



UNIVERSITY COURT

MEETING DATE	13/12/2024
REPORT TITLE	UPDATE FROM LAST YEAR'S COURT WORKSHOP
CLASSIFICATION	Public
REPORT AUTHOR	Michelle Barbour, Assistant Pro Vice-Chancellor Enterprise & Innovation Sarah Roberts, Strategic Innovation Manager
SPONSORED BY	Guy Poppy, Pro Vice-Chancellor Research & Innovation
PURPOSE	To Note
<p>University Court is asked to: NOTE the update on progress in relation to the Enterprise and Innovation 2023 Court workshop.</p>	
Summary of Paper History and Onward Consideration/Decision Making	No
Does this report need to go to another body or Committee?	No
<p>Executive Summary One year on from the University Court workshop on Enterprise and Innovation, and there is much to report! Below you will find a digest of some of the exciting developments, from a £300M opportunity to support spinout companies in the South West, to updates on the University Strategic Performance Indicator of Intellectual Property Disclosures, to inspiring individual stories of enterprising academics, students and graduates.</p>	
<p><u>Strategic Outcomes</u> World-leading research and innovation with local, national and global impact University SPI for Enterprise and Innovation: Increase our commercial offering by establishing our new Bristol Innovations platform to boost the translation of ideas to market, through spin outs and fostering partnerships with industries, businesses, government agencies and other innovation assets globally, nationally, and locally.</p>	
Key University Risks <u>Current KURR Risks</u>	No
<u>Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)</u> undertaken N/A	No
Appendices/Reading Material Attached	No

One year on from the University Court workshop on Enterprise and Innovation, and there is much to report! Below you will find a digest of some of the exciting developments, from a £300M opportunity to support spinout companies in the South West, to updates on the University Strategic Performance Indicator of Intellectual Property Disclosures, to inspiring individual stories of enterprising academics, students and graduates.

SETsquared and QantX announce plans for £300M investment vehicle to support innovation and growth.

The University of Bristol is one of six universities in the SETsquared partnership teaming up with leading regional investment firm QantX to launch a new £300m spin-out focused investment vehicle.

The new investment vehicle aims to significantly boost the creation and growth of science and technology companies in the South and West ready to address global challenges.



[October: University of Bristol to partner in £300m investment vehicle | News and features | University of Bristol](#)

It's been a fantastic year for performance on our key University SPI for Enterprise and Innovation; **Invention disclosures were up 29% in 23/24** (23/24: 135, 22/23: 105). Performance exceeded the target of 110 for 23/24 and that of 130 for 26/27. The Faculties of Science and Engineering, and Health and Life Sciences, continue to perform strongly, while the Faculty Arts, Law and Social Sciences showed the greatest growth of all with an increase in disclosures of 121%

Commercialisation highlights across Arts, Social Sciences and Law:

Lucy Cramp (Archaeology and Anthropology)

Lucy Cramp recently won a £1 million AHRC Capital grant to establish the Centre for Chemical Characterisation in Heritage Sciences (RiChES) at the University of Bristol. The Centre will be a 'world-leading national facility' based in Arts and drawing together expertise from across the University (Chemistry and Earth Sciences). RiChES will provide a commercial service which offers cutting-edge radiocarbon dating and analysis to heritage organisations and archaeological services. This builds on the existing BRAMS radiocarbon dating facility but will upgrade its equipment and expand the commercial offering to the heritage science community.

Richard Cole (Classics)

Richard Cole established the Bristol Game Lab in 2022 with Edward King and Xiaochun Zhang (Modern Languages) and has recently won a share of funding (£1.2M) from the MyWorld Collaborative Research and Development call with gaming industry partner Meaning Machine. This year-long project will involve research and development in generative AI systems for in-game characters, with Richard's research informing the cutting-edge of game design. Following on from this, Richard offers commercial consultancy services to the local games industry using the expertise built up by the Bristol Game Lab.

We attribute this increase in disclosures to a suite of initiatives designed and executed to drive disclosures and support the pathways that follow. These include **Enterprise Roadshows** (e.g. ICURe, beLAB1407), **Enterprise Masterclasses** (live events where researchers hear from innovation leaders and have opportunities to ask questions), **Enterprise Sessions** (inspiring stories and Bristol-linked individuals), and our pioneering **University Enterprise Fellowship and Early Career Enterprise Fellowship** schemes which provide protected time, resource and personalised support to enterprising researchers at all career stages.



In February 2024 we launched an exciting pilot scheme, the **Early Career Enterprise Fellowships**, creating opportunities for postgraduate research students to explore the commercialisation of their research. Each fellowship provides commercialisation and entrepreneurship training, a presentation skills masterclass, one-to-one professional research commercialisation support and bought-out time, for the fellows to pursue the opportunity.

In March 2024 we welcomed our first cohort of 10 Early Career Enterprise Fellows from a diverse range of disciplines from across the University. An intense 3 months of training and activity resulted in 10 fantastic Pecha-Kucha style pitches before an external judging panel at the **June Festival of Enterprise**.

With fantastic feedback from how the fellowship had helped widen student and supervisors commercial networks to personal development of presentation and pitching skills, the scheme has also led to a patent application, securement of commercialisation funding and a new job for one of the fellows! To read more about the Enterprise Fellows' experiences of the scheme [visit the Enterprise and Innovation Blog!](#)



University of Bristol spinout company **iCOMAT** has closed secured more than **£17.5m in funding** to deliver lighter transport solutions faster and at a lower cost.

iCOMAT is currently working with more than 25 customers from across the aerospace, defence and automotive sectors, and has successfully delivered parts for demanding applications including fighter aircraft panels, space launcher structures, and Formula 1 components

[June: iCOMAT funding success | News and features | University of Bristol](#)



The University were shortlisted for the RAEng Bhattacharyya award for our long-standing partnership with EDF . The

Bhattacharyya Award is an annual award to celebrate collaboration between academia and industry. This prize of £25,000 is awarded to the team or teams who best show how industry and universities can work together.

