

Directorate for Research, Innovation and Enterprise Annual Report 2023-2024

Introduction

This report marks the second year of activities since RIE was established in August 2022. It provides an overview of the breadth of functions covered by RIE, key work undertaken, support provided to colleagues across the university, as well as engagement with external stakeholders. Although RIE's main focus is to support the implementation of the Innovation and Research Pillar of the 2035 University strategy, its work also contributes to the other three pillars: Education and Enterprise, People and Culture, Partnerships and Place. Thus, the highlights of RIE work in this year's report are presented under each of the four Pillars and include:

Research and innovation

- 2023/2024 has been a record year for research awards, totalling just over £10M.
- Funds from the Higher Education Innovation Fund have been invested and support has been provided by RIE colleagues to help the development of two new Centres, focusing on topical issues such as Defence and Security and AI.

Education and enterprise

2023/2024 This year our renewed Brookes Enterprise Support Team, which is now located in the Enterprise Centre has run a series of courses with some aimed at improving our students' employability and some specific to start-up activities. In addition the newly created Freelance 101 bootcamp was aimed at those students already freelancing, as well as those considering this pathway. This also benefited from our active partnership with Santander Universities, enabling awards of £15k to a number of promising freelancers.

People and culture

The Research Development team in collaboration with other Researcher Developers and Careers colleagues from Cambridge, Kent, King's College London, Oxford, Surrey and Sussex organised a very successful Cross-Institutional Speed Mentoring Event for Research-Only Staff, in November 2023. Mentees commented on the benefits of gathering different perspectives from Mentors from other institutions.

Partnerships and place

- The Enterprise Centre, established in collaboration with OxLEP, has met and in some cases exceeded all its targets for start-ups and jobs creation, for the second consecutive year.
- This year the 17th annual Science Bazaar was held, aimed at families with children from Oxfordshire and beyond to inspire the next generation of scientists. In 2024 the Bazaar reached unprecedented heights, attracting 7,000 visitors, representing a 133% increase compared to previous attendance records.

This year we welcomed a new member of the RIE Senior Management Team, Christie Walker, who has taken the role of Deputy Director and Associate Director Research and Governance. Dr Tudor Georgescu, held this role very capably in the interim and my colleagues and I are very grateful for his contribution to RIE work. We also celebrated the long and highly distinguished career of Professor Linda King, who decided to step down from her role as PVC Research and Global Partnership. We are all very grateful for all her guidance and advice in helping us all build the new Directorate.

We look forward to working with the new PVC Research and Innovation, Professor Joe Tah, and to support the implementation of his vision and strategy for research and innovation.

Last but not least, this report celebrates the achievements of RIE colleagues and our thriving research and knowledge exchange community. There are three main teams in RIE, Research Support and Governance, Impact and Knowledge Exchange and Enterprise and Innovation, sub-divided into smaller teams focusing on specific functions.

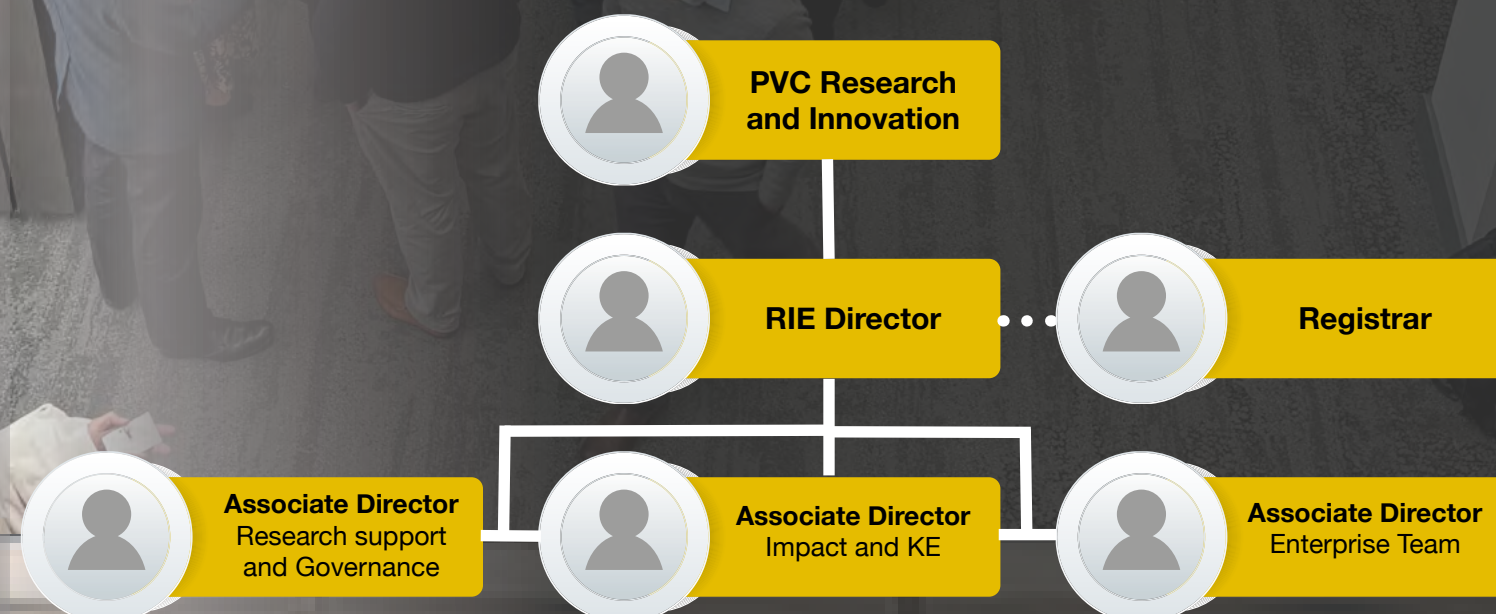
Most of these sub-teams are very small, yet, as the metrics and activities highlighted in this report demonstrate, their achievements are impressive.

