How can social science researchers work with intermediaries?

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First some definitions...

*An **innovation** is a new or improved product or process (or combination thereof) that differs significantly from the unit's previous products or processes and that has been made available to potential users (product) or brought into use by the unit (process)*

Source: Oslo Manual 2018

Innovation activities include not just technical R&D, but many different activities within a firm, industry and eco-system – including training, marketing, customer engagement, IP
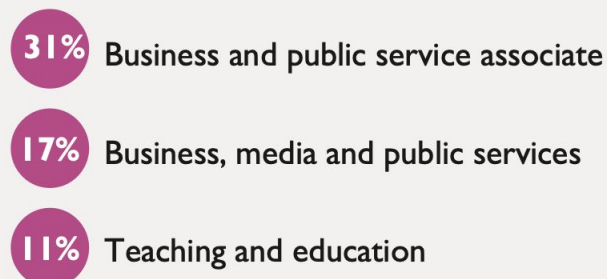
Innovation activities within an **innovation landscape** also include – national and regional policy interventions, regulation, funding/investment, research, market-making and enabling activities such as Catapults, Research Technology Organisations, Trade associations, Business support

Innovators already use social science skills extensively

Graduates go on to work in a wide range of sectors and occupations[1]

- **18%** Professional, scientific, and technical activities
- **17%** Education
- **9%** Wholesale and retail trade
- **9%** Financial and insurance activities
- **8%** Human health and social work activities
- **8%** Public administration and defence
- **6%** Administrative and support services

Just over three-quarters of social science graduates leave university to work in a professional occupation. The most popular professions are:
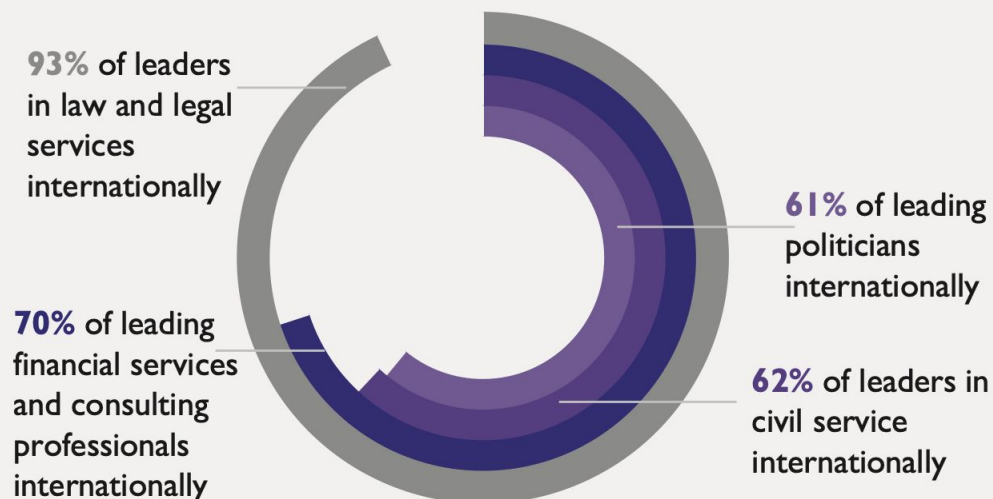
- **31%** Business and public service associate
- **17%** Business, media and public services
- **11%** Teaching and education

They go on to be global leaders[2]

60% of global leaders have undergraduate degrees in social science fields

93% of leaders in law and legal services internationally

70% of leading financial services and consulting professionals internationally

61% of leading politicians internationally

62% of leaders in civil service internationally

Source: Positive Prospects - Academy of Social Sciences, 2018

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A complicated UK Innovation landscape

Figure 10
Research and Innovation Landscape Map[37]

