The Innovation Centres: productive collaboration

Innovation Centres
Supported by The Scottish Funding Council, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Scottish Enterprise.

Opening the door to innovation

The potential of Scotland's academic research base to help companies grow is immense. Businesses often know this, but do not know what to do about it.

Around 70% of businesses in Scotland report barriers to academic collaboration: they are not sure who to talk to, what capabilities exist, or how to make collaboration work.

Scotland's Innovation Centres are changing this. Through connections, signposting, funding, technical expertise and project management, we make it easier for businesses, academia, funders and other innovation partners to collaborate successfully.

This work is only made possible by our unique networks and alignment with our sectors. The benefits for Scotland are far-reaching and rich.

Collaboration in Action

New connections lead to job creation

Thales UK in Glasgow contacted CENSIS to help identify specialists in automatic target recognition. CENSIS introduced Thales UK to a research group at the University of the West of Scotland.

The resulting project to develop and demonstrate algorithms using low-resolution thermal image data that can automatically detect a human or vehicle was successful, and opened a new R&D area for Thales.

Two new engineers have been hired to work in this area and the company is investigating the possibility of supporting a PhD project.

Scotland's eight Innovation Centres operate across key sectors where Scotland can be world-leading. Their common aim is to help businesses large and small to increase the pace of innovation – and in turn to help Scotland's economy and people to prosper.

The programme is funded by the Scottish Funding Council, with support from Scottish Enterprise and Highlands & Islands Enterprise.

For more information, or to find out if we could help you innovate, visit http://www.innovationcentres.scot

Collaboration in Action

IC collaboration supports development

Two ICs are backing a project to develop an augmented reality system for use in the oil and gas industry, allowing objects to be viewed in obscure environments. It's an excellent example of how cross-industry collaboration can develop technology solutions for the upstream sector.

With support from the Oil & Gas Innovation Centre (OGIC), engineering design company Cadherent worked with Robert Gordon University (RGU) to complete the first phase of research.

Backed by OGIC and The Data Lab, and again in collaboration with RGU, Cadherent has now moved into the second project phase, to develop a prototype.

BioPilotsUK

The Alliance of Open Access Biorefining Centres

Landmark alliance will support UK bioeconomy

In 2016 IBioIC joined with four other R&D centres across the UK to form the BioPilotsUK alliance. This seeks to position Britain as a global leader in biorefining technology development and bio-based product manufacture – two key elements of the bioeconomy.

In Europe alone, the bioeconomy is estimated to be worth around €2 trillion.

By working collaboratively with other UK R&D hubs, IBioIC seeks to speed up the commercialisation of new green processes and products from biomass, including plants, algae and wastes, increasing the UK's strengths in this sector.

Developing best practice across construction

The Gannochy Trust's plan to develop 50 new affordable homes includes a project with Glasgow School of Art around the briefing and design process to deliver well ventilated homes.

The project is co-funded and facilitated by Construction Scotland Innovation Centre (CSIC).

The team aim to develop a methodology for best practice for innovation in housing projects, providing templates for contractors to adopt better project practices.

With the Scottish Government's target of 50,000 new affordable homes, there is a significant opportunity to apply the practices gained from this collaboration between CSIC, academia, the public sector and third sector.

[1] Ekos (2016), Business engagement and economic impact evaluation of the Innovation Centres Programme.