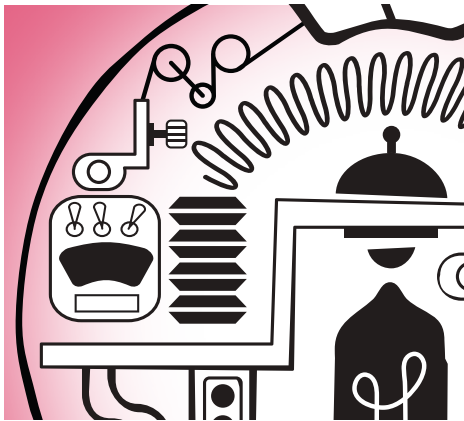


# Oxford University Innovation Engaging with the **Humanities**





## The Vice-Chancellor

I am delighted to see the entrepreneurial and innovative engagement taking place in the Humanities and the support being provided by Oxford University Innovation.

The fresh exciting ideas and creativity are evident from the case studies. Innovation in all its forms is to be prized and recognised, and it is important for the University to engage outwardly to support pathways to impact and also job creation, particularly for Humanities students.

I look forward to observing the developments still to come in future years.

*Professor Louise Richardson,  
Vice-Chancellor, University of Oxford*



“Having recently taken up post as Head of the Humanities Division I was pleasantly surprised to see the innovative and creative work already taking place in the Division. While our focus is directed towards research and the pathways strengthening our impact for the Research Excellence Framework, I am very much aware of the important role the Humanities Division plays in creating wide-ranging impact; locally within Oxford, for the UK and on the international stage. To this end, and as an entrepreneurial and creative Division, we wish to utilise all the resources available to us at Oxford and are delighted to have the support services available from Oxford University Innovation. This brochure gives an overview, with some useful case studies, of the services available, from supporting start-up companies with students and innovation challenge competitions, through to supporting knowledge exchange fellows to continue their excellent collaborative work with organisations after their fellowships have ended.”

*Karen O'Brien, Head of Humanities Division*



Greg Smolonski/OU Images



Archeox Archaeology of East Oxford



A Tale of Two Cities, Photo: Robert Day Photography

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## Welcome

Having recently assumed the position of CEO at Oxford University Innovation, I am very conscious that OUI's role as an innovation enabler must support the rich and diverse research outcomes across all Divisions of the University.

The creative and entrepreneurial spirit present in the Humanities Division is fertile ground from which the green shoots of innovation are appearing.

OUI's function is to guide and nurture these green shoots as they grow. The case studies in this brochure showcase what can be achieved with OUI helping to create and support pathways to impact.

Feedback received from colleagues in the Humanities Division suggests OUI's empathetic approach to maximising potential impact through innovation, enterprise and entrepreneurship is proving successful.

We will strive to consolidate and strengthen the existing relationships between OUI and our Humanities Division colleagues. We look forward to working with the wider Humanities community to create further examples of successful innovation.

*Matt Perkins, Chief Executive Officer  
Oxford University Innovation*



“It is clear from the last Research Excellence Framework exercise, and from the reactions to it, that impact as part of research is here to stay. There are many pathways to achieve impact, however, and it is important that we have access to all of them. To keep our range of choices as wide as possible, I asked Oxford University Innovation to produce a brochure describing just how they can support the Humanities here.

This brochure shows that support. I think you will be able to see, from the case studies provided here, how their engagement with the Humanities is reaping benefits in supporting our innovative and outward-looking spirit.”

*Chris Wickham, Chichele Professor of Medieval History (emeritus) and previous Head of Humanities Division*



# Oxford University Innovation sponsors the Humanities Innovation Challenge Competition



Oxford University Innovation is delighted to sponsor the Humanities Innovation Challenge Competition. We are doing this together with The Oxford Research Centre in the Humanities (TORCH), which seeks to stimulate and support research activity that transcends disciplinary and institutional boundaries. TORCH is a great advocate of innovation and creativity in the Humanities and its networks. Oxford University Innovation and TORCH are keen to encourage researchers, graduate students and staff to develop entrepreneurial ideas which can potentially enrich their own work, communicate to a wider audience, and develop new perspectives.

To this end, you are invited to propose innovative ideas which can lead to entrepreneurial activity, social impact or enterprise. Although the Challenge is open to individuals, we would also like to encourage cross-disciplinary team-work, in which case at least one member of the team should come from the Humanities Division.

