potential global impact. For the city, our University is one of its largest employers and a major contributor to its economic, social, cultural and intellectual vibrancy. Our students bring a huge amount of energy and vitality to the city, and in turn our location greatly contributes to the richness of their university experience.





### **Executive summary**



### Cornerstones of our strategy

Educational innovation that will nurture resilient graduates who can thrive in a dynamic and rapidly changing world. This will be achieved through the launch of a new Bristol Futures curriculum, the establishment of a new Bristol Institute for Learning and Teaching and significant investment in the physical, digital and support infrastructure needed to deliver a top-class student experience.

Developing the structure, content and modes of delivery of our portfolio of taught postgraduate programmes to ensure that they map to current and future market needs. We will also launch a major new initiative in business education and its interface with other disciplines including health, ICT, science, engineering and the humanities.

Taking our commitments to diversity and inclusivity to a new level through a number of complementary initiatives: a new Bristol Scholars Programme focused on making the benefits of a Bristol education more accessible to high-potential students in the local community; a new scholarship programme developed in partnership with our global alumni base to further increase the flow of top-class international students to the University; and a focused effort to increase female representation in University leadership roles.

Building capacity in world-leading research through growth of PhD student numbers and the further development of the Bristol Doctoral College as a comprehensive resource for their support. We will also augment research capacity in areas of established excellence and/or strategic importance through the launch of the Vice-Chancellor's Fellowship Scheme.

Establishing a limited number of Specialist Research Institutes in which Bristol has the potential to sustain world-leading research of scale. We will also continue to develop our University Research Institutes to promote University-wide multidisciplinary research on global grand challenges.



Putting people at the heart of our future development by significant investment in our staff. This includes overhauling our recruitment and promotion processes and putting in place measures to further empower our staff and unlock their potential.

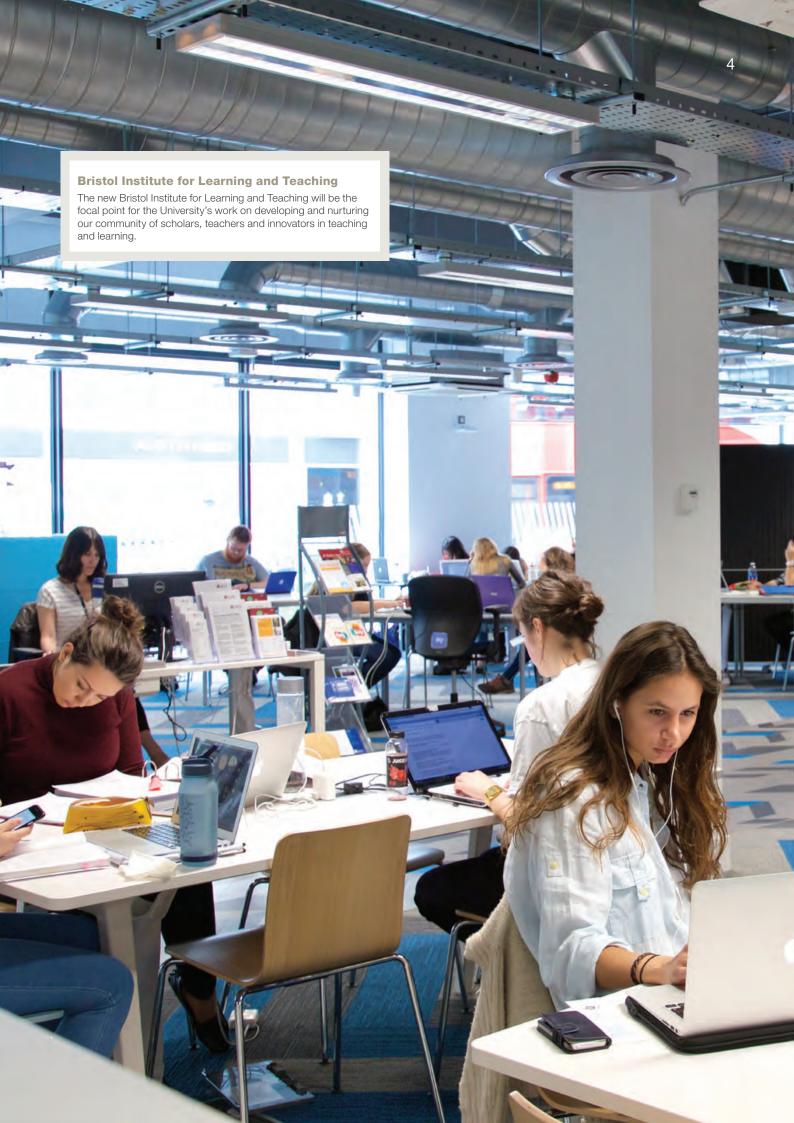
Transforming the centre of our main campus by clustering enhanced student support facilities in a new Student Resource Hub and building a new University Library around Tyndall Avenue. We will also explore and develop options to create an additional campus within the city focusing on business education and its interfaces with other disciplines.

