



IAA funded Industry Engagement Day Fundamental in Securing a £6.7M Centre for Doctoral Training

Research Background

Professors Manuel Salmeron-Sanchez and Matt Dalby lead the University of Glasgow Centre for the Cellular Microenvironment, a multidisciplinary team focusing on understanding the interactions between materials, proteins and cells to engineer and control cell behaviour and stem cell differentiation.

Industry Day

After being short listed for an EPSRC funded CDT, the Academic team applied for Impact Acceleration Account (IAA) funds to support an industry engagement. An engagement event was needed to gain a comprehensive insight into the needs and issues of importance to Industry, and to help tailor a responsive CDT application. The feedback from the day was critical in guiding many aspects of the final CDT proposal, and to kick-start ongoing collaborations.

As well as presentations from Industry leaders and the Academic team, the event included an Open Space discussion session to encourage open and relaxed conversations enabling the gathering of key opinions and prioritising what is most important. Participants rotated around tables with different curated topics of discussion including: employability and training; industry needs and requirements; clinical interactions; regulatory barriers and commercial uptake of new model systems. This Industry day was a positive step in so many ways. Strong links with industry were nurtured at an early stage, and both financial and in-kind support for the CDT were secured.



Outcomes

- The CDT bid was successful, gaining £6.7M of EPSRC funding.
- The final CDT bid was submitted with commitment from 37 companies and 18 academic institutions & individuals.
- Ongoing support from our active industry club and stakeholder partners are central in guiding the strategy of the CDT.
- Knowledge exchange activity was showcased at this event, and there has been two further networking events since.

Benefits of EPSRC IAA

The nature of the IAA funds being available quickly, enabled an external consultant to be hired to facilitate the day and allow the team to focus on networking with key opinion leaders. The information gathered from the events attendees was collated and analysed and was critical in refocusing the full CDT application.

The lifETIME (Engineered Tissues for Discovery, Industry and Medicine) CDT

A partnership between the Universities of Glasgow, Birmingham, Aston and CÚRAM – Science Foundation Ireland, is now recruiting students. We will train innovation leaders in drug discovery and regenerative medicine through development of bioengineered humanised 3D models, microfluidics, diagnostics and sensing platforms. <https://lifetime-cdt.org/>