**Even if your idea doesn't win a prize, an expert from Oxford University Innovation will discuss the potential of your idea and give you useful feedback, so in any event it will be a great learning experience.**

## The challenge

The challenge is to develop your best ideas by summarising them in 200 words. Researchers whose entries are selected will be given mentoring to pitch their ideas to a panel of judges, in front of an audience, for a cash prize of £1,000 and for in-kind support worth over £5,000. The idea may come out of your academic work, or your other interests. Oxford University Innovation wants to support you in turning those ideas into opportunities. Perhaps you have a clever idea for a smart app such as the LIFE project ([oxreach.hubbub.net/p/LIFEproject](http://oxreach.hubbub.net/p/LIFEproject)), or educational interventions to support learning and development, or an innovative way of mounting lights – anything that can help others and be sustainable at the same time.

## Prize

The winner will receive a cash prize of £1,000. They will also receive in-kind support worth over £5,000, including:

- Invitation to a dinner hosted for the Innovation Challenge
- Invitation to the Oxford Innovation Society networking event and dinner
- Media support for a press release
- Mentoring for the next steps and throughout your project
- Support for funding opportunities, through the crowdfunding platform OxReach, or support through three other Oxford University Innovation funds
- Possible entry into the Oxford Startup Incubator with access to networking, funding, marketing, legal, and accounting services, or development of a University spin-out company and help with team building.

## Judges

The judging panel will be made up of entrepreneurs, creative thinkers and experts in innovation.

## Eligibility and process

Teams or individuals can apply as long as at least one team member comes from the Humanities.

## For more information

Please contact Susan Clark  
[susan.clark@innovation.ox.ac.uk](mailto:susan.clark@innovation.ox.ac.uk)



# Introducing consultancy support for the Humanities Division

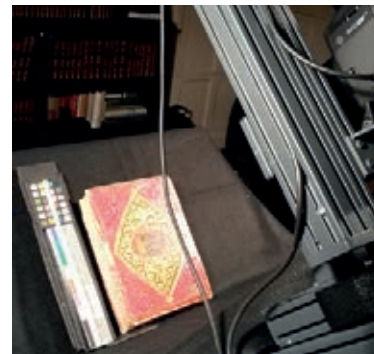


Over the past few years, the Consulting Services team at Oxford University Innovation has seen a steady increase in the number and diversity of consultancy projects that call upon the advice and expertise of colleagues based in the Humanities Division, including the relationships beyond the University established by Knowledge Exchange Fellows.

We recognise that academic consultants are motivated to undertake consultancy work for a variety of reasons, ranging from the desire to see their expertise applied to new challenges outside the spheres of teaching and research, through to financial benefits and the opportunity to build relationships that may lead to downstream research funding. Whatever the circumstances, we aim to work in partnership with staff in the division, striving to offer an efficient and effective transactional service that includes fee discussions, contract negotiation and insurance cover. Where appropriate, we can also provide business development support which may include assistance in writing proposals and tendering for projects.

We are excited about the potential for consultancy in Humanities to play an important role in the division's impact strategy and warmly welcome contact from staff, individually or on behalf of the faculties, to discuss how we can assist you.

*Andrew Goff, Head of Consulting Services,  
Oxford University Innovation*



Photos from the top: The documentation process using mobile conservation cradle and high resolution digital camera. Winchester Cathedral logo. Details of the first folio of the Ferrell-Vogüé Machaut manuscript showing the composer Guillaume de Machaut; on loan to Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.

Photo credit: By kind permission of the owners, James E. and Elizabeth J. Ferrell

## Striking the right note

The Digital Image Archive of Medieval Music (DIAMM), part of the Music Faculty, was set up in 1998 and is a leading resource for the study of medieval manuscripts. Archive-quality digitisation of rare and valuable manuscripts enables very high-quality, colour-accurate surrogates to be made without reference to the original, thus minimising damage and deterioration.

In 2012 Oxford University Innovation's Consulting Services were asked to assist DIAMM with contractual and administrative matters prior to any work being undertaken. Working with DIAMM, Oxford University Innovation formulated a contractual template designed to reduce the uncertainty and risk that can be associated with the complex projects that DIAMM takes on, as well as helping with pre-consulting negotiations on the fees and payment arrangements.

