

[News story: £8 million expansion of programme to commercialise research](#)

The £8 million funding boost to the ICURe pilot will see the University of Warwick and Queen's University Belfast join the programme.

An £8 million expansion of the Innovation to Commercialisation of University Research (ICURe) pilot programme will allow even more commercially-promising ideas to get to market more quickly.

The funding will see the [University of Warwick](#) and [Queen's University Belfast](#) join the programme, which is supported by Innovate UK, part of the new national funding body [UK Research and Innovation](#).

The universities will work alongside delivery partner, [SETsquared Partnership](#) to run and grow the programme across the UK. Final contracts to run this phase of the pilot will be signed shortly.

Additional 48 research teams to be supported

ICURe's focus is on training early-career researchers to find the right route to commercialisation and helping them develop the necessary business skills, connections and expertise. It aligns with government's [Industrial Strategy](#), which emphasises the importance of research, innovation and skills to develop a strong economy and ensure Britain leads the high-tech, highly-skilled industries of the future.

With this funding boost, the pilot programme will be able to support an additional 48 research teams nationwide.

University researchers can get up to £35,000 to take their ideas out of the lab and validate them in the market.

A total of £3 million of the funding will go towards helping the start-ups that emerge from the programme to establish their businesses and support future growth. This will be competitively awarded by Innovate UK.

It builds on the success of the pilot to date. Research estimates that for every £1 of investment spent through ICURe it generates almost £4 of economic benefits in return. The pilot has engaged 160 university research teams to generate more than 11,000 business links worldwide and create 120 jobs in 44 new companies.

Effective translation of research into products

Business Secretary, Greg Clark said:

Britain is famous for its innovations. From the humble toothbrush to hip replacements, the ATM to the World Wide Web – these inventions have had a huge impact on our daily lives.

Up and down the UK, some of the brightest and best talent are undertaking research which can deliver extraordinary innovations that will transform our society for the better.

Through the Industrial Strategy, the 4 grand challenges, and the funding announced today, we are helping turn innovative new ideas into products and services which could help change our lives and keep the UK as a world leader in developing the products of tomorrow.

UK Research and Innovation Chief Executive, Sir Mark Walport said:

Supporting the very best talent and bridging the gap between research and commercialisation are 2 of UK Research and Innovation's core objectives. We are a world-leading research nation and we must ensure that our innovation ecosystem supports the effective translation of this research into products with real-world impact.

The ICURE programme enables this translation by providing researchers with the funding to move ideas out of universities and into the marketplace, where they will have the greatest impact.

From converting Medtech discoveries into new treatments to developing portable devices to counter infectious diseases, this additional funding will support ground-breaking projects that will enable us to meet future challenges and remain at the cutting-edge of research and innovation.

Don Spalinger, Chairman of the SETsquared Partnership, and Director, Innovation and Entrepreneurship at the University of Southampton said:

SETsquared created ICURE to overcome some of the barriers of getting the outputs from the UK's world class universities research labs into the commercial marketplace.

ICURE's results from its first 3 years of operation go beyond our expectations. This expansion of ICURE's nation roll-out will enable even more research teams at more UK universities to take advantage of its proven capabilities. ICURE enables university research teams to explore all avenues of commercialisation, from collaborative research to consultancy to licensing to spin-outs.

The ICURE experience empowers the university research teams to work more closely with businesses in all of their future activities.

The university view

Professor Stuart Croft, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Warwick, said:

Warwick is renowned for the many ways it acts as a highly effective bridge for innovation between academic research and industry, and we are therefore delighted to be a key part of the national rollout of ICURe with its focus on helping early-career researchers taking their innovations into the marketplace.

Warwick will also draw on the innovation-based partnerships across the Midlands such as Midlands Innovation, the Midlands Engine, and the Midlands Enterprise Universities teams, to ensure that this programme helps create even more innovation-based jobs and business growth across our region.

Brian McCaul, CEO of [Qubis Ltd](#) and Director of Innovation at Queen's University Belfast, said:

Having had 9 teams graduate from ICURe, and having run 3 of our own Lean Launchpad programmes, Queen's and Qubis have been pioneers with lean start-up in tech transfer. The focus on the customer-need is the perfect antidote to tech-push.

We have already seen significant commercial benefits, whether measured by deals done, or learnings achieved, especially with early-career researchers. We are convinced that 'lean changes', change everything.

We're now keen to work with our partners to accelerate ICURe adoption across Northern Ireland, Scotland and the North of England. This is a vital initiative for rebalancing the UK innovation economy.