TRANSFORMING OUR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

TRANSFORMING OUR CURRENT INNOVATION ARRANGEMENTS TO AN EFFECTIVE UCL INNOVATION LIFECYCLE SERVICE

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UCL's position as a world leading research institution combined with its location at the global crossroads of London gives it arguably unrivalled potential and opportunity to maximize the impact of its research and education activities. Whilst UCL already has extensive interactions with the outside world, there are latent opportunities to deepen relationships to relevant industry sectors, professions and public services. The calibre of UCL's students and staff gives UCL another considerable advantage as it seeks to strengthen its innovation and enterprise portfolio.

What is the Innovation Lifecycle service?

UCL has recently developed a 5-year strategy for innovation and enterprise, with the following strategic priorities:

- Improve UCL engagement with business and innovation partners
- Contribute to employability of all students, staff and the wider community
- Use our position in London to benefit London, the UK and the wider world
- Promote and embed an effective culture of innovation and knowledge exchange across UCL
- Contribute to the financial sustainability of the institution.

Significant actors supporting innovation and enterprise at UCL are UCL Innovation and Enterprise together with wholly owned subsidiary companies UCLB and UCLC, and a number of staff with Professional Services and some staff and teams within Faculties. Detailed design of the changes proposed in this model will also need to take into account the outcomes of the UCL/UCLB relationship review which will complete in17/18.

The key findings of the TOPS programme addressing innovation arrangements at UCL are that:

1. The innovation arrangements can be described as the Innovation Lifecycle Service,
2. This in turn comprises two key components, innovation development and innovation support
3. Neither of these are complete, or scalable at UCL, and
4. In particular, Innovation Support has some urgent challenges that need addressing.

1. **Innovation Development** - This activity includes, but is not limited to:

- Supporting UCL staff and students to develop their ideas towards use and application (impact),
- Supporting the development of enterprising and entrepreneurial attitudes and skills amongst academic staff and students,
- Driving the culture of innovation, through career incentivisation (including recognition and reward), "seed" funding for Knowledge Exchange and impact, celebration of role models and success stories
- Innovation partnership building and support
- Supporting technology development and innovation uptake with, and by, business and other users (including through licensing and spin outs)
- Securing external funding to finance innovation projects.

At the institutional level, this activity is currently co-ordinated by UCL Innovation and Enterprise. At the Faculty level, where Faculties have chosen to invest in this capability, there is activity focused on local or sector-specific

outcomes e.g. SLMS TRO, Engineering. In addition the development of opportunities for commercialisation and consultancy are coordinated by UCLB and UCLC respectively.

2. Innovation Support - This activity includes:

- Innovation legal and contractual operational delivery
- Innovation financial management
- Governance and authorisation policies and procedures.

Some of this activity is currently delivered by various Professional Service areas, including FBA, legal services, research services, faculty and department managers, faculty enterprise staff, or by UCLB or UCLC (limited to commercialisation and consultancy activity respectively).

1. We have heard from a large number of colleagues regarding the issues they are facing.

- Lack of clear pathways to progress projects
- Delays in resolving non-standard contractual issues
- Duplication of effort, with local solutions being developed.

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2. Overview of the principles and emerging ideas

To develop the Innovation Lifecycle Service to being an effective, 21st century approach, three major ideas are emerging:

1. Innovation Support: we could **introduce an Innovation Ledger**, comparable to the Research Ledger. This could require systems development and resourcing. It is possible that some resource already exists, but is not organised effectively. It would be essential that this is aligned effectively with Research Support, so as to enable clear decision making processes for academics and professional services staff engaging in new opportunities

2. Innovation Development and Support – bridging the gap: We could **introduce Innovation Managers**[1]. These could be capability-focused, faculty embedded individuals, led and managed by Innovation and Enterprise. They could bridge the gap between Innovation Development and Support and could also assist in the steering of projects towards the right 'route' for example consultancy, commercialisation (UCLB) short courses, CR&D. This potential role would be important in managing the interface with UCLB and UCLC. Some Faculties have also chosen to invest in local capacity for this activity

3. Innovation Lifecycle Service as a whole: we could **refresh policies** – bringing them up to date and fit for purpose, develop new/improved agreements, communicate effectively (including training).