I wish to conclude with a big thank you to all RIE colleagues for their dedication, high level of professionalism and for their positivity in embracing change as the University is going through a period of transformation. Thank you also to the many colleagues across the University who have supported and will continue to support our work.



PROFESSOR SIMONETTA MANFREDI
Director of Research, Innovation and Enterprise

RIE structure at a glance



Research and Innovation Pillar

Record Year for Research Awards

2023/24: £10M (vs £6M in 2022/23)

304 Research Proposals Supported

2023/24 Total Value: £70M

A record year for research funding awards

2023/24 has been a record year for research awards which totalled over £10M, compared with just over £6M last year. It reflects the significant increase in the number of applications supported and submitted by the Pre-Award Team in 2022-23 for a total value of £59M, which represented a 64% increase compared to the previous year (£36M). In 2023/24 the team supported the submission of 304 research proposals for a total value over £70M.

These figures show how bidding for research funding is well established in our research culture and how the impressive increase in research external funding is testimony to the excellence of our research and knowledge exchange which makes a significant contribution to research financial sustainability.

Research awards require effective post-award support that involves reporting, financial monitoring and, in some instances, sub-contracting. The post-award team supported approximately between 350-400 contracts over the course of the year.

Most contractual arrangements stem from research awards and consultancies. Further support to researchers and doctoral students is provided by the Research Culture and Practice team which covers a number of functions. For example, the Research Data Manager has assisted in 67 Data Management Plans and has collaborated with information security to produce technological solutions for cross-border data transfers, established contingency plans for potential fieldwork disruptions, and implemented a post-award data quality protocol. While colleagues in the same team who support the work of the University Research Ethics Committee have processed 70 ethics applications from doctoral students and 82 from staff. Full ethics applications take an average of 5 weeks to fully approve from the point of review. Two new processes have been established: the process for reviewing research involving animals has been published on the website, and a pilot for the new due diligence process is underway. Since May 2024, 33 projects have been assessed through the due diligence process.



UKRN Open Research Programme: 2023-24 Activities training

Oxford Brookes is part of the UK Reproducibility Network's (UKRN) Open Research Programme, a five-year initiative involving twenty universities funded by Research England dedicated to growing and embedding high-quality open research practices in partner institutions and across the sector. The central pillar of the Open Research Programme (ORP) is the 'Train the Trainer' initiative, a multi-institutional, free, high quality Open Research training run by UKRN and external partners across all partner institutions. With eight participants placed on five courses, engagement from Brookes staff has exceeded expectations. The first OBU 'Train the Trainer' offering will be delivered by OBBS PhD student Mitalli Katoch.

OBU Open Research Manager Dr Joe Corneli has been involved in evaluating this training initiative with UKRN throughout the year. Dr Eric White, UKRN Institutional Lead at OBU since September 2023, will take leadership of this national training workstream from September 2024.

Building on workshops and consultations with colleagues from all Faculties and Directorates, Joe Corneli led the development of the Open Research Action Plan draft as a way to guide and evaluate the impact of open research within OBU in collaboration with the Open Research Working Group. We also co-organized the OXBER Autumn School with the University of Oxford and Berlin Institute of Health, and hosted a keynote by UKRN Lead Prof. Marcus Munafo in November. The Oxfordshire Open Data Sandpit, co-organised with the Oxford Brookes Artificial Intelligence and Data Network (AIDAN) in June, fostered new open data projects with local stakeholders. Following the Network Launch Event at Brookes' Enterprise centre in February,

the ORP has helped deliver: the "What Can Open Research Do For You?" institutional training event at OBU; an Open Research presentation for OBU PhD students; and, with RIE, a series of 'microtraining' videos on the new OBU Open Research website.

Finally, from September we are establishing a Local Open Research Network in collaboration with the Research Integrity and Governance steering group, which will allow us to sustain and build on the significant foundations we have established this year.

For more information contact:
jcorneli@brookes.ac.uk



JOSEPH CORNELI
Open Research Project
Manager



Oxford Brookes research and knowledge exchange tackling global challenges

Colleagues in the Impact and KE team, have supported the development of two new research and KE Centres: the Centre for Defence and Security Research (DASOBU), launched in late 2023 and the Institute for AI, Data Analysis and Systems (AIDAS) in early 2024. DASOBU is led by Karl Kjelstrup-Johnson. Its key objectives are to develop interdisciplinary cutting-edge research and knowledge exchange in this area, to explore new approaches to defence and security challenges and to train the next generation of experts in this area through PhD studentships, short courses and CPD. The Centre has already been successful in winning a number of bids and tenders.

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KARL KJELSTRUP-JOHNSON
Director of Defence and
Security

AIDAS, which is led by Professor Fabio Cuzzolin, aims to leverage Oxford Brookes research strengths in AI and uncertainty, cognitive robotics, AI software engineering, AI and health care and AI ethics implications, to establish a clear identity in the UK competitive AI landscape. AIDAS will also foster links with the Turing Institute (in October 2023, the University was admitted to the Turing University Network in AI and Data Science). Moreover, the Institute intends to foster a strong KE ecosystem by developing collaboration with industry. Both Centres have received investments from the Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF) to support their initial development.

For more information contact:
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PROFESSOR FABIO CUZZOLIN
Director of Institute for AI, Data
Analysis and Systems

Making a difference: Research impact and public engagement

The Impact and Knowledge Exchange (KE) team supports the University's mission to turn research into real-world change. By facilitating policy impact sessions, managing funding awards, and fostering interdisciplinary collaborations, the team drives innovation and influence across sectors. From co-created projects like Banking on Health to the popular Oxford Brookes Unscripted podcast, the KE team ensures that research makes a lasting difference in communities and beyond.



