



Queen Margaret University

EDINBURGH

Queen Margaret University - University Innovation Fund (UIF) Priorities AY 2017/18

Equality Impact Assessment

Building on current and good practice we have ensured positive promotion of equality and diversity in staff and all who are affected by the use of the UIF as evidenced by the supporting EQIA.

Statement re the Platform Grant Allocation

QMU welcomes the allocation of the Platform Grant. The Grant will be used to underpin the delivery of our Research and Knowledge Exchange Strategy 2015-2020 and Outcome Agreement 2017-2020, aligned to the priorities identified below. As these form a core part of our activity we are committed to matching this funding.

Commitment to All Outcomes

Through the Universities Scotland Research and Commercialisation Directors' Group (RCDG) ,QMU is committed to contributing to all of the national outcomes. We welcome all opportunities to embed good practice and implement any recommendations arising from RCDG led activity.

Institutional Context

In 2017/18 we will continue to prioritise innovation and enterprise through collaboration and working with the private, public and third sectors to achieve economic and societal transformation, regionally, nationally and internationally. To maximise the economic, cultural and social impact of our research, we aim to provide applied, translational and market ready solutions to strategically identified external priorities, generating income in order to drive sustained growth in capacity. The importance of innovation within QMU has increased significantly, with growing acknowledgement of the pivotal role it plays in enhancing our student experience and delivering impact. A major driver is the development and sustainability of a changing culture that supports the capacity of our staff and students to be entrepreneurial in a variety of contexts.

We welcome the UIF as a focal point for Scottish Universities to develop and co-ordinate a critical mass of resources to address innovation challenges and opportunities. Institutionally we will continue to pursue bold ideas in an environment where creativity, innovation and success is encouraged and celebrated. We will work consultatively and collaboratively with the other Scottish HEIs to benefit from new perspectives, and will continuously improve our innovation profile, as measured by key national/international benchmarks, and strive to deliver maximum benefit to society from our activities.

National Outcome one (demand stimulation): (QMU part of the sector collaborative partnership) (Ref PA5) (Ref PA6) (Ref PA10)

Our focus will be on the Scottish Government priority economic sectors of Food and Drink; Creative Industries; and Tourism with a new emphasis on Service Innovation that cuts across other sectors such as Financial Services, Health and Public Services. Social Innovation continues to be an area of enterprise resonating firmly with our institutional mission.

We are keen to establish a key position in Service Innovation, recognising that the primary driver of innovation in many key economic sectors is market opportunity. Given the importance of the service sector to the Scottish economy we believe that a better understanding of supply chain linkages between technology and the service sectors is vital. Responding to the structure of Scotland's large, low research-intensity service sector, presents untapped and new opportunities for industry/academic collaboration. These sectors are not R&D intensive in the traditional definitions of innovation but excel in internationally competitive markets. Through its Consumer Dispute Resolution Centre (CDRC), QMU is keen to play a leading role in defining the contours of service innovation and its significance as a cross cutting priority across many of the economic sectors. Plans are also underway to join the Scottish Institute for Policing to support research in public service innovation.

By strengthening links with SE Account Managers, Interface and sector leads in SE and HIE, the Business Gateway service and Industry Bodies we will progress our ongoing commitment to move from transactional to more strategic, well-embedded relationships that are firmly aligned to our research and values. We will continue to engage with the innovation landscape in Scotland including Innovation Centres (where possible), Interface, Innovation Vouchers, and the Scottish Government's proposed innovation reforms. We will monitor our performance to drive cultural change in support of key Scottish Government initiatives - Making it Happen, the Universities Scotland 5 Point Innovation Action Plan and Innovation Scotland Action Plan.

Through the enhancement of relationships with the new Interface Business Development and Sector Teams we will identify opportunities and leads that stimulate demand for solutions to industry challenges and advances in fundamental understanding. We will support our researchers in articulating research outputs to external stakeholders and potential end-users through our repository and new institutional website.

By developing, evaluating and facilitating the uptake of theory-driven interventions to influence priority economic sectors, we will increase the profile and positioning of our academic research through our new Research and KE Centres, specifically our Centre for Communication, Cultural and Media Studies, Centre for Person-centred Practice Research and Centre for Applied Social Sciences.

In anticipation of the new Scotland Food and Drink Strategy 2017-2030, we will continue to work in collaboration with SRUC and Abertay to ensure collaborative alignment of academic research with the industry innovation strategy. We will further develop this partnership and engagement with the Food and Drink Industry via our joint work with the Scottish Enterprise Food and Drink Industry Liaison Group. This will also support ongoing inter-institutional initiatives in support of graduate start-up and employability in Food and Drink.