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3. What could potentially change?

- We could separate the responsibilities for innovation development from innovation support – i.e. contractual sign off to be governed by innovation support
- We could revise the roles and change accountabilities in processes across the institution for innovation support and innovation development
- We could create Innovation Manager roles, and integrate these with Consultancy and Business Managers to optimise benefit to UCL in the Innovation Lifecycle

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[1] Innovation Manager is consistent with the terminology being used by UCLB (Business Managers) and UCLC (Consultancy Managers). These three roles would work together to support and enable the innovation lifecycle in UCL within the faculties. In practice, the Innovation Managers would be resourced from and managed by UCL Innovation and Enterprise (Partnerships team) but embedded in Faculties.

- We could implement existing and renewed policies, processes, templated agreements etc., supported by training[2,] and used appropriately
- We could ensure that projects and ideas are developed in the best context, to deliver the best outcome for the opportunity[3], and funding is allocated to the correct part of UCL
- We could create an Innovation Ledger, with necessary support, that could enable informed and accurate recording and tracking of innovation and innovation-associated activities, enabling a better understanding of our industry interactions and recognising increased income
- Great careers: We could create a Community of Practice in order to bring together staff working in shared professional areas to share best practice, develop the practice area and establish career pathways.

4. What would not change?

There are a number of areas which are not covered by the emerging ideas and would not change. Although not exhaustive, these include:

- There will still be dedicated resources that are focused on the sector, and with strong relationships within the Faculty and departmental structures (which has been reported to work well)
- There will still be UCLB and UCLC staff embedded in Faculties to support partnership working, which has also been reported to work well
- Vice Deans of Enterprise will continue to have a strategic role in:
  - developing the innovation and enterprise strategy for their Faculty, working alongside their Dean and VD colleagues, the Vice-Provost (Enterprise) and the leadership of UCL Innovation and Enterprise, and
  - delivering these strategies working with Innovation, Business and Consultancy Managers and Enterprise Facilitators.

5. The potential benefits we could make

1. UCL systems that are effective and therefore hidden from researchers, so that their experience is that it is easy and exciting to work with business and innovation partners

2. External businesses and innovation partners will find it exciting, easy and beneficial to work with UCL

3. Increase the impact of UCL research and teaching (with concomitant benefits of increased income from industry and other innovation partners)

4. Simplify and clarify for researchers the route to impact for their innovations (e.g. commercialisation, consultancy, Knowledge Exchange, short courses etc.)

5. Be able to provide key account management across the whole Innovation Lifecycle Service

6. There will be a commitment from academic and professional staff to build the best partnerships with business, based on best practice and working across UCL where this brings the greatest benefits

7. UCL will be better aware of and able to manage risks around partnerships.

6. What are the outstanding questions we would welcome feedback on?

1. How do we align faculties' innovation work with that of the wider university, in places where local solutions have been created in the absence of a fully formed Innovation Lifecycle Service?

2. How do we ensure there are appropriate incentives for the model to work?

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[2] For example, online self-service training for areas like intellectual property and conflicts of interest, and a new self-service declaration of interest tool.

[3] In other words, projects that should be developed towards commercialisation will be developed through UCLB, projects that should lead to a partnership and collaboration with business will be developed through UCL Innovation Development, and consultancy by UCLC etc.

3.   How do we develop a clear picture of what the resource requirements is for the model to work?

4.   How do we manage and embed the ecosystem for innovation alongside research support so that it is seamless for academics and partners?

Disclaimer:

These documents contain emerging ideas for how UCL professional services could be delivered in a more effective way in the future. At present, no formal change proposals are being put forward by UCL and so engagement remains at an informal stage. Where a preferred option is mentioned, this pertains to PA Consulting recommendations and does not constitute a formal proposal for change by UCL.