The Impact and Knowledge Exchange (KE) team supports the University Impact Champion, Professor Tina Miller, and the implementation of the Research Impact strategy. The team ran a number of policy impact sessions with support from external consultant Huw Edwards who specialises in the understanding of Parliament, legislation and public policy.

They also managed a number of awards, worth over £50k, to support our colleagues' projects to develop research impact. The

Children and Young People Research and KE Network CYP was successful in securing funding (£15k) from the highly competitive ESRC Impact Accelerator Fund held in partnership with the University of Oxford to develop impact through a project Banking on Health. This involved a co-created nutrition cooking workshop initiative for young people in Oxfordshire. It brought together a number of colleagues from different disciplines: Dr Shelly Coe, Oxford Institute for Applied Health Research, Dr Sarah-Louise Mitchell, Oxford Brookes Business School and Dr Patrick Alexander, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, all at Oxford Brookes University, partnering with Good Food Oxfordshire and Achieve Oxfordshire.



This year the team also launched 'Brookes Making a Difference' article series with the inaugural piece by Dr Ethel Burns, Senior Lecturer in Midwifery whose research had led to a greater understanding of how being immersed in water offers key benefits to women and their babies during childbirth.

Colleagues who would like to contribute to this series should contact RIE Impact Manager, Lidiya Talbot ltalbot@brookes.ac.uk. Moreover, a new impact platform was set on Converis to replace the Impact Tracker which can be accessed by logging into Converis.



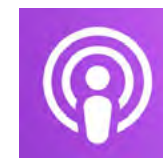
The team has also continued to develop its successful podcast series Oxford Brookes

Unscripted that has been invested in with a new logo, workflow, host, and editing support. There have been 7 episodes released this year, a further 10 episodes recorded waiting to be released, and more episodes scheduled into the new year.

The series has a cumulative listenership of 11,000, with the most popular episode having 1161 unique listens. There is equal representation of all disciplines, with episodes featuring researchers at all career stages from PhD students to Professors, and alumni. Feedback from those who have taken part has been very positive as has the interest in taking part in the series.

Colleagues who would like to take part in the Unscripted podcast series should contact RIE Public and Community Engagement Coordinator Dr Ellie Beaman ebeaman@brookes.ac.uk.

Listen to Oxford Brookes Unscripted:



Oxford Brookes continues to be in the top ten UK Universities for IP income

We completed the annual Research England Higher Education Business and Community Engagement (HE-BCI) Survey. This survey related to 2022-23 and reported a total income of £19.7M. It showed a 20% increase in IP income compared to the previous year, which keeps Oxford Brookes in the top ten UK universities for IP income:

www.hesa.ac.uk/data-and-analysis/providers/business-community/table-4d

Also, we saw an exceptional increase of 319% of income for facilities and equipment from £46,474 in 2021-22 to £197,000 in 2022-23 resulting from the combined income of the Enterprise Centre and the BioInnovation Hub. However, there was a drop in contract research and consultancy, respectively, of 3.9% and 9.6% compared to 2021-22.

In 2023, our performance in the Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF 3) was above cluster average in relation to three of the seven perspectives measured by KEF. These are: Research Partnerships, Working with the Public and Third Sector and IP & Commercialisation. Conversely, in relation to Working with Business, CPD and Local Growth and Regeneration, the university's performance was below cluster average. Public and Community Engagement (which is scored by self-assessment) has improved compared to KEF 2 and it is now on cluster average.

Find out more: https://public.tableau.com/shared/5TFRFDSYF?tabs=n&:display_count=y&:origin=viz_share_link&:embed=y



Promoting research and KE collaboration between academics and businesses

Access to the research expertise of our academics across the university is a key driver to businesses choosing the Enterprise Centre (EC) and BioInnovation Hub (BiH) as their preferred business location. The resulting research inspires and drives innovation and enables the success and growth of those businesses, resulting in potential impactful case studies for the Research Excellence Framework (REF) and the Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF). For example, this year Oxford Brookes received £98K from the Regional Innovation Fund allocation (Research England). This was managed through RIE to support the development of collaboration between three companies located in the EC and academics in our research centres. Two projects supported collaboration between the University's Centre for Nutrition and Fermentation Technologies Ltd (Fermtech) and with Sun Bear Biofuture Ltd. The third project involved the Centre for Functional Genomics working with Sensible Biotechnologies.

Case study:



The Sun Bear Biofuture team, from left:
Ben Wilding, Chief Executive officer; Ben Williams, Chief Technical Officer; Laura Van Marrewijk, Chief Scientific Officer

Sun Bear Biofuture Ltd and the Centre for Nutrition and Health (CNH)

The project will enable sample production of Sun Bear Biofuture's yeast derived palm oil alternative and to run sensory testing of the ingredient in a range of products at Brookes to compare with products already in the market. In addition to the production and testing, the further impact includes:

- Involvement into the project from masters level students to help develop their skills and experience
- Production of a case study generating visually engaging results to help with potential customer and partner engagement



Innovate
UK

Knowledge
Transfer
Partnerships



Knowledge Transfer Partnerships

Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTPs) funded by InnovateUK represent another important channel to establish collaborations between academia, businesses and other organisations. In order to provide better support to faculties and academic colleagues engaging with KTPs, RIE led a Task & Finish group that included representatives from Legal Services, academics with experience of running KTPs, RIE staff, including KPT consultant Anna Verghese, and our Innovate UK adviser, Dr Matt Hogan. This group has developed a set of recommendations to make our processes more agile in developing KTPs. In 2023-24 we had five live KTPs and we launched a new KTP Strategy to proactively help faculties to grow the number of KTPs. Working with local business network B4 we delivered an Innovation Ecosystem round table and an academic value proposition workshop to better understand problems and KTP as a solution.