Redoubling our efforts in internationalisation: setting ambitious targets for both international student recruitment and student mobility across all our programmes; expanding our portfolio of joint and dual degrees with high-quality international partners; and increasing the scale, reach and impact of our research through a limited number of joint PhD and research programmes with other leading international universities.

'To achieve our goals we will need to be ambitious and strategic in the generation and deployment of resources, become more efficient and nimble in our governance and management systems, and collaborate in new and imaginative ways with likeminded institutions in the city-region, the UK and across the world. The engagement and support of our alumni and the wider Bristol family will be crucial to our success.

When we have implemented this Plan, our University will be widely recognised as one of the top universities in the UK, and among the most well-respected universities in the world. Our local and international partnerships will be a beacon of good practice in global higher education.'

**Professor Hugh Brady** Vice-Chancellor and President



# Education and the student experience



'We will provide an education that enables all our students to become the best that they can be, and to become leaders in their chosen fields. We aspire to a reputation for education that matches our reputation in research, and is world-leading.'

**Professor Judith Squires**Pro Vice-Chancellor for Education

Research and education are synergistic activities at Bristol, each nourishing and informing the other. We already offer an outstanding, research-rich undergraduate provision and host a range of prestigious PhD programmes. We also offer many masters' programmes that can, in some cases, lead to PhD training or are explicitly designed to give graduates a competitive advantage in the workplace. Our learning environment has been greatly enhanced by the sector-leading innovations of our academic and professional services staff.

The environment in which our students work, live and play is as important as the education we provide. Offering an outstanding student experience, supporting student



### **Technology-enhanced learning**

Andrea Zhok and Marcella Oliviero in the School of Modern Languages won first prize in the 2016 Apereo Teaching and Learning Awards for their use of the Xerte authoring software for a peer-teaching Italian grammar project – one of many uses of IT packages for technology-enhanced learning in Modern Languages.

well-being and enabling students to develop their personal resilience and self-reliance are vital in ensuring that our students get the best from university life and flourish in a changing world.

A keystone of this strategy is a renewed focus on education and the student experience.

### **Education and the student experience**

### Actions. We will:

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Assist our students in developing the knowledge, skills, adaptability and resilience they need to thrive in a society that is changing more rapidly than ever before by launching the Bristol Futures initiative. This will complement the traditional strength and educational depth of Bristol's established, research-rich curriculum with educational breadth and the development of academic and employability skills through three personal and professional development pathways: Innovation and Enterprise, Sustainable Futures and Global Citizenship.

Review, reshape and expand our portfolio of taught postgraduate masters' and continuing professional development programmes to ensure they are fit for purpose in the national and international marketplace in terms of their content, structure and modes of delivery, and maximise their potential to boost the employability of our graduates. This will include the launch of a major new initiative in business education and its interfaces with other disciplines.

