

# 10 Trends

## to Guide University Leaders in Growing Industry Partnerships

When considering how to grow their research portfolios, many universities think about industry partners. While engaging with industry requires a different approach, the good news is that companies are eager to expand partnerships beyond sponsored research so they can access the full spectrum of university assets.

This infographic outlines ten ways universities can meet industry needs and create compelling opportunities to attract new corporate sponsors.

Talent	
<div>1</div> <div>Embed talent programming in collaborative spaces</div> <div></div>	<div>2</div> <div>Market access to talent as a core component of research partnerships</div> <div></div>

When universities provide programming to draw talent in, collaborative research spaces are more appealing to companies.

**University of Waterloo** provides a one-stop-shop for companies interested in partnering with the university. It also offers established firms and startups access to career services and student talent, both current students and recent grads.

Talent is the gateway for companies; they want access to skilled talent across undergraduate, graduate, and academic pools.

**Imperial College London** offers industry membership programmes in the Faculty of Engineering that provide companies access to undergraduate and graduate researchers, industrial placements, and recruitment support.

Organisational Design	
<div>3</div> <div>Centralise the university partnership access point to promote deeper business engagement</div> <div></div>	<div>4</div> <div>Use applied research arrangements to access larger pools of industry research funding</div> <div></div>

A centralised access point for industry engagements presents a single face to the market, making it easier for companies to navigate partnership opportunities and for institutions to manage relationships.

**University of Michigan's Business Engagement Center** unites advancement and research industry relations to nurture broader company partnerships.

Industry disproportionately concentrates its research funding on applied and developmental functions that require dedicated university research structures to access and manage.

**University of Adelaide Defence and Security Institute** promotes applied research, manages and builds defence-related partnerships, and develops educational programmes for the future workforce.

Innovation		
<div>5</div> <div>Divest from focusing solely on university intellectual property</div> <div></div>	<div>6</div> <div>Support innovative ventures to maximise investment return</div> <div></div>	<div>7</div> <div>Signal a business-friendly environment through templatised partnership agreements</div> <div></div>

Large companies are decelerating their investments in university intellectual property given growing doubt of its commercial viability.

**73% of technology transfer offices** operate at a net loss, **16% break even**, and only **11% generate a profit**.

Start-ups yield greater value as investors pursue evidence of commercial viability around an innovation as well as talent and organisational structure to ease transition to market.

**University of Alaska-Anchorage** designs innovation ecosystems targeted at supplying venture capital to their start-ups to address limited start-up resources in Anchorage.

Efficient contracting processes signal institutional openness and entrepreneurial culture to industry partners but do not necessarily improve contract speeds.

**University of Copenhagen** offers different partnership parameters (i.e., commissioned research or recruit a researcher) and expected outcomes for industry, organisations, and public sector on its website.

Economic Development		
<div>8</div> <div>Offer education and training as part of industry partnerships</div> <div></div>	<div>9</div> <div>Partner with regional university consortia and development entities to catalyse industry investment</div> <div></div>	<div>10</div> <div>Collaborate via interinstitutional consortia to better attract industry</div> <div></div>

Universities can meet industry training and upskilling needs alongside research expertise; this saves companies time and resources by having one partner for both research and training.

**Technological University Dublin's** Enterprise Academy facilitates talent development initiatives and long-term skills strategies for industry, i.e., food and drink, pharmaceutical, media, technology, and hospitality.

Economic development investment at the city or county level supports university-industry collaborations to support innovation and regional job growth.

**Midlands Innovations**, comprised of eight universities and local and regional economic departments in the UK, work together to increase overseas industry funding for research for universities and companies in their region.

Interinstitutional collaborations increase the scope and clout of industry-university partnerships.

**Stockholm University** and **University of Helsinki** collaborate across two key projects, CoastClim and Artic Avenue, to strengthen world-class research in climate and marine studies.