FUTURE-THINKERS



Migration and refugees



Healthy ageing and care



Children and young people



Artificial intelligence and data



Sustainable and resilient futures



Equality, diversity and inclusion



Creative industries research and innovation



www.brookes.ac.uk/research

Supporting diversification of income through research and KE

Oxford Brookes has a number of Centres/Institutes that contribute significantly both financially and reputationally to the University, and are a key driver for knowledge exchange. Colleagues in the Impact and KE team prepared a report that set out these Centres' core drivers, business models and impact which was presented to the University KE Steering Group. The team has also brought together the Oxford Brookes business development community across the University which is vital to knowledge exchange and securing alternative income streams. This has been achieved through a number of key activities including regular meetings of the Directors of Centres/Institutes that undertake KE activities and a new Business Development Managers community of practice.

The University Spinout/Start-up policies have been updated to reflect the latest recommendations suggested by the Department of Science, Innovation and Technology as well as HM Treasury in the Independent Review of University Spinout Companies report.

A healthy pipeline of research with potential for commercialisation is developing and it is being supported through Proof of Concept (PoC) internal grants funded by HEIF. In 2022-23, four PoC were supported, two in TDE and two in HLS.

Research, Innovation and Knowledge Exchange Networks highlights

Research, Innovation and Knowledge Exchange Networks (RIKE) have continued to support Brookes' research community to connect internally and externally, learn new methods and skills, proactively prepare funding applications and engage in discussion and debate on 'hot-topics' facing society and business.



The Migration and Refugees Network (MRN) is leading Oxford Brookes' application to become a University of Sanctuary. To this end we are undertaking a Knowledge Exchange project with Asylum Welcome to conduct a needs assessment for Oxford Brookes to help us devise our action plan for our Sanctuary application. MRN Chair, Dr Tamsin Barber, was interviewed on Sky News discussing UK Immigration policy, the Rwanda Bill and her research on Vietnamese people seeking asylum or arriving through precarious migration routes. A Public Exhibition for the Sanctuary 'HOME' project (featuring 9 Universities) was held in the Glass Tank and showcased during Oxford Sanctuary Fair at Oxford's Town Hall.

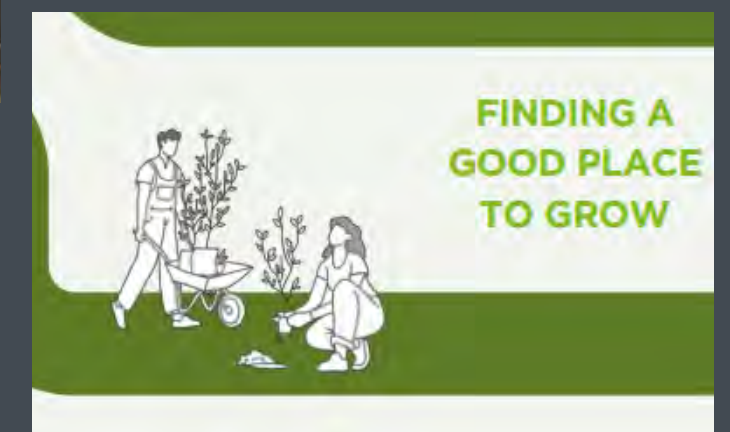
dominant discourses and structures, and forces of disruption and transformation within the creative industries.



The Sustainable and Resilient Future Network ((SRF) members, Dr Mina Samangoeei (Architecture), Dr Sangeetha Thondre (Nutrition) and Dr Emma Davies (Psychology) developed the **Edible Streets project** following a networking event. This project received funding from the Small KE Awards Scheme and by a range of external bodies, including Oxford County Council. The project focuses on building planters on publicly accessible streets to encourage local food production and promote mental wellbeing. In March 2024 the team produced a 'how-to' guide, funded by Oxford County Council Public Health and available for download on their website: Healthy place shaping - latest news | Oxfordshire County Council. The Edible Streets project was featured by the BBC News Oxfordshire neighbours urged to grow food on pavements.



The 4th **hashtag#CreativeIndustries** Festival took place in April 2024 with the theme 'Power and Change'. In a year that has been dominated by hashtag#election campaigning on both sides of the Atlantic, at a time when technological advances are raising existential questions, this Festival explored the dynamic interplay between hierarchies of influence,





Case study:

Collaborative Project: Sustainable Nutrition Guidelines for The Gambia

The aim of this project led by Oxford Brookes Centre for Nutrition and Health (OxBCNH) was to collaborate with the University of The Gambia (UTG) and other stakeholders from the Health and Agriculture ministries of The Gambia to co-create guidelines for a sustainable nutrition strategy for The Gambia.

As part of this project, funded by Oxford Brookes University Research, Innovation and Enterprise Directorate, under the Small KE Awards Scheme, OxBCNH organised a Nutrition Knowledge Exchange conference. The Vice-Chancellor of UTG Professor Herbert Robinson attended the conference in person and several colleagues from the Gambia attended the conference online. The OBU Vice-Chancellor Professor Alistair Fitt opened the conference with his keynote speech. The conference featured talks from Mr Mbakeh Camara (Innovation and Partnerships Director, UTG), Prof Sidat Yaffa (Dean, School

of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences, UTG), Dr Abubacarr Jagne's (Ministry of Health, The Gambia), Mrs Fatou Jammeh Touray (Ministry of Agriculture, The Gambia) and Mr Momodou Jallow (MRC Unit at LSHTM, The Gambia), giving an insight into the Gambia's food, agriculture and health systems.

The presentations from OBU by Dr Carolyn Mason, Prof Jonathan Tammam and Dr Ed Cole, RIE Technology Transfer Manager, highlighted the facilities, research and enterprise expertise. The project lead, Dr Sangeetha Thondre presented her past research on Gambian food products, while Dr Aisling Daly shared her past research experiences in the Gambia and Dr Vasiliki Iatridi spoke about behaviour change strategies in nutrition. The conference ended with an interactive discussion and proposals for future work, which will continue until July 2025.

