



Cabinet Office

Open Innovation Team

Pilot phase review



Lancaster
University



UNIVERSITY OF
Southampton



The Open Innovation Team was set up in August 2016 to help Whitehall departments generate analysis and ideas by deepening collaboration with academics.

The team is supported by Research Councils UK and sponsored by four leading universities: Bath, Lancaster, Southampton & Warwick.



58

Whitehall
events



46

Academic
collaborations

Underway or under
discussion



39

University
visits



41

PhD

Placements

Academics
engaged

500+



27

Policy
projects



1,000+
Followers



3

Policy
Announcements



125,000

Contributed by each partner
university



1

Innovation
Prize

We do not have an exclusive relationship with our university partners, but they do benefit from sponsoring us.

Most importantly, partner universities receive a range of agreed benefits that lead us to collaborate more intensively with their academics and students.

84%

The share of collaborations under way or under discussion accounted for by academics from our partner universities.

53%

More than half of our visits to universities have been to partners.

27%

More than a quarter of our PhD students have come from partner universities.

“We’ve got so much to gain from deepening collaboration between academics and officials. The Open Innovation Team is doing an important job and I’m delighted that it’s got off to such a good start. I look forward to even more success in phase two.”

**Jeremy Heywood,
Cabinet Secretary**



This pack explains:

- 1. Why we set up the Open Innovation Team**
- 2. What we've been trying to achieve**
- 3. How we've been trying to do it**
- 4. The impact we've had so far**
- 5. How our partners have benefited**
- 6. What we've learned**
- 7. What we aim to do next**

Vision



We think deeper collaboration between academics and officials will lead to better policy decisions.

But collaboration can be difficult so we've created a specialist team to help bridge the gap between the two communities and develop more effective ways of working with each other.

By deepening collaboration we want to accelerate innovation, make policy more evidence-led and academic research more demand-led.



We help departments generate analysis and ideas by deepening collaboration with academics.

We've opted for a partnership model because we benefit from close relationships with universities who can help us innovate and increase our impact. We also want to split the cost of running the team.

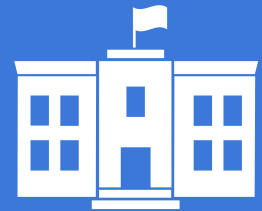
UNIVERSITIES



OPEN INNOVATION TEAM



GOVERNMENT



IN: expertise & funding
OUT: research impact & policy knowledge

IN: policy challenges & in-kind support
OUT: Better policy advice & more innovation



Pilot phase objectives

Establish a presence in Whitehall

- Set up an Open Innovation Team
- Raise awareness of our offer
- Increase support from senior officials

Get some wins under our belt

- Increase engagement between academics and officials
- Set up collaborations with departments
- Achieve some meaningful examples of policy impact

Deliver benefits for our partners

- Deliver agreed partner benefits, including academic collaborations, visits and policy workshops
- Experiment with other types of partner benefits, including Whitehall events, PhD placements and advice on influencing policy

Learn more about what works

- Explore ways of weaving academics into the policy making process
- Experiment with methods of collaborating with departments
- Reflect on what works and adapt as needed

Our approach

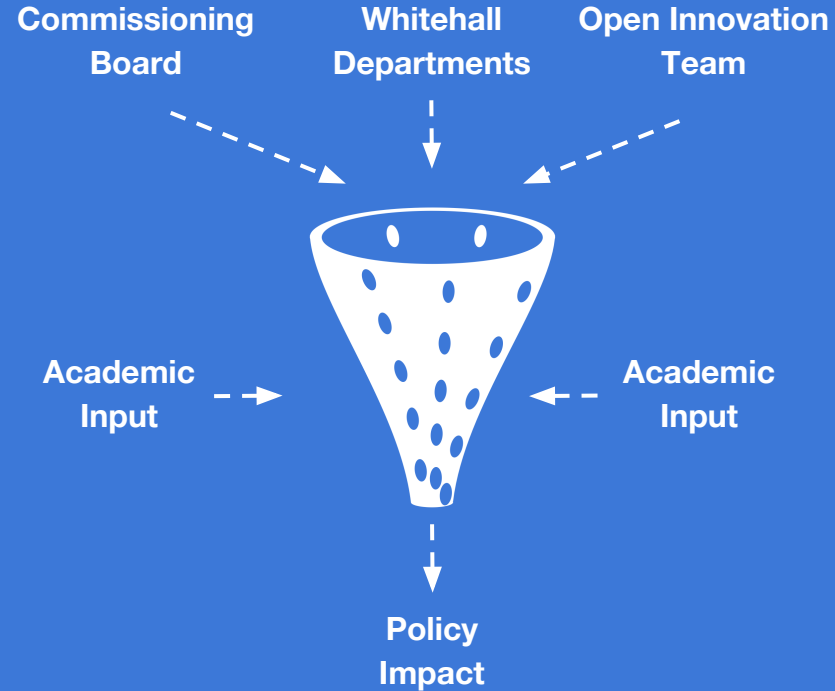
A group of people are gathered around a large, dark green table in a meeting room. They are engaged in a discussion, with some looking at documents and others at laptops. The room has white walls and a large window in the background. A blue semi-transparent banner is overlaid on the image, containing the text "Our approach".

We've used the sponsorship income received from our university partners to establish a team of officials in the Cabinet Office.

The team works flexibly across Whitehall on a wide range of policy issues, including mental health, digital transformation and economic growth.

We try to be demand-led, meaning that we focus primarily on responding to requests for support from departments, rather than approaching them with project ideas.

Our projects come from three main sources:



We're a small team who receives lots of requests for help so we vary the intensity of the support we offer:

Signposting

Provide advice before leaving Whitehall colleagues to engage academics and establish their own relationships.

Brokering

Scope the project, introduce academics and officials and broker a collaboration, before leaving colleagues to manage it themselves.

Intensive support

Intensive ongoing support to engage academics and collaborate with them on research and policy.

Our work normally falls into one of four categories:

Engagement

We use engagement as a stepping stone to deeper forms of collaboration. Tools include: meetings, seminars, workshops, half-day conferences, visits.

Analysis

We produce analysis ourselves, and/or set up collaborations where academics share their knowledge or produce fresh research to shed more light on a policy problem.

Ideas

We provide policy advice and ideas to colleagues either on our own or in collaboration with academics.

Innovation

We experiment with new approaches and ideas, including introducing a PhD placement scheme and new types of outputs and events.

Our impact so far

Cabinet Office
Purpose

Cabinet Office is the
of government. Its
is:

on the integrity
tion, co-ordinate
urity of the realm
tain a flourishing
racy;

rt the design and
tion of HM
policies
te





We've had some good policy wins during our pilot phase. For example, we proposed the recently announced GovTech Catalyst and a new partnership to improve the mental health of 16-25 year olds.

Our biggest achievement, however, has been demonstrating that we can play a valuable role in deepening collaboration between academics and officials.

The following slides summarise our work on mental health, digital transformation and economic policy.

Case study: mental health

- Organised a conference for 50+ at the University of Warwick's offices in The Shard bringing together academics and officials to discuss children and young people's mental health.
- Embedded a member of our team in Department of Health Social Care (DHSC) for six months to help develop the children and young people's mental health green paper.
- Proposed that government commit to establishing a new partnership to improve the mental health of 16-25 year olds.
- Leading work with DHSC and DfE to establish a new partnership to improve the mental health of 16-25 year olds.
- Created a new series of mental health research seminars for DHSC.
- Arranged for a stream of PhD students to join DHSC on placement.

"The Open Innovation Team has provided invaluable support to the work of our team, including very useful work on identification of key issues, bringing academic expertise into the policy development process and developing new policy proposals on 16-25 year olds' mental health."

