



Innovation Sub-Group Meeting

Wednesday 23rd February 2021, 10:00 – 12:00

Virtual Microsoft Team Meeting

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Draft Minutes of the Meeting

Members present:	<p>Lesley Thompson (LT): Chair & VP Academic & Government Strategic Alliance Elsevier</p> <p>Sarah Haywood Price (SHP): Managing Director Advanced Oxford</p> <p>Simonetta Manfredi (SMf): Associate Dean for Research & KE Oxford Brookes (<i>in attendance for Prof Linda King</i>)</p> <p>Roger Neal (RN): Sophos UK</p> <p>Barbara Ghinelli (BG): STFC</p> <p>Agne Milukaite (AM): Cycle Land</p> <p>Stuart Martin (SM): Catapult</p> <p>Paul Beasley (PB): Professor of Energy Systems and Head of R&D Siemens UK</p> <p>Debbie Buckley– Golder (DBG): Innovate UK</p> <p>Jane Galsworthy (JG): Director of Programmes Oxford Innovation /AO Rep</p> <p>Ian Chapman (IC): UKAEA</p>
Apologies:	<p>Chas Bountra (CB): Oxford University</p> <p>David Legg (DL): Innovate UK</p> <p>Andrew Harrison (AH): Diamond Light Source</p> <p>James Colgate (JC): Williams Engineering</p> <p>Sally Long (SL): IPO</p>
In attendance:	<p>Phil Clare (PC): Deputy Director, Knowledge Exchange & Engagement, Oxford University</p> <p>Thandiwe Hara-Msulira (THM): OxLEP</p> <p>Ahmed Goga (AG): OxLEP</p> <p>Alexandra Capata (AC): OxLEP</p> <p>Stuart Wilkinson (SW): Oxford University</p> <p>Puja Gidwani (PG): OxLEP</p> <p>Guy Robinson: IPO</p> <p>Helen Brind (HB): OxLEP</p> <p>Sophie Lee (SL): OxLEP</p> <p>Leah Thomson (LTh): Oxford University</p> <p>Natalie Egan (NE): OxLEP</p>

	Item
1.	Welcome, Introductions and Apologies
2.	<p>Matters Arising & Minutes of the Meeting held on 16th of December 2020</p> <p>AG: General areas - Report From Jeremy Long</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There is an increase in conversation on skills to make sure different aspects of skills are aligning with place strategy and we should note that the road map identifies issues around vocational training. ▪ There may be difficulties in attracting researcher talent in a Post-Brexit environment and aligning that up with the ecosystem. ▪ There is a discernible shift between areas of high performance and others. Levelling up may be about how we can encourage innovation in areas that have lower a history of it. ▪ However, innovation adoption in some markets sectors is still slow, and this includes Oxford. ▪ There may be a role in attempting to adopt technology more aggressively, to support wider innovation activity. ▪ Innovate UK team will be coming in the next meeting and we will focus on innovate activity. <p>ACTION:</p> <p>Please pass any further thoughts to Ahmed for Jeremy to contribute to the efforts to strengthen the resolve around this.</p>
3.	<p>Oxfordshire Business Investment Fund (BIF) - AG</p> <p>The BIF is a 2.1m capital grant programme focused on building economic recovery. The aim is to support businesses to position themselves in a post-Covid environment, including increasing their market share.</p> <p>It involves 25k capital grant, and businesses are expected to match fund.</p> <p>Areas of interest include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increasing R/D Investment ▪ Acceleration of technology adoption ▪ Creating supply chain opportunities ▪ Developing ways to improve on the disruptions caused by Covid-19 ▪ Looking for proposals that can support apprenticeship and traineeship protection ▪ Understanding how markets and sectors have changed in light of customer and consumer behaviours – e.g. online activity, near shoring design activity. <p>The timetable is driven by funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Scheme is going live on 1 March. ▪ There is a breakfast launch event on 2nd March. ▪ Process will start with call for an EOI with deadline on 19 March.

- A Task and finish group has been set up to make sure that these projects are developed and are hitting the mark and there is a dedicated team working on it.
- The specs briefing will go through all the issues to help people out so that the process is not onerous and not time wasting.

SHP - Does the match need to be capital as well?

AG - No it can be revenue e.g. cash alongside software licensing or further training used to deploy the technology.

SMF – Is there a link that we can use?

AG - Yes, collateral is being developed this week, and includes micro media and site which will be circulated.