Managed by Dr Julia Craig-McFeely, who was the imaging consultant on the pilot project for the digitisation of the Dead Sea Scrolls, DIAMM's consulting expertise has over the years been used by organisations such as the Royal College of Music (for digitisation of the Anne Boleyn Book); King's College London (for digitisation of the Exon Domesday manuscript from Exeter Cathedral); Winchester Cathedral (for digitisation of the Winchester Bible); and the University of Newcastle upon Tyne (for work on Manuscript Partbook B.4.17 from Queens College Cambridge, a project sponsored by the Early English Church Music editorial series).



“The consultancy activities provided by DIAMM are much in demand for specialist manuscript imaging.

Some of the work undertaken is of crucial importance to the conservation of manuscripts that become increasingly delicate with time, creating images that can be studied in closer detail than working with the manuscript itself. The digitisation equipment is completely mobile, allowing us to work on site anywhere in the world. The team has worked throughout Europe, in the USA and in Japan, bringing their expertise to priceless manuscripts in some of the most important archives in the world.”

Dr Julia Craig-McFeely, Research Fellow,  
Faculty of Music



## History of Art in action

Involving an academic expert from a renowned institution in a TV documentary brings obvious benefits to producers in the form of increased credibility, prestige, and, potentially, higher viewing figures. But sound academic advice can benefit media productions in many other ways too.

In late 2015, Geraldine Johnson, Associate Professor in History of Art, was approached by Big Light Productions, a major television drama production company. At the time, Big Light and their Italian partner, Lux Vide Productions, were filming the first series of their co-production *Medici: Masters of Florence* starring Dustin Hoffman as the founder of the famous Renaissance dynasty. But they were already planning a second series focusing on Lorenzo de' Medici, known as the Magnificent, and his interactions with some of the most famous names in the history of art such as Sandro Botticelli, and later Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo. Although this was a drama series, both production companies were eager to get expert advice on the historical and artistic context in order to produce a more convincing and authentic-looking series.

**Geraldine agreed to share her expertise by participating in workshops with the companies' writing teams and critically reviewed scripts for each of the eight episodes.** Having worked with Oxford University Innovation in the past, she was aware of the benefits of “outsourcing” administrative and contractual matters in order to be able to concentrate on the most interesting aspects of the project.

“Oxford University Innovation provided excellent advice right from the start of the project and took the lead on negotiating the fee and the all-important terms and conditions. This meant that I didn't have to discuss any of these types of contractual issues with the client and instead could concentrate on defining the consulting brief and then simply get on with the job. It has made the experience of working with a major television production company much less stressful than it would have been had I tried to go it alone. And it was very reassuring to know that issues like insurance, indemnity and managing intellectual property were being looked after by the team at Oxford University Innovation, with access to legal advice as and when necessary as well. For academics thinking of working on television, radio or film projects, I would definitely recommend using Oxford University Innovation.”

*Geraldine Johnson, Associate Professor of History of Art, History of Art Department*

# Broadcasting our talents

Oxford historian Professor Martin Goodman is no stranger to the world of television. Most recently, in 2015 he met with screenwriters working on an original international broadcast TV drama about a large Jewish family. The TV crew themselves had been able to collect much information from desk research and visits to museums, and from their trips to Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. They were, however, also very much aware of the benefits that a researcher specialising in the history of the Jews in the Roman Empire would bring to their project. Going the extra mile and arranging a meeting with Martin has enabled them to discuss their findings and add the much desired “oomph” to their work.

On a different occasion, Martin provided his expertise in a TV documentary dealing with the subject of women in the Imperial Roman Empire in an interview filmed at the Ashmolean. And that’s not all. **Over the last 13 years or so, Oxford University Innovation has helped Martin to put together more than 15 contracts related, in one way or another, to TV dramas, documentaries or broadcasters in general.**



“It is in the nature of my research on the history of the Jews at the beginning of Christianity that I get called on for advice on television programmes and films aimed at a general public and produced by media professionals seeking guidance, sometimes at a very basic level. I have been immensely grateful to Oxford University Innovation for saving great amounts of my time by taking on all the negotiations with the production companies, so that they know they will be paying for my advice by the hour and that they need to focus their queries to make best use of my expertise.”

