

**Westminster Higher Education Forum policy conference:
Next steps for university spin-outs and commercialisation in the UK**

Timing: Morning, Wednesday, 22nd October 2025

*****Taking Place Online*****

Draft agenda subject to change



**WESTMINSTER
HIGHER EDUCATION
FORUM**

- 8.30 Registration
- 9.00 **Chair's opening remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
- 9.05 **Spin-outs, commercialisation and economic growth - trends, policy and considerations for the future**
Ana Avaliani, Director, Enterprise, Royal Academy of Engineering
- 9.15 **Priorities for unlocking spin-out potential - policy, funding, and innovation**
implications for spin-outs of the Spending Review, Modern Industrial Strategy, and the Government's response to the Independent Review | funding allocation and alignment with innovation priorities | developing equity policies and standardising university partnerships and terms | National Spin-out Register and improving data collection and transparency | regional variation in institutional approaches and supporting emerging centres | industry collaboration and best practice in spin-out formation | Research Excellence Framework 2028 and knowledge exchange metrics
Dr Luke Burke, Co-Founder and Director, Corryn Biotechnologies
Dr Adrian Bradley, Partner, Cleveland Scott York
Dr Neil Simrick, Head of Spinouts, Imperial College London
Senior representative, investment
- 9.35 Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.00 **Fostering entrepreneurship and commercialisation in university environments**
Dr Mairi Gibbs, CEO, Oxford University Innovation
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.20 **Chair's closing remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
- 10.25 Break
- 10.35 **Chair's opening remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
- 10.40 **Taking forward the National Spin-out Register**
Dan Cook, Director, Data Policy and Research, Jisc
Ellen Bamford, Associate Director, Knowledge Exchange Data and Evidence, Research England
Questions and comments from the floor
- 11.05 **Best practice in spin-out models - partnerships, licensing, and founder support**
Dr Ananay Aguilar, Director, TenU
- 11.15 **Equity allocation, support models and funding for UK spin-outs**
new guidance recommending 10-25% university stakes and aligning stakeholder interests | institutional variation and shared Technology Transfer Office and sector-specific support models | public-private partnerships and long-term funding strategy | Government Office for Technology Transfer guidance and reforming governance and licensing frameworks | sustaining commercialisation support through the Higher Education Innovation Fund and other routes | expanding proof-of-concept and early-stage funding | retaining high-growth spin-outs in the UK and attracting international investment
Damian Mole, Founder, Kynos Therapeutics; and Professor, Surgery, University of Edinburgh
Simon Bumfrey, CEO, HSBC Innovation Banking
Senior representative, university partnership
- 11.30 Questions and comments from the floor
- 11.55 **Inclusive growth, skills, and diversity in spin-out development**
supporting underrepresented academic founders and improving leadership diversity | sector-specific opportunities in life sciences, artificial intelligence, advanced manufacturing, and clean energy | institutional and cross-sector coordination to expand commercialisation activity | Connecting Capability Fund, local partnerships, and wider growth infrastructure | sustaining skills and training pathways through internships, buyouts, and skills passports | immigration and visa policy and its impact on talent pipelines and international competitiveness
Professor Dr Vanessa Wood, Vice President, Knowledge Transfer and Corporate Relations, ETH Zürich
Jacqueline Moore, Partner and Head, Global Mobility and Immigration, Thorntons
Rhys Bowley, Head, Intellectual Property and Commercialisation, Swansea University
Graham Smith, Head, Investment, International and Innovation, Glasgow City Council
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.40 **'Spinouts beyond academia: The Government Office for Technology Transfer's role in public sector commercialisation'**
Dr Maggie McGowan, Deputy Director, Knowledge Asset Commercialisation, Government Office for Technology Transfer
- 12.55 **Chair's and Westminster Higher Education Forum closing remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
Sean Cudmore, Westminster Higher Education Forum