Provide the support, feedback, infrastructure and contact hours that students need as part of a top-class learning experience, and review and enhance the ways in which we provide student pastoral support to ensure the well-being of all of our students.

Transform our digital infrastructure to support our students' learning environment, recognising that the range of new technologies in everyday use is changing students' behaviours and expectations.

Enhance our capacity in e-learning through development of blended learning options within the new Bristol Futures offering, conversion of some of our most successful taught postgraduate programmes into a distance learning option and development of a focused suite of new, online degree programmes.

Nurture and grow our community of innovators and scholars in teaching and learning through the establishment of a Bristol Institute of Learning and Teaching.

welcoming, student-centred 'heart' to our University. Notable elements will be a new University Library that focuses particularly on the needs of our arts and social sciences students; clustering our University-wide academic, pastoral and career support in a new Student

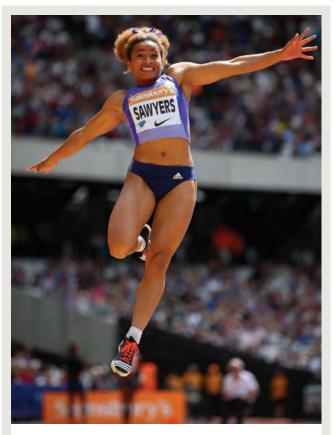
Resource Hub; and enhancing the quality of the public

realm around the centre of our main campus.

Remodel the centre of our main campus to create a

### **Applying learning in real-world settings**

Our Community-Based Learning programme allows students to work with local organisations as part of their degree programmes, benefiting students and partners alike. Examples include students developing business plans for local Non-Governmental Organisations, advising the City Council on flood risk management and proposing strategies for improving urban biodiversity. These projects count towards the students' degrees and give them valuable work experience. The growing list of local partners includes Arup, various community partnerships, and the Environment Agency.



### From participation to high performance

Law student Jazmin Sawyers won a silver medal in the long jump at the Commonwealth Games in 2014. Jazmin is a member of the University's Performance Squad, which offers benefits including tailored coaching and access to Olympic-level facilities. We encourage all our students to get involved in sport, and offer a wide range of leisure, fitness and team activities.

### **Merchants' Academy**

The University sponsors Merchants' Academy, a comprehensive school in Withywood, South Bristol. Working with the school, we have developed a programme of support for their pupils, including mentoring and tutoring sessions, visits to the University and summer schools. Members of University staff also sit on the Academy's governing body.





'We will be a university that is fully integrated with the communities we serve and is a destination of choice for students from all backgrounds. We also want to ensure that all our students have the support they need to achieve their full potential.'

### **Robin Geller**

Registrar and Chief Operating Officer

### Inclusivity and diversity

Recognising the potential of our applicants has always been fundamental to our mission to recruit the most able students from the most diverse backgrounds, and we have invested significantly in outreach, student support and progression initiatives. Significant progress has been made in recent years; Bristol's widening participation activities, and the research that underpins them, are recognised as sector-leading.

We are now planning to build on these activities and take a more radical approach with the aim of achieving a step-change in the diversity of our student population. In developing these plans, we will continue to work closely with our student body, through the Students' Union, to ensure that our actions are evidence-based and achieve results.

### Actions. We will:

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Significantly increase recruitment of high-potential students from local schools through a new Bristol Scholars programme that will provide guaranteed places for the schools' top students, and will be developed and delivered in partnership with those schools.

Roll out a new, contextual offer system of up to two grades below our standard offer for high-potential students from aspiring state schools.

Provide students from under-represented backgrounds with a tailored package of academic and pastoral support to guide their development and ensure that they thrive at Bristol.

Review all curricula to ensure that they are inclusive in scope and delivery.



# Research, innovation and partnerships



'We already compete successfully with the best in the world in a number of key research areas. We will build upon that position to cement our place as one of the world's leading research-intensive universities, and be exemplary in our openness and willingness to collaborate with a wide range of partners.'