Education and Enterprise



Enriching our students' experience and employability

Many activities either designed and delivered or supported by RIE involve both undergraduates and postgraduate students and enrich their students' experience and employability skills. This year our renewed Brookes Enterprise Support Team (BES) which started operating in the autumn has benefitted from being located in the Enterprise Centre.

This provides a physical space which enables and demonstrates enterprise/entrepreneurship in action in the heart of campus, facilitates educational opportunities across the curriculum, and contributes to a student experience which is both industry informed, and is able to offer work based learning and future career opportunities. In terms of BES Events, some target the development of

key skills and attributes for overall improved employability, and some are specific to start-up activity. The Spark Programme ran twice in 2023/24, with 72 attendees over two separate 6-week programmes. This takes participants with the seed of an idea, through to a more developed business model, culminating in a pitch for some initial grant funding. The newly created Freelance 101 Bootcamp, was aimed at those already freelancing, and those considering that pathway. The inaugural 1 week Bootcamp had 17 participants in May 2024 and benefitted from our active partnership with Santander Universities, enabling awards of £15k to a number of promising freelancers. Both programmes were oversubscribed, and so we will look to increase capacity for the coming year.

Case studies:

From Health Promotion Advocate to Innovator in Cancer Care



Anastasia Nemchuk, a graduate of the Global Public Health Leadership Master's at Oxford Brookes University, has built her career on promoting sustainable, evidence-based health practices.

Her first initiative, "Busy? Healthy Easy!", helps individuals adopt healthier lifestyles without relying on restrictive diets. This platform empowers people to make informed, achievable changes to their daily habits.

Anastasia's path took a pivotal turn when she participated in the Crick Innovation Challenge. There, she and her team developed OncoMatch, an AI-powered platform that connects cancer patients—especially those with pancreatic cancer—to personalised clinical trials and treatments based on their genomic data. This innovation aims to enhance patient outcomes by offering tailored care options in a more accessible way.

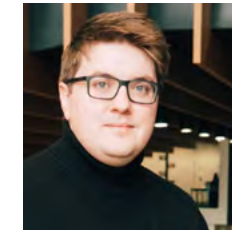
The next stage for OncoMatch involves securing funding, conducting research, and establishing partnerships with healthcare providers and pharmaceutical companies to scale the platform and make personalised cancer care more widely available.

Anastasia credits Oxford Brookes University, especially the Brookes Enterprise Support's Freelance 101 Bootcamp, for helping her refine her ventures and providing invaluable mentorship and resources.

"Start small, stay true to your mission, and don't be afraid to pivot," Anastasia advises, highlighting adaptability and passion as the keys to her success in public health and innovation.

Her journey demonstrates the powerful impact of combining technology with public health expertise to address critical healthcare challenges.

Entrepreneurial Journey at Oxford Brookes



Matthew Minett, a soon-to-be graduate of the BA (Hons) Business, Enterprise & Entrepreneurship programme at Oxford Brookes, began his journey in 2018 studying Motorsport Engineering.

After realising the course wasn't for him, he took a year off before returning to pursue a business degree. In Autumn 2023, he joined Brookes Enterprise Support (BES) through the SPARK programme, which became a turning point in his entrepreneurial path.

Over the 2023-2024 Christmas break, Matthew co-founded Team Sakura Engineering, drawing on his motorsport experience. The team established an online presence and began networking with businesses, laying the groundwork for their future.

Matthew initially joined BES's SPARK programme to enrich his studies, not planning to start his own business. However, the support he received built his confidence, showing him that entrepreneurship was within his reach. He credits BES for inspiring him to take the plunge into launching a start-up.

Through 1-to-1 mentoring, Matthew received valuable advice on structuring his business and meeting key milestones, like sponsorship negotiations. His mentor, Mim, helped him stay accountable, ensuring he stuck to his goals and timelines.

Matthew's involvement with BES transformed his view of entrepreneurship. Initially interested from an academic perspective, he now has a personal passion for it and plans to pursue entrepreneurship long-term. His advice to other students? Get involved with BES—it's invaluable support for anyone interested in starting their own business.

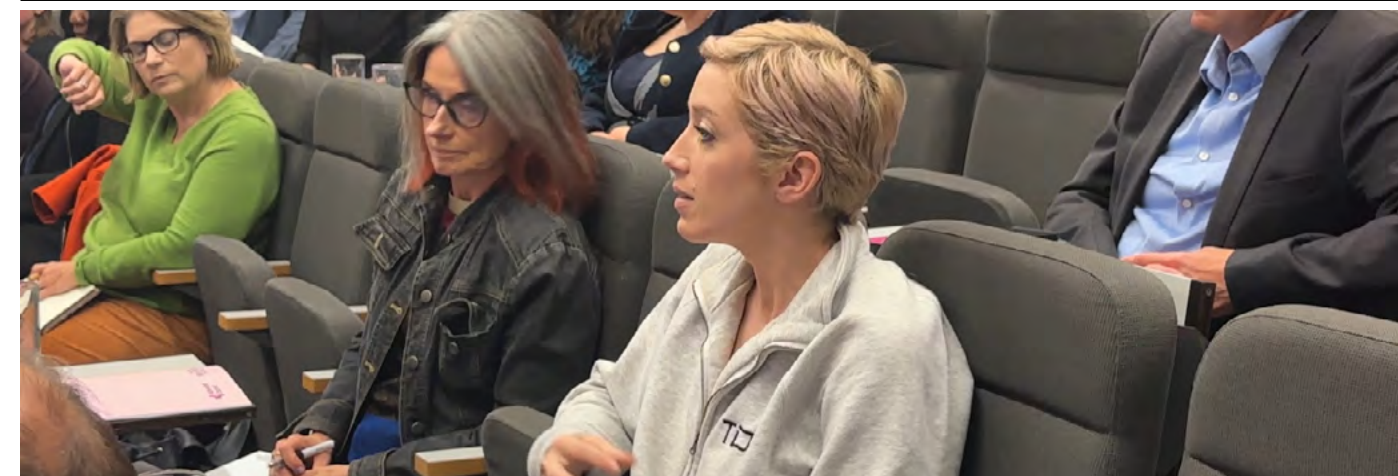


Oxford Brookes Bioinnovation Hub

Companies based in the BiH labs provide a wide range of access, support and experiences to our students. These include: talking about their experiences within taught modules, providing material for taught lab practicals, providing work experience for UG students, hosting doctoral training programme internships, hosting summer internships, providing UG research projects. It should be noted that whilst the Enterprise Centre and BiH are operating in the fields of digital, bioinnovation and life sciences, opportunities for students are pan-university and can create case study contributions to our TEF and KEF submissions.