**Catherine Tyack,
Mental Health Policy
Team, Department of
Health and Social Care**

Case study: digital transformation

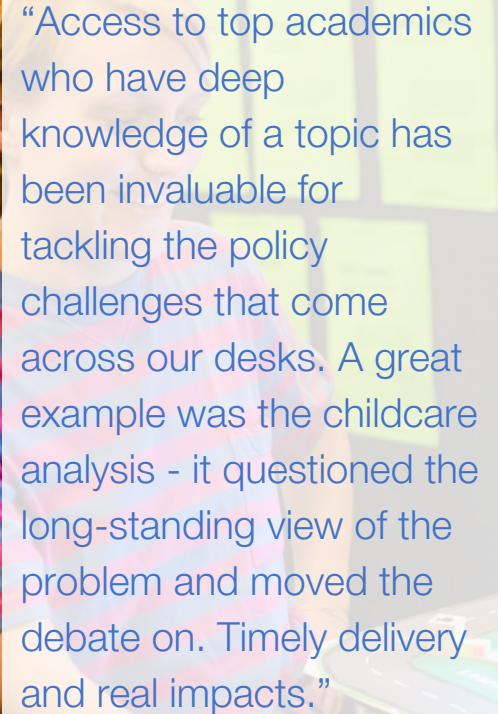
- Announced in 2017 that we'd set up a Digital Government Partnership to boost collaboration with academics on digital transformation.
- Led early work on the creation of a GovTech Catalyst with HM Treasury, GDS and DCMS.
- Collaborating with Imperial & Southampton to develop proof of concepts for the use of Distributed Ledger Technology (DLT) in the public sector.
- Collaborating with Warwick, Southampton & Bath to identify opportunities for the application of Robotic Process Automation and agents in the public sector.
- Supporting GDS to scope out work on data enabled change accelerator projects.

“The Open Innovation Team has played a vital role in sustaining the government’s community of interest for Distributed Ledger Technology. Their feasibility research has been a step ahead of the rest of government, accelerating thinking on how to get to grips with a new technology.”

Tom Wilkinson,
Department for
International Development

Case study: growth and labour markets

- Worked with the University of Bath to provide analysis and advice on childcare reform for Cabinet Office.
- Delivering a 12 month programme of academic engagement, research and advice on competition policy for HMT, DCMS and others.
- Working with the Low Pay Commission to support their analytical work.
- Organised a seminar series for BEIS inviting leading academics to offer perspectives on the industrial strategy.
- Set up a programme of policy conferences inviting academics from leading economics departments to Whitehall to share their ideas with officials.
- Organised a half day conference on automation and the future of work.



“Access to top academics who have deep knowledge of a topic has been invaluable for tackling the policy challenges that come across our desks. A great example was the childcare analysis - it questioned the long-standing view of the problem and moved the debate on. Timely delivery and real impacts.”