BG: It would be good to understand the detail. We have a similar industry-matched program which has been successful. How are you planning to help industry to take up innovation and R/D to access the scheme? There are gaps in what the standard programmes offer, and what innovate UK provided, and R/D development. We need to come up with ways of providing easier access to the schemes.

AG - The key is getting the comms out as fast as possible and we are going through the conversational process. It is currently already out on LinkedIn. We are working to push communications out this week.

This money is coming out of CLG rather than BEIS so we have to spend it in a particular way. This is the trade-off we have had to adopt, to get money into the programme and the delivery time is squeezed to 5.5 months.

ACTION: AG/AC to share the links to the dedicated micro-site with the groups.

ACTION: All to push the details of the scheme to their contacts, especially to as many businesses as possible.

4. **Connecting Global – NE**

A kick-off discussion about the concept of connecting global.

The LIS and later the investment plan identified connecting global as part of working with other innovation communities across the world innovation. This is a multi-channel absorbing video, social media and other connective mediums. It will allow Oxford to be a genuine partner in global development and would support the global work happening in Oxford. We also want to capitalise on what Oxford has achieved around the pandemic.

Cluster Map Analysis

- The connecting global concept is about how we promote the Oxfordshire innovation ecosystem through a multi-market platform. It follows on from earlier work on the cluster map.
- Our analysis of the Cluster map showed that the site had a peak in activity just after the map was launched and this was flat until April when vaccine research was announced and another peak when vaccine was approved in December. So the vaccine peaks appear to have generated a few searches, otherwise it has been flat throughout.
- The cluster map also missed some key players in Oxford so we need to expand who is included and specifically ensure key technology companies research institutes, science and business parks are included.
- The numbers also show a high bounce rate – 80% of the new users are not coming back, and they are spending less time on the page.

This means that while the Oxford cluster name resonates the Oxford name and so attracts people, but we are not converting the user to regular users.

- 50% of the users are from the UK and the other 50% are overseas, including 7% from the US, and 6% from Turkey.

We need to factor these lessons into connecting global and work out how it is used and promoted, including how it is designed.

Purpose of connecting global

The purpose will be to bring together Oxford into one place, offering connectivity to other ecosystem communities such as silicon Valley and promoting technology, and cutting edge research. Raising Oxfordshire's profile as a top 3 global innovation ecosystem with an emphasis on investment, collaboration and partnering.

Service areas of interest include:

- attracting and promoting Talent
- recruitment
- providing touch points
- events
- international links
- cluster development and mapping
- research and academia
- emerging sectors
- news portal
- living in Oxfordshire

The aims is to provide insight into the ecosystem about what this place is what it does and what its assets are. This could be a unique platform.

Users:

The communities and subscribers would include:

- Innovators
- Investors
- Graduates
- Business leaders
- The whole ecosystem in Oxford and globally

The platform will also support the latest in social media, and people should be able to see fresh updates of relevant information such as: recruitment opportunities, event programmes, trade visits, relocation stories etc. The site should articulate why anyone might want to come or relocate to Oxford.

Next Steps

The ambition is to move quickly but we need to be careful to resolve cluster map issues first. We will be looking at more customer testing and how to improve the user interface. We also need to think around how we can advance the visibility etc.

AM - This is an exciting ambition and something Oxfordshire needs – collaboration is really needed so buy in from all communities and leaders is key. They all need to see it as a value for them.

SHP - We need to ensure it is properly resourced and effectively curated and up to date. Showing the dynamics of the labour market is an effective way of showing the vitality of the cluster.

AG - We have to be prepared to invest into it if we want to make a difference. This will cost money but it will also generate significant value later on so we have to look at running this in a commercial way.

LT – Market testing is very important so we need to test that – the design should be linked to what users think is needed. We can also learn from other places and draw lessons from social media content and aspects.

5. Increasing Diversity in Enterprising Activities (IDEA) - LTh

Presentation on progress on the women and entrepreneurship.

