

# WAYS TO WORK WITH YOUR UNIVERSITY

# INTRODUCTION

The Directorate of Business Engagement, Careers and Employability (BECE) is home to the University's Alumni and Development activities; the provision of Careers, Employability and Enterprise support for our students and graduates; our Business Development and Knowledge Exchange activities to support local businesses; and our provision of Apprenticeships focused on employer-led education. Through significant investment into the team in 2021/22. We support the University's mission to:

*"Be one of the key business support agencies in the region and the provider of choice for knowledge exchange, innovation, and entrepreneurship, and state-of-the-art training for our region. We aim to regenerate our local economy by transforming local productivity and targeted sectors, through skills and workforce development."*

And ensure:

*"Our graduates will be confident thinkers and professionals ready for the world of work. They will have the breadth of knowledge and experience required; they will be socially conscious and value-driven individuals striving to make a positive contribution to society. In a technologically driven world, our graduates will be digitally competent, globally aware, forward looking, enterprising, enquiring and a voice of change for our future sustainable development."*

Our priorities are:

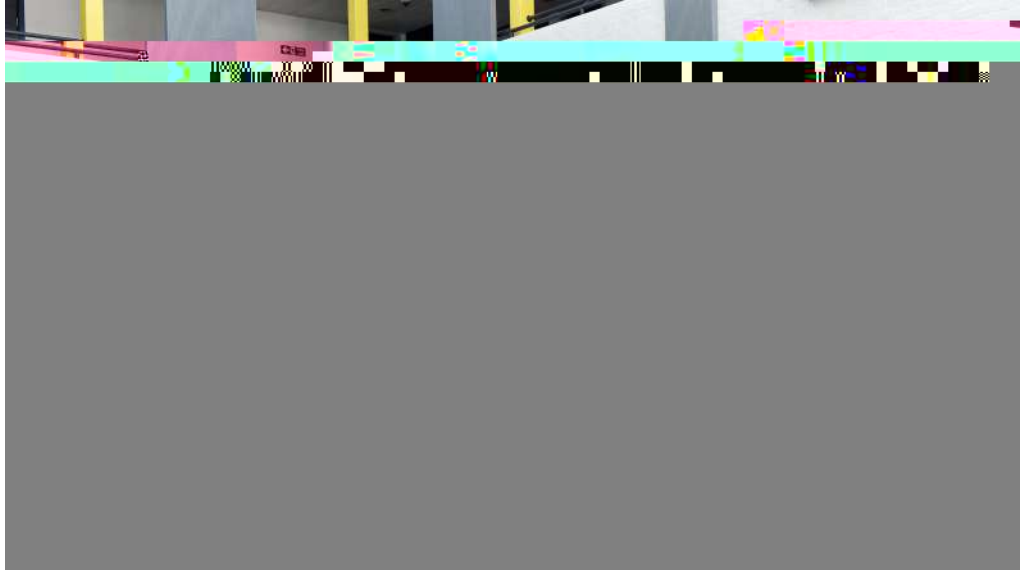
1. To transform local productivity and targeted sectors through active alumni engagement and philanthropic giving, skills development, business and job creation and work-based learning including Apprenticeships, student and graduate entrepreneurship and support for innovation;
2. To transform and enhance the student and graduate experience and employment outcomes through the development of careers, employability and enterprise;
3. To transform our knowledge exchange and fundraising activity and gain recognition through the Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF) and Higher Education Innovation Funding (HEIF) formula, achieving recognition as a distinctive university leader in local and regional economic development.



**Professor Gurpreet Jagpal**

Pro Vice-Chancellor,  
Business and Entrepreneurship

# WORKING TOGETHER



We are focused on building long-term, mutually beneficial relationships with regional organisations that create a positive impact on our community, and welcome your suggestions of new ways for us to do this. You can find out more about how we are currently partnering with organisations below.

## **Access to Funding**

Adding an academic partner dimension to your funding applications can significantly increase their likelihood of success and we are happy to discuss where we can partner and add value. You can also talk to us about delivering on projects that have already secured funding. In addition, subject to eligibility requirements and availability, your organisation may be able to apply for University funding such as Innovation Vouchers or R&D Facilities Funding to subsidise the collaboration costs and kickstart building long-term relationships.

