



**Response from University of Strathclyde, 17 June 2019**

**SFC survey on University Innovation Fund approach**

The SFC is reviewing the new University Innovation Fund (UIF) approach and funding model over 2019-2020. A UIF Review Group has been established by SFC's Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee (RKEC) to assist with this and is seeking initial information on how the new UIF approach is viewed within institutions and how the planning, management and measurement are undertaken to help deliver against the UIF outcomes. This will complement the existing evidence available to the UIF Review Group which includes SFC outcome agreement information.

Responses should be concise (up to 250 words per question), containing key points, tangibles and evidence where possible. Where challenges are identified, institutions are encouraged to suggest methods/mechanisms for overcoming these in the future. The case study should be no more than 500 words in length.

A single institutional submission is requested.

**Response form**

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Purpose
Please describe what your institution considers UIF to be for and how widely this is understood.
<p>UIF is a critical funding stream to enable delivery of initiatives and ongoing activities focused on enhancing Strathclyde's and the sector's ability to deliver greater social and economic impact through translation of research to knowledge exchange and innovation. Strategies to address UIF priorities are discussed at key fora including our Executive Team and the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee, chaired by the Associate Principal (Research and KE).</p> <p><i>Alongside funding into academic departments to support delivery of outcomes, some examples of what Strathclyde considers UIF to be for include:</i></p> <p><b>Innovation partnerships</b> Our partnership with Scottish Enterprise and Glasgow City Council for the Glasgow City Innovation District (GCID) – launched in February 2019 – is forecast to stimulate</p>

significant levels of innovation and growth activity within the city. Our business case for investment in GCID, developed by staff underpinned by UIF funding, is predicated on economic and socially inclusive impact.

### **Industry Engagement**

Our recently established dedicated Innovation and Industry Engagement (IIE) Directorate offers account management services to businesses and provides an easy entrance point to access university expertise. This approach will simplify access to the university and enable greater coordination with Scottish Government and the Enterprise Agencies. This further enhances the work to support collaborative industrial funding opportunities that is driven from our Research and Knowledge Exchange Services Directorate.

### **Entrepreneurship activities – Enterprise Pathway**

Our successful Enterprise Hub provides support to students, staff and alumni. The hub provides entrepreneurial training through its Enterprise Pathway programme, and provides start up advice and mentorship.

Please describe how your institution ensures UIF is targeted at delivering the published UIF outcomes.

The cyclical approach to UIF Planning and Reporting, undertaken as part of the annual Outcome Agreement (OA) process, has provided a structure to ensure UIF is targeted at delivering the published UIF outcomes (which we have sought to influence), with a balance between institutional activity and cross-sector collaborative activity. We welcome the fact that UIF is referenced in the Scottish Government's Innovation Action plan, and Strathclyde actively contributes to the process whereby UIF is reviewed and managed through the Research & Commercialisation Directors Group.

Our OA UIF reports outline Strathclyde's commitment to collaborating with other parts of the HE sector (via the Universities Scotland RCDG Collaboration), the public sector, and industry in line with our 'triple helix' institutional mission. Coordination of Strathclyde activity to deliver the UIF outcomes has historically been driven by our Directorate for Research and Knowledge Exchange Services. Going forward much of this will be carried out by our new IIE Directorate mentioned earlier.

We are also keen to ensure specific initiatives can be supported with targeted allocations. For example, to deliver the flagship Government-backed National Manufacturing Institute for Scotland (NMIS) development, Strathclyde is continuing to deploy staff backed by our UIF to progress the critical detailed business planning and early implementation stages in 2018/19.

Our international work with CESAER, through which we have supported Scottish Government international engagement, is also partially supported through UIF.

## Management and Planning

Please describe how your institution plans its UIF allocation and how well plans are understood across the institution. Are there any challenges to effective planning with the way UIF is allocated by the SFC?

The University has invested in its underlying innovation and knowledge exchange capability, met in part from the UIF (formerly KTG) as part of the University's recurrent funding. In our view it is imperative that the UIF remains part of recurrent funding, but that there is also a means found to reward and more directly incentive strong performance and contribution to outcomes.

The recent shift through UIF to effectively 'block' allocate funding to institutions through the UIF, contingent upon receipt of acceptable plans and reports on delivery against priorities, brings one advantage of *relative* certainty in terms of funding. However, the requirements of UIF in terms of reporting and progression of initiatives have increased over a period when the overall funding, and relative funding to research intensives, has decreased. In this context, we consider it essential that SFC does not seek to make *existing* levels of grant allocations contingent on further additional project based initiatives.

In terms of internal distribution, the University continues to distribute a proportion of the UIF income to departments on the same basis as was used for the pre-existing Knowledge Transfer Grant. This reflects our view that good performance needs to be supported and that, although the metrics-based KTG allocation approach was imperfect, it was strongly correlated with good performance.

Please describe how your annual UIF allocation is managed within overall budgets in order to support delivery of your UIF plans.

KE and innovation are central to the overall university strategy, and our UIF plans (as described in the OA) are fully aligned. The UIF is allocated across support services and academic departments to support this activity, as described above.

## Collaboration

How does the new UIF collaborative framework (in addition to your Platform and Outcome Grant) help deliver your institution's KE strategy?

The collaborative framework contributes to our overall KE strategy, but we see particular benefits in key areas:

### Entrepreneurship

As the lead of the Entrepreneurship Collaborative cluster Strathclyde has led the development of the Enterprise Hub proposal, which follows a successful pilot of Enterprise Campus and proposes regional support to early stage entrepreneurs. Though

funding is currently not available for the regional programme, Strathclyde will continue to work with other universities to establish Enterprise Support Group and thematic practitioner forums to enable exchange of best practice within the sector.

#### International

The work of Scottish Government agencies in promoting Scotland as a science and innovation partner and the development of a new BEIS international R&I strategy, makes this topic timely. UIF could be a vehicle for SFC to encourage the engagement of universities in this activity. However, it should also be recognised that most activity will be at an institutional level.

#### Innovation and demand led initiatives

Our partnership working with the sector, via Universities Scotland RCDG, Interface and the Innovation Centres is helping deliver a rolling programme of Innovation Challenge events aimed at understanding and addressing key industrial challenges which can be developed into expressions of interest and used to influence future Waves of the ISCF. This includes part-funding from UIF for a dedicated secondee to work nationally helping build a community of practice focused on ISCF, deliver the Innovation Challenge events, broker new relationships in response to ISCF opportunities and industry led-challenges and act as a liaison mechanism with Scottish Government/Innovate UK/UKRI and provide support to consortia in emerging challenge areas with potential to influence subsequent waves of ISCF funding.

#### Inclusive growth and Equality and diversity

These are key underpinning issues for KE and broader university strategy, and we welcome the sharing of good practice and initiatives that take place in the context of the UIF collaborative framework.

Please identify any barriers or areas for improvement in the new collaborative approach, suggesting methods/mechanisms for overcoming these where possible.

UIF would benefit for a specific fund to pump-prime novel collaborative activities to encourage innovative approaches and new thinking. This could be undertaken through an annual call and aligned to the key UIF priorities, ensuring time is allowed for any new activities to take effect.

#### **Case study**

The UIF Review Group would welcome at least one case study to help the group understand an outcome or impact which UIF has helped to support.

The Glasgow City Innovation District (GCID) is a collaborative partnership being driven by the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow City Council (GCC), Scottish Enterprise (SE), Glasgow Chamber of Commerce, and Entrepreneurial Scotland, and was launched formally by Minister Derek Mackay in January 2019. It seeks to attract and grow

innovative companies in the Innovation District and to thereby accelerate economic impact both for the region and across Scotland. There is strong support for the creation of the GCID because it builds on existing innovation assets with a track record of delivery in Strathclyde's city centre campus, including TIC and Inovo, which contain a high concentration of UK Catapults and Scottish Government funded Innovation Centres, Glasgow City Council's Tontine start-up accelerator and the new Garment Factory building. It is also one of Scotland's most accessible locations with close proximity to Queen St and Central train stations, and direct access to the M8 motorway and Glasgow and Edinburgh airports. In addition, it is linked to a wider geography of innovation including two of Strathclyde's non-city centre Industry Centres (AFRC and PNDC), Glasgow's Royal Infirmary, College Lands / Clyde Gateway, GAIA (airport) and the National Manufacturing Institute for Scotland (NMIS).

Building on the £100M investment in the TIC and recent purchase of the industry-facing Inovo Building, the University is seeking £150M co-investment to double the existing footprint of TIC and Inovo. This expansion of the TIC Zone will establish vibrant, innovative and cross-sectoral clusters of applied translational research and innovation activities, drawing on partners from academia, public and private sector, to generate wealth for Glasgow and Scotland. The established Advanced Pharmaceutical Manufacturing, Energy and Enabling Technologies clusters will be augmented by six new clusters initially focusing on 5G / Communications, FinTech, HealthTech, Industrial Informatics, Quantum and Space. The plans in relation to Quantum and Industrial Informatics build directly on the BEIS Wave 2 Science & Innovation Audit in Enabling Technologies for Advanced Manufacturing and Resilient Infrastructure which was a consortium led by Glasgow Economic Leadership (GEL) that also included Glasgow & Heriot-Watt Universities, Glasgow City Council, Scottish Enterprise, Fraunhofer Centre for Applied Photonics, NPL Scotland and the CENSIS Innovation Centre. We have been successful in attracting a number of industry R&D teams to work alongside the University, most notably the recent move by M2 lasers to establish their Quantum Technologies Innovation Centre.