- In the first instance, this initiative will focus on addressing activities that support women in entrepreneurship
- The university is doing some of this in parts but action has not previously been coordinated.
- This formal approach follows ongoing work internally and also by colleagues at Brookes, as well as other national work like The Alison Rose Review of Female Entrepreneurship (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-alison-rose-review-of-female-entrepreneurship>)
- We have convened an advisory group that includes one ISG member (**AM**)

The key areas of work are:

- Currently, in the process of recruiting a full time Programme Coordinator, for 18 months in the first instance.
- The PVC (Innovation) Professor Chas Bountra is the sponsor with an overall overview of women in entrepreneurship. We are also recruiting an academic champion to help deliver system changes in the University, and support the development of the programme. This signals a very serious intention to do this.
- We will collate and curate resources – use what is available and provide support to current activities. Work collaboratively with other people who are doing this rather than create something from scratch.
- The Oxfordshire community support is not just about women, so men will also be encouraged to actively participate.
- Bespoke programmes within the university will be offered financial support to develop.
- Entrepreneurship data collection – The University does not have a single entrepreneurship point, so we are looking at an app to track student and staff engagement with entrepreneurial opportunities and activities and to see how different groups are using these resources.
- We note there may be GDPR issues which we will need to navigate, particularly as we will be collecting sensitive data.
- Community building is probably the most interesting for this group, as anyone interested in entrepreneurship in Oxfordshire can join in. There will be a series of events and opportunities open to all.

SMf – Interested in finding out more about the data especially in terms of ethnic minorities which is currently limited. There may be scope to develop a framework.

BG - Asked if there had been any links with UKRI on the subject

ACTION: Simonetta to speak to Leah and see how they can link in to UKRI.

6. Oxfordshire IP Pilot - PG

Presentation of the IP project draft.

GR: There has been much work around innovation ecosystems including utilising and commercialising IP. Puja has been working with OxLEP based on the IPO's place strategy, and this includes people, place and growth hubs.

This report is a first draft and it needs some level of prioritisation to be done, before taking forward any of the recommendations.

PG presented the report (*refer to IP project full report or the IP project executive summary*).

ISG feedback on the report

- Companies could fall into two groups:
 - a) Those not making enough effort to protect IP
 - b) Those who are over protective of their core IP that it prevents good conversations with customers or investors. These issues may also be specific to particular sectors.
- There has been IP education activities going on. We need to make sure that we understand what knowledge is being imparted by those. A discussion about how embedded it is in existing activities is important.
- Business strategic sites, funders and angel investors try to dig into IP strategies for businesses, but this is fragmented and we need to bring it all together.
- There could be interest in additional support, and services to what is available within institutions, e.g. universities, but this needs to be sensitive to what is already there. It may also be useful to see how we can improve the uptake and use within the institutions. For example, a research hub may be where such work could happen, but we may need to consider how those could be brought closer into departments or the curriculum.

SHP – Businesses who are self-selecting e.g. in science park may be easier to engage than those in other places, and they may also be less engaged with IP. We may need to strategise the focus and how we reach out.

GR - The IPO is trying to integrate IP in the strategies that are being built around the regions, without necessarily building a new set of activities.

AG - If colleagues can feedback by Friday 5th/6th we will absorb the comments and the task group will meet again to look at the issues that have emerged in the report.

Action: IP Task group is due to meet on 09/03/2021 to discuss this report further.

Action: All to provide any more feedback by 6th March, in time for the IP task group meeting.

7. Innovation Support for Business Project

A quick update on the IsFB Programme:

- Current components on the programme: Innovation support products, Co funded Facilities, Go-Create Innovation Grants
- An update on the baseline budget for the programme will be shared with the T&F Group
- An update on the outputs achieved to the end of the Q4 2020.

Phase Two Strategy has been presented.

Proposals for IsFB in 2021 has been presented.

AG: This is a programme that is now live and there is an opportunity to focus its activities over the next 18 months in support of the areas that we have discussed withing the parameters of ERDF.

SHP: There is an opportunity to articulate the value proposition and how it is different from other support is available, and which segment the programme is targeting.

AM - We need to make sure it ties in with many diverse and innovative businesses.

RN - Are we seeing a shift of people working from home to office/. Are people long term going to work from home as opposed to work from offices. – home working may shift.

The group advised to minimise the risk of not cross-referring between the different programmes and coordinate the funding programmes between IsFB and Innovate UK/ other organisations.

AG - There is a specific commitment in the spec that businesses to be referred to other programmes alongside the BIF so that they can get the maximum of the offers that are available.

SHP – There is a target around collaborations between the companies participating in the programme through research collaborations. And there is a need to address if this programme is going to meet this target.

ACTION: Discussion on the target at the next Task Group Meeting.

8. Any Other Business

Dates of the next meetings (Microsoft Teams):

- *25th of May, 2pm - 4pm*
- *28th of September, 2:30pm - 4:30pm*
- *8th of December, 2:30pm - 4:30pm*