**Professor Nishan Canagarajah**Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research

### Research

The University of Bristol is ranked among the world's leading research-intensive universities. Our reputation is built upon our core disciplinary strength and breadth, in which we will continue to invest and build. We have also built a significant reputation for multidisciplinary research, largely through our University Research Institutes. We pride ourselves on our commitment to critical enquiry and research excellence, and to realising the impact of our research on society.

Competition for research funding is fiercer than ever before, as is the need to work creatively and nimbly with a wide variety of partners in the development and execution of research and the realisation of its impact. We must build scale in key areas, provide the environment necessary to be a destination of choice for the best scholars, and attract and retain more PhD students and early-career researchers who are the engines of the research endeavour.

### Research, innovation and partnerships

### Actions. We will:

Establish a limited number of Specialist Research Institutes to support the growth of, and give greater external visibility to, world-leading specialised research programmes of scale.

Further develop pan-University multidisciplinary research through the expansion of our four University Research Institutes, which are focused on health (Elizabeth Blackwell Institute), the challenges of living with environmental change (Bristol Cabot Institute), data science research (Bristol Jean Golding Institute) and exploration of the human condition (Bristol Brigstow Institute).

Create 100 tenure-track Vice-Chancellor's Fellowships for early- and mid-career researchers to boost research and leadership capacity in areas where Bristol is an established international leader or has the capacity to develop internationally-competitive scale and impact.

Increase our PhD student numbers to be in the top quartile of the Russell Group and further develop the Bristol Doctoral College as a comprehensive resource for the enhancement of the PhD training experience.

Develop postgraduate research training relationships with overseas institutions and industry partners, including joint/dual PhD degrees or 'cotutelle' arrangements involving our diverse array of Bristol-based national Centres for Doctoral Training and Doctoral Training Partnerships.

- 1. Professor Malcolm Evans OBE from the University of Bristol Law School was awarded a knighthood in the Queen's 2016 New Year Honours list for his services to torture prevention and religious freedom.
- 2. Professor Robert Fowler won the 2014 Charles J Goodwin Award of Merit for his outstanding contribution to classical scholarship, notably his critical edition of early Greek mythography.
- 3. The University's Volcanology Research Group, led by Professor Katharine Cashman, was presented with the Queen's Anniversary Prize for Higher Education for its work including studies of the Eyjafjallajökull eruption in Iceland.
- 4. Dr Kate Hendry in the School of Earth Sciences received the 2016 Houtermans Award from the European Association of Geochemistry, given to early-career researchers for an exceptional contribution to geochemistry.
- 5. Professor Jeremy O'Brien (left), Director of the Centre for Quantum Photonics, was awarded the Optical Society's 2010 Adolph Lomb Medal for his contributions to founding the field of integrated quantum photonics.













### Innovation and impact

Our University is a beacon of good practice in innovation and enterprise. The world-leading Bristol SETsquared, the Business Acceleration Centre at the University-run Engine Shed, is a cauldron of enterprise activity and new business creation, and our National Composites Centre at the Bristol and Bath Science Park is a role model for industry-academia collaboration. We seek out and work with the best high-growth, innovative companies based in or relocating to our region, and we establish new ventures with public- and private-sector organisations to create test beds for our research.

We want to enhance further the scale, quality and impact of our research by embedding entrepreneurial thinking in all our staff and students, and through fruitful partnerships with a wide range of organisations. We aim to be a sector leader in terms of our ability to establish and maintain productive collaborations.

### Actions. We will:

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Increase the innovation potential of our graduates through a number of complementary initiatives: the mainstreaming of innovation and entrepreneurship in the new Bristol Futures undergraduate curriculum initiative; the launch of the Bristol Innovation Programmes – a suite of new, four-year undergraduate degrees which couple established subjects with innovation; and a major new venture in business education, innovation and entrepreneurship and their interfaces with other disciplines.