## **Access to Knowledge & Expertise**

We have a broad range of academic expertise which you can access on a contract research or consultancy basis, and our Business Development Managers are on hand to discuss your requirements and approach relevant academics on your behalf. World-class knowledge exists not only within our three Schools - Engineering Arts, Science and Technology, Social Sciences and Humanities and Health and Sports Sciences but also in our new Research Institutes:

- Crime and Social Justice
- Digital Futures
- Health and Wellbeing
- Sustainability

In addition, the University has introduced Challenge Labs as a new model to tackle societal issues. They bring together individuals from across different sectors to address a challenge and work together with our academic specialists and students to generate ideas for solutions.

## **Access to Training**

Investing in training adds value to your organisation and helps ensure that you and your employees have the skills and knowledge to take advantage of every opportunity to grow your business or move into new sectors. We offer an existing range of courses for professionals and individuals and create bespoke training based on your requirements. Training can be delivered flexibly at a time and location to suit you, including your own premises. Our training can support you in the following ways:

- Upskill your workforce
- Embark on a leadership programme to enhance your career
- Carry out ongoing training that is essential to your role
- Cre

# WORKING TOGETHER

## Access to Student Expertise

As well as offering internships, work placements or graduate opportunities to our students, you can also collaborate with us to provide real projects and problems for students to work on within their degrees. These can be worked on, on an individual, team or class basis. We have established specific activities to enable this type of knowledge exchange such as the Marketing Lab and student Hackathons. Within these programmes you will share your business problem, respond to questions from students and then listen to them pitching their solutions and recommendations. You will then have the option to work with a student supported by academic supervision to realise activities identified in the session.

Students really benefit from real-world perspectives and case studies; as such we often invite local businesses to provide a guest lecture or talk within their course – let us know if you can contribute.

Participating in our events, careers marketplaces or offering tours and work shadowing will help raise awareness of your brand and provide insights into the workplace for our students and staff community. Plus, our FREE online job board is an ideal way to promote your job vacancies to both students and alumni.

In addition, if you have a longer-term research project and require

## **Accessing Business Support**

Our sector-focused Business Development Managers are on hand to discuss your growth plans and to help you navigate the local business support landscape; directing you to relevant external expertise and grant funding. We also offer work and meeting space, mentoring, events and access to a network of like-minded organisations through Innovation Labs (ILABS) a unique university and private sector collaboration. A benefit of becoming a member and joining our growing business community is that you can access not only the University workspace but all other Innovation Labs sites in the region. ILABS provides a single point of access between businesses of all stages, academic and student knowledge and fantastic facilities.

## **Accessing Events**

Each year we run a series of events inviting speakers to talk about their area of expertise. These may be our own academics or guests who have particular skills or knowledge. We offer a blend of face to face and online events. As well as engaging with informative speakers, the events provide an opportunity to network with other attendees including our staff and academics. In addition, we work with partners to deliver networking opportunities. Past events have included:

- International Women's Day
- Net Zero innovation symposium
- Insights into counselling
- Practical ways to develop leadership skills in your business
- Business Support marketplace

## **Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTPs)**

If you have an idea for your business but don't have all the in-house expertise to develop it – a KTP could be the answer. KTP projects are designed to help provide you with business expertise and funding, giving you the resource to deliver increased competitiveness and growth. Innovate UK funds up to two thirds of the KTP project costs and they are a collaboration between three partners typically lasting one to three years (standard) or four to six months (short):

- The Knowledge Base partner (a University academic)
- The KTP Associate (a recent graduate or postgraduate from anywhere in the world)
- The Organisation



The Alumni Relations and Development  
Office at the University of Suffolk is  
successfully





From 2022/23 the University has committed a large investment into the Team, enabling it to double in size and the creation of a physical hub, due to open in 2023. The new team structure introduces the roles of Employability and Careers Consultants and Placement Consultants aligned to each of our academic Schools, providing targeted resource to students, academics and employers. Resources have been created to support students to start up a business or pursue freelance opportunities and will help us to ensure that enterprise, entrepreneurship, and employability are embedded into every degree. Our most recent Graduate Outcomes results saw 92% of students in employment or further study, with 82% in highly skilled roles, compared to a sector average of 78%, results we will strive to continuously improve.