[37] Figure 10 is an attempt to capture the major organisations and funding sources, relevant to business-university collaboration, in the UK's research and innovation landscape. Due to the complexity of the landscape there will inevitably be information missing.
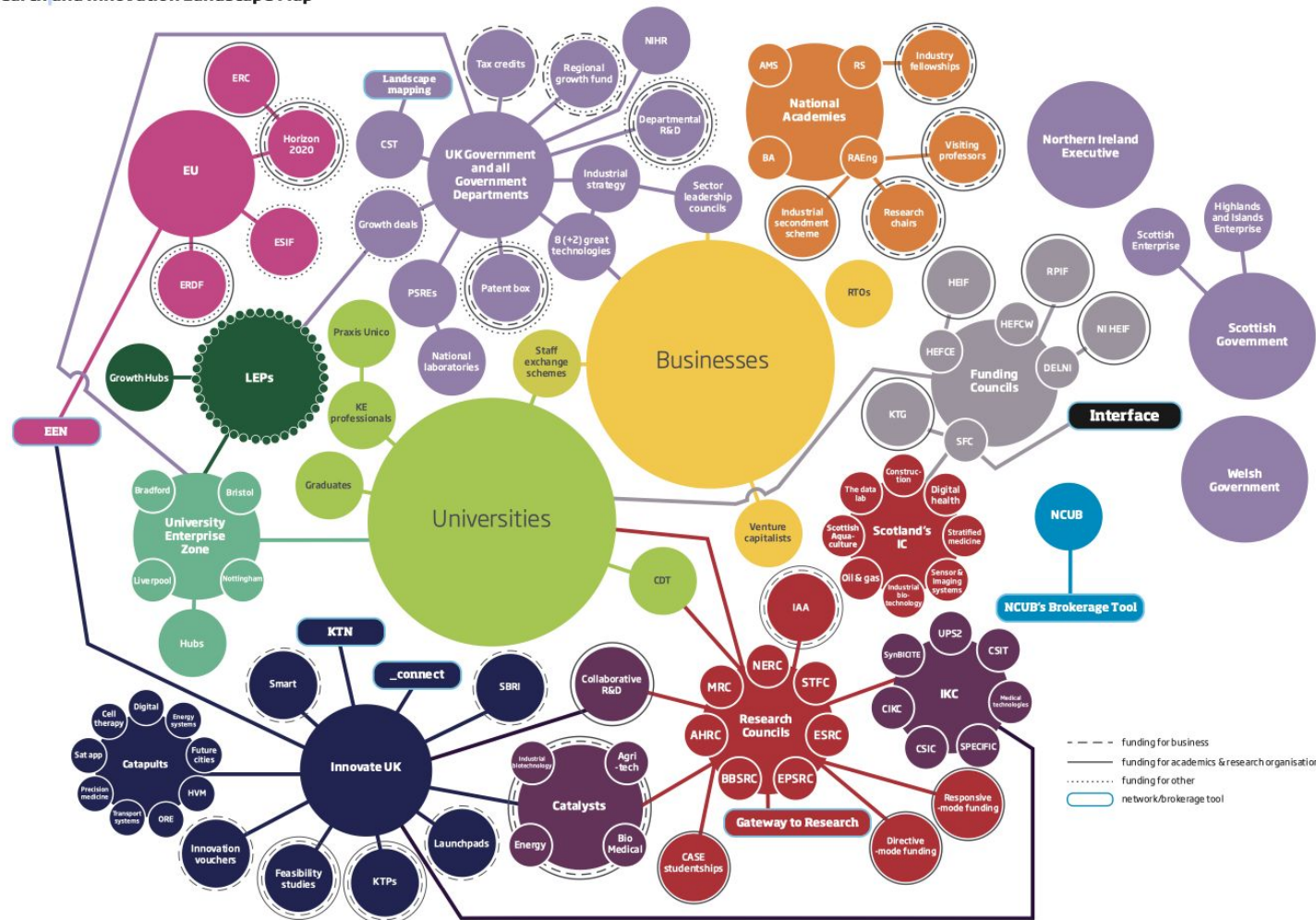
*Source:
Dowling Review of business-university research collaborations, 2015*

Thematic suggestions

- Impact and Value for Money

- Place

- Systems thinking

- Adoption and diffusion

- Policy development (regional and national)

- Capturing insights from business engagement by intermediaries and sharing them

- Helping intermediaries develop new programmes for engagement

Types of organisation – trade associations

Types of organisation – research and technology organisations (RTOs)

AIRTO > About us

About us

AIRTO is the Association for Innovation, Research and Technology Organisations, the foremost membership body for organisations operating in the UK's innovation, research and technology sector.

View a taxonomy of the UK's Innovation Research Technology sector

Our members deliver vital innovation and knowledge transfer services which include:

- applied and collaborative R&D
- consultancy
- technology validation and testing
- incubation of commercialisation opportunities
- early stage financing

Types of organisation – accelerators and incubators

Types of organisation – investment communities

Case study: IUK KTN

Transforming Business Through Social Sciences – (TBSS) ESRC pilot

The project looked at how **business and social science collaborations** can happen at scale by working with organisations like KTN.

TBSS - the approach

Test **existing KTN mechanisms** that can be used to foster collaborations

Find **new, creative ways** to connect the social science research community & businesses

International examples and best practice for connecting social science research teams with business

We provide a **sector-agnostic focus** on **strategic challenges across industry**, e.g., tech adoption, business model innovation, COVID-19 recovery, sustainability, circular economy, connectivity, growing resilience.

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So, how does one make room for "soft sciences" in an organisation intrinsically built around "hard sciences"?

- As it turns out, not overnight

Behaviour Change and Business – Webinar Series

- Webinars are organised in partnership with KTN Innovation Networks
- Over 2000 people signed up for the first 3 webinars in this series

- Most comments looked like this:

SH This is gold! Thank you to organisers and presenters.

This is an incredible topic. It's fantastic that Innovate UK KTN is giving it a platform. Thank you.

Pilot output - social science research teams tool for engagement

Empower KE professionals

Help business development teams to map out existing skills, capabilities and expertise in the different innovation core drivers, as described in our Innovation Canvas.

KEF metrics

Contribute towards defining appropriate KEF metrics for the social sciences, through the match making exercise between academics and businesses.

Support university staff

Support university staff within knowledge exchange teams, to ensure they are confident to translate research into lay terms.

Showcase the value of social sciences

Showcase the value of social sciences to businesses and increase the visibility of social science research across the country.

Conclusion – get involved – we can help!

- IUK KTN very happy to make connections to other intermediaries, across a wide range of sectors and disciplines

- Offer advice about navigating the landscape

- Connect you directly to businesses and/or innovation programmes

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Thank you for listening!

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