Work with regional industry, universities and local government to develop a select number of research and innovation themes where established regional research excellence and scale can be harnessed through collaboration to drive world-leading innovation, economic growth and job creation.

Develop a new Bristol Digital Living Innovation
Platform as the University's flagship contribution to
the regional research and innovation agenda. This
platform will be a test bed for research that integrates
data collected in real time (via everything from transport
networks to home-based medical sensors) into projects
that enhance businesses, public services and the lives of
local people. This new venture will be fully engaged with
our new business education initiative and with the Engine
Shed business incubator.

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## Our staff (and ways of working)



'A highly motivated and energised workforce is a prerequisite for achieving our ambitions. We must recruit, develop and retain the best academic and professional services staff and provide them with a challenging, high-performing and supportive environment.'

### **Professor Guy Orpen**Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost

Our University is a large and complex community, and a huge variety of people contribute to its success. We value and seek to build on the current sense of community and collegiality that is such a particular characteristic of our institution. Part of our strength lies in the many overlapping cultures that coexist. We will continue to foster the partnership working and respectful behaviour that are so important in enabling our staff, students and the wider community of involved alumni and supporters to thrive and play their part to the full.

**Left** Professor Judy Harris (centre) was one of the first recipients of a University of Bristol Teaching Fellowship and was co-director of the Applied and Integrated Medical Sciences (AIMS) Centre of Excellence in Teaching and Learning until 2011. She currently manages the AIMS initiatives based in the School of Physiology and Pharmacology.



### **Bristol Teaching Awards**

Dr Kelly Moule (above centre), Reader in Biomedical Science Education in the School of Biochemistry, received the 2015 Vice-Chancellor's Award for Education for her exceptional contribution to education and enhancement of the student experience at Bristol.

'Teaching is a huge part of our vocation as academics, and it's wonderful to be recognised by the University for the effort and initiative we put into giving our students the best experience possible.'

Dr Kelly Moule



We aspire to a fully inclusive culture. We value the diversity of thought, belief and background in our community that enables the University to be effective at challenging accepted norms and resilient in the face of continual change. We are therefore determined to attract and retain a more diverse workforce than ever before.

### Actions. We will:

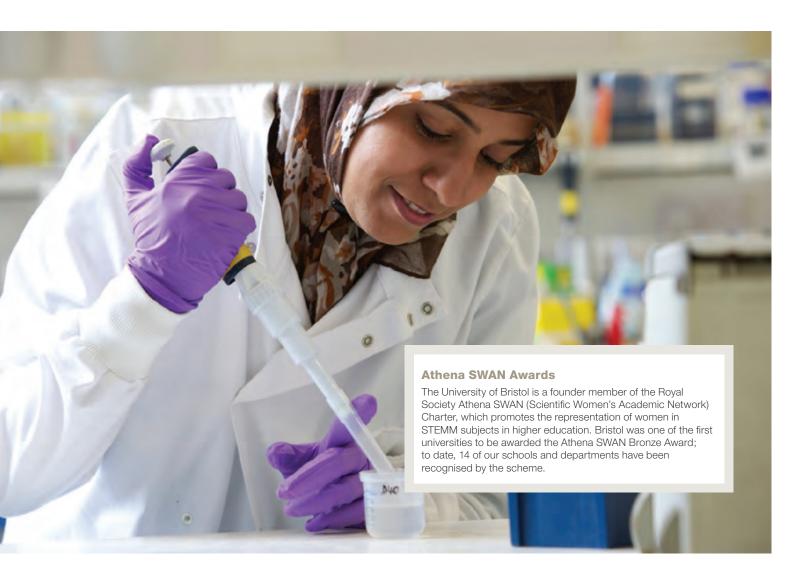
Further enhance our ability to attract the very best staff from across the world by overhauling our recruitment and selection activity, including the use of a campaign approach where appropriate.

**Nurture individual excellence and unlock potential** by reviewing personal development and performance management arrangements, and maintain our emphasis on leadership and management development.