One of our PGR students, Mario Simo Hernando who has been working with one of the companies located in the EC, describes his experience as 'the best experience of his life'. What he has found especially valuable is the opportunity to discover other career routes for PGRs in STEM. As he put it:

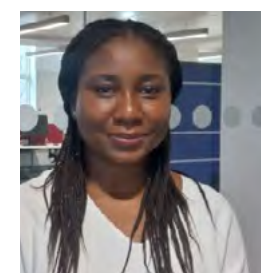
“There are many people that are doing their PhDs who think that the only way of doing science is being in academia. I suspected that I wanted something else, but I never tried private companies before. So I said, let’s give it a go.”



Giving our PGR students a taste of RIE working environment and opportunities

RIE has worked closely with the former PVC Research and Global Partnerships, Professor Linda King, and colleagues in the PGR team in the ASA Directorate to develop the offer of internships for PGR students. These are funded by the Central Research Fund and a pilot was launched 2023/24. RIE also took part in the pilot by offering an internship to a PGR student from Oxford Brookes Business School (OBBS). Furthermore, to ensure that our PGRs can make the most of opportunities to sit on university committees as representatives of the Doctoral Student community, RIE colleagues in the Research Culture and Practice team, that supports the university Research Ethics Committee, have updated the Doctoral Student Representative role description with an emphasis on transferable skills that can be learned in the role.

Case study:



Postgraduate student Elizabeth Okoro has worked on placement in the Directorate for Research, Innovation & Enterprise as a Business Strategist Intern. In this role she provides support to the Enterprise, Research and Innovation teams by implementing and delivering tasks in public engagement and programmes supporting student enterprise. Here, she talks about her experience of life in the Directorate so far, and what she hopes to take away from it.

Elizabeth has only been working here for a short time, but in that time, she has already gained a lot in terms of skill, experience, and a broadening of her perspective. She has put her creative abilities to use by crafting social media copy and graphic design, skills she didn't previously use much. Additionally, she has gained experience working in a team to put on creative events, most recently when she collaborated with the Enterprise Support team to help deliver the Freelance 101 bootcamp for entrepreneurs. Being part of that team helped her understand what it takes to bring about such a huge and successful event.

Elizabeth has also expanded her understanding of Public Engagement (PE) through conducting research on various science events and public festivals at universities and institutions across the UK, which has informed Brookes' own PE activities, such as the Science Bazaar. This experience opened her eyes to the many ways research can be disseminated and communicated between academics and the wider community, and how the public can be involved. Additionally, she had the opportunity to create a template for the Business Enterprise Support Impact Report and work with the Research Support and Governance team, which taught her about open research.

Partnerships and Place



Contributing to the Oxfordshire Innovation Ecosystem

The Enterprise Centre and BioInnovation Hub have been pivotal in enabling greater connectivity to our key partners and the local economy. Two new companies joined the EC and BiH. Sensible Biotechnologies came on board in the summer of 2023, starting from a robust position having raised seed funding (over £3m) just before joining us. Their lab and computational team have grown rapidly, and they are currently seeking series A funding. Fermentation Technologies joined the Centre in May 2023. They have received funding from OxLEP (and also won Most Innovative Business at the 2023 Oxford Local Enterprise Partnership awards) and £50K from InnovateUK.

The Enterprise Centre has supported creation of 56 jobs since opening in 2021 (against a target of 47 at this point in the project) and 12 new start-up companies (target 12). Over a 4-year timeframe, the ambition is to support 17 companies and 74 new jobs. Its value-adding offer is recognised by those seeking to collaborate with the university, and its students and graduates. With a strong connection to the health and life sciences sector, including being a core member of the emerging Headington Digital, Health and Life Sciences Cluster, we are facilitating a growing community that supports and develops industry, academia, and our students.

We have met or exceeded the OxLEP KPIs for the period covering April 2023-March 2024 and these are:

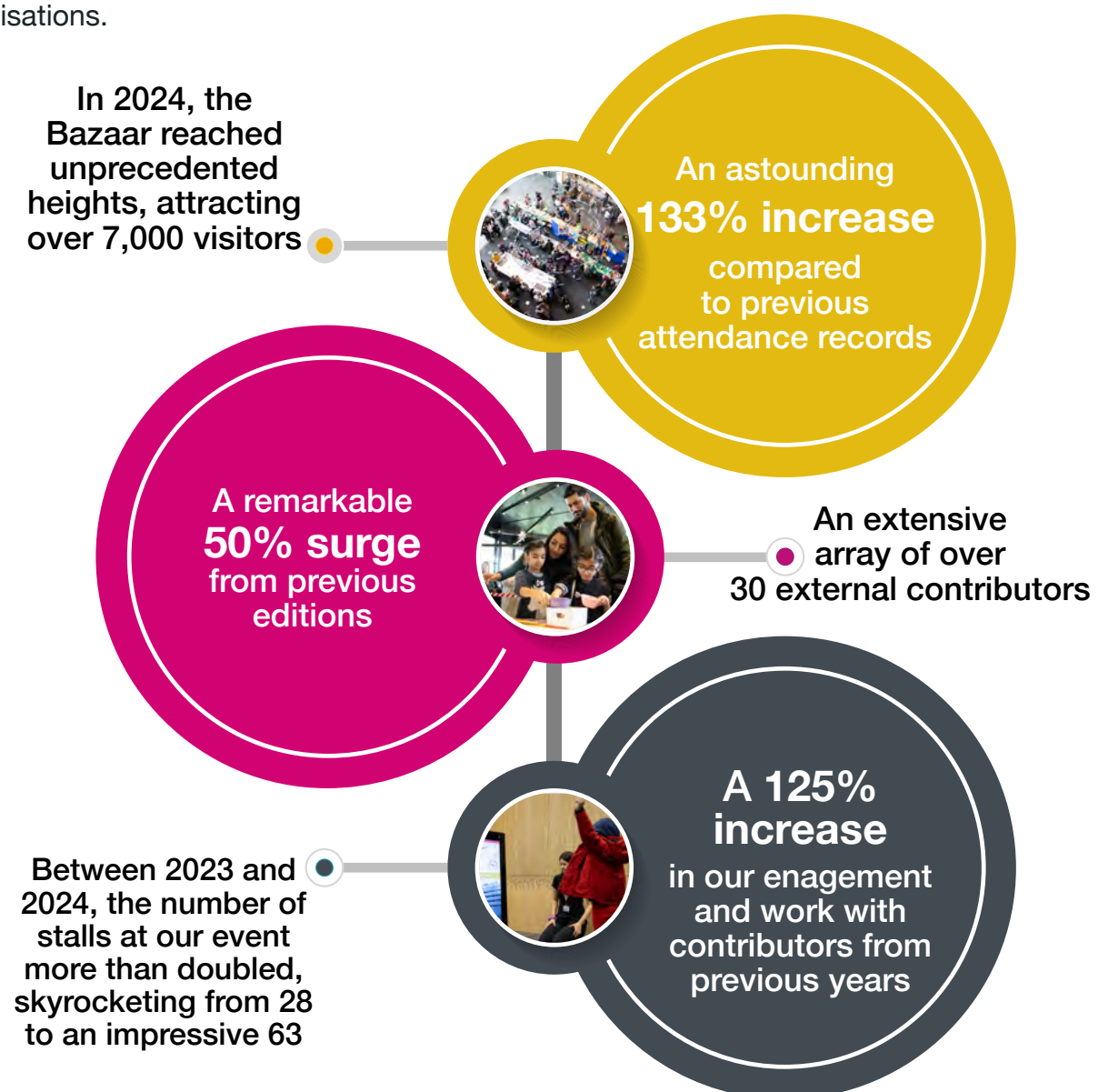
- Start-ups created: Projected 5. Delivered 5, including those supported by the Brookes Enterprise Support team which are part of OxLEP KPIs
- Jobs at start up: Projected 5. Delivered 8
- Jobs created (growth of companies): Projected 20. Delivered 23





Inspiring the next generation of scientists

New to this year's 17th annual Science Bazaar was the help of a newly established steering group to shape and drive the direction of this flagship event. The group comprises internal and most importantly external stakeholders who meet twice a year and who have been instrumental in helping us to understand what is important to visitors and the community. External stakeholders include: Autism Oxford, Rose Hill Junior Youth Club, Headington School, and Windmill Primary School. We saw over 7000 visitors, 63 hands-on activities and contributions from 13 organisations.



The policy lab: A new Oxfordshire policy research alliance

On 18 March 2024, the University of Oxford, Oxford Brookes University, and Oxfordshire County Council officially launched a collaborative initiative called the Local Policy Lab. This project also initiated discussions on the potential creation of an Oxfordshire Policy Research Alliance, aimed at fostering a closer partnership between academic researchers and local policymakers. Colleagues from the Impact and Knowledge Exchange (KE) team are playing a key role in supporting this initiative, working alongside academic staff from Oxford Brookes University.

The Local Policy Lab has two key aims:

- **Connecting researchers with local stakeholders:** It seeks to link researchers from the University of Oxford and Oxford Brookes with key policymakers from County and District Councils, as well as with local volunteer groups, charitable organisations, and the wider community. This collaboration will support the development of evidence-based public policies, initially focusing on crucial areas such as health and climate change.
- **Providing practical opportunities for graduate students:** The initiative will involve graduate students, supervised by experienced academics and county officers, in significant projects. These students will have the opportunity to work with existing datasets, collect new qualitative data, and conduct impact evaluations, contributing to real-world policy improvements.

Find out more: www.socsci.ox.ac.uk/local-policy-lab

A photograph of two men in a hallway. The man on the left is wearing a blue shirt and glasses, looking towards the man on the right. The man on the right is wearing a grey jacket and glasses, looking back at the first man. In the background, there is a door with a sign that says 'CLC G.02' and a poster on the wall.

People and Culture

Supporting and developing our researchers

Researcher development is overseen by Professor Susan Brooks and the programme is delivered by our colleague Jennie Cripps, who in March 2024 was joined by Katie Whitlock. This team in collaboration with other Researcher Developers and Careers colleagues from Cambridge, Kent, King's College London, Oxford, Surrey and Sussex organised a Cross-Institutional Speed Mentoring Event for Research-Only Staff, on 28th November 2023.

This event was very successful with 100% of Mentees and 100% of Mentors, who responded to feedback, reporting that the event was a good use of their time and would recommend it to others. Mentees commented on the benefits of gathering different perspectives from Mentors from different institutions, different disciplines and different career stages. Key takeaways included the importance of long-term career planning, diversifying collaborations, getting feedback on grant applications, celebrating failure, crafting a narrative to weave together skills and experiences, widely disseminating research, looking for work outside of academia and not giving up easily!

