

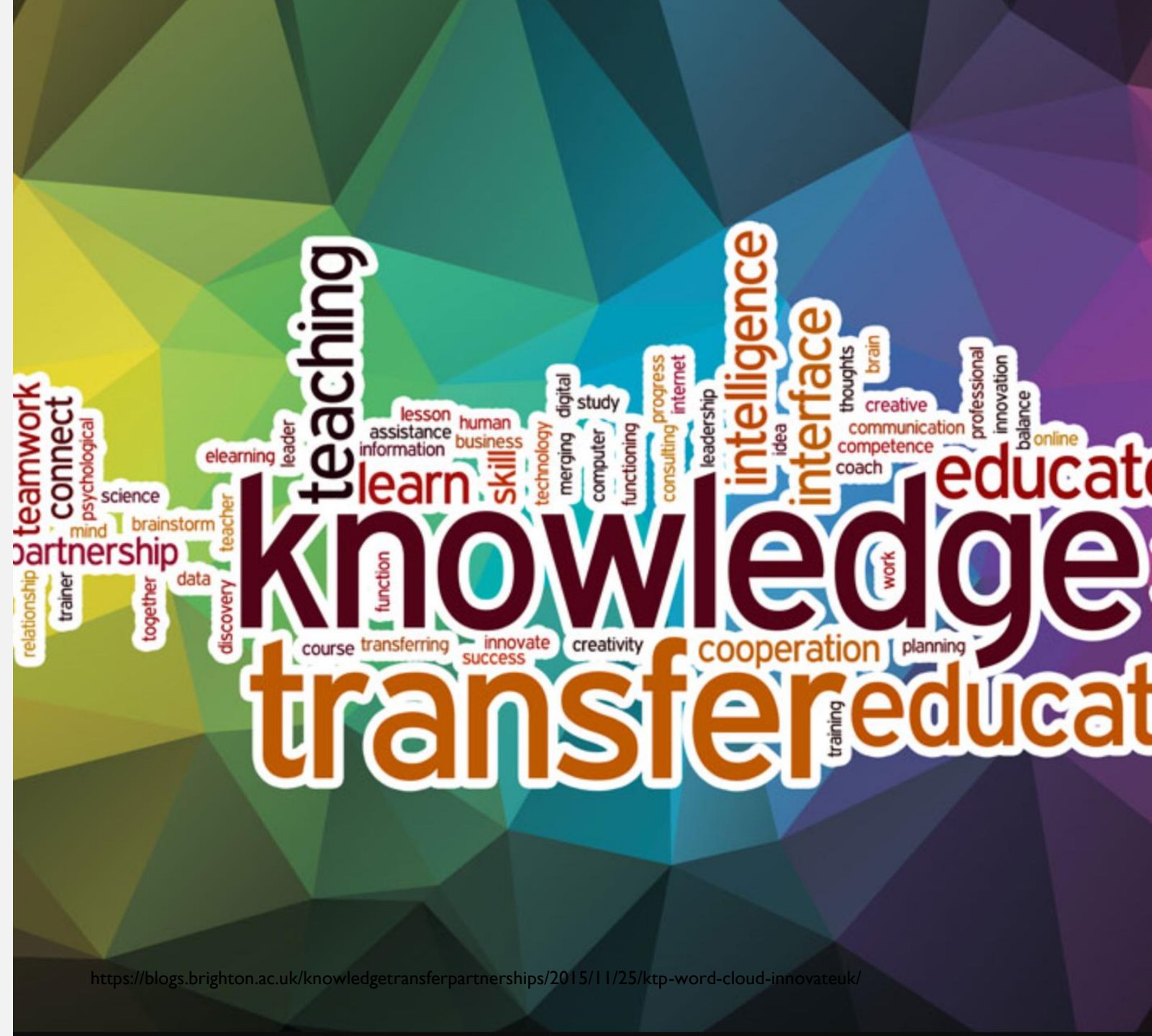
THE ROLE OF TECHNICIANS IN KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE – REVISITED ONE YEAR ON...

23rd November 2022

Harry George, BBSRC

Hannah Noke – University of Nottingham Business School

KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE-
“COLLABORATIVE, CREATIVE ENDEAVOUR THAT TRANSLATES KNOWLEDGE AND RESEARCH INTO IMPACT IN SOCIETY AND THE ECONOMY. KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE INCLUDES A SET OF ACTIVITIES, PROCESSES AND SKILLS THAT ENABLE CLOSE COLLABORATION BETWEEN UNIVERSITIES AND PARTNER ORGANISATIONS TO DELIVER COMMERCIAL, ENVIRONMENTAL, CULTURAL, AND PLACE-BASED BENEFITS, OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS AND INCREASED PROSPERITY” (PG. 3).



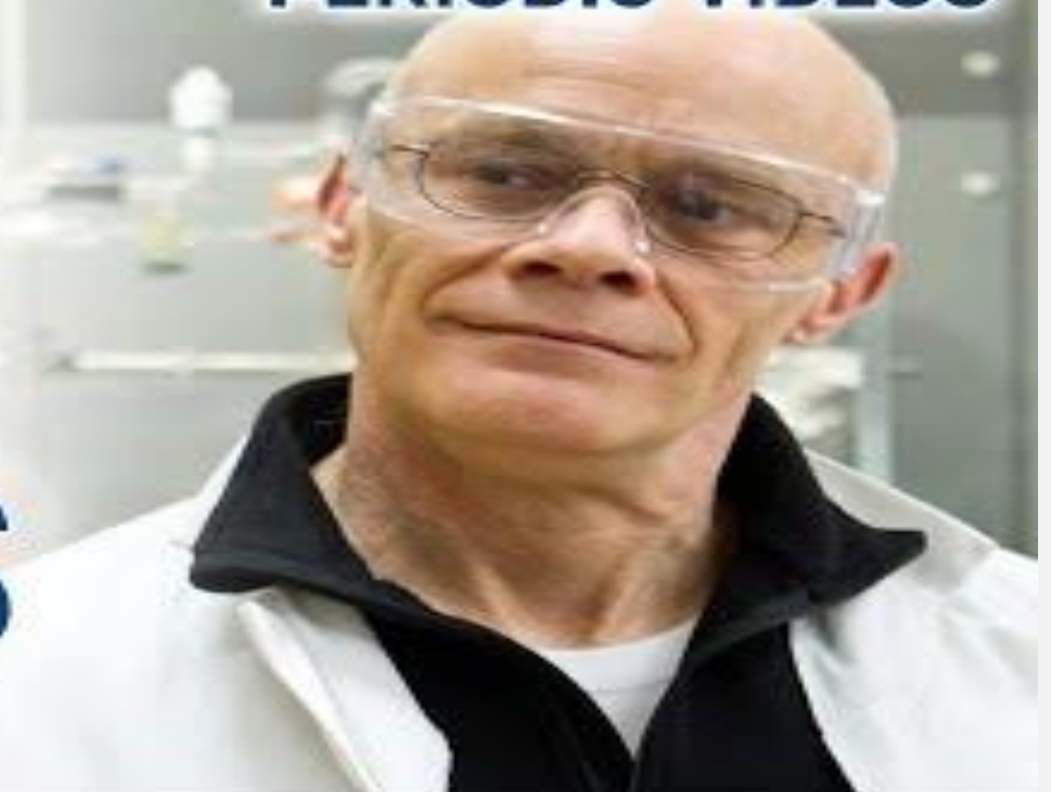


WHY WAS THIS REPORT NEEDED?

- *“Technicians are essential to research, teaching and Knowledge Exchange (KE) and it is vital that they are valued and supported to realise their potential in all these areas. Increasingly the contribution of technicians is being recognised...but until now there has been little documented recognition of the role that technicians play in the sector’s knowledge exchange activities.”*
- Professor Trevor McMillan
- Chair, Midlands Innovation
- Chair, Research England KE Framework Steering Group
- Vice-Chancellor, Keele University

PERIODIC VIDEOS

Neil Barnes



PRESENTED THE ROYAL SOCIETY HAUKS BEE AWARD IN RECOGNITION OF HIS OUTSTANDING SKILLS AS
A RESEARCH TECHNICIAN.

- *“The contributions of technical staff to KE currently have **poor visibility and recognition**. There is also a **lack of understanding of KE, its meaning and what constitutes ‘Knowledge Exchange’ within the technical community**” (p. 6).*



KEY
FINDING

Recommendations

The report makes 8 recommendations, relevant to technical staff, institutions and the wider landscape of funders and professional associations.



Employers, funders and sector bodies should recognise and capture the contribution that the whole team, including technicians, make to KE by **inclusion in KE strategies, funding opportunities and in policy**, e.g. KE Concordat action plans.



Employers should **include technical staff in discussions, reporting and decision making about KE**, including representation on internal boards.



Employers of technicians should be more explicit in **how technical expertise contributes** to their externally facing activities.



Technical staff should engage positively with the training and funding opportunities provided related to KE and **be proactive in sharing their contributions to KE**.



Employers should **make KE training available** to technicians, the types of KE, identifying staff contributions and training in specific aspects.



Employers ensure that the contributions technical staff make to KE are appropriately recognised as part of their **Technician Commitment action plans**.



The **Future Research Assessment Programme** should ensure that metrics around KE are inclusive of all roles.



Professional bodies, associations and networks should recognise and be inclusive of technicians and their roles in KE.

INITIATIVES
SUPPORTING
TECHNICIANS IN
KNOWLEDGE
EXCHANGE



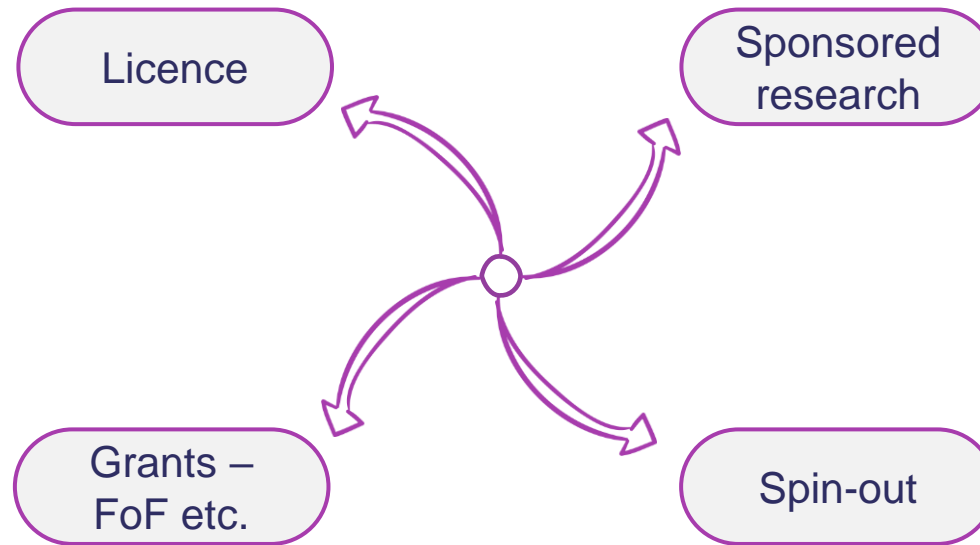
Biotechnology and
Biological Sciences
Research Council

BBSRC ICURE

Explore



Get out the lab to test commercially promising ideas!



BBSRC's Bioscience ICURe pilot

Goals of BBSRC ICURe

EXPLORATION

Create opportunity for all career stages to explore commercial concepts

CONNECT

Connect the ecosystem through links to BBSRC funding support & capability

SKILLS

Upskill bioscience community in enterprise skills

PROFILE

Raise the profile of bioscience through exploring onward value from bio-research

VALUE

Generate added value from UKRI-funded research

What we've changed



Bioscience focused

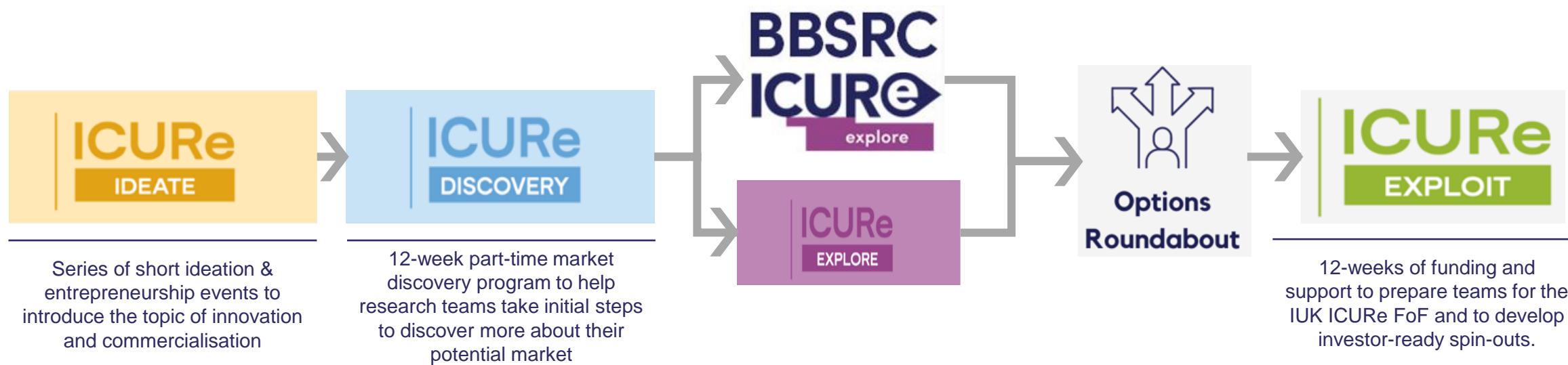


Open to all of BBSRC-funded institutes



Open to researchers at any career stage, PhD students and **technicians**

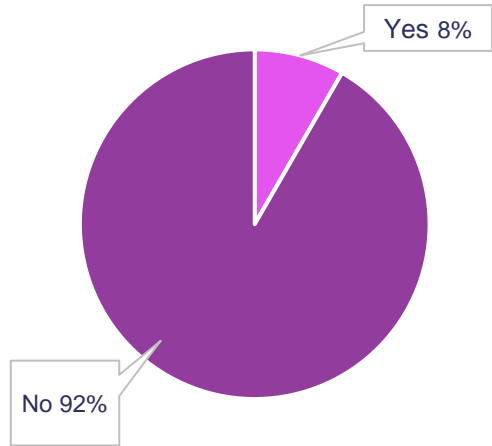
The new Innovate UK ICURe pathway



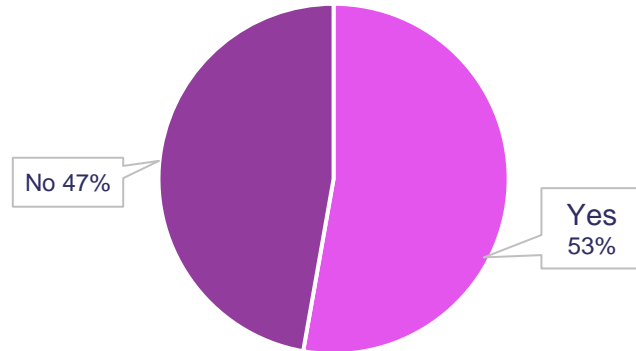
Technicians eligible at all points

Technician survey

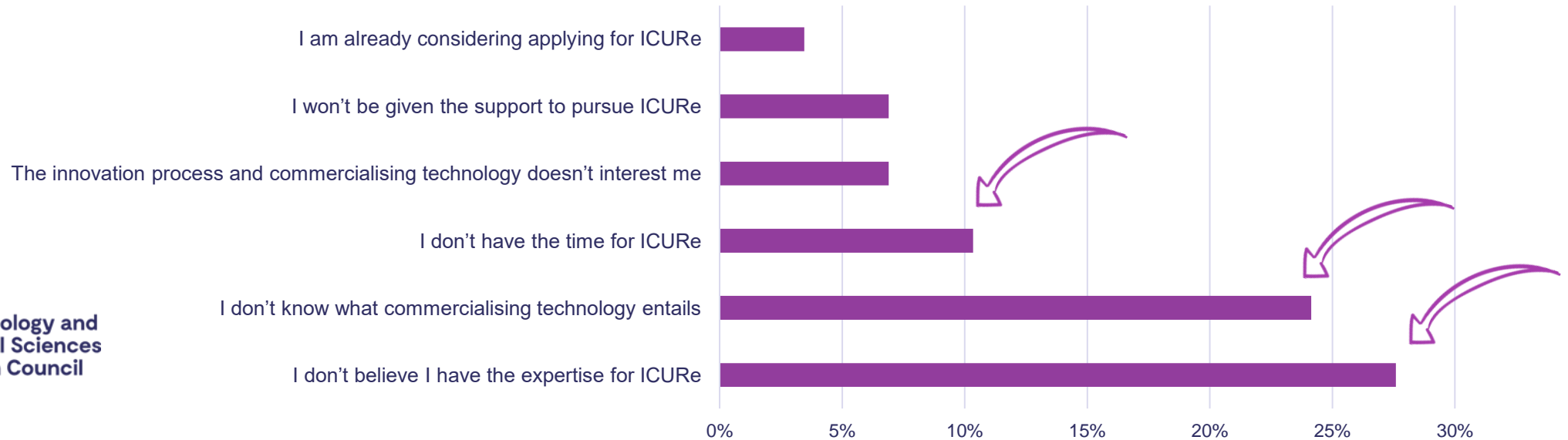
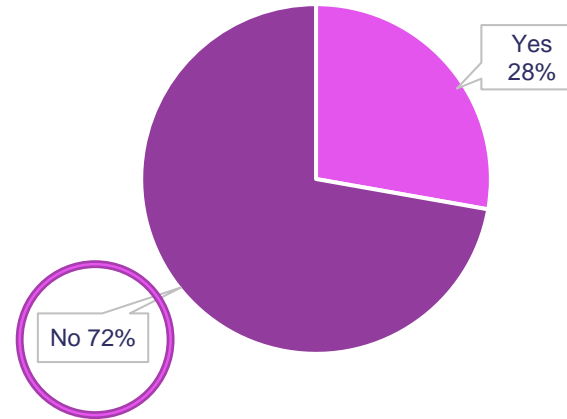
1. Have you heard of ICURe before?



2. Does the idea of bringing a new technology to market interest you?



3. Would you consider applying for BBSRC ICURe?



BBSRC



£25k Funding available to fund your idea

Applications open until 9th January 2023

www.icureprogramme.com



What is YES?

- Pre-idea business plan that focuses on building business awareness now in its 23rd year
- The challenge: to prepare plans for an imaginary start-up company seeking equity investment
- Since its inception it has provided entrepreneurial training for over 6,300 scientists and engineers

What does YES provide?

- YES provides a learning experience ...
 - understanding of the issues involved in commercialisation of science
 - an insight into the issues faced by start-ups
 - team work, time management, communications
- ...in a competition format

The YES family



“After starting my new role, I discovered that I am now more heavily involved in procurement, providing business cases and setting up small research facilities. Although the sport and exercise science programme only launched this September, it has become apparent that commercialisation and developing partnerships will play a significant role especially as our laboratories are in Scotland’s National Sports Performance Centre. YES has offered me the opportunity to develop business skills and gain commercial awareness which has opened my eyes into to a whole new world of opportunities and possibilities. It has helped demystify what exactly knowledge exchange, innovation and enterprise mean and helped me identify how these specifically relate to my role as a technician, which I previously believed had little relevance to my job.”

Russell Wilson, Senior Laboratory Technician in the Institute of Life and Earth Sciences at Heriot-Watt University



YES22



RESEARCH PENDING –
PLAYING CATCH UP!

What we do
know

Entrepreneurship and innovation represent foundational elements of the knowledge economy (Philpott et al., 2011).

Role of universities and how they contribute to the knowledge economy a hot bed of research (Treanor et al., 2021).

Underlying such collaborations is the important phenomenon of knowledge exchange and the various roles played by different sets of individuals (De Silva, 2016, Wright, 2014)

Few academic papers
discussing technicians

What's been
happening

2 conference papers

Setting out a research agenda for journal publication

WE NEED YOUR HELP



WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE MAIN BARRIERS TO
TECHNICIANS BECOMING INVOLVED IN TRAINING FOR KE?



WHAT WOULD YOU DO TO OVERCOME
THOSE BARRIERS?

GO TO WWW.MENTI.COM AND USE
THE CODE ...