

Draft Innovation Group minutes

Wednesday, 4th December 2019, 14:30 – 16:30

OxLEP Boardroom, Jericho Building, OX1 1SA

Members present:	<p>Lesley Thompson (LT): Vice President, Academic & Government Strategic Alliance Elsevier</p> <p>Chas Bountra (CB): Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Innovation) University of Oxford</p> <p>Paul Beasley (PB): Professor of Energy Systems and Head of R&D Siemens UK</p> <p>Stuart Martin (SM): CEO Satellite Catapult</p> <p>Sarah Haywood Price (SHP): Managing Director Advanced Oxford</p> <p>Simonetta Manfredi (SMf) Associate Dean for Research & KE Oxford <i>Brookes in attendance for Prof Linda King</i></p> <p>Roger Neal (RN): Sophos UK</p> <p>Debbie Buckley– Golder (DBG): Innovate UK</p>
Apologies:	<p>Prof Linda King (LK), Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Research and Global Partnerships Oxford Brookes</p> <p>Jane Galsworthy Director of Programmes Oxford Innovation / AO Rep</p> <p>James Colgate, Group Strategy Director, Williams Engineering</p> <p>Ian Chapman, CEO, UKAEA</p>
In attendance:	<p>Phil Clare (PC): Deputy Director, Knowledge Exchange and Engagement, Oxford University</p> <p>Thandiwe Hara-Msulira (THM), OxLEP</p> <p>Sebastian Johnson (SJ), OxLEP</p> <p>Ahmed Goga (AG), OxLEP</p> <p>Josh Fedder (JF) BEIS</p> <p>Peter Russell (PR) OxLEP</p> <p>Alexandra Capatra (AC) OxLEP</p> <p>Jody Tableporter (JT) (Steer Ed)</p> <p>Simon Pringle (SP) (Steer Ed)</p>

Item 1 - Welcome, introductions and apologies

- The Chair welcomed members to the Innovation Group meeting and apologies were noted.
- Due to unforeseen circumstances, Nicola McConville was unable to attend the meeting. The agenda was amended to move the presentation from TecTonic to the next meeting in February.

ACTION – THM to speak and confirm with Nicola McConville

Item 2 - Matters Arising & Minutes of the Meeting on 30th August 2019

- The minutes of the 30th August 2019 meeting were approved.

Item 3 – LIS Development and Investment Prospectus

To receive an update on the LIS process including a working session led by Steer Economic Development on the potential content for a prospectus and collateral material to promote and profile Oxfordshire to investors and audiences.

AG: Introduced JT and SP from Steer ED Consulting.

SP set out to the Group Steer ED's recent relevant experience and the interrelationship across the ecosystem between people & human capital; infrastructure & assets; finance & business expertise; and knowledge & ideas

i) Innovation eco-system - questions to ask:

- How do you get an ecosystem to work?
- What is happening in the labour market?
- What role do we play in supporting it?
- How do we bring together existing capabilities?
- How do we create new capabilities?
- What are our existing strengths?
- How do we stay ahead?
- How do we find the route ways to new excellence?

SP explained that we need to understand the variation in our spatial geography and work out the different levels at which complementary parts of the system play.

ii) Investment prospectus

JT explained that this component of the study will look at the messages that we need to build to position the Oxfordshire Innovation Ecosystem to different audiences.

JT invited the Group to consider what the current perception of Oxfordshire was and its investment offer?

In the discussion the members made the following points:

- The offers from London and Cambridge are better known and may be perceived better by investors.
- Oxfordshire is not well known as a location for business - it is not clear what sector someone would want to come to Oxford for.
- It is a disjointed package – is it with built around Oxfordshire or just Oxford? Is it about the Universities, the labs, or Harwell or Culham? There is no collective way of looking at it.
- The case for added value is not well articulated - there are competing tensions between different parties across the ecosystem the big players and we need more willingness to collaborate
- Oxfordshire is a difficult place to recruit to, so finding good talent for R&D is difficult. Some employers are having to work with international universities to find it. At the same time, the universities are also feeding into international and national job markets
- although the issue of perception is a challenge, things are changing - there is an effort to send messages that we are tackling big global challenges. We can tell our story better.

What are Oxford's strongest assets?

SP invited group members to identify what are the current assets/advantages within Oxfordshire which are not well communicated?

In the discussion the members made the following points:

- We have the largest international space cluster in Europe and the potential to lead the sector in a number of global markets
- We have to celebrate our achievements more openly by finding ways of telling the good things we are doing.
- The Oxford conversation should reflect the diversity of our offer and not just be about the university
- Oxford University is putting in a lot of efforts to expand from teaching and research towards innovation and creation of new companies for students and attracting industry (e.g. putting on innovation space).

iii) Business case development

JT explained that Steer will work with project leads to develop a suite of business cases to translate the ambitions set out in the LIS into a coherent delivery programme for investment. Some of projects will be fully developed proposals whilst others will be focused on further development feasibility work during 2020/21. Templates for developing business cases were circulated last month and coaching sessions will be held on 16 and 17 December, with further support to develop the cases will take place next year.

AG confirmed that a working session for all OxLEP Board and Sub Group members will be held on 6th February and requested that members hold this date in their diaries

ACTION – Innovation Group members to confirm attendance at LIS working session

Item 4 - Women and Entrepreneurship: Simonetta Manfredi

An update on the Gender & University Spinouts study led by Oxford Brookes.

SMf explained that, although this study is focusing on University spin outs, the objective is to use this piece of work to open a conversation on the wider Oxfordshire ecosystem and the opportunities to introduce initiatives more quickly.

The study is also looking at the following issues:

- what can we do to make entrepreneurship more diverse?
- how can we harness different perspective that diversity offers to innovation?

SMf said that we want both the talent, and the diversity of the kind of products we can have. Oxford has the highest proportion of women founders, so we are best placed to act. There is a lot we can anticipate on the spin out process from the findings of the report. The focus should now be on action:

The study team would welcome more information on the profile of:

- OSI pipeline of companies coming through – Enterprising Oxford is currently looking at this data and will share with Oxford Brookes and Innovation Group;
- C suites of existing major companies in the ecosystem – Advanced Oxford can help build up a picture of the current profile of C Suites;
- early career researchers and doctoral students who are taking up the opportunities provided under the UKRI IcURE programme – this will be readily available through the programme team at UKRI
- undergraduates, post-graduates and alumni accessing services through The Foundry

ACTION

- **THM, PC and CB to provide information from OSI and The Foundry**
- **SHP to discuss with the Brookes team building information on C Suites**
- **DBG to facilitate data from the IcURE Programme Team**

SMf confirmed that a qualitative report will be shared in February with a number of recommendations.

LT emphasised the need to raise the profile of the outputs of this study and the visibility of the mix of leaders that are within the ecosystem

ACTION -

Item 5 - Increasing Business Investment in R&D

- *Development of an Oxfordshire Innovation Dashboard pilot.*
- *Working with BEIS to meet the ambitions of the 2.4% R&D target.*
- *Findings of the Impact Accelerator Account study report (for information).*

TH and AG presented the paper on increasing R&D investment to 2.4% and emphasised that extracting useable data remained a significant challenge as there is no solid baseline which is broadly agreed by HMG as the basis from which to measure performance, thus making overall activity at a regional level harder to track.

AG explained that we need a better understanding of how we are going to grow in relation to the R&D target. The BEIS Team are also developing this work and want our support.

The paper proposed that Oxfordshire explore the development of an “innovation barometer” that would comprise a basket of c50-100 companies from across the ecosystem which would be tracked across a series of innovation and R&D indicators over time to help inform the level of investment being made.

SHP explained that measuring data as a one off is meaningless and that any framework needs to be future proofed and measurable. It also needs to have credibility locally so we can do something more with it and undertake further scrutiny.

DBG suggested that it is possible that we are closer to the 2.4% ambition in Oxfordshire than we believe but we need a baseline position from which to work from and build improvement in private sector investment

LT confirmed that, historically, it's been easier to demonstrate R&D income received by institutions and organisations but more difficult to provide credible extrapolation of private sector spend and its impact.

PC explained that it is hard to get any data at all and others, such as Cambridge, have tried this by hand through a line by line collation of data from Companies House, and then they have grown their baseline from this agreed position. If we want to do this properly, we have to do it methodically and from a primary source that we own. It should not be done just from a local perspective but needs to be comparable to what everyone else is doing. BEIS needs to tell us if someone else is doing something better than us, or not so we can model our ideas.

SHP felt that the only way to do it is to undertake a piece of primary research, built off a sample of companies but it may be difficult to decide who to include. The easy thing is to go to Companies House and sort by SIC codes but these may not match what companies do or describe themselves.

ACTIONS

- **TH to confirm attendance of BEIS team at February innovation group meeting**
- **JF, AG to convene a pre-meeting with BEIS team in January to review proposals**

Item 6 – Innovation Support for Business Programme (ISFB)

PR explained that ISFB will now become part of the innovation sub-group and a regular item on the agenda. It has been expanded for another 2-3 years and there is a substantial amount of money in the early stages of innovation. A detailed project plan for 2020 is in development and will be shared with the innovation group.

ISFB is a business support programme open to all companies as long as they are incorporated. It provides a small amount on grant projects and some 1:1 advisory support and is a partnership involving Oxford University Hospitals Trust (The Hill), Begbroke Science Park and local councils. The revised programme has an important role to play in supporting the ambitions set out under the LIS.

ACTION – PR to share a summary briefing note on ISFB programme with the group

Item 7 – AOB

To give update on progress and future plans.

Cluster map – TH and AG reminded people about the cluster map on <https://oxfordcluster.com/>. Members are encouraged to look at it and provide feedback before the next meeting.

ACTION – All Innovation Group member to review the cluster map and feed back comments to AG by 20th January

Future Meetings (2020)

26th February	: 11:00 - 13:00
15th June	: 11: 00 - 13:00
23rd September	: 14:30 - 16:30
16th Dec 2020	: 14:30 - 16:30