Westminster Higher Education Forum policy conference:
Next steps for knowledge exchange in higher education and research in England
Timing: Morning, Monday, 23rd November 2026
*****Taking place online*****

Draft agenda subject to change

8.30 Registration

9.00 **Chair's opening remarks**
Baroness Warwick of Undercliffe

9.05 **The current landscape for knowledge exchange and reflections on *KEF5***
Dr Stuart Wilkinson, CEO, Knowledge Exchange UK
Questions and comments from the floor

9.30 **Implementing Higher Education Innovation Funding priorities, institutional capacity and knowledge exchange delivery**
HEIF Policies and Priorities 2025-2031 | *priorities for investment in knowledge exchange capability and professional expertise* | *commercialisation, technology transfer and support for spin-outs and start-ups* | *accountability, funding and institutional sustainability* | *supporting diverse institutional missions and strengths* | *leadership, governance and capability* | *balancing commercial, civic and public benefit objectives* | *collaboration across the sector and partnership working* | *measuring economic, social and civic impact* | *supporting long-term innovation and economic growth*
Senior representative, university
Senior representative, specialist university
Senior representative, business
Senior commentator
Questions and comments from the floor

10.15 **Chair's closing remarks**
Baroness Warwick of Undercliffe

10.20 Break

10.30 **Chair's opening remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian

10.35 **Strengthening commercialisation, university-business collaboration, and innovation-led growth**
technology transfer and knowledge exchange processes | *strengthening pathways from research to application and adoption* | *investor readiness and access to finance* | *scaling spin-outs and graduate start-ups* | *IP, contracting and commercialisation challenges* | *collaborative R&D partnerships* | *engagement with SMEs and access to university expertise* | *emerging technologies, innovation and productivity growth*
Adrian Toutoungi, Partner, Winston Taylor
Senior representative, university
Senior representative, spin-out
Senior representative, investment
Questions and comments from the floor

11.20 **'Future directions of travel on knowledge exchange metrics'**
Dr Simon Hepworth, Director, Knowledge Exchange, Research England
Questions and comments from the floor

11.45 **Developing innovation clusters and place-based partnerships for long-term growth**
Senior representative, innovation cluster

11.55 **Place-based innovation, skills and regional growth**
universities as anchor institutions | *collaboration with combined authorities, employers, NHS organisations and local government* | *supporting local innovation ecosystems and innovation clusters* | *workforce development and addressing skills shortages* | *widening access to innovation opportunities and supporting inclusive growth* | *international engagement and partnership working* | *measuring economic, social and civic impact* | *contributions to health, wellbeing and public benefit*
Stephanie Smith, Deputy Director, Policy, Russell Group
David Hollis, Knowledge Exchange Manager, University of Warwick
Senior representative, combined authority
Senior representative, employer

12.15 Questions and comments from the floor

12.40 **Policy priorities for knowledge exchange, innovation and growth**
Dr Maggie McGowan, Deputy Director, Commercialisation, Government Office for Technology Transfer, Department for Business, Innovation, Science and Trade
Questions and comments from the floor

13.05 **Chair's and Westminster Higher Education Forum closing remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
Sean Cudmore, Westminster Higher Education Forum