

The UK Institute of Technical Skills & Strategy

A collaborative initiative by the sector for the sector

 @kellyvere

THE
ROYAL
SOCIETY

 Universities
UK

IOP Institute of Physics

 ROYAL SOCIETY
OF CHEMISTRY

 National Centre
for Universities and Business

AdvanceHE

GW4

N8 RESEARCH
PARTNERSHIP

 Royal Society of
Biology

CRAC
The Career Development Organisation

 vitae
realising
the potential
of researchers

 GATSBY

 MI
TALENT

 MIDLANDS
INNOVATION

Technician **Commitment**

 University of
Nottingham
UK | CHINA | MALAYSIA

 Science
Council

T M U
TECHNICAL
MANAGERS
in Universities

Context

GOV.UK

Home > Education, training and skills > Further and higher education, skills and vocational training

Press release

£490 million skills training boost to help get more people into jobs

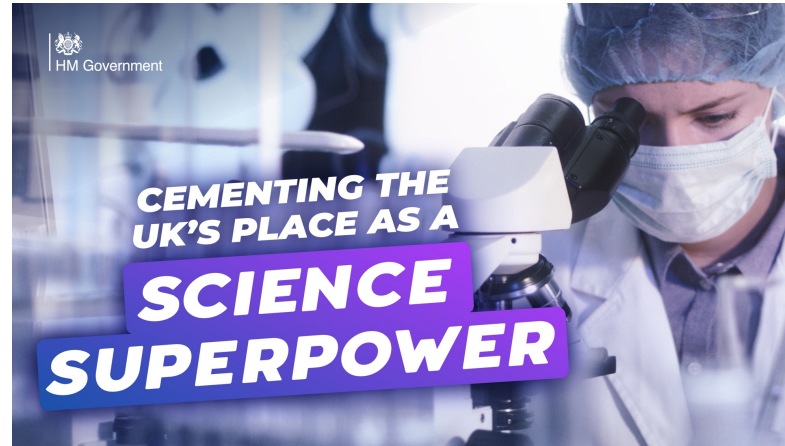
Multimillion pound investment to radically improve university and college facilities and provide better teaching for students.

The Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak, said

- “ Investing in education and skills will unlock future growth, boost productivity and help build the skilled workforce of the future.
- “ That’s why we’re spending £490 million to support high-quality teaching and world class facilities in universities and colleges right across the country.
- “ Whether it’s in aerospace engineering or green tech, this funding will provide young people with the support they need to build a great career.”

Education Secretary Gillian Keegan said:

- “ This investment is about making sure students get the highest quality training in key subjects which are driving economic growth. That means access to top of the range facilities which prepare people for the workplace, filling skills gaps and levelling up the whole country.

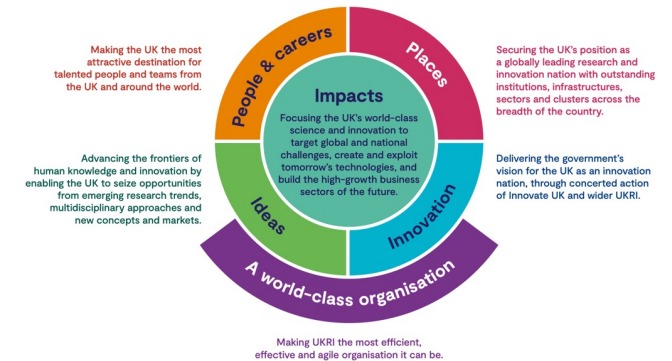


George Freeman MP, Minister for Science, Technology, Innovation and Space.

As Minister for Science, Research & Innovation, it is more important than ever that Britain delivers a bold, optimistic and ambitious plan to realise our vision for the UK as both a science superpower and an innovation nation. We can and should be the world’s most innovative economy, inventing and adopting the new innovations and technologies that will solve the challenges of tomorrow.



Our strategic objectives provide the framework for how we will achieve our vision and realise our principles through world-class:



Technical Skills, Roles & Careers

- The whole research ecosystem of people, with diverse roles, are crucial to solving global challenges
- Technical roles are a vital part of that ecosystem yet traditionally experience a lack of visibility & recognition
- The UK has an identified shortage of technical skills and roles
- The technical community has an ageing population & EDI challenges
- If not addressed, this is a threat to achieving the % GDP increase in R&D



An Evolving Landscape

2017

Technician Commitment

Establish the Technician Commitment. It launches with 36 founding signatory institutions.

2018

Publish sector report:



Technician Commitment: One Year In

2019

Publish sector reports:



Technicians: Providing frontline and vital support for student health and wellbeing.



Equality, Diversity & Inclusion: A Technician Lens.

2020



Awarded Research England funding for TALENT – a £5M programme to advance status and opportunity for the technical community in UK higher education and research



Publish sector report: COVID-19: The Impact on Technicians in UK Higher Education & Research.



The government's UK Research and Development Roadmap launches, setting out the UK's vision and ambition for science, research and innovation (references Technician Commitment).

2021

Publish sector reports:



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: UK Technicians' Experiences During the Covid-19 Pandemic.



Funding Technical Staff in Research



The Role of Technicians in Knowledge Exchange: An explorative study



Technician Commitment: Progress and Impact

2022

Publish sector report:



The TALENT Commission



Research Culture: A Technician Lens

Technician Commitment

Stands at over 110 signatory and supporter organisations

Increased sector awareness and engagement with the need to consider technical skills and roles strategically and drive culture change

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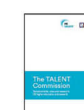
The Role of Technicians in Knowledge Exchange: An explorative study



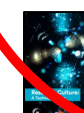
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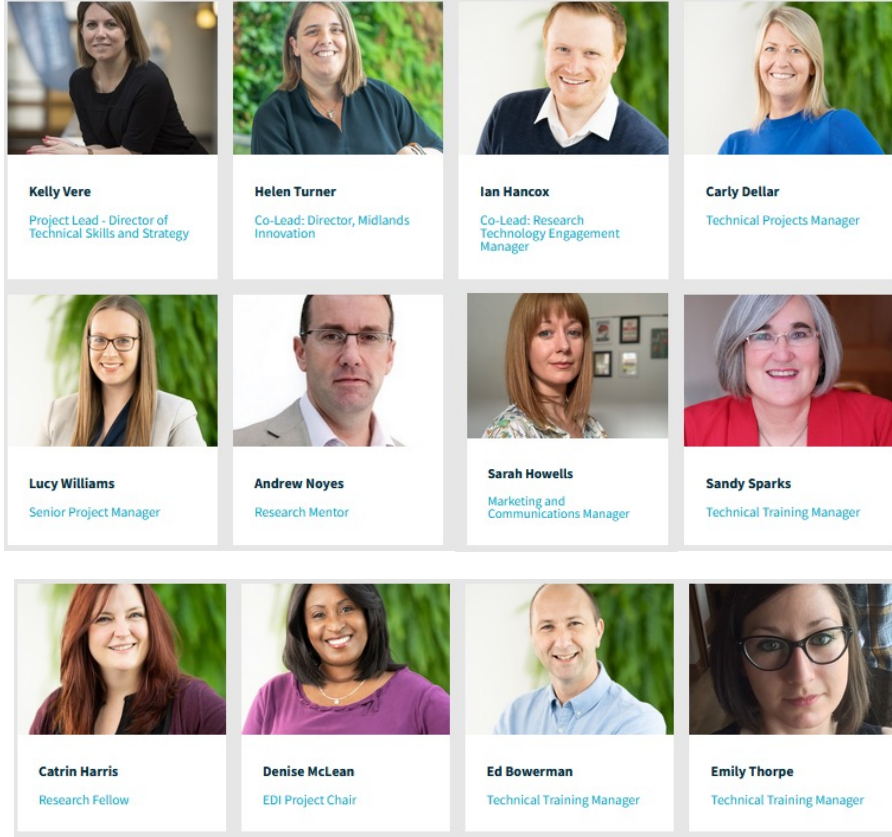
Increased sector awareness and engagement with the need to consider technical skills and roles strategically and drive culture change



**Research
England**



MI TALENT: advancing status & opportunity for technical talent



£4.9 million; 2020-2024



A diagram consisting of three interconnected, glowing white loops arranged horizontally. Each loop contains text and is positioned above a corresponding descriptive text block.

Policy
commission

Strategic insight into technical
skills of the future

Culture
change
projects

Driving culture change for the
technical community

Training and
empowerment

Career development for
technicians through tailored
technical training

Programme Workstreams



Policy
commission

Strategic insight into technical
skills of the future

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empowerment

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technicians through tailored
technical training

The TALENT Board of Commissioners



Sir John Holman
Chair of the TALENT
Commission



Nigel Towers
Head of Strategy, Marketing and Sales,
Thales Alenia Space UK



Rory Duncan
Director, Talent and Skills, UKRI



Helen Pain
Chief Executive,
Royal Society of Chemistry



Anne-Marie Corlat
Freelancer



Kirsty Edgar
Head of Research for the School of
Geography, Earth and Environmental
Sciences, University of Birmingham



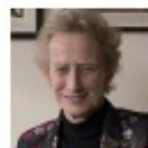
Nishan Canagarajah
President & Vice-Chancellor,
University of Leicester



Tim Savage
Director of Technical Learning,
University for the Creative Arts



James Hetherington
Director, Centre for Advanced Research
Computing, University College London



Dame Athene Donald
Master of Churchill College,
University of Cambridge



Max Boardley
Precision Development Facility
Manager, RAL Space



Paul Lewis
Professor of Political Economy,
King's College London



Dobra Humphris
Vice-Chancellor, University of Brighton
and Chair of University Alliance



Jennifer A. Ikin
Business Manager,
Peridot Partners



Steven Hill
Director of Research,
Research England



Nicola Atkinson
Isotope Support Scientist,
British Geological Survey



Rhys Morgan
Director of Engineering and Education,
Royal Academy of Engineering



Dame Helen Atkinson
Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Aerospace,
Transport, Manufacturing,
Cranfield University



Jhoen Ahmed
Head of Technical Services,
Aston University



Ray Chung
Head of University IT Support,
Loughborough University

Who are they?

Technicians & technical Staff

Academic staff

VCs & PVCs

Directors, CEOs, & sector leaders

Representatives from...

Higher Education Providers

Research Institutes

Funding Bodies

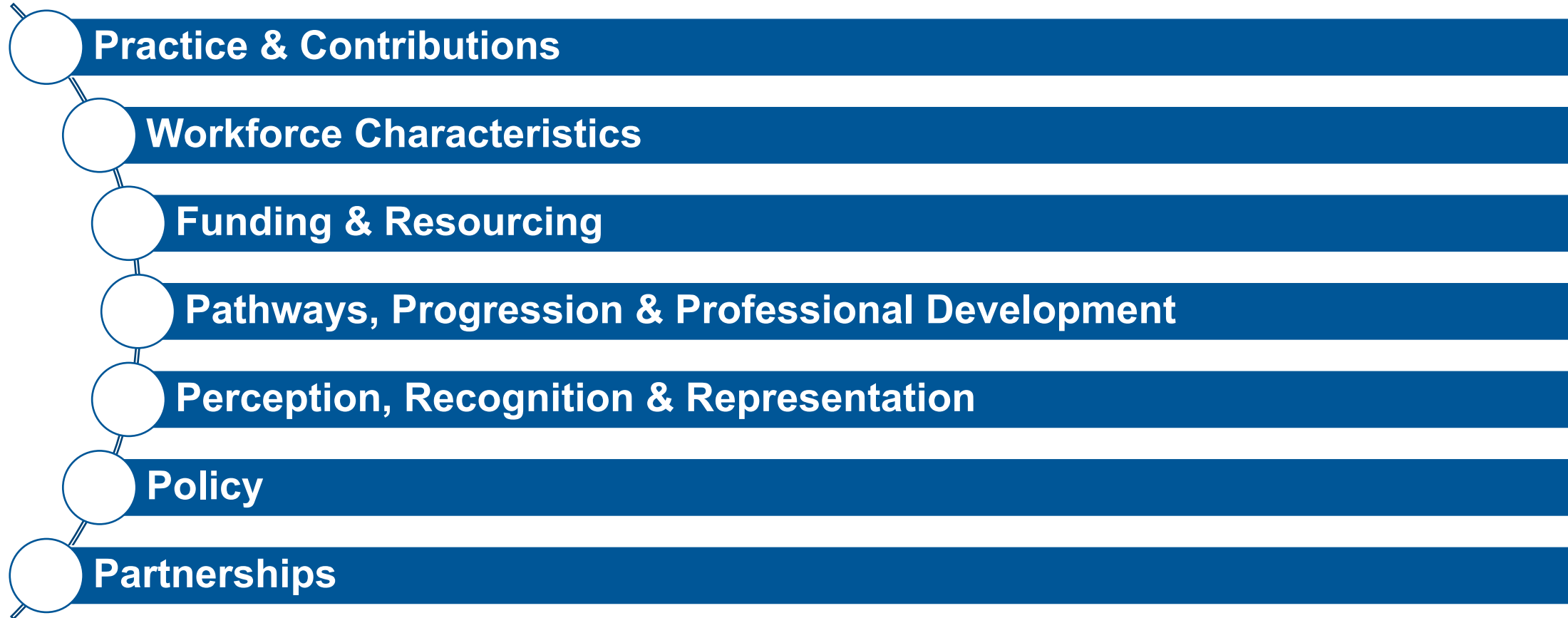
Learned Societies & Academies

Industry

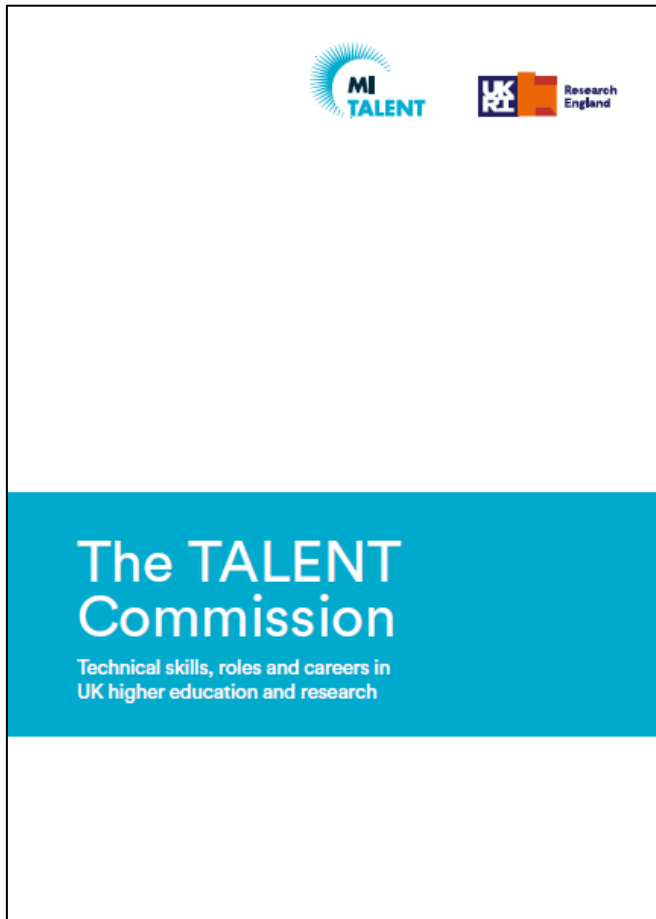
Charitable Foundations

STEM, Creative Arts, IT, etc

Key Themes Explored



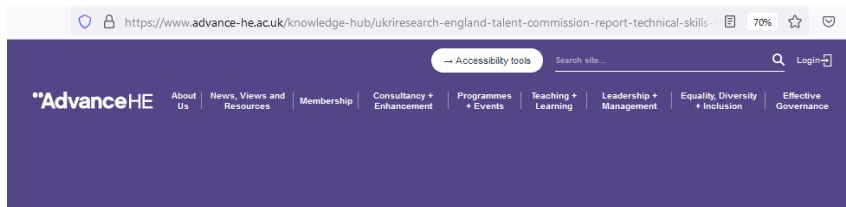
The TALENT Commission report



- A landmark policy report
- Research findings & evidence based recommendations
- Launched virtually in Feb 2022
- Parliamentary reception at the House of Lords in May 2022



Reception so far



← Back to Knowledge Hub

Governance News Alert

UKRI/Research England TALENT Commission report: Technical skills, roles and careers in UK higher education and research

Published: 03 February 2022

The TALENT Commission was launched in July 2020 to look at technical skills, roles and careers across UK higher education and research and is part of wider work by Research England to advance the status and opportunities of the technical community. The report is the result of 20 months of research and stakeholder engagement, including the largest survey of UK technical staff working in higher education and research ever undertaken, a range of focus groups and additional commissioned research projects on topics including funding and future technologies. The report outlines a set of principles and 16 recommendations, with further specifics to target stakeholder groups.

The full report can be found [here](#).

At a glance:



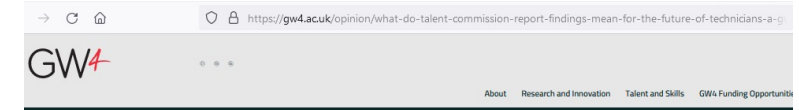
The TALENT Commission Report



<https://www.researchprofessionalnews.com/rr-news-uk-research-councils-2022-2-role-of-technicians-in-teaching-and-research-underplayed/>

*ResearchProfessional News

UK Europe USA Australia & NZ Africa World Opinion Funding Insight Covid-19 Funding Opportunities



← Back to Opinion

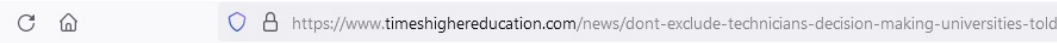
WHAT DO TALENT COMMISSION REPORT FINDINGS MEAN FOR THE FUTURE OF TECHNICIANS? – A GW4 RESPONSE /

February 22, 2022



Sabrina Fairchild

Dr Sabrina Fairchild, GW4 Alliance Talent and Skills Manager, welcomes the TALENT Commission report, which has gathered new strategic insights into the UK's technical workforce in higher education and research.



PROFESSIONAL CAMPUS JOBS EVENTS RANKINGS STUDENT SC < Go back

Don't exclude technicians from decision-making, universities told

'Unsung heroes' of UK research are too often denied seat at the table, says major review of technical staff and skills

February 1, 2022

Jack Grove

Twitter: [@jgro_the](#)



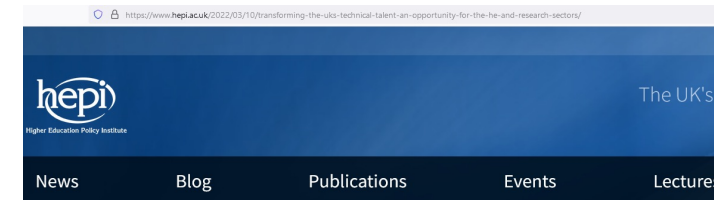
Role of technicians in teaching and research 'underplayed'

By Chris Parr

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Talent Commission calls for better career opportunities for technical staff



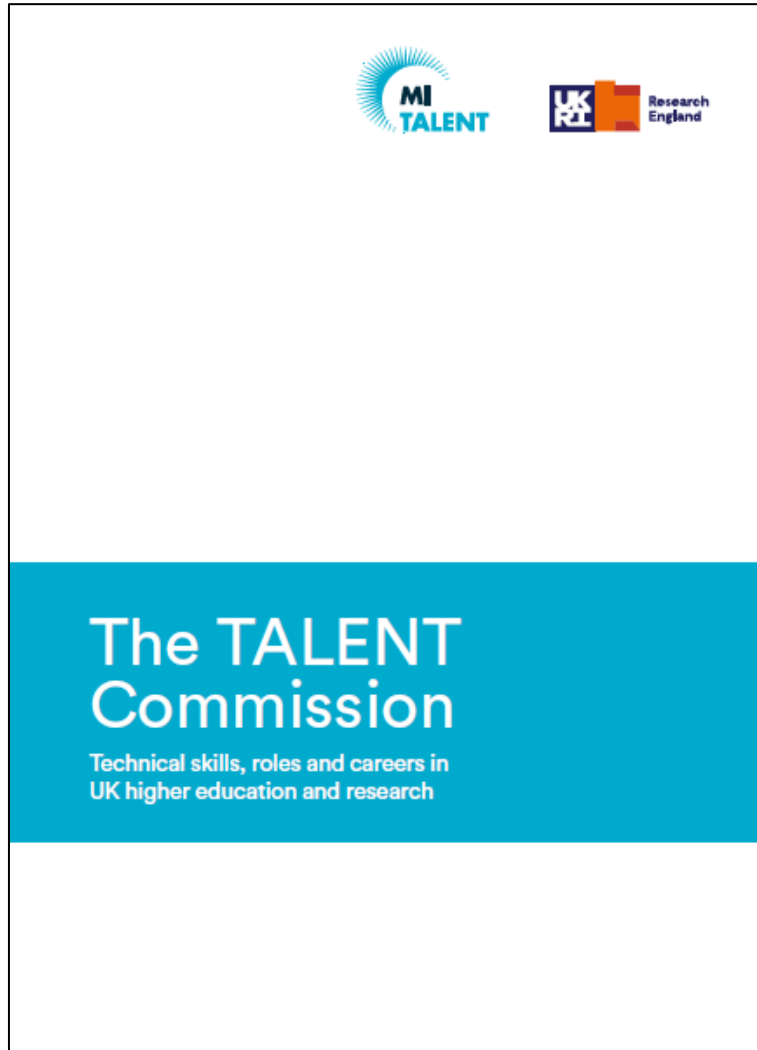
Transforming the UK's Technical Talent: An opportunity for the HE and research sectors

10 March 2022

By Debra Humphris

Debra Humphris is Vice-Chancellor of the University of Brighton and was one of the Commissioners on the UKRI-Research England funded TALENT Commission, a national policy commission delivering strategic insight into the future of the UK's technical talent.

Collaboration isn't always easy in a competitive sector. But in the current higher education and research landscape, more strategic thinking by institutions, funders and policymakers



Recommendation 16:

“The TALENT Commission advises the creation of a new collaborative entity, provisionally to be called the UK Institute for Technical Skills & Strategy [working title] that builds on the multi-stakeholder approach of the Technician Commitment, to represent and provide a conduit to the technical community, advising government, sector initiatives, funding bodies and other organisations. We advise that the new entity works closely with the professional bodies and membership organisations to which technical staff belong to ensure connectivity, voice and visibility for the technical community.”

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The TALENT Commission



Research Culture: A Technician Lens

Technician Commitment

Stands at over 110 signatory and supporter organisations

2023

Publish sector report:



Economic Benefits of implementing TALENT Commission recommendations



Awarded Research England funding to establish ITSS - £5.5M



Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council

EPSRC Strategic Technical platform call (£6M)

Increased sector awareness and engagement with the need to consider technical skills and roles strategically and drive culture change



UK Research and Innovation @UKRI_News · 6h

Technicians are essential to research & innovation. Through @ResEngland, we're pleased to support the new UK Institute of Technical Skills and Strategy @UniofNottingham.

More: mitalent.ac.uk/UK-ITSS #UKITSS

"The Institute of Technical Skills and Strategy will build on the great work of our technical community and Technician Commitment leads across the UK by providing advocacy and strategic leadership for the diverse technical community.

"Technicians, technologists, specialists and related roles across the Research & Innovation sector are vital to our strategy to create a diverse and inclusive system, supporting and enabling individuals, and the UK, to reach their full potential."

- Melanie Welham, UKRI Executive Champion for People, Culture & Talent.



Research England @ResEngland · 11h

Technicians are vital to the UK **research** & innovation system. We're pleased to be contributing to enhancing skills and developing careers through our support of the new national Institute of Technical Skills and Strategy @UniofNottingham - mitalent.ac.uk/UK-ITSS #UKITSS

"I'm pleased that Research England funding is supporting the new UK Institute of Technical Skills and Strategy.

"The Institute will enhance the skills base for technicians, help to raise the visibility of their vital contribution to UK research & innovation, and support their career development, and tackle a shortage of technicians.

"I look forward to seeing the impact the ITSS will have for technicians – from museum archivists right through to space technologists."

- Professor Dame Jessica Corner, Executive Chair of Research England



**Research
England**

**£5.5 million Investment to establish new
UK Institute for Technical Skills & Strategy**



Study A

University of

Sir Colin Cam

Home

Press releases

Press release

2019

2018

2017

2016

2015

Blog

Feedback form

Videos

Expertise for

Meet the team



Image: Flickr / Simon Walker

National Institute of Technical Skills and Strategy to support UK research and innovation launched

By **Reece Goodall**

Mar. 23, 2023

Posted in News

The UK is set to welcome a new £5.5 million national institute, with the aim of augmenting the country's technical capability and capacity across academia, research, education, and innovation. The initiative seeks to enable the UK to become a global powerhouse in science, engineering, and creative industries.



UK INSTITUTE FOR
TECHNICAL
SKILLS & STRATEGY

Our Vision

The UK is a global leader in science, engineering, and the creative industries, enabled by its technical capability and capacity across higher education, research and innovation, and technical careers are recognised, developed, respected and aspired to.



Our Mission

To accelerate and fulfil the potential of UK technical skills and careers across higher education, research and innovation.

ITSS will provide insight, influence policy, inspire innovation, foster integration, promote international leadership, strengthen industry connections, and ensure the long-term sustainability of technical skills and careers.



A Collaborative Approach

- A multi-disciplinary team with a strong track record in shaping, leading and delivering progress on this emerging agenda
- Academic, policy and community building expertise across the team
- A solid, cohesive and connected partnership, committed to working across the sector to deliver change
- Advisory Board comprised of sector stakeholders
- ITSS Technical Council to embed a culture of technical leadership

THE
**ROYAL
SOCIETY**



IOP Institute of Physics



AdvanceHE

GW4

N8 RESEARCH PARTNERSHIP



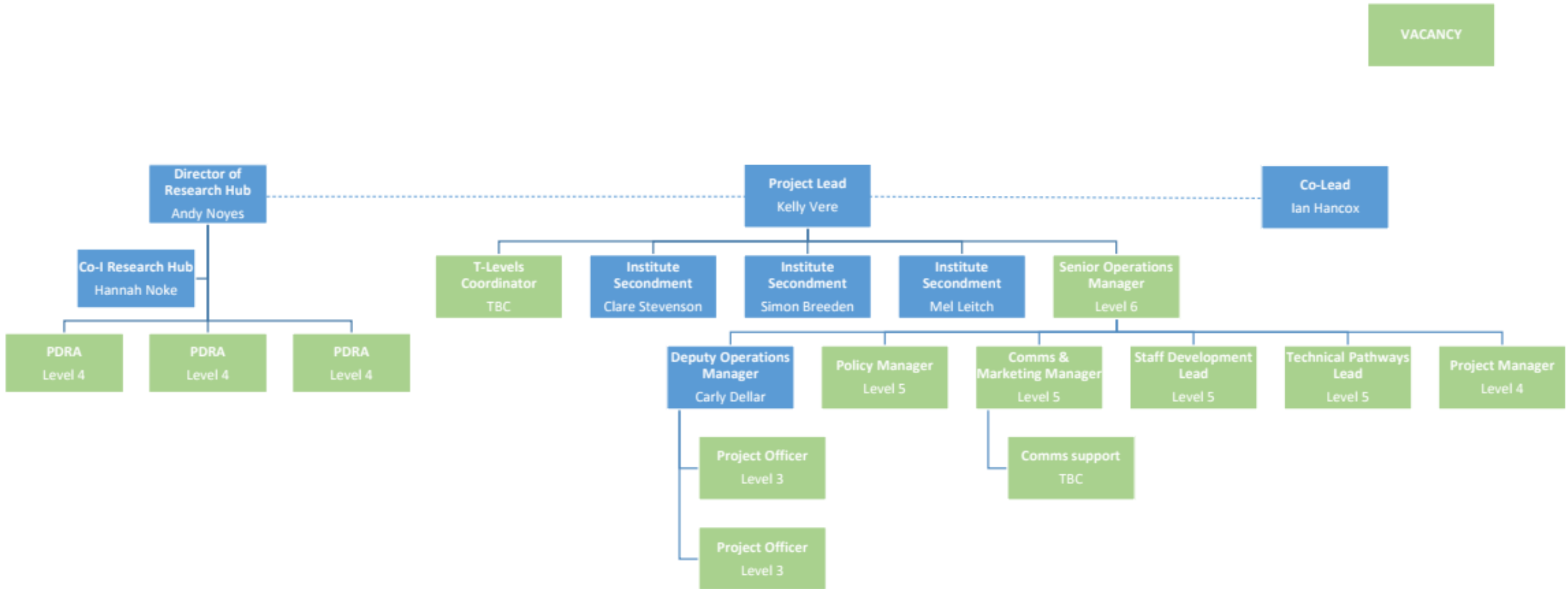
CRAC
The Career Development Organisation



Technician **Commitment**



UK ITSS Organisational Chart



ITSS Hubs



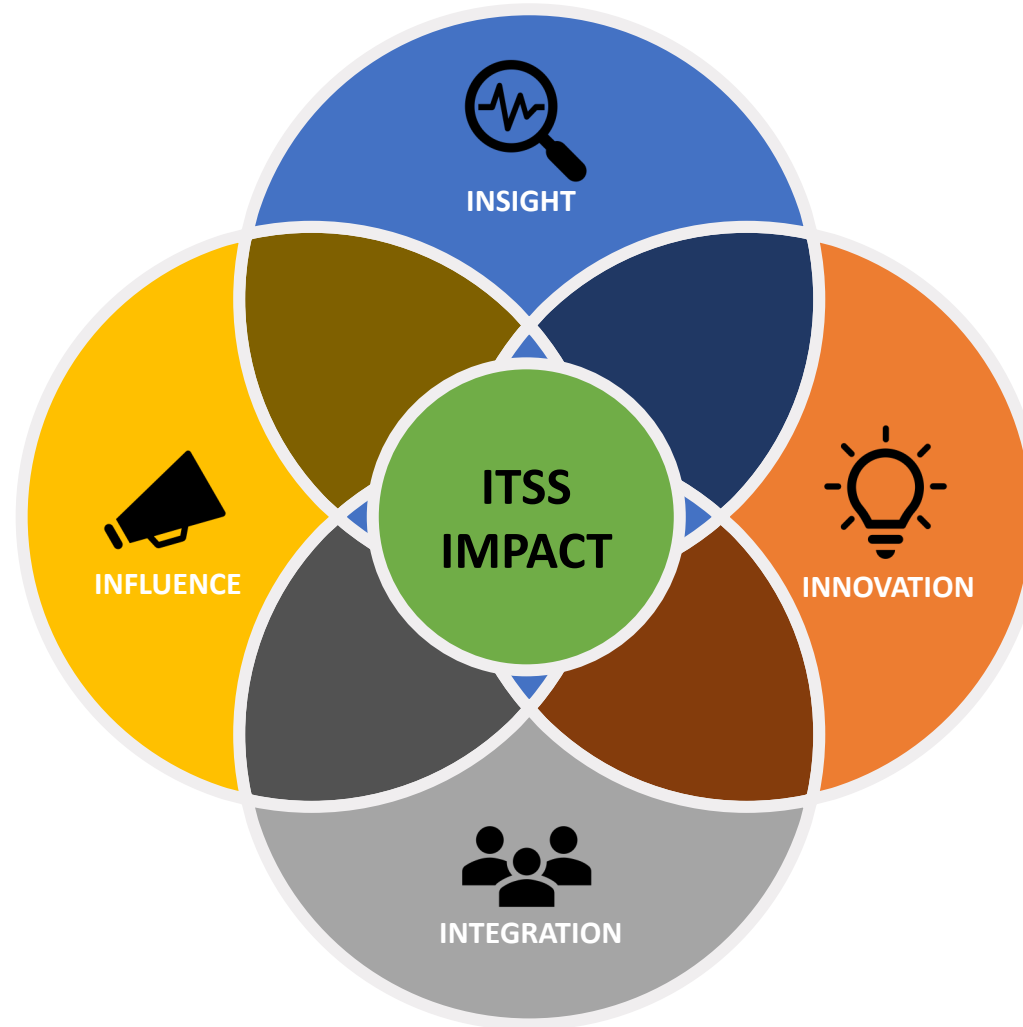
INSIGHT

Research and understanding on technical roles, skills, careers, education, training and research culture and systemic change



INFLUENCE

Policy and Advocacy to inform, influence and interpret policy pertaining to technical roles, skills, careers, education and training



INNOVATION



Innovative Practice to develop and evaluate new ways of working to support technical skills and careers in R&D and beyond

INTEGRATION



Building Connectivity, Culture and Community across and beyond the sector around technical skills, roles, education and training



INSIGHT

Hub 1 – INSIGHT



INSIGHT

Research and understanding on technical roles, skills, careers, education, training and research culture and systemic change

- Mapping the Landscape
- Understanding the Landscape
- Transforming the Landscape





INFLUENCE

T-LEVELS

THE NEXT LEVEL QUALIFICATION



T-Level pathways to R&D careers



**Engineering and
Physical Sciences
Research Council**

**Investment in new
technical talent**

IOP Institute of Physics



UK Research and Innovation



UK Research and Innovation

People and Teams

UKRI Action Plan

March 2023



Supporting the establishment of the UK Institute of Technical Skills and Strategy (ITSS) to:

Provide strategic leadership, influence, insight and impact for technical skills and strategy across the UK.

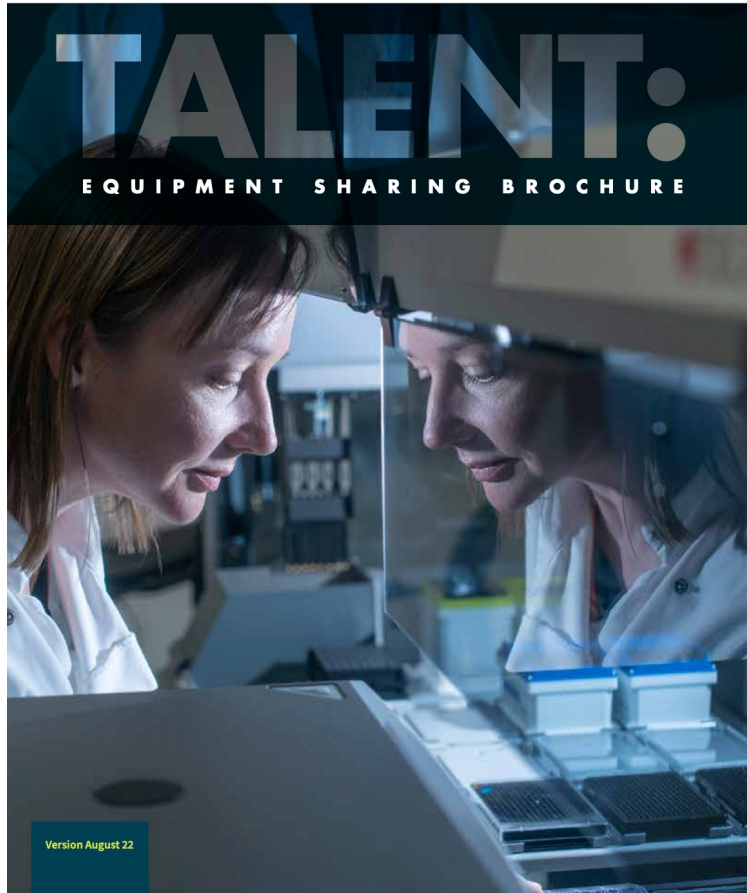
4.4. Investment and UKRI staff support for an Institute of Technical Skills and Strategy.

A national institute providing insight, influence, and innovative interventions to ensure that the UK has the technical capability and capacity across academia, research, education, and innovation to enable the UK to be a global superpower in science, engineering, and the creative industries, and that technical skills, roles, and careers will be recognised, understood, developed, respected, and aspired to.

Continued collaboration with UKRI



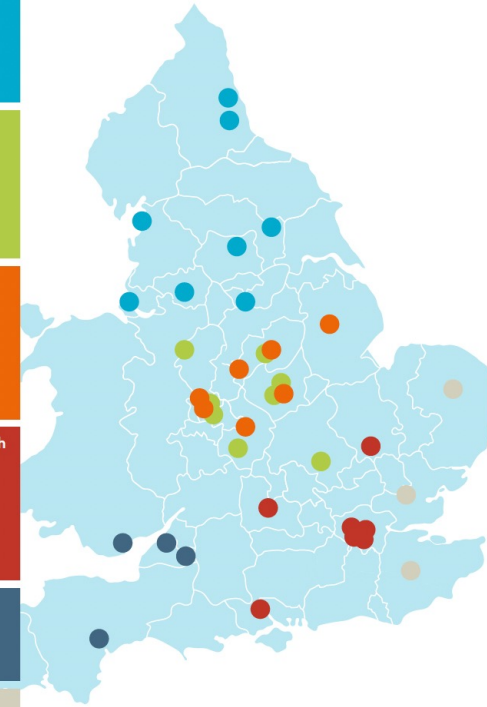
INNOVATION

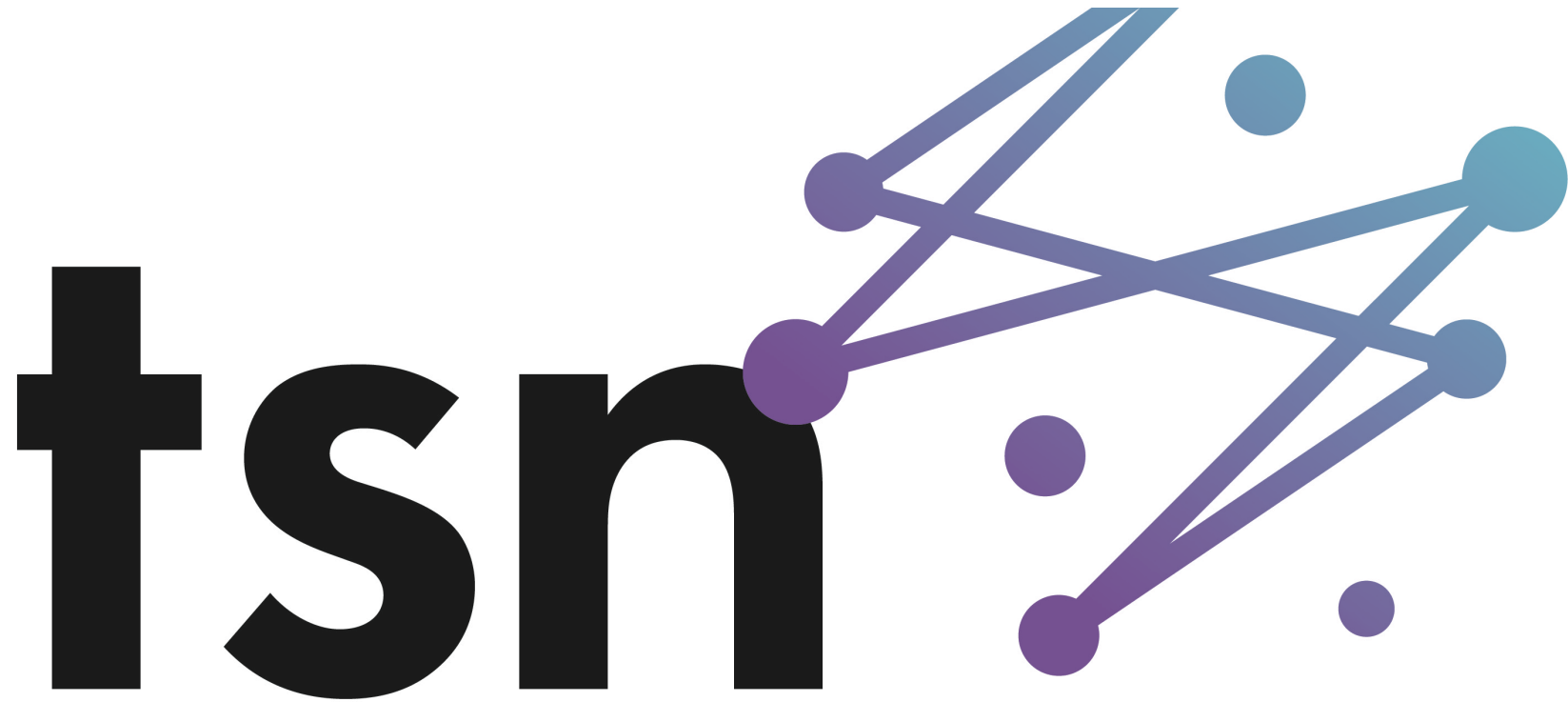


Partnerships with other universities

Regionally, universities have been working together to collaborate on areas of shared interest for some time. These regional HE partnerships, like Midlands Innovation in the Midlands, N8 in the North, and GW4 in the West (see Figure 23), provide an opportunity for technical innovation, skill and expertise to be shared.

- N8 Research Partnership (N8)**
 University of Liverpool
 University of York
 University of Leeds
 Durham University
 The University of Sheffield
 Lancaster University
 The University of Manchester
 Newcastle University
- Midlands Innovation**
 Aston University
 University of Birmingham
 Cranfield University
 Keele University
 University of Leicester
 Loughborough University
 University of Nottingham
 University of Warwick
- Midlands Enterprise Universities**
 Birmingham City University
 Coventry University
 University of Derby
 De Montfort University Leicester
 University of Lincoln
 Nottingham Trent University
 University of Wolverhampton
- Science and Engineering South (SES)**
 King's College London
 Imperial College London
 Queen Mary University of London
 University College London
 University of Cambridge
 University of Oxford
 University of Southampton
- Great Western 4 (GW4)**
 University of Bath
 University of Bristol
 Cardiff University
 University of Exeter
- Eastern Arc**
 University of East Anglia
 University of Essex
 University of Kent





UK Technology Specialists Network



Alex Sossick

Head of Core Research
Laboratories, Natural History
Museum



Andrew Filby

Director, Newcastle University
Flow Cytometry and Single Cell
Technologies Shared Resource
Laboratory.



Ian Hancox

TALENT Co-Lead: Research
Technology Engagement Manager,
University of Warwick



Julie Herniman

Senior Experimental Officer at the
University of Southampton



Ralph Adams

Senior Research Fellow and Head
of NMR Spectroscopy, Department
of Chemistry, University of
Manchester



Lee Murphy

Head of Genetics Core, Edinburgh
Clinical Research Facility,
University of Edinburgh



Natalie Homer

Mass Spectrometry Core Manager
and Senior Research Fellow in the
Edinburgh Clinical Research
Facility, University of Edinburgh



Peter O'Toole

Director of the Bioscience
Technology Facility, Vice-
President Royal Microscopical
Society, Head of Imaging and
Cytometry, University of York

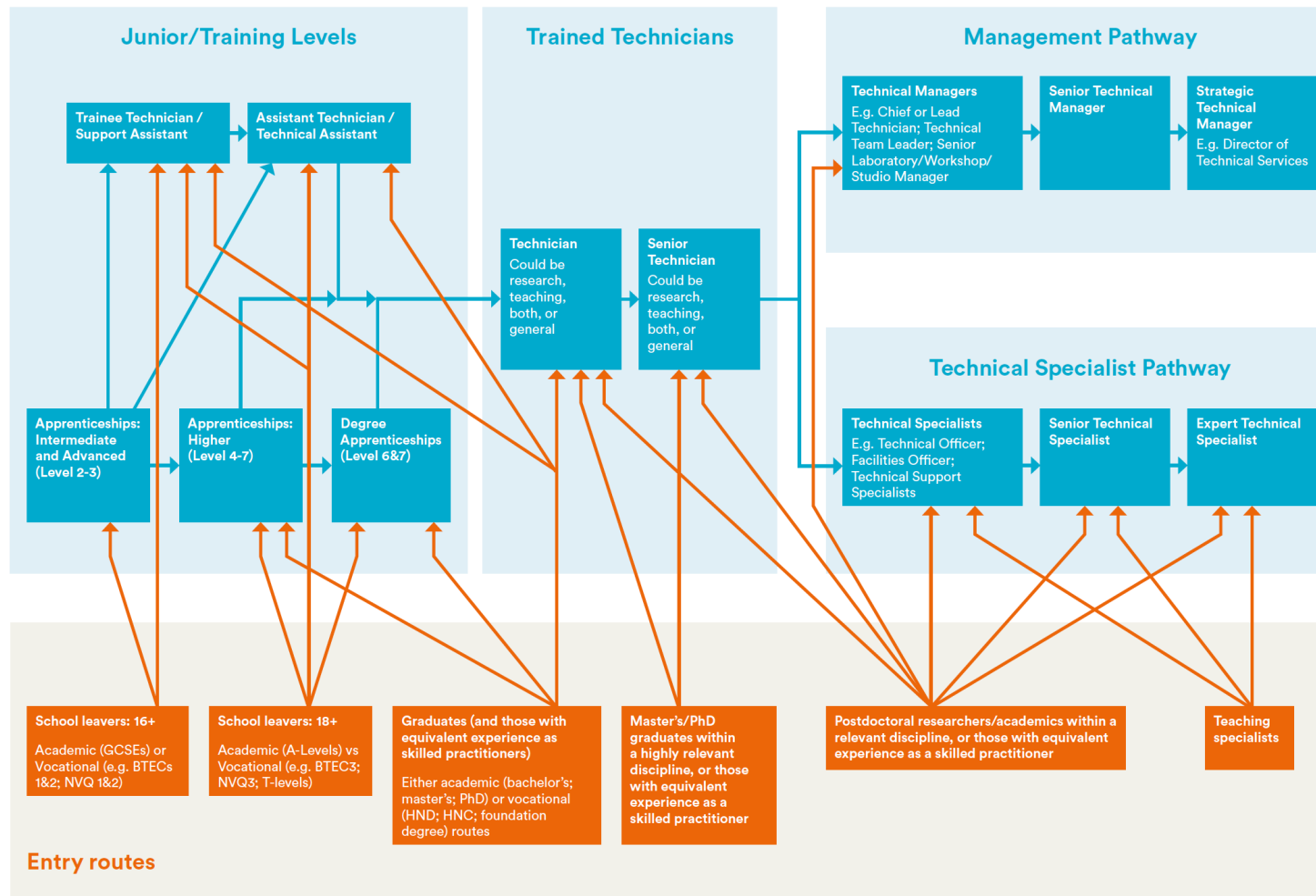


THE UNIVERSITY
of EDINBURGH



2024 UK Technology Specialist Network Conference - 16th and 17th April





At any of these levels, transition or entry can occur to and/or from different sectors, such as between HE providers, Research Institutes, and industrial or commercial employers.

Figure 11: Possible entry routes into technical careers within UK HE and research.
Source: interviews with technical managers and career specialists from a range of UK institutions and discipline areas.

Global and UK Knowledge Exchange Placements





Strategic Technical Development: Herschel Programme for Women in Technical Leadership



Nottingham University
Business School

UK | CHINA | MALAYSIA

Technician **Commitment**

Executive Programme in Strategic Technical Leadership

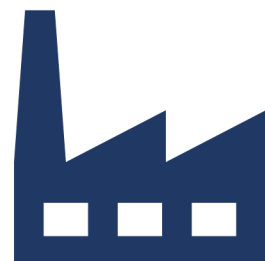




INTEGRATION

Technician Commitment





INDUSTRY



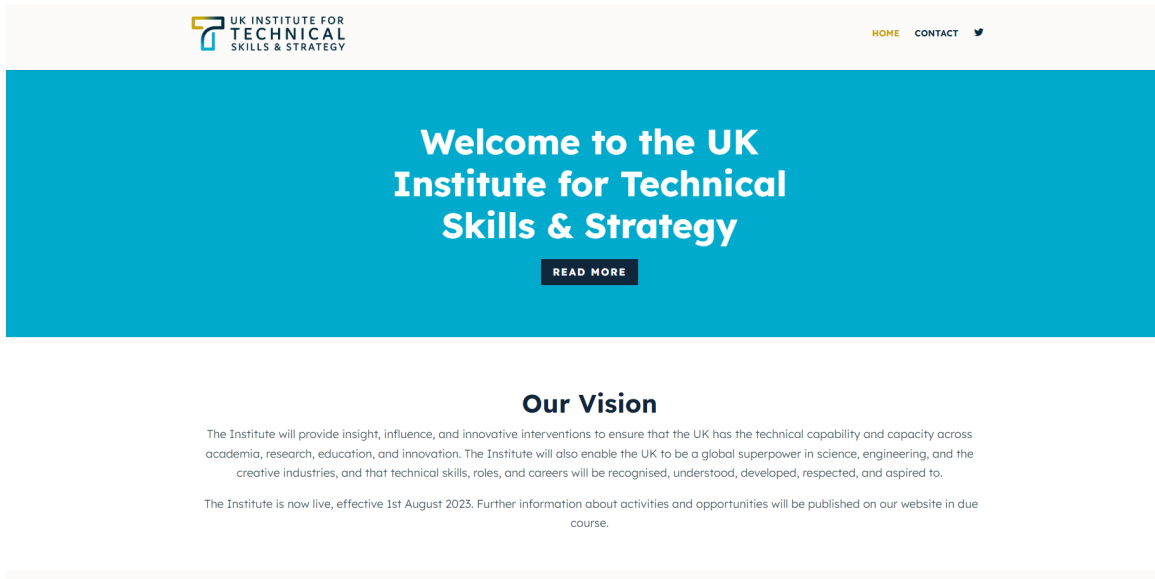
INTERNATIONAL



INSTITUTE SUSTAINABILITY



ITSS Website



The screenshot shows the top navigation bar with the logo on the left and 'HOME CONTACT' on the right. The main content area has a blue background with the text 'Welcome to the UK Institute for Technical Skills & Strategy' and a 'READ MORE' button. Below this is a section titled 'Our Vision' with two paragraphs of text.

UK INSTITUTE FOR TECHNICAL SKILLS & STRATEGY

HOME CONTACT

Welcome to the UK Institute for Technical Skills & Strategy

[READ MORE](#)

Our Vision

The Institute will provide insight, influence, and innovative interventions to ensure that the UK has the technical capability and capacity across academia, research, education, and innovation. The Institute will also enable the UK to be a global superpower in science, engineering, and the creative industries, and that technical skills, roles, and careers will be recognised, understood, developed, respected, and aspired to.

The Institute is now live, effective 1st August 2023. Further information about activities and opportunities will be published on our website in due course.

<https://itss.org.uk/>

<https://itss.org.uk/contact-us/>



The screenshot shows the contact page with the logo at the top. The main heading is 'Contact' in a large font. Below it is a breadcrumb trail 'Home » Contact'. The main content is a form titled 'Subscribe to the UK ITSS newsletter' with a list of required fields: Email Address, First Name, Last Name, Organisation, and Job title. Below the form is a section titled 'Interested in' with four radio button options: Insights and research, Policy and advocacy, Technical skills and career development, and Technician Commitment.

UK INSTITUTE FOR TECHNICAL SKILLS & STRATEGY

Contact

[Home](#) » [Contact](#)

Subscribe to the UK ITSS newsletter

* indicates required

Email Address *

First Name *

Last Name *

Organisation *

Job title *

Interested in

- Insights and research
- Policy and advocacy
- Technical skills and career development
- Technician Commitment

UK ITSS Governance



UK ITSS Technical Council

Technician **Commitment**



Resources Events Latest News Signatories Supporters Technician

22 MAR 2023 | 1:00 PM
QUICK READS

UK ITSS Technical Council calls for members from the wider technical community

The UK Institute for Technical Skills and Strategy is forming a Technical Council, comprising of members from the technical community across the UK, to embed a culture of technical leadership.

Following the announcement of the UK's new £5.5 million national Institute for Technical Skills and Strategy, we've created an opportunity for technicians, technical leaders and those with specialised work experiences, across all levels and disciplines, to get involved in shaping the work of the Institute. The ITSS Technical Council is opening its membership to the wider technical community to implement a diverse perspective and inclusion of new voices across the UK. There are no minimum or maximum requirements, just a willingness to shape the national landscape for technicians.

Members are expected to serve 2-year terms, after which the Council will be refreshed to allow a wide range of ideas and individuals to be included. Members will meet quarterly to advise the ITSS on the needs of the community, contribute to progressing ITSS programmes/initiatives and provide input on the assessment of internal submissions. They will act as ambassadors for the Institute and its activity. Whilst national in scope, the ITSS will be physically located at the University of Nottingham. This is a voluntary role, with a commitment of up to 5 working days per year. Any reasonable performance expenses will be compensated.

Paul Gilbert, Technical Manager, University of Liverpool and Chairperson, Technical Managers in Universities (TMU), will be co-chairing the Council said:

"The greatest reward of being a technical manager is in helping to guide and promote technical careers.

The new Institute of Technical Skills and Strategy will be in the vanguard of driving transformative technical skills development strategies and policy-making in the UK. The Technical Council will give technicians of all backgrounds the

Latest post



Paul Gilbert
University of Liverpool



Andy Filby
Newcastle University