Westminster Higher Education Forum policy conference:
Next steps for university spin-outs and commercialisation in the UK
Timing: Morning, Monday, 25th January 2027
*****Taking Place Online*****

Draft agenda subject to change

8.30 Registration

9.00 **Chair's opening remarks**
Baroness Brown of Cambridge, Chair, Adaptation Committee, Climate Change Committee

9.05 **Assessing progress and priorities following the *Independent Review* and *Hickson Review***
Senior speaker confirmed from the **Royal Academy of Engineering**
Questions and comments from the floor

9.30 **University-investor relationships, deal terms and IP - experience in practice and next steps**
equity and licensing | timescale to deal completion | UKRI's refreshed IP policies and terms attached to publicly funded research | implications for investment, ownership and company location | university-investor relationships, timing of engagement, decision-making and investor input | commercialisation practice, governance and support for founders | investor engagement and commercial expertise in universities | role and resourcing of technology transfer offices | entrepreneurship, company formation and investor readiness | founder equity, team dynamics and diversity | differences in approaches to risk and development timescales, and the incentives and expectations of founders, investors and universities | published policies and transparency of deal data
Professor David Denning, Professor, Infectious Disease in Global Health, University of Manchester
Sara Ludlam, Partner, Brabners
Dr Amanda Wooding, Deputy Head, Life Sciences, Cambridge Enterprise, University of Cambridge
Senior representative, investment
Questions and comments from the floor

10.20 **Priorities for research translation, proof-of-concept and routes to investment**
Dr Mairi Gibbs, CEO, Oxford University Innovation
Questions and comments from the floor

10.45 **Chair's closing remarks**
Baroness Brown of Cambridge, Chair, Adaptation Committee, Climate Change Committee

10.50 Break

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

11.05 **Priorities for venture building, commercialisation and routes to investment**
Geeta Nathan, Deputy Director, Innovation Ecosystem Strategy, Innovate UK

11.15 **Commercialisation finance, scale-up and international growth**
bridging the gap between publicly funded research and private investment | commercial readiness and pathways to first investment | pre-seed, early-stage and growth funding | UKRI proof-of-concept support and the Innovate UK Venture Builder pilot | role of UKRI, Innovate UK and the British Business Bank | pension and institutional capital | British Growth Partnership and the proposed UK Scale-up Fund | scaling and international expansion | UK and overseas listing and exit routes | retaining economic value, talent and high-growth companies in the UK
Stephen O'Rourke, Commercial Champion, BioFlavor, University of Helsinki
Ian Connatty, Deputy Chief Investment Officer and Managing Partner, BBB Investment Services, British Business Bank
Dr Christian Holtze, Open Innovation Manager and Principal Scientist Flow Chemistry, BASF
Diana Galpin, Director, Enterprise and Knowledge Exchange, University of Southampton

11.35 Questions and comments from the floor

12.00 **Regional commercialisation capacity and long-term outcomes across the UK**
access to investment, investor networks and commercialisation support beyond established innovation hubs | growth in spin-out activity outside the golden triangle | innovation clusters, place-based growth and the Local Innovation Partnerships Fund | shared technology transfer models and collaboration | strengthening commercialisation expertise and support capacity | regional approaches to attracting investment and supporting scale-up | translating publicly funded research into long-term economic impact | the HEIF review and incentives for commercialisation | measuring outcomes including scale-up performance, investment attraction and wider economic impact | tracking high-potential spin-outs
Jonathan Hopper, Senior Vice President, Technology and Founder, OMass Therapeutics
David Coleman, CEO, University of Birmingham Enterprise
Sarah Windrum, Head, Cluster Development, HORIBA MIRA
Senior representative, combined authority
Senior commentator
Questions and comments from the floor

12.45 **Commercialisation capacity in England - the HEIF review and Research England priorities**
Dr Bethany Adams, Associate Director, Knowledge Exchange Strategic Projects and Partnerships, Research England
Questions and comments from the floor

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