Increase diversity within our staff population through a range of measures including ensuring gender diversity on all interview panels, openly advertising all senior posts and creating a dedicated 'exceptional talent' pathway for targeted recruitment of high-quality female and BME staff with clear leadership potential. We will also eliminate the gender pay gap within the professoriate within the lifetime of the plan.

Improve the quality of two-way communication with staff and establish appropriate mechanisms for staff to feed into decision-making through the introduction of a Staff Engagement Plan.

We will empower our staff to operate effectively through a lean and agile approach to governance and management that enables staff to fulfil their roles and provides effective, transparent and accountable decision-making. We will also review the core statutory elements of our governance structure to ensure they are fit for purpose. Building on the recent Council Effectiveness Review, we will conduct a review of Senate and wider academic governance, review and refresh the role and structure of Court and Convocation and seek to develop mechanisms to strengthen further our relationship with our alumni.





### **Vice-Chancellor's Impact Award**

This Award is presented to staff whose research has significantly impacted on society. In 2015, Dr Hannah Christensen and Professor Matt Hickman in the School of Social and Community Medicine won for their mathematical models, used by the Department of Health to determine which new vaccines should be introduced in the UK.



### **Professional Services Excellence Awards**

The Professional Services Excellence Awards recognise the outstanding contributions of administrative, operational and technical support staff. There are seven categories: the winner of the Outstanding Team Award in 2014 was the teaching technical team in the School of Veterinary Sciences.



## Internationalisation and global relations



'If we are to gain more of the advantages that internationalisation offers, we must ensure that the University remains attractive to the world's brightest minds. We must further internationalise the student experience and deepen the University's alliances with carefully selected organisations worldwide. We will also take steps to raise our institutional profile and reinforce our global reputation for excellence.'

### **Dr Erik Lithander**

Pro Vice-Chancellor (International and Student Recruitment)

Our ambition is to make internationalisation even more central to our thinking and behaviour and to be acknowledged worldwide as a UK leader in this regard. We want our staff, students, and education and research activity to reap the benefits of a renewed institutional commitment to build strategic connections and relationships around the world.



### **China graduation**

More than 350 Chinese students who studied at Bristol celebrated their graduation at a ceremony in Beijing in 2015 – the second such event the University has held in China's capital. Bristol's Chancellor, The Right Honourable the Baroness Hale of Richmond, presided at the ceremony.

### Internationalisation and global relations

### Actions. We will:

Increase the proportion of high-quality international students on all our programmes through enhanced marketing and recruitment, a new international scholarship programme developed in partnership with our overseas alumni, and the forging of targeted new educational partnerships with leading international universities.

Enhance the opportunities available to our UK students by further internationalising our curricula, expanding on-campus internationalisation initiatives and increasing the availability of student mobility opportunities.

Build a 'Global Lounge' that will serve as a hub for intercultural activity on campus and will consolidate services for international students coming to Bristol and for UK students seeking outgoing mobility opportunities.

Make our University a destination of choice for international scholars by significantly enhancing the services and support available to incoming staff, visitors and their families.

Ensure – through partnerships with student societies and community groups – that our University, students and staff are active participants in the celebration of diversity in Bristol, and that we champion a range of campus-wide initiatives that enhance the intercultural understanding and sensitivity of our entire community.

Promote and enhance the profile and reputation of the University through a bold and proactive international positioning strategy.

We will achieve our ambitions by developing and proactively maintaining a handful of large-scale strategic partnerships with leading international organisations, including other universities. We will also develop and support partnerships with international alumni chapters and relationships with leading individuals, companies and organisations. This will help raise the University's profile and increase engagement with highly networked and influential alumni and friends to encourage volunteering and philanthropic support.



