

Knowledge Exchange Framework Narrative 2023

Institutional Context

Summary

Since its foundation in 1964, Lancaster University's institutional strategy has placed equivalence on research, education and engagement and this three-pillar approach remains today. Consistently ranked in the top 15 UK HEIs and highly ranked globally, Lancaster translates deep local and regional impact that can be applied for wider national and international contexts – acting locally and thinking globally.

Lancaster uses its reputation as a research-intensive institution to hold a respected position as an innovative and effective catalyst for change.

Lancaster focuses on key societal challenges and specialises in multi- and inter-disciplinary innovative engagement. As an anchor institution, Lancaster is an active enabler for securing opportunities that benefit its various communities by prioritising quality and effectiveness of its solutions over quantity.

Context

Lancaster University contributes to societal, cultural, environmental and economic development at local, national and global levels, engaging actively with partners to support innovation through knowledge exchange (KE). Our [Strategic Plan](#) has Engagement as an equal pillar alongside Research and Education. Its purpose is "to engage actively with our community of communities (from local to national to global), to use our collective intellectual and wider capabilities to act as a 'force for good' - a facilitator that generates widespread and transformative economic and societal benefit".

Through KE, we engage with partners and stakeholders across businesses (large and small), entrepreneurs, public and third sectors and policymakers. We build innovative collaborations to meet the challenges of modern society and stimulate research and teaching, both in the UK and through our global strategic partnerships in Malaysia, Ghana, Germany and China. By focusing on synergies across research, teaching, innovation, enterprise and leadership, we can be a key catalyst in positioning the North West of England as a beacon for positive economic, health, social, environmental and educational change and in doing so meet our responsibilities as a civic university.

Key focus areas include:

- **Working with regional partners to enable economic growth within Lancashire and the North West.**
This includes delivery of business innovation collaboration programmes worth >£100M focussed on key local, regional and national challenges including healthcare, net zero, entrepreneurial leadership and the secure digital/data driven economy. We are an active member of the N8 group of northern universities, hold seats on the North West Business Leadership Team (NWBLT) and have developed strategic alliances with local authority, university, college and industrial partners.

- Capitalising on the full potential of flagship opportunities. This includes Eden Project Morecambe in partnership with Lancaster City Council, the Lancashire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), County Council (LCC) and the Eden Project, which was recently awarded £50M through the Levelling Up Fund. We also played a pivotal role in partnership with the LEP, BAE Systems, LCC and University of Central Lancashire, working with the Ministry of Defence to secure the location for the new National Cyber Force representing investment of £5Bn by Government.
- Co-location of almost 50 organisations in dedicated office and laboratory spaces across our campus, enabling close physical proximity to researchers and KE staff resulting in deep and sustained collaborations. We are now developing policies to enable the creation of a full Innovation Campus.
- We are one of four universities who partner with the Open Innovation Partnership, we are members of The Universities Policy Engagement Network (UPEN) and we proactively engage with the Industry and Parliament Trust to build relationships between researchers and Government and influence policy development. The Work Foundation, the leading think tank for improving work in the UK, further enables our KE with policymakers.
- We are proud of our extensive use of undergraduate and graduate talent to enable KE collaborations, enhance employability, retain expertise regionally and support our broader research environment. We reward academic KE activity through an Engagement pathway for academic promotions and annual staff awards.