We are keen to work with the sector to raise the profile of enterprise and innovation by supporting joint events, drawing on current partners, and opening the doors more widely to targeted collaborators. This might include exploring opportunities to develop industry specific offerings based on the collective Scottish University expertise e.g. the Highland Show, Food Matters Live London.

We will continue to push specific partnership initiatives that support traction in industries with historically low levels of R&D spend i.e. Tourism, Creative Industries and Financial Services. Through collaboration we will extend this activity to look at the alignment of resources focused on collaborative academic capacity building. This might take the form of collaborative post-docs focused on key industry challenges and would help link blue skies and market ready research in sectors such as Food and Drink where the supply chain is complex.

Outcome two (simplification/commercialisation) (Ref PA8) (Ref PA7)

An underpinning driver is to continue to support the development of unified support for innovation in regional SMEs to catalyse the flows of knowledge between QMU and external partners. We will work to improve support to enterprising researchers by encouraging a culture of open access and open innovation. Recognising that innovation and creativity are vital to the Scottish economy in enhancing the exploitation of research and entrepreneurial excellence, QMU will undertake a radical overhaul and streamlining of its IP policy to ensure that knowledge sharing, and partnership working, is far more straightforward and cost effective. Internally, we will take action to address the recommendations of NCUB Task Force report on Business-University Collaboration.

Outcome three (simplification/greater innovation): (QMU part of the sector collaborative partnership) (Ref PA3) (Ref PA4) (Ref PA7) (Ref PA5) (Ref PA10)

Our activities will continue to focus on the Scottish Government Economic Strategy 2015, the Scotland CAN DO Framework and the Scottish Enterprise 2015 target to increase innovation active businesses from 2400 to 3000 by 2018.

We are committed to the delivery of the SFC/Creative Scotland Creative Industries Strategy and are delighted to be part of a joint proposal, led by Glasgow School of Art on securing wider benefits from creative activity through collaboration. We are engaging in ongoing dialogue with other HEIs including Glasgow School of Art and the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland to look at specific initiatives around creative start-ups, possibly a summer creative entrepreneurship accelerator programme, where graduates are partnered with industry practitioners and, where appropriate, researchers, from their field of practice and industry. Recent graduate start-ups would also benefit from some form of pan-Scottish initiative, in partnership with Creative Scotland, that would support enterprise creation in the creative industries in contributing to the development of exhibitions, performances, productions etc. We believe that additional work is also required around funding interventions that support micro enterprises, sole traders and owner/practitioners who form the business model that dominates many of the sectors that define the creative industries.

Working towards the delivery of national outcomes we are keen to develop and share good practice on the commercialisation of physical space and Innovation/Enterprise Parks. In the Creative Industries we will work with Glasgow School of Art and the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland to explore collaboration around reciprocal agreements for graduate incubation – hot desking in different partner HEIs.

QMU is partnering with East Lothian Council which is working with businesses in the region as part of a unique Food and Drink based Business Improvement District (BID), the first of its kind in the UK. The BID framework has been used elsewhere to enhance town centres, tourism and business parks with successful examples bringing a range of improvements such as better promotion and marketing, community events, projects and loyalty schemes, all of which can drive sales and attract more investment.

We will develop opportunities for inter-sector innovation in Food and Drink, Creative Industries and Tourism; crossing existing disciplinary boundaries and exploring links with FE. Recognising the increasing imperative of “Place-based” policy, we will build on institutional and collaborative strengths in high level skill production and high value innovation to embrace opportunities arising from the new Government Industrial Strategy. Initial discussions are underway with the University of Highlands and Islands (UHI) to explore collaboration and alignment with innovation arising from respective City Deals, including the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Deal via QMU’s Food and Drink Innovation Park. We will explore possibilities for an Eastern Food Corridor in this context and maximise collaborative opportunities for working with UHI in Food and Drink and Tourism.

Following Professor Reid’s 2016 review of the Scottish Innovation Centres, we will continue to lobby for more flexible Scottish interventions for innovation led economic growth that do not assume one size fits all and encourage traction in high growth sectors such as Food and Drink, where R&D spend has historically been low but sector growth projections are high and the opportunities for employability are unprecedented. Our new institutional focus on Service Innovation will explore opportunities including and beyond innovation synonymous with STEM and will seek to anticipate emerging innovation arising from cross sectoral collaboration. Maximising any opportunities for engagement with the existing Scottish Innovation Centres remains a priority, specifically with the Digital Health and Care Institute, Industrial Biotechnology and the Scottish Aquaculture Innovation Centre. Through our Centre for Health, Activity and Rehabilitation Research we are keen to develop links with the Construction Innovation Centre.