*Martin Goodman, Professor of Jewish Studies and President of the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies, Faculty of Oriental Studies*

Photo credits: Hagit Berkovich, VKuntsman, Sean Pavone



Photos: Page from a Hebrew Bible. Fragment of old Jerusalem fence with decorative menorah. Skyline of the Old City at the Western Wall and Temple Mount in Jerusalem, Israel.

# Ethical aspects of military technologies

In summer 2014 the Military Law experts at Melbourne Law School successfully applied for a project with the Australian Government's Defence Science and Technology Group (DSTG). At DSTG's request the academics proposed to analyse the legal and ethical implications of so called emerging and disruptive technology, and to provide the client with their findings in the form of a number of discussion papers and reports. The Law School was able to cover the legal aspect of the project from their own resources, but they required specialists who could provide an analysis of the ethical implications of such technology. This analysis was significant from a legal perspective in that potential changes to the existing legal framework were likely to be driven by ethical concerns.

**Given their reputation and past experience in the field, Professor Julian Savulescu and Dr Hannah Maslen from Oxford's Faculty of Philosophy offered a perfect match.**

The Director of the Oxford Uehiro Centre for Practical Ethics, Professor Savulescu, is a recognised world leader in the field of practical ethics. He has pioneered research into the ethics of emerging biotechnologies and one of his major research themes is human enhancement. Dr Maslen had worked on various topics directly relevant to military applications of bioscience and technology, and has a particular interest in how our current conceptions of, and distinctions between, different types of harm may be challenged and how the law will have to adapt to accommodate new or more nuanced conceptions of harm.

So, forming an expert project team was not a problem. All that remained before the work could commence was to agree on the terms and conditions of the cooperation. A task possibly less glamorous than ethical evaluation of military technologies but essential for getting the project off the ground, especially given the sensitivity of the issues being dealt with. Fortunately, the Oxford team was in that respect able to fully rely on the Consulting Services of Oxford University Innovation, who handled the lengthy contract negotiations and who also assisted with the administration and payment arrangements once the project concluded over a year later.



“ We made use of the excellent services of Oxford University Innovation to manage our collaboration with the University of Melbourne. Leaving it to them to handle all the contracts and negotiations freed us up to concentrate on our exciting project, examining the ethics of enhancement technologies in the military. Not having to dedicate research time to the administrative burden of consultancy made the whole process much more enjoyable, and undoubtedly benefited the final product. ”

*Julian Savulescu, Uehiro Professor of Practical Ethics and Dr Hannah Maslen, Research Fellow, Oxford Uehiro Centre for Practical Ethics*



Ivan Cholakov



Ivan Cholakov

Photo on the right: A Tale of Two Cities stage set.

Profile photo credits: Polly Borland, Oxford Martin School/David Fisher

# A tale of knowledge exchange

When the artistic team at Northampton's Royal & Derngate theatre responded in January 2014 to the partnerships scheme being advertised by the Humanities' then newly formed Knowledge Exchange (KE) group, their enquiry was answered by Ros Ballaster, Professor of 18th Century Studies at the Faculty of English. For a whole year both parties were able to take advantage of the mutual collaboration that KE fosters by bringing together the research-rich culture of Oxford with expertise in devising and delivering relevant and challenging theatre to a local audience.

**So when the KE fellowship came to an end 12 months later, the mutual feeling was that the relationship should continue – and this is where Oxford University Innovation stepped in.** Working closely with the Humanities office, we put together an agreement stating the expectations and rewards of such extended cooperation, expressed in monetary form. In this way, not only can the theatre's artistic directors be clear of the high value of the academic expertise, but Ros' faculty can clearly demonstrate the impact and benefits for all concerned.

To date, Ros has been involved in four productions. She has written articles for programmes, and attended rehearsals for two plays: a new adaptation by Mike Poulton of Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities* and a contemporary reworking of a farce by Georges Feydeau, *Every Last Trick*. As she's settled into the role she has started to arrange consultancies and workshops in Oxford and Northampton to support scriptwriting, research and adding literary value to productions. Her aim is to produce genuine exchanges of mutual benefit both to the theatre and the academic scholars.



Keiko Ikeuchi

“ I think it's good for the culture of the University to have some people working outside of it, in these exchange relationships, not just in terms of public engagement. It feeds the expertise and experience of the external partner back into our research and teaching practices. I do feel like I have a pretty easy relationship with the people at Royal & Derngate now. The personnel may change but I know most of the people there and they can ring me up, ask for something, and I can just say, "No I can't deliver that" or "Yes I can probably find someone" or I can try and do it myself. You know, it's uncomplicated, and I have now signed a consultancy agreement with them for twelve days a year, so it will be an ongoing relationship. ”

*Ros Ballaster, Professor of 18th Century Studies, Faculty of English*



Robert Day Photography

# Licensing & Ventures: realising your ambitions



If you have an idea which has come from your research and you are looking for ways to make an impact with it, our Licensing and Ventures team can help you develop and realise your ambitions.

If you want to lead the idea, we can support you. If you want to support the idea, we can help to put together a team around you to make it happen. If you discover a better way to do things that other people will find useful, we offer another route to getting your idea out to maximise its impact.

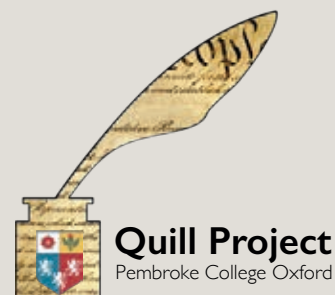
We can do this in one of two ways. We can:

- license your ideas so that others can use it, or
- create a company around you to deliver the idea to others.

The company or licence could be profit-making, a mechanism for returning much-needed research funding back to the department, or a social enterprise – a not-for-profit arrangement designed to deliver products, services or aid at cost price to make a social impact.

**Throughout the process we will tailor the process to your needs and enable you to guide your idea in the way that suits you to achieve the objectives you have.**

*Mark Mann, Technology Transfer Manager,  
Oxford University Innovation*



## Transformation of the Quill

The Quill project aims to become the definitive source available for the study of the origins of the text of the Constitution of the United States and, subsequently, state constitutions. It will transform access to the founding documents of American constitutional law, by making available to a wider audience newly accurate and useful versions of the records of the Constitution's creation. The project will promote a new approach to the study of foundational, negotiated, legal texts and establish a software platform, Quill, that will have a significance for the study of a wide range of records. It will enable a detailed study of the process of negotiation, debate and compromise that formed the Constitution.

The first phase involved designing and writing a new database system that models committee work. The platform has been written to cope with all of the problems presented by the specific manuscript material relating to 1787, but is intended to have wider applications, and in that sense is intended as a generalised tool for the study of all formally negotiated documents of this character.

The project development was supported by Dr Alfie Abdul-Rahman, Oxford e-Research Centre.



“Discussions are underway with Oxford University Innovation relating to the options for commercialisation of the platform and its various applications. This work is intended to support continued research of historical content and value, and to widen the impact of the original research.”

*Dr Nicholas Cole, Senior Research Fellow at Pembroke College, Oxford*

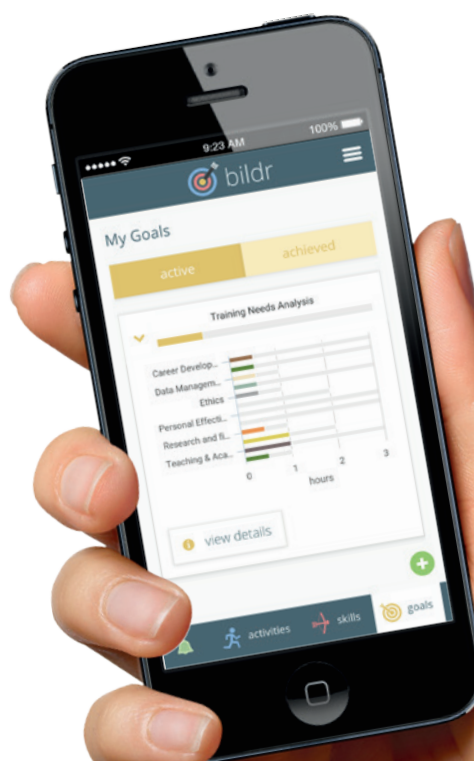
# Building bildr

Bildr, a mobile phone app, is a product created by the Frameworks project that helps Oxford graduate students and staff track how their career is developing in an easy and useful way. It is the first tool of its kind to take advantage of the mobile, smartphone format, thereby enabling users to do this tracking on-the-fly, and to build a skills profile that they can take beyond the University if so desired. So the moment a student has finished a training course, or reached a research milestone, or started a new collaborative venture (the list goes on...) they will be able to chart how they are evolving as a professional against the Oxford Skills Framework, setting goals for themselves, and getting a clear sense of what steps they can take next through live, dynamic suggestions for upcoming training. And when they come to write their next CV, they will be able to generate a custom report so that they can simply paste in their latest, most relevant skill profile and list of activities. The app is accompanied by a database in which user profiles are stored, providing all sorts of opportunities for detailed reports and research.



**Though in its early stages, the Licensing and Ventures team at Oxford University Innovation has helped John to map out the potential for the app, exploring questions such as: would other universities take this up, and would other public sector bodies want to encourage their staff to use it? Might there be other markets to which the app and database could be taken?**

We are at the early stages of putting together a company to provide the bildr service to other institutions, and have introduced John to potential investors. We are now helping John to put together a bid for funding to make a minimum viable product in advance of creating a company.



“My project is just making its first steps as far as fulfilling its commercial potential is concerned, but I’ve felt really lucky to have had Oxford University Innovation’s support during these formative stages. Working with Oxford University Innovation has helped me to clarify my vision for bildr, to explore the project’s commercial possibilities, and to understand better how the app and database we are producing might benefit the University and expand beyond it. I’m really excited to see what the future holds.”

*Dr John Miles, Research Associate at Wadham College and Training Officer for the Humanities*



Photo credits: www.priming.com

# Cutting edge automated speech recognition

## Say it again?

Is the [n] in *handbag* the same as in *handgun*? It could be quite different and indeed in reality no person pronounces a word in the same way, even when they repeat themselves.

## Statistically speaking

As a result, most ASR systems, which are generally based on statistical-modelling techniques, with “right and wrong” decisions, require extensive training from thousands of recorded speakers just to master the variation within one dialect. Oxford’s FlexSR system outperforms many existing ASR systems at individual word recognition, based on not individual sounds, but parts of sounds and its lightweight nature is ideally suited to integration into existing technologies or for mobile deployment.

## Key benefits of Oxford’s FlexSR

- High accuracy across non-ideal speech
- Faster, more robust and tolerant of background noise
- Ideal for multi-user environments
- Computationally lightweight
- Potential for mobile deployment
- Easily adaptable to any spoken language (currently it is implemented for English and German), including tonal languages
- Less system training required

## Linguistic model

For standard speech recognition software, high degrees of accuracy are only achieved with multi-layered and computationally-intensive models, requiring either state-of-the-art hardware, or in the case of mobile applications, a network connection to offload the analysis. In addition, many systems also need to be trained against a particular voice to attain accurate recognition (although some might suggest that it is the speaker that is trained how to speak, not the software how to recognise!).

FlexSR is different. Rather than rely on statistical analysis alone, linguists at the University of Oxford developed a “sparse” linguistic model of the human cognitive representation of words. This theory suggests that humans store a very basic phonological representation of each word, accepting wide variation in the sounds themselves and recognising words by their general pattern. Adopting this approach allows FlexSR to identify words across a wide range of speakers and dialects by extracting approximate sounds and matching these patterns with its internal word list or lexicon.

## Easy integration

Given the potential impact of this new approach and the broad range of applications and ease of integration, Oxford University Innovation anticipates a high demand for potential product development.

## The team behind FlexSR

The Humanities Division team behind this novel linguistic model is led by Professor Aditi Lahiri from the Faculty of Linguistics, Philology and Phonetics. The research resulted from a European Research Council advanced research grant (WORDS) followed by Proof of Concept funding. The team have now received follow on funding from UCSF to build a prototype to provide corrective feedback on pronunciation for language learners for example.

Professor Lahiri comments “It is very satisfying to see the team’s hard work put into this research, maturing into something of impact to society. We have a project manager and software developers moving this forward to a demonstration model which can be our showcase to potential partners for further commercialisation. We academics can continue our passion of research in the field whilst leaving the commercial side to Oxford University Innovation”.



“ It is very satisfying to see the team’s hard work put into this research, maturing into something of impact to society. We have a project manager and software developers moving this forward to a demonstration model which can be our showcase to potential partners for further commercialisation. We academics can continue our passion for research in the field whilst leaving the commercial side to Oxford University Innovation. ”

*Professor Aditi Lahiri, Faculty of Linