

RE-P-2020-03-Annex B

Buckinghamshire New University

HEIF accountability statement

**Narrative return template for HEIF funding period
2021-22 to 2024-25**

Return date: 21 May 2021

Return as Microsoft Word file to: KEPolicy@re.ukri.org

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Question 1 – Strategic objectives

Summarise the institutional strategic objectives that relate to knowledge exchange and guide your plans for HEIF.

We expect institutions' plans for HEIF to be guided by strategic objectives for knowledge exchange. However, there is no requirement for institutions to submit or maintain a standalone knowledge exchange strategy document.

We appreciate that KE objectives may be found in a specific KE strategy document or they may be contained as part of other strategic documents such as teaching, research or overarching institutional strategies.

Whatever form your knowledge exchange objectives are in, please provide a precis of the main objectives here so that we can see the strategic context that guides your plans for HEIF and forms the basis for your monitoring and delivery of intended benefits.

We welcome the inclusion of hyperlinks to published strategies and plans that may be referenced in the summary.

In answer to this question, you are free to use text or tabular format but please ensure that the question response is contained in no more than two pages of A4.

(max 2 pages of A4)

Buckinghamshire New University (BNU) aims to deliver research and innovation that impacts and enhances lives and society and underpins our educational offer. BNU's impactful research strengthens strategic relationships with key partners through collaboration and knowledge exchange. BNU staff are encouraged and incentivised to engage in knowledge exchange activities, including consultancy, on behalf of the University.

The University has a long and successful history of KE activity and is one of only 3 of the England-based current GuildHE small and specialist HEIs to receive HEIF funding to support its work. Our work comprises CPD, consultancy and contract research, with a particular focus on the Health and Social Care sectors allied to our cluster of applied research and innovation research groups and institutes in those fields. We use our HEIF funding to support the development, maintenance and evaluation of this work. We also engage in social, community and cultural activities as part of our community involvement and are expanding the public engagement dimension of this work as part of our commitment to be an anchor organisation in our region.

- Purpose and Impact: Knowledge exchange is central to our purpose, drawing on our heritage that is grounded in applied education and applied research which bring impact to business, industry and wider society and a strong contribution to lifelong learning and well-being. Located in the heart of UK's start-up centre, BNU has a significant advantage and exceptional potential to contribute social and economic impact.

- **Values/Inclusivity:** Knowledge exchange is consistent with our values and the importance we give to collaboration, diversity, and inclusion, serving our various communities with pioneering insights and a compassionate and responsible approach in our partnering relationships. Our EDI policy opens our doors to welcome and educate diverse local communities, and visitors from across the world. A vibrant public and community engagement agenda is an important part of who we are.
- **Organizational Learning:** We are a high-performing learning organization. Engagement with business, industry and societal challenges enriches experiences and learning for our academic colleagues. It also improves the quality and impact of our research by validating its application to real life problems.
- **Student Learning:** Engagement with business, industry, charities and societal challenges brings opportunities and insights for professional practice into our teaching and offers students the opportunity to engage with real life problems to enhance their experience, knowledge and skills.
- **Employability:** we play a key role in the local, regional and national skills agendas through active engagement with Buckinghamshire LEP and the Skills Advisory Panel. We are respected as leaders in developing employment-ready graduates. Knowledge exchange activity enables close relationships with industry partners, employers, professional bodies and other organizations, all of whom have demonstrated an interest in recruiting our graduates. These close relationships with employers deliver internships, placements and projects for students, which in turn deliver enhanced graduate outcomes. Supporting students in their enterprise endeavours (through training and incubation) also enables personal growth, enhanced employment prospects and new business development opportunities.
- **Workforce Productivity:** Knowledge exchange activity helps develop the quality of the workforce, and the skills, productivity and prospects of our partners' employees.
- **Reputation and sustainability:** Our knowledge exchange activities enable BNU to demonstrate its difference and distinctiveness, and through a wide range of touch-points (research, consultancy, events, CPD etc) extend our influence regionally, nationally and internationally, ensuring we remain a financially-sustainable organization.

Through our distinctive and focused KE activities, we will continue to work with businesses, industry partners and other communities to have measurable and beneficial economic and social impacts, particularly in ways that will help deliver an exceptional experience and improve employment prospects for our students.

As a member of the Arc Universities Group, we are committed to working with government, business and other partners to maximise the potential for sustainable and green growth in this region of economic significance by supporting the development of a more responsive skills system which creates new employment pathways for young people, aligned to the skills needs of businesses and working in collaboration with key strategic partners.

Question 2: Use of HEIF*(Max 6 pages of A4 or A3)*

| Planned areas of HEIF supported KE activity Please provide an overview of planned KE activities or projects that will be supported by your 2021-22 and onwards HEIF allocations. | HEIF support How HEIF will be used to support the project? | HEIF priorities How does this relate to govt priorities and RE-OfS strategic objectives? (Including note of scale where student benefits are achieved.) | Strategic objectives Which institutional strategic KE objective does this relate to? | Indication of timescales |
|---|--|---|--|---------------------------------|
| Increase Internal Profile of Knowledge Exchange: organise workshops and roadshows to promote how staff can benefit and contribute from KE and an annual KE Conference that will help showcase the work that colleagues are engaged in with employers and other stakeholders. | 1 annual KE Conference funded 7 Workshops (1 per school) | Long-term vision for R&D which includes highlighting the importance of knowledge exchange, HEIF, KEF and the KE Concordat | Reputation and Sustainability | 2021-22 onwards |
| Build Capacity and Leadership: each School will have a School Knowledge Exchange Lead, reporting to the Innovation and Knowledge Exchange Manager who, in turn, will report to the Director of Research and Enterprise. The specific scope of these KE Leads will be flexible to match the particular priorities of each School. | 7 School KE leads | Long-term vision for R&D which includes highlighting the importance of knowledge exchange, HEIF, KEF and the KE Concordat | Reputation and Sustainability | 2021-22 onwards |

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| <p>Value Contributions to KE: Introduce a fair and transparent system for allocating resources, including the distribution of surplus from projects (above FEC), the award of workload hours. Introduce KE Awards to recognise the contribution of academic and professional support staff.</p> | <p>KE workload time recognition. Annual KE awards</p> | <p>Rewarding and incentivising performance.</p> | <p>An above-benchmark performance in our KEF Cluster</p> | <p>2022-23 onwards</p> |
| <p>Student enterprise. Support graduates' entrepreneurship through mentoring and training, helping the University to operate a 'founders' factory' model, with student entrepreneurs working with academics to generate IP and spin-out businesses for the University. This ecosystem will also enable BNU to support students' placements with local SMEs.</p> | <p>50 graduates annually using the support</p> | <p>RE/OfS objective for students to benefit, anticipate circa 250 students will be involved directly</p> | <p>Graduate employability - New student start-ups and associated funding attracted</p> | <p>2021-22 onwards</p> |
| <p>Employer engagement. Improve engagement with major employers. Build internal capacity, linking pockets of excellence across the University and scaling our operation to achieve greatest impact</p> | <p>BNU Thames Link Employers Hub Academic staff time buy-out x2 FTE and supports KE professional posts</p> | <p>Local and National Industrial Strategy</p> | <p>Graduate Employability and 200 employers' customers for short courses, apprenticeships, industry-sponsored courses and also recruiter for our graduates.</p> | <p>2022-23</p> |
| <p>Creative Culture Growth. Support SMEs through student talent to develop AI innovation in media production around Pinewood Studios creative cluster.</p> | <p>Training Centre Academic staff time buy-out x3 0.4 FTE and supports KE professional posts</p> | <p>Long term vision for R&D in Oxford-Cambridge ARC economic development</p> | <p>50 SMEs and 150 graduates to support AI embedding in</p> | <p>2023-24</p> |

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| | | | media and film production | |
| Health and Social Care. Widen the impact and benefits of BNU's Health and Social Care provision. | Health and Social Care Institute Academic staff time buy-out x2 0.2 FTE and supports KE professional posts | Industrial Strategy around "people" | Provide 20 CPD courses so that BNU can contribute to improved outcomes for people's health, care and wellbeing in Buckinghamshire | 2021-2023 |
| Inclusive Enterprise Hub. To help drive more extensive and intensive KE activity to link our engagement with business, industry, and employers – and to provide an obvious KE regeneration project in and of itself. This will link BNU's three subject hubs. | Hub manager | A long-term vision for R&D | A place of creativity and connectivity, it will bring together programmes and activities which, co-located and collaboratively engaged with an ever widening, cross-fertilising pool of external partners, will work together to transform the employability outcomes of BNU students | 2022-24 |
| Virtual Research Environment. This will cover all aspects of knowledge exchange – including an impact module, improved ways of capturing and reporting the status of KE | Digital KE services | A long-term vision for R&D | VRE will provide digital skills training and collaborative consultancy for | 2021-25 |

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| projects and partnerships, and the development of staff KE profiles to support KEF reporting and internal and external KE marketing. | | | businesses, for example, and to exploit the growing market for online education. | |
| Annual KE Conference. To promote and amplify BNU's social and economic KE distinctiveness | Workshops | A long-term vision for R&D | A number of workshops and roadshows will promote how staff can benefit and contribute. | 2021-25 |

Question 3 – Monitoring success

How do you manage your HEIF funding and monitor the success of your activities against the strategic objectives set out in question 1, and in line with delivering Government priorities?

Describe the policies, procedures and approach you have in place in the context of your strategic objectives to:

- i. manage your HEIF spending
- ii. measure progress
- iii. evaluate outcomes and
- iv. identify lessons learned.

In answer to this question, you are free to use text or tabular format but please ensure that the entire question response is contained in no more than four pages of A4.

(Max 4 pages of A4)

KE income and expenditure activity is monitored by the University's Research and Enterprise Committee in the form of quarterly reports based on data held centrally. This measures performance against agreed targets and allows the University to have early warning of areas where performance is not as expected so that intervention can be made.

In May 2021, an Innovation and Knowledge Exchange Manager was appointed to ensure joined-up and effective support for research and KE activities. The new manager will provide improved support for a broad range of research and knowledge exchange activities. The manager will foster an improved understanding of current strengths, to enable KEF requirements and reporting to be met with confidence. The new manager will oversee three teams across the University focusing on funding support, collaboration development and the KE environment. The KE Environment will seek to better capture staff profiles and activity data to promote institutional excellence and researcher expertise.

Our University Strategy, IMPACT 22, places a higher emphasis on translational and applied research rooted in innovative professional practice and on growing associated enterprise opportunities to achieve a 100% growth in KE-related income over the next 5-year strategic period. This overarching KPI is being broken down in work with School-based Enterprise Champions to create local growth targets. The KPI delivery is led and supported at institutional level by the Innovation and Knowledge Exchange Manager and the KTP Manager.

The University has refreshed its infrastructure through which it supports and manages KE activity in line with its expectations to grow and better develop its KE work. This includes the following activities:

Policies

The University has agreed a new policy for the establishment of Impact Research and Innovation Centres. This highlights the ways these Centres contribute to our KE work and requires annual reporting of impacts and outputs and a three-year business plan which forms the basis of agreed targets for income and associated outcome measures.

The University has a new policy on consultancy which, along with our related guidance around IP, supports our new research and innovation centres and hub. These policies have brought us in line with best practice in the sector and enable us to better incentivise this activity.

Procedures

We have developed PGT/ PGR pathways to innovation that support future start-ups in the Creative and Digital Industries and Health and Social Care sectors. The former draws on the Alacrity model, developed at Falmouth University, whilst the latter builds on our AHSN-funded PGCERT programme.

We have created a network of School-based Enterprise Champions. These colleagues will feed into sector events and work to better capture our activity on a quarterly basis, with the support of the University Business Engagement staff.

We are enhancing data capture via a central CRM database that records our interactions with key KE business partners, along with the key account manager within the HEI, and records the areas in which we have worked with the organisation. The University Impact and Innovation Officer works with the Enterprise Champions to support the evaluation and tracking of the impact of our KE work.

Our community work is now being focussed through a planned programme of public and civic engagement, overseen by a steering group chaired by the Director of Research and Enterprise. This reports quarterly to the main Research and Enterprise Committee.

The University reports its knowledge exchange activities through the annual HE-BCI return which, in turn, drives performance-based income from HEIF funds. With the arrival of the KEF in 2020, we will report on a more tightly defined set of performance metrics for knowledge exchange activity. The new metrics are mostly focused on income, but narrative statements are required to support claims around local growth and regeneration, and public and community engagement.

Table 1 BNU Knowledge Exchange recognised activities

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| <i>Research Partnerships</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Cash contributions to collaborative research as a proportion of public funding</i> • <i>Co-authorship with non-academic partners as proportion of total outputs</i> |
| <i>Working with Business</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Innovate UK income (KTP and grant) as proportion of research income</i> • <i>Contract research income with businesses per academic FTE</i> • <i>Consultancy and facilities income from businesses (SME and non-SME)</i> |
| <i>Working with Public and Third Sector</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Contract research income</i> • <i>Consultancy and facilities income</i> |
| <i>Skills, enterprise, and entrepreneurship</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>CPD/CE income</i> • <i>Learner days</i> • <i>Graduate start-up rates</i> |
| <i>Local Growth and Regeneration</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Regeneration and development income from all sources</i> • <i>Additional narrative and context</i> |
| <i>IP and Commercialisation</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Income from spin-outs</i> • <i>Average external investment per formal spin-out</i> |

Evaluation and Continuous Improvement: The University supports the principles behind the Knowledge Exchange Concordat which is being developed by Universities UK and Research England, and the University was a signatory to the Concordat in 2020. In evaluating our success, we undertake regular institutional and collective monitoring to review our KE performance. Since 2020, we have used the KEF clustering and benchmarks to inform the development and execution of a programme of continuous improvement.

Reporting: Following the recent employment of an Innovation and Knowledge Exchange Manager (IKEM), we are now focusing on implementing processes that further strengthen our methods for capturing, reporting, and quantifying our knowledge exchange (KE) activities across the University. We have paid particular attention to the impact of our public and community engagement and how we can measure this in order to build upon our distinctive reputation further.

The IKEM will work to develop methods of data capture in collaboration with our finance department, that will build upon the foundations currently in place in order to forecast activity levels and financial returns. In addition to this, we will continue implementing the new self-reporting events tool in conjunction with a single cross-University event booking/promotion tool and digital attendee scanners.

Through the appointment of an IKEM, we will forge closer working relationships not only with teams such as Events, Marketing and Communication but also with the Students Union. This will allow us to strengthen and broaden the scope and financial returns of our

KE related activity alongside the dimensions of public and community engagement that are important institutional values.

Key indicators for success will include:

- A greater recognition of the positive contribution BNU makes to the lives of the communities we serve.
- A doubling of activity levels in terms of the number of:
 - external organisations with whom we partner on research, teaching and employability partnerships;
 - academic staff engaged with KE activity or income generation;
 - new student start-ups and associated funding attracted;
 - external attendees at public and community engagement events;
 - delegate days on skills and professional development programmes.
- An above-benchmark performance in our KEF Cluster (M), on selected perspectives consistent with our strengths, rewarded by an increased HEIF allocation.
- We expect these achievements to at least double our knowledge exchange income from 2019/20 levels by 2024/25 equating to about 4.5 million.