

University of Birmingham School of Biosciences



At the University of Birmingham School of Biosciences, our impacts reflect the diversity of our research. Initiatives such as our proof of concept competition encourage our researchers to think about applications for their research and our impacts range from advice on policy to novel pharmaceuticals.

The School of Biosciences at the University of Birmingham undertakes a wide variety of research, encompassing work on animals, plants and microbes and spanning from molecular and cellular systems to the study of whole organisms.

Our impacts reflect the diversity of this research and cover many different areas including commercial outreach ranging from pharmaceuticals through to bird food manufacturers, policy outreach addressing the European biodiversity agenda, scientific outreach for users of next generation sequencing technologies and social outreach to schools and the general public.

Delivering Impact

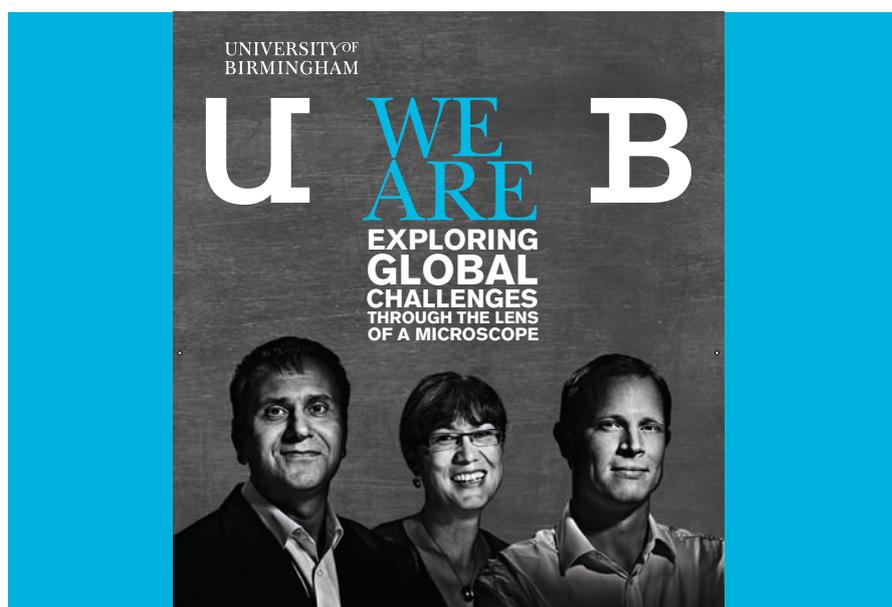
We promote an awareness of the importance of impact through:

- our processes including our Personal Best review which maximises individual academic potential
- local dissemination meetings and activities such as regular school and college events and dedicated workshops
- cross-university initiatives that include internal entrepreneurship and proof-of-concept competitions
- external knowledge transfer fellowships and commercialisation funds
- teaching programmes at undergraduate and postgraduate level that encourage students to look at the bigger picture
- strategic funding for bench-to-bedside research

We have become more outward looking, more engaged and more engaging. We have a Research Office whose role is to support staff in research funding and knowledge transfer activities. This is done in partnership with both our corporate colleagues in Research and Commercial Services and with the Alta Innovations technology transfer office.

We are implementing a policy of engaging stakeholders early on in the project lifecycle in order to enrich and provide greater focus. This brings other potential benefits such as additional funding that could enhance the value of the project.

We believe we have a lively research environment where dissemination of scientific knowledge and engagement with a wide audience is increasingly routinely achieved. This outlook has been driven particularly by the influx of a new generation of academic researchers keen to capitalise on the potential of new media including web pages, video links, blogs and wikis to complement more conventional workshops, demonstrations, lectures and journal publications.



Professor Gurdyal Besra, Professor Noni Franklin-Tong, Dr Robin May
 Birmingham Heroes: Solving tomorrow's problems today

Road to Riches

Roads to Riches is a university spin out company started by Angela Murray (BBSRC Enterprise Fellow 2009-2010). The company intends to use bacteria to convert platinum group metals lost from cars' catalytic converters back into usable catalyst. The company's innovative methods apply new technology to traditional methods of concentrating valuable metals in order to retrieve the metals from road dust. With support from the University's commercial services the company now has a patent at PCT phase and incubator space at the Birmingham Science Park as well as having been accepted onto Entrepreneurs of the Future. They were also runners up at the 2009 Lord Stafford Awards.



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Once processed road dust contains similar quantities of platinum to mined platinum ore

Phage-based diagnostic

Bioscience Ventures Ltd is a joint venture between the University of Birmingham and the diagnostics specialist Abingdon Health. One of the products it is developing is a roadside saliva test for drugs of abuse that originates from research at the university. The idea was first registered with the University's Technology Transfer Office in 2008, when it also won the Big Idea. It has since received support through a Medici Fellowship, a BBSRC Enterprise Fellowship, a KT development fund, the AWM advanced proof of concept fund and follow-on funding. It is planned to turn it into a new spinout through the joint venture in 2011.



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The optical virus detecting device, pictured, is the basis of our diagnostic tool

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The BBSRC Excellence with Impact 2011 scheme ran from 2008 to 2010. It was developed to reward and esteem those university departments most active in embedding a culture that recognises and values the achievement of impact alongside excellent research.