

CONSULTANCY

Making existing knowledge within the University available to people who need it.

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

WHAT IS CONSULTING?

We see consulting as a way of sharing and applying the wealth of specialist knowledge and expertise that exists across The University of Manchester in a way that benefits both academia and industry.

BENEFITS TO BUSINESS

Access skills, expertise and equipment that are not available in-house; new perspectives on business challenges; greater understanding of advances in research; relationship building and networking opportunities.

BENEFITS TO ACADEMIA

Gain up-to-date commercial insights that can inform research and teaching; improved links with the business community; additional income to support future academic work.

CONSULTANCY CASE STUDIES

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.

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.