We will secure our position as the partner of choice for industry in key markets through the quality and focus of our research and efficiency of our outward interfaces; this will include maximising the societal impact of QMU activities through marketing, communication and brand development.

Outcome four (entrepreneurialism): (QMU part of the sector collaborative partnership) (Ref PA1) (Ref PA5) (Ref PA2)

Our underpinning strategy is to grow research and innovation interactions with external stakeholders that enhance the student experience by fostering collaboration in economic sectors of prime relevance to teaching and future graduate careers. Through alignment of strategy, we will ensure that enterprise and employability is a core component of academic provision at all levels by: increasing start up activity; supporting opportunities for developing and understanding enterprise skills both within QMU and externally, including placements, internships and participation in enterprise competitions; presenting a single, coherent message about enterprise to all stakeholders; building on our Academies programme; and nurturing relationships developed with employers through other interactions to maximise graduate employment opportunities.

Long term we will maximise opportunities to embed research and knowledge exchange within the curricula and develop channels for student input into these activities by ensuring that teaching is delivered by academics, aspiring to international research reputations, creating curricula that showcase and reflect our critical and applied research and practitioner expertise.

We will develop a programme of pilot innovation activity - learning and extending networks around Enterprise and Start Up with the Further Education sector, building on existing collaboration with SRUC to pilot initial activity around Food and Drink and the land based colleges.

We have rebalanced our emphasis towards academic capacity building to respond to external demand and capture high value academic links with industry. As cited in our EU Concordat for Research Careers and European HR Excellence Award framework, there is a commitment to work in partnership with Heriot Watt University to develop people exchange by working collaboratively with other institutions to develop training for SME translational skills for researchers with a focus on co-creation, alignment of objectives and expectations, and the development of mutual value. QMU welcomes the opportunity to promote access to cutting-edge facilities and equipment, proprietary data and industry resources. In emerging sectors this can strengthen the innovation absorption process; enhance researcher capabilities to work across the interface; and the mutual understanding of needs, capabilities, constraints and contexts

In response to Universities Scotland - Making it Happen (2015) we will continue to champion entrepreneurship and enterprise by implementing a programme of activity which is bringing about a step-change in the entrepreneurial culture within QMU. We will continue to develop incubation services for the creation of graduate start-ups and support for innovation in local companies through proposals for a QMU Innovation Park (QMUIP); supporting the increasing role of the University as a catalyst for innovation led economic growth. QMU recognises the anchor role of universities in national and regional ecosystems and continues to seek to influence the wider absorptive capacity of industry: the economic conditions beyond the university which determine how proactive we need to be to maximise innovation, and which determine appropriate institutional strategies for entrepreneurship.

There is recognition that graduates in the humanities and social sciences have much to contribute to the innovation spectrum. We would like to work with the sector to improve the articulation of the industry need for graduates in this area.

Entrepreneurialism offers a specific opportunity to engage externally, drawing in new actors outside our traditional networks. Discussions are already underway with GSA and RCS to establish a number of initiatives to explore and stimulate collaborative activity in Creative Entrepreneurship; these include the collation of persuasive case studies of creative industries' students engaging with enterprise; devising and designing training to illuminate the actual professional ecology of creative industries; and developing initiatives to support enterprise in sectors with high growth rates but where the business model is sole trader/owner practitioner. Collaboratively we are keen to develop interventions and rhetoric aligned to these in non STEM sectors.

Within QMU we have created a new Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Advisory Group and appointed Enterprise Champions who will act as exemplars and role models to proactively embed our enterprise objectives. Underpinning our Research and KE Strategy, a new Entrepreneurship Framework and Action Plan has been launched to govern the operational direction of our activities. In 2017 we will curate an Inspiring Entrepreneur Exhibition to celebrate the work of our enterprise successes across a range of activities including social and service innovators; seek to appoint an Entrepreneur in Residence; and launch a new QMU programme of enterprise education to maximise opportunities for the integration of the services provided by the Scottish Institute for Enterprise and Business Gateway into the curriculum.

The East Lothian Council Business Gateway's on-campus location continues to be a strong endorsement of QMU's entrepreneurial vision, supported by the increased campus presence and hot desking of Enterprise Campus, Converge Challenge, Sporting Chance and the Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce.

Outcome five (international): (Ref PA11)

QMU recognises the increasing need to bring together diverse expertise from across multiple disciplines to solve global challenges. New ODA funding brings new opportunities for collaboration and growing international partnerships. We will maximise the position of our Institute for Global Health and Development to progress opportunities in this context. We will engage with our global alumni across all sectors of society to expand our connections and share expertise.

Recognising the increasing imperative of "Place-based" policy, we will build on institutional and collaborative strengths on high level skills production and high value innovation to embrace new opportunities arising from the new Government Strategy. Further we will seek to engender a culture and model of co-creation with students and industry.

Opportunities will be maximised for international activity by building on existing researcher networks – i.e. increasing partnership with initiatives such as EURAXESS and other researcher mobility networks to support our ability to attract increased numbers of international industry collaborations.

Through our collaborative pilot work with Heriot Watt University and the University of Glasgow on the Scottish Government's London Investment Hubs we will support the Global Scotland Trade and Investment Strategy 2016-2021 to underpin the Government's and enterprise agencies' focus on attracting inward investment, driving exports and promoting Scottish interests globally. Focusing on Food and Drink, Tourism, Creative Industries and Service Innovation we will work in partnership to attract inward investment and help companies and academia access new markets and investors.

Outcome six (inclusive growth and social impact): (QMU part of the sector collaborative partnership) (Ref PA10)

QMU will prioritise wider social agendas as well as economic goals, including contributions to civic life, social, community, health, cultural and intellectual enrichment. Specifically we are keen to play a key role in thought leadership on economic and societal impact, how it is measured and how it should be used. In the area of Service Innovation, we are keen to work with the sector on collaboration with users as a source of innovation, recognising, that in many economic sectors, the user is often more innovative than the manufacturer.

There is an opportunity to work collaboratively to embed the principles of the Concordat for Research Integrity and consider how the work we undertake, host or support impacts on the research community and on wider society.

We value creativity and innovation in our research. We will work to actively engage and stimulate our students, communities, businesses and partners to help them understand better their place within society and to embrace the importance of knowledge and academic discourse that has significant impact for society, culture and economy. Our new Research and KE Centres highlight our main inter-disciplinary strengths, our drive to deal with real world issues and show our strategic commitment to encouraging innovation within and between disciplines with our partners from across all sectors of society.

Social Enterprise and Community Interest Groups make an important contribution to our portfolio and we plan to grow activity in this area in terms of enterprise creation and demand for our services. By working collaboratively in applying social entrepreneurship to business solutions, the sector could make a significant impact in addressing social, economic and environmental issues. Inter-university Social Enterprise partnerships are an area we are keen to explore. Specifically we would like to collaborate with a wide range of cross-sector organisations to enhance and develop ecosystems of support for social entrepreneurs.

Collaboratively we would like to: explore novel forms of enterprise incubation – incubators in ideas and innovation in culture and society; improve systems for national data sets for impact capture around social and cultural impact and KE; and develop new mechanisms for collating data on researcher mobility and career destination. There is scope to link the work of RCDG and major sector developments around the current Joint Funding Council consultation on the model for the next REF. Further, we would like to use RCDG to feed into other UK research developments such as the Forum for Responsible Metrics and progress some related outcomes of the Metrics Tide.

With partners in the Creative Industries we are keen to explore the concept of a "Living Lab" and develop creative spaces where partners in industry, the public, the third sector and the wider community can work collaboratively to drive the local economy.

We welcome the opportunity to work with other institutions in developing initiatives in support of social and cultural innovation. This could include the implementation of our institutional commitments to the Concordat for Public Engagement. We have created a new QMU Centre for Dialogue and Public Engagement and continue to engage in ongoing networking with partner institutions in the East of Scotland via the Edinburgh Beltane for Public Engagement Network.

Outcome seven (Equality and Diversity): (QMU part of the sector collaborative partnership)

QMU respects and celebrates diversity and equal opportunity through an inclusive culture and promotes parity of esteem for impact generating translation and knowledge exchange activities. We will develop baseline data on equality and diversity for innovation and enterprise activities including graduate start ups.

We will deliver plans as cited in our EU Concordat for Research Careers and European HR Excellence Award framework with Heriot Watt University to develop and share good practice in relation to promoting industry engagement as a form of bridging for contract research staff and look at possible models of cross –institutional collaboration. We plan to link this activity to equality and diversity impact assessment profiles of staff who undertake commercialisation

and knowledge exchange. We will increase the integration of innovation and enterprise activity with Research Governance initiatives such as ATHENA Swan and REF equality codes of practice.