Watch the video for more information: [UoB EDF FINAL](#)

We're immensely proud to have reached the shortlist for this year's [Royal Academy of Engineering Bhattacharyya Award](#), recognising our longstanding partnership with [EDF \(UK\)](#) to ensure safe, clean, and affordable energy for the UK. Professor [Thomas Scott](#), from the [University of Bristol's](#) Interface Analysis Centre shared this tribute: "In being shortlisted for this award we celebrate the legacies of Professor David Smith and Professor Peter Flewitt, who both made significant contributions to the EDF partnership over many years. Sadly David died in 2015 and Peter passed away suddenly in September and we regret that they were not able to share and celebrate in this culmination of their work, but we are grateful to have known and worked with them both."

Dynamic Therapeutics, a University of Bristol spin-out, awarded a prestigious Blavatnik Prize by QantX, a leading venture capital firm, for its pioneering U-RHYTHM technology in April 2024. The award recognises the scientific advances and future potential of the UK's most innovative scientists and engineers.

The U-RHYTHM device is worn in a comfortable band placed around the hips. The position of the microdialysis membrane, which is placed superficially in the skin

[April: blavatnik-prize | News and features | University of Bristol](#)



Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor of Research & Innovation Professor Annela Seddon with the award for 'AI University of the Year'

University of Bristol has been crowned 'AI University of The Year' at the National AI Awards solidifying the University's reputation as a leader in artificial intelligence research and education.



But that wasn't all. **The University of Bristol initiative REASON Open Networks Project bagged AI Award for High Tech & Telecom**, rounding off a successful night for colleagues in the [Faculty of Science and Engineering](#).

From AI supercomputing to driving AI innovation within the telecom industry, responsible AI systems and interdisciplinary collaboration, the University's contributions aim to set global benchmarks for academic institutions and business.

Prepare for Impact Programme

We know that most researchers want their research to make a positive difference in the world, so what if we gave them the skills, knowledge and confidence to share what they are working on with others, outside of academia? That was the driving force behind the **Prepare for Impact programme, jointly delivered by the Industrial Liaison Office and Science Partnership Office in the Faculty of Science & Engineering**. In October we had a wonderful celebration for the end of the



Prepare for Impact programme at the Watershed in Bristol. Anna Ploszajski and Pete Bailie gave masterclasses on story telling and networking and seven academics participated in a three minute research talk competition to win a prize of having a film made of their research. All the talks were inspiring but special congratulations to Ryan Palmer who was the judges' choice.



“Prepare for Impact Programme” was crucial in changing my attitude towards entrepreneurship and pushed me towards applying for the IAA funding. Prior to it I held a belief that my research is fundamental and holds no value outside of the academic circles. Attending the mentoring program, where our mentor was a senior person from the aerospace industry, allowed me to develop a different perception of my work and realize the full potential of our findings. Subsequently, I have attended several training sessions and workshops

that assisted me not only in developing a successful IAA application, but also in winning a fellowship and being more effective in promoting and championing our research.

SETsquared ranked in the top three startup hubs in Europe & top in UK

The SETsquared Partnership has been ranked as the 3rd leading startup hub in Europe and the top entry from the UK and Ireland by the Financial Times and Statista's [Special Report on Europe's Leading Startup Hubs](#).

The report ranked 125 startup hubs across 21 European countries using data and feedback from alumni and independent experts, including investors, and it also examined the success of emerging companies.

SETsquared is recognised for its unique collaboration model across six research-intensive universities and the quality of its place-based support for deep tech startups, alongside the scale, expertise, and capabilities that the six universities bring across the South and South West regions.

[SETsquared ranked in the top three startup hubs in Europe and top in UK - SETsquared Bristol](#)

The New Enterprise Competition Winners were announced in June.

The NEC is the [Careers Service's](#) flagship start-up competition. Run by the [Basecamp Enterprise Team](#), students, graduates, and staff, with support from mentors and experts, transform their business ideas into business realities. The final stage of the competition, the GROWTH stage, sees participants battle it out in pitches to a panel of experts for a chance to win a share of £25,000 of funding!



(Pictured from left to right are: Shabaj Ahmed (Progressable), Rachel Keys (Heartly), Ajeet Bhambra (Foundercentre), Artemis Fragkopoulos (SLANT), Deeshen Shah (Lettus Digest), Louisa Billington (Accomodeep), Weronika Stelmach (Weaving Change), Isobel Turner (Attic Catalogues), and Vasudev Menon (Invaai)).

The overall winner for 2024 is **SLANT**, winning £15,000 plus 12 months of incubation at [SETSquared](#). They also won a £3,000 bonus prize from competition sponsor, [Engineers in Business](#).

SLANT is building electric trolleys – called ‘e-carriages’ – to help shoppers get their groceries home. They want to reduce the 4.5 billion car journeys made to the shops in England each year and help those who do not drive to get their shopping home easily and sustainably.

[Meet our 2024 New Enterprise Competition winners! – Careers Service Blog](#)

Thank you again for your engagement during the Enterprise and Innovation workshop in December 2023, and we hope you have enjoyed learning about some of the recent activities and developments in this area across the University

Professor Michele Barbour, Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor: Enterprise and innovation and Dr Sarah Roberts, Strategic Innovation Manager

University Enterprise and Innovation Committee