Another highly successful event organised by this team, was the 6th biennial Researcher Career Pathways Event that took place in January 2024. The event supports Research-Only Staff and Research Students to explore careers both within and beyond academia. 100% of delegates recommended the event to other researchers.

In addition, themed monthly meetings were organised for the Research-Only Staff Network (e.g. career development, REF, making the most of your contract). The sessions facilitated discussion and questions, signposted participants to support and resources, and included internal guest speakers.

Another highlight of the Research Development year was the addition of seven new training events to the University's Research & Knowledge Exchange Training programme for 2023/24. The sessions were well received and rated highly by delegates for both useful content (4.5 out of 5) and for meeting their purpose (4.6 out of 5).

Research-active staff of all levels at Oxford Brookes University can register now to attend University Research & KE Training in 24/25:

www.brookes.ac.uk/sites/research-support/researcher-development/training

Fostering an entrepreneurial culture

The Enterprise Centre working closely with the BioInnovation Hub acts as a catalyst between internal and external stakeholders, our academic staff, and our student and graduate talent pool. This results in opportunities to foster enterprising and entrepreneurial skills and attributes within our people and an environment which enables and nurtures enterprise activity. Facilitating research and innovation, the facility has also contributed to student and graduate placements (for example employing undergraduates as lab assistants during their studies), and employment, and enabled KE activity with external businesses. This contributes towards our KEF return, and offers an opportunity for students to become technically competent.

Our people news



Dr Philip Clegg, Associate Director - Enterprise, was awarded an Honorary Life Fellowship of EEUK for services to Enterprise & Entrepreneurship Education, and is an assessor of Business Schools for the Small Business Charter Accreditation, (Enterprise/Entrepreneurship Dimensions). He also sits on the Headington Science Cluster steering group.



Dr Ed Cole, IP & Commercialisation Manager, has joined the ICURe national team, at InnovateUK, as Head of Regional Hub London & South East England to develop, promote and further expand the programme. Ed also works part-time for RIE as Technology Transfer Manager.



Howard Feather, Business Start-Up Manager, leads our B4 external engagement activity, and is a member of the University Alliance Incubator/Accelerator Group



Dr Sarah Irons, Enterprise Centre & BioInnovation Hub Manager, is a member of the Headington Science Cluster, the University Alliance Incubator/Accelerator Group, and OBN's annual steering and theming groups.



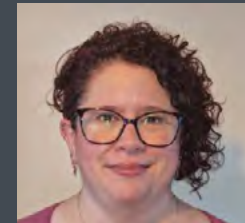
Professor Linda King, former PVC Research and Global Partnerships, will act as an adviser to commercialisation of research. Linda is co-founder of Oxford Expression Technology, a successful university spinout company.



Professor Simonetta Manfredi, Director of Research, Innovation and Enterprise, is a member of the University Alliance (UA) Research and Innovation Network and was invited to speak at a fringe event of the Labour Party conference in 2023, organised by UA. Her research to increase women's representation as founders of university spinouts was cited in the Spinout Review commissioned by the HM Treasury and published in 2023. She is also a judge for Praxis Auril (soon to become KE UK) Knowledge Exchange Awards.



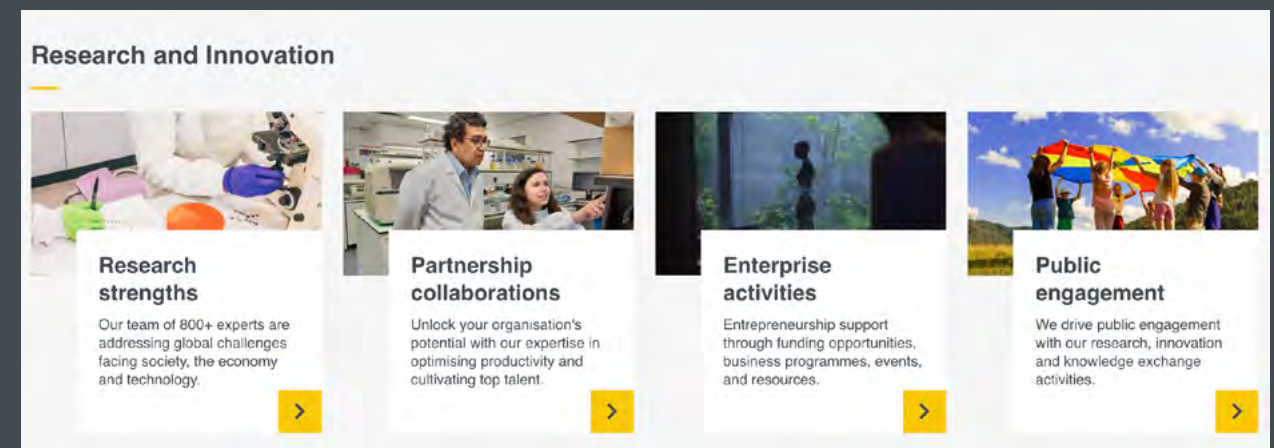
Dr Carol Mcanally, Associate Director Knowledge Exchange & Impact, is a member of the University Alliance Knowledge Exchange Network (add EPSRC invitation). She was invited as an external speaker to EPSRC's All Staff event in June celebrating its 30 year Anniversary. Dr McAnally was asked as an ex-colleague to share her reflections on her career, how working at EPSRC has shaped this and highlights of her time at EPSRC.



Christie Walker, Deputy Director and Associate Director Research Support & Governance, is one of the Co-Champions of the Arts & Humanities Special Interest Group for the Association of Research Managers and Administrators (ARMA). Christie is also a member of the UKRI Open Access Stakeholders Group.

In collaboration with colleagues in MRE we have developed new web-pages to showcase research, innovation and enterprise:

➡ www.brookes.ac.uk/engage-and-innovate



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For more information about research, innovation and enterprise opportunities at
Oxford Brookes University please email:
rieenquiries@brookes.ac.uk

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