Through our enhanced service we will continue to provide our students with impartial and equal access to support and opportunities that will empower them to be confident in making decisions about their future, equipping them to achieve graduate success. By 2030, every undergraduate and postgraduate taught student will benefit from meaningful interaction with us and the Team will have embedded its presence on the Ipswich campus, providing a welcoming and inspirational space for students, staff and organisations to meet and plan their future.

As we move towards 2030, the Team will work to increase and improve communications, and raise awareness of Careers, Employability and Enterprise.

We will:

- Ensure that our service provides the variety of support needed to match our diverse student community, knowing that one size does not fit all.
- Ensure that employability, enterprise, and entrepreneurship is embedded into all degree programmes.
- Provide opportunities for work experience appropriate to all student needs through collaborative partnerships.
- Continue to expand our offer and provide extra-curricular opportunities for students to meet organisations and inspiring alumni.
- Work with the wider Directorate to increase the number of internships and graduate jobs available to our students and graduates.
- Expand the support for students wishing to start or expand a business, or who wish to start freelancing.
- By 2026, to annually support the creation of 20 academic student and/or graduate start-ups.
- Provide students with the skills to confidently navigate a world in which 'career' no longer means a job or employer for life.
- Establish new collaborative partnerships to benefit students/ graduates and our external stakeholders (wishing to support students)



Knowledge Exchange (KE), innovation and entrepreneurship are fundamental activities for the University of Suffolk. Working with public, private and third sector organisations we will tackle current and future challenges (both commercial and societal), horizon scanning to ensure we meet future skills gaps and retain talent in the region. We will co-design solutions to meet the needs of individual enterprises, from sole trader start-ups to large, established companies and build long-term partnerships, providing access to our academic expertise and student talent, and our world-class facilities and resources. We search for funding opportunities to make ideas happen.

We have invested significantly in new staff with the right skills to support achievement of our ambition. Our revamped Business Development Team is already building relationships with external and internal stakeholders, identifying relevant knowledge and expertise, and increasing capacity. Already we have seen growth in our Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) portfolio and seen KE income increase by over 500% since 2017/18.

We have also invested in specialist equipment and facilities for external organisations to access as part of our KE offer. This includes access to high-specification laptops, software, creative technologies, and our 3D Productivity Suite for rapid prototyping. We are creating demand led CPD and short courses for various industries and sectors, to meet current and future skills gaps. We have forged a new private sector partnership with Innovation Labs Group which aims

to grow the innovation ecosystem, providing physical space along with events, training, mentoring and access to academic and student knowledge.

As we move towards 2030, we will use our areas of distinctiveness to drive innovation and increase productivity collaboratively, making Suffolk a competitive force within the UK.

We will:

- Generate £7M of enterprise/KE income, ensuring the University can design and deliver projects to support the local business community and beyond.
- Be recognised as the leading university in our KEF cluster ensuring significant progress and impact achieved in 50% of the priority areas.
- Collaborate with 250 organisations through a range of KE projects.
- By 2024, achieve national (external) recognition for our KE activity.
- By 2024, be a top 30 KTP provider university.
- Create a portfolio of services/programmes to meet the needs of the levelling up agenda, transforming local productivity through skills development, business and job creation.
- Be an integral part of the regional business support network and the location of choice for start-ups in Ipswich.

# APPRENTICESHIPS

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Apprenticeships provide an opportunity for employer-focused education to boost business performance and provide work-based learning opportunities.

Our vision is to become an outstanding apprenticeship training provider of choice and each objective is designed to continue our journey of development and deliver this vision.

We will:

- Focus on learners by providing them with an outstanding experience, delivering an accessible curriculum where delivery is creative, flexible and responsive.
- Work in partnership with employers to improve the quality and efficiency of our curriculum to achieve outstanding results, ensuring employers are actively involved in the decision-making process to help shape our curriculum offer.
- Grow our apprenticeship offer through an innovative curriculum, developed in partnership with employers and the communities we work within to ensure we meet their needs, with particular emphasis on the digital, health, supply chain, leadership and management skills gaps.
- Celebrate our student achievements with our employers through local, regional and national awards and skills competitions.
- Ensure the University achieves its vision of becoming an Ofsted outstanding training provider.
- Achieve and maintain outstanding Teaching, Learning and assessment by providing apprentices with an exceptional experience so they can reach their full potential and make a positive impact on their employer.









