The University of Manchester has a long tradition of working with industry. Our academics are constantly generating new knowledge, discovering new techniques, theories and models and developing specialist skills and expertise – all of which have the potential to be applied in the non-academic world.

The Business Engagement Support Team (BEST) works with academics and industry partners to match our expertise to organisations’ individual business requirements.

One of the ways we apply our knowledge to business is through consulting projects. Companies, governments, agencies and other organisations don’t always have the knowledge, resources or know-how to resolve issues in-house. Employing an academic consultant can give you a broader perspective, allowing you to find new ways to solve complex business problems and formulate policies, or giving your organisation an ‘expert voice’ in legal or business settings.

Whether it’s a short-term, one-off project or forms part of a longer-term strategic relationship, consulting activity can add real value to your business.

OUR CONSULTING SERVICES INCLUDE:

- Specialist opinion
- Technical and professional advice
- Expert witness services
- Due diligence
- MBS Consulting – accessing the talents of Manchester Business School students and graduates to tackle a range of business challenges
PLANET-FRIENDLY POWER

CONSULTANT  Dr Zhongdong Wang, School of Electrical and Electronic Engineering, Engineering and Physical Sciences
CLIENT      EDF Energy
OBJECTIVE  To assess new, environmentally friendly oils for use in power transformers
PROJECT  Power transformers traditionally use mineral oils as insulating material, which is not readily biodegradable and can pollute soil and waterways if a transformer fails. EDF Energy commissioned Dr Wang and her team to investigate the suitability of a novel vegetable-based oil which is 98% biodegradable within four weeks.
RESULTS  The team contributed to EDF Energy’s environmental agenda and, specifically, its aim of being the first energy company to develop and operate an environmentally friendly high voltage power transformer in Europe. Running parallel to this consultancy project, the team has completed two phases of a research project, which looks at further uses of ‘green’ oils for higher voltage and higher power transformers. It is now ready to start a £1.2m research project as the third phase. This work will significantly help the UK to achieve a more sustainable and environmentally friendly energy supply.

ANTI-AGEING ADVICE

CONSULTANT  Professor Chris Griffiths, Institute of Inflammation and Repair
CLIENT      Boots
OBJECTIVE  To test and analyse a new anti-ageing product
PROJECT  As a leading expert in skin ageing, Professor Griffiths has been providing dermatology advice to Boots since 1995, using his expertise to help the company’s scientists develop new products. When Boots was working on a new anti-ageing cream, Protect and Perfect, Professor Griffiths was able to recommend testing on human volunteers using a technique developed at The University of Manchester. This led to a contract research project to undertake clinical trials of the product, which found that Protect and Perfect increased the elastic components in photo-aged skin.
RESULTS  As the first independent clinical trial of a high street anti-ageing product, Professor Griffiths’ work gained significant media coverage, raising his, and the University’s, profile and increasing sales of Protect and Perfect from 10,000 units per week to 24,000 units a day. The University has since completed further tests on the product, including a full clinical trial, and Boots are keen to participate in more collaborative projects in the future.

OFFSHORING SOLUTIONS

CONSULTANT  Dr Silvia Massini, Manchester Business School
CLIENT      A global pharmaceutical company
OBJECTIVE  To advise on the feasibility of offshoring technical work to low cost countries outside the UK
PROJECT  As part of an international Offshoring Research Network, Dr Massini looked at how and why UK companies are increasingly moving functions such as product design, research and development (R&D) and IT development to offshore locations like India and China. A global pharmaceutical company contacted her for advice on whether or not to offshore some of its non-core R&D processes to free up capital to invest in essential product and service innovation. The assignment involved in-depth interviews with UK and US managers and researchers about their offshoring activity.
RESULTS  The company accepted the advice in Dr Massini’s report to offshore its R&D processes. The report recommended looking at different locations to avoid popular ‘hotspots’ with potentially high wage inflations, and advised the company to appoint an experienced Global Offshoring Manager to oversee the operations.

FOR MORE INFORMATION... Please contact us on: TEL: +44 (0) 161 306 0554  EMAIL: naomi.sells@manchester.ac.uk