### **Singapore meets Bristol**

During a State Visit to the UK in 2014, the President of the Republic of Singapore, Dr Tony Tan Keng Yam, came to Bristol to witness the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between Nanyang Technological University (NTU Singapore) and the University of Bristol to collaborate in healthcare technology research, especially in the field of wearable technology and home sensing represented by Bristol's EPSRCfunded SPHERE (Sensor Platform for Healthcare in a Residential Environment) project.

## Physical and digital infrastructure



Our ambition is to provide a welcoming, well-maintained and inclusive campus that provides the infrastructure, both physical and digital, that our staff and students need to succeed individually and to flourish as a community.

### Actions. We will:

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Continue our rolling investment in high-quality academic infrastructure, with major upgrades of facilities for Mathematics, Engineering, Biomedical Sciences and Geographical Sciences.

Explore and develop the options to create an additional campus within the city focusing on business education and its interfaces with other disciplines including health, information and communications technology, science, engineering and the humanities.

Create a highly visible, coherent and welcoming heart to our main campus on Tyndall Avenue by providing new facilities, remodelling and integrating existing facilities, and enhancing the external public realm. Revamp our digital infrastructure to make it more resilient, scalable, flexible and secure, including replacing our data centres, starting a new phase of development in our high-performance computing and investing in new productivity, collaboration and communications tools to allow all staff and students to work and study more efficiently and seamlessly.

Engage with strategic partners with a view to enhancing our physical infrastructure in key areas such as medicine and sport, and explore the potential for developing a new cultural quarter for Bristol, centred on the University's iconic Victoria Rooms.





### Sustainability



'Addressing social and environmental challenges is at the heart of everything we do at Bristol: the way we teach and pursue research, the subjects we focus on, and how we behave as an institution. We are already leaders in this area, and we are setting ourselves ambitious targets. We will work in partnership with our students, the city and organisations around the globe to achieve our goals.'

Professor Rich Pancost
Director, Bristol Cabot Institute

We are proud to have developed leading innovations in sustainable research, education and behaviour. Examples include the Green Impact Awards, developed at Bristol and now used across the sector to encourage sustainable behaviour among staff, and working with organisations around the city to win, and realise the benefits of being, European Green Capital in 2015.

Sustainability is embedded in everything we do: the research we support, our curricula, the student experience we offer and the way we behave as an organisation. The environmental principles of Bristol as a city and of our University attract both staff and students, and harnessing their passion and energy to make a positive difference in the world is key to our success and central to our approach.



### Actions. We will:

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Seek to mainstream sustainability in the minds of all our students and nurture future leaders in sustainable thinking via the Sustainable Futures pathway of the Bristol Futures curriculum and through volunteering activities supported by Bristol Students' Union and other organisations.

Boost our world-class research capacity and promote policy innovation in sustainability through further development of our Bristol Cabot Institute.

Continue to set ambitious institutional targets in areas such as transport, water usage and energy usage, and aim to become a net carbon neutral campus by 2030, setting an example for the sector.

We are a founding strategic partner of the Bristol Green Capital Partnership and of Bristol Health Partners, which have sustainability at the centre of their strategies. We will work with them to achieve the city-region's ambitions, and with other partners locally, nationally and internationally with the aim of securing a healthy, sustainable future.



### Way to grow

The University's involvement as a leading partner in European Green Capital 2015 featured many local sustainability projects, including Way to Grow, which brought students and local communities together to transform green spaces. Student volunteers worked with partnerships such as the Friends of Brandon Hill Group to identify areas in need of gardening.

'I have met lots of new people and enjoyed getting close to nature while also getting some hands-on conservation experience. I would like to continue volunteering in environmental conservation and educate others about its importance.'

Amy Preston, Way to Grow Committee

### **Green Impact Awards**

The Green Impact Awards scheme was developed by the University of Bristol's Sustainability team. Green Impact challenges students and staff to make a series of changes and actions that will help the environment. The scheme has now been adopted across the UK higher education sector and beyond, with over 270 UK organisations taking part and an estimated 6,923 tonnes of carbon saved so far.

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### Accessibility

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