**Rachel Hope, EDS
Projects, Cabinet Office**

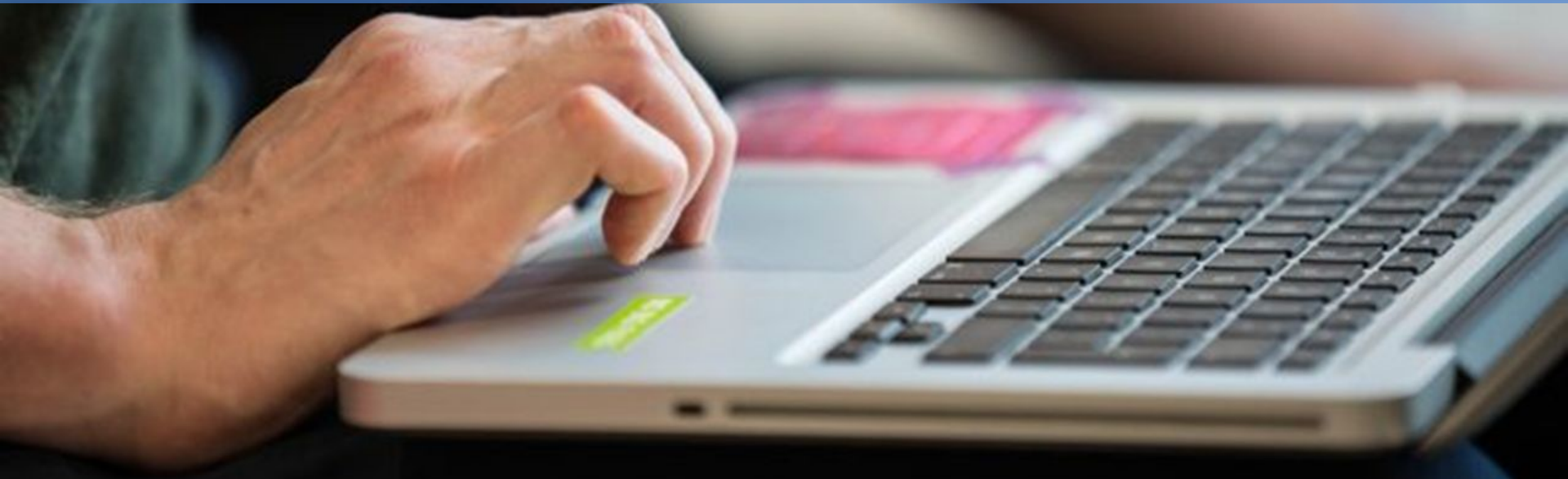
Case study: PhD placements

- We've engaged PhD programmes across the country to offer students placements of 3-6 months in Whitehall.
- 41 placements have been agreed, are underway or have been completed over the past 18 months. Students come from a mix of universities, including non-partners.
- 31 PhD students have/will work in the Open Innovation Team. The rest have gone to a mix of other Departments.
- We are in discussion with departments to agree plans for a significant expansion of our PhD placement programme. If we can secure resource to manage an expanded programme, we hope to place at least 100 students in 2019.

“I've really enjoyed my time in the Open Innovation Team. It's been a great opportunity to get first-hand experience of how the policy making process works and what working in the civil service actually means. Working across such a wide range of projects means that you're always learning something new and being in a small team means you get to do real and interesting work.”

Rosa Hodgkin,
University of Cambridge

How our partners have benefited



Our university partners have each contributed £125,000 to sponsor a pilot, running from August 2016 to December 2018.

Partners receive a set of benefits designed to deepen collaboration with their academics and teach their students about policy making.

We work closely with our partner universities but we do not have an exclusive relationship. We have been engaging with other universities and collaborating with them where possible.



What we agreed to deliver for sponsors:

- 1 place on the Open Innovation Partnership board
- 2 academic collaborations per year
- 2 campus visits per year
- 1 talk per year from a senior official
- 1 Whitehall policy workshop per year for students
- Branding at Whitehall events and a social media presence



Our approach to partner benefits has evolved over time as we learn more about what works best for our partners.

Flexibility

We originally thought we'd bring academics into Whitehall on three month placements, but quickly found that a more flexible approach would be better for both academics and officials.

Prioritisation

Arranging talks from senior officials has been harder to deliver than expected and is less of a priority for partners so we've focused instead on talks from members of the Open Innovation Team and delivering academic collaborations.

Experimentation

Partners have helped us experiment with new ways of adding value that benefit both officials and academics. For example, they've helped us set up a PhD placement scheme, experiment with new events formats, and introduce new kinds of output.

Our work with the University of Bath has so far focused on labour market, health and social policy challenges, including childcare reform, the minimum wage and loneliness.



- **9+ academic collaborations under way or under discussion**
 - 4 Open Innovation Team visits and 1 Policy Lab visit
 - 3 policy events at Bath's London office
 - 2 Cabinet Office Policy School workshops for students
 - 1 talk in our Whitehall speaker series, Thought Experiment
 - 1 maths event as part of our conference series, Outside View
 - 1 talk on industrial strategy as part of a series we created for BEIS
-
- Quarterly partnership board meetings
 - Branding on all Open Innovation Team outputs
 - **2 PhD placements agreed or underway**



Susan Harkness on childcare

Susan worked with the Open Innovation Team for several months supplying analysis and advice for Cabinet Office colleagues on the relationship between childcare support and labour market outcomes for women.

Julie Barnett on loneliness

Following the Prime Minister's announcement in January that government would be developing a loneliness strategy, Julie has begun working with a cross-government team one day per week to provide tailored analysis and ideas.



Our work with Lancaster University has so far focused primarily on health, education, environment and innovation, including intensive support for the Open Innovation Team itself.



- **8 academic collaborations under way or under discussion**
 - 5 Open Innovation Team visits to Lancaster
 - 2 talks to academics on influencing policy
 - 1 policy workshop for students, with another planned in Autumn 2018
 - 1 talk in our Whitehall speaker series, Thought Experiment
 - 1 innovation event as part of our conference series, Outside View
- Quarterly partnership board meetings
 - Branding on all Open Innovation Team outputs
 - **4 PhD placements completed or underway**



Katie Alcock on early years assessment

Katie has been working with the Department for Education and Public Health England to inform their work on early years assessment for five year olds and two year olds, joining expert meetings and summarising academic evidence.

Katy Mason & Chris Ford on innovation

Katy and Chris have been working closely with the Open Innovation Team for more than a year, sharing their knowledge of Open Innovation and producing an independent assessment of our progress to date.



Our work with the University of Southampton is focusing primarily on digital transformation and population change.

