Innovation vouchers

Complex problems to solve?  
Unresponsive organisation?  
Seeking market insights?  
Under pressure to speed up development?  
Need access to specialist equipment?

Funded access to academic expertise & resources

The University of Surrey’s Innovation Voucher scheme funds collaborative projects between small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and the University’s academic expertise.

Projects can be used to address specific technical challenges, develop or test products, or introduce innovative new business processes.

Successful applicants will be matched with a relevant academic expert together with whom a project will be defined with specific tasks and outcomes.

All projects must be delivered by the University of Surrey and should address a real challenge faced by the SME – something which can only be addressed with specialist expertise or facilities.

Vouchers are expected to be valued at between £5,000 and £10,000 each, but projects requiring larger amounts will be considered where the value is justified. The voucher covers the cost of the services delivered by the University to the SME as part of a consultancy project.

The scheme is time-limited: all projects must be completed by 31st March 2018.

To Apply

In the first instance, contact the scheme manager, Ian James i.james@surrey.ac.uk, who will guide you through the application process. Your application will be reviewed (in confidence) and if selected you will be connected to the relevant University department to initiate the collaboration project.

For more information, please email: i.james@surrey.ac.uk
To apply for an innovation voucher you must be a start-up, micro, small or medium-sized business located in the UK with fewer than 250 employees and an annual turnover of less than £50 million or a balance sheet total of under £43 million.

None of the University staff members or interns (or their families) delivering the project can have an interest in the beneficiary company (e.g. a shareholder or directorship).

**Aims of the scheme**

The Innovation Voucher scheme aims to cultivate closer ties between UK SMEs and the University of Surrey. The vouchers allow SMEs to address complex challenges, drive product innovation and accelerate business growth by harnessing the University’s world-leading academic expertise and state-of-the-art facilities.

**Examples of academic innovation and expertise:**

**Enterprise Innovation & Transformation**
- Business model innovation
- Scaling up
- Lean/Agile experimentation
- Leadership and change
- Sustainable enterprise
- Strategy and entrepreneurship

**Engineering & Physical Sciences**
- Electronic/mechanical engineering
- Computing/IT/Cyber security
- Advanced materials
- Energy systems
- Environmental sustainability

**Health & Medical Sciences**
- Clinical research
- Biosciences & medicine
- Veterinary medicine
- Experimental biology
- Health sciences
- Consumer behaviour

**Eligible companies**

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**Voucher allocation**

The total number of vouchers is limited. Only one voucher will be allocated per company or project, which will be at the discretion of the scheme administrators. The voucher is used by the University to directly cover the costs incurred for the services it provides to the beneficiary company. No money will be paid directly to the beneficiary company, which is responsible for its own costs.

**State aid (de minimis) regulations**

The Innovation Vouchers scheme runs under European State Aid (De Minimis) regulations that state that your business must not receive more than €200k (c. £185k) of De Minimis aid over a rolling, three fiscal year basis. *It is the responsibility of the SME to ensure that this criterion is adhered to.*

*This should be calculated from the date you are awarded the voucher, going back 3 fiscal years (the previous 2 fiscal years and the current fiscal year, from April to March, not your own financial year).*