- **6 academic collaborations under way or under discussion**
 - 4 Open Innovation Team visits
 - 1 visit with Cabinet Office and HMT to discuss research methods
 - 1 visit with DCMS, GDS and others to discuss digital transformation
 - 1 event in London for DWP on musculoskeletal health and work
 - 2 Policy School workshops, with another planned in Autumn 2018
 - 2 talks in our Whitehall speaker series, Thought Experiment
-
- Quarterly partnership board meetings
 - Branding on all Open Innovation Team outputs
 - 2 policy making talks to students
 - **7 PhD placements completed or underway**



Andrea Margheri on distributed ledger technology

Andrea has been working with us for several months, initially helping to identify a new Whitehall use case for distributed ledger technology and now beginning to develop a proof of concept for it.

Jane Falkingham on population change

We've recently begun working with Jane and her team to share their insights on population change in the UK and begin producing a tailored programme of analysis and ideas for senior officials.



Our work with the University of Warwick has so far focused primarily on mental health, digital transformation and productivity.



- **10+ academic collaborations under way or under discussion**
 - 4 Open Innovation Team visits
 - 1 visit to Warwick with HMT and BEIS to discuss productivity
 - 1 policy workshop for students, with another planned in Autumn 2018
 - 1 talk in our Whitehall speaker series, Thought Experiment
 - 1 event on productivity as part of our conference series, Outside View
 - 1 talk on industrial strategy as part of a series we created for BEIS
- Quarterly partnership board meetings
 - Branding on all Open Innovation Team outputs
 - 1 mental health policy event at The Shard



Swaran Singh on mental health

Swaran has been working closely with us for more than a year, shaping our thinking and supplying ideas on children and young people's mental health as we've contributed to the children and young people's mental health green paper.

Mark Skilton on artificial intelligence

Mark has been helping us think through opportunities for using artificial intelligence in government. He has helped officials consider options at meetings and workshops and is now working with the Open Innovation Team to produce a note setting these out.



Non partner universities
visited since 2016:

- Edinburgh
- Newcastle
- Durham
- Birmingham
- Oxford
- Cambridge
- Essex
- UCL
- Imperial
- Sussex
- Surrey
- Bristol
- Cardiff
- Manchester
- Leeds
- Sheffield
- Royal Holloway
- Loughborough*
- Swansea*

*scheduled for 2018



**We've also been engaging
and collaborating with
other universities.**

**We've visited 17 non
partner universities since
we were established.**

**More than 100 academics
from non-partner
universities have attended
our events.**

**Four collaborations are
under way or under
discussion with
academics from other
universities.**

Lessons



We've achieved more than expected during our pilot phase, but there's plenty of room for improvement:

Projects

It's hard to know in advance which projects are going to be successful, meaning that we've often invested time in projects that haven't given us the desired impact. We need a more efficient approach.

Partners

Some of our partner benefits have been harder than expected to deliver and/or haven't seemed as useful as originally anticipated. We'll need to reflect what we've learned in the benefits package for phase two.

People

It's hard to manage demand with a team of 3-5 officials, even when it's complemented with PhD students working on placement. We need to scale up the team in phase two.

Profile

It takes time to build and manage a team's profile. We've begun to invest more in this by establishing a presence on Twitter and setting up a blog, but there's more to do inside and outside Whitehall.

Next steps



Ministers and senior officials are keen to scale up the Open Innovation Team so we're inviting universities to sponsor a second phase:

Impact

We want to deliver more policy impact across a wider range of topics and continue the process of establishing the team as a valued contributor to the Whitehall policy making process.

Partnership

We see the partnership approach adopted for the Open Innovation Team as successful and valuable, both in terms of increasing the impact we can achieve with this kind of work and splitting its cost. We intend to adopt a similar approach in phase two.

Competition

To secure a second round of university sponsors, we will run a competition inviting interested UK universities to submit proposals to Cabinet Office. Applications will need to cover a range of criteria, including financial contribution, partnership benefits and research excellence.

We expect the process for agreeing phase II sponsors to run as follows:

- **7th September:** event with interested universities to explain our approach, answer questions and receive feedback/ideas (e.g. on partner benefits).
- **28th September:** deadline for formal sponsorship applications. A draft version of this form can be found with the guidance document published alongside this slide pack.
- **October-November:** shortlisting and negotiation with preferred bidders.
- **December:** phase II partners announced.
- **January:** new package comes into effect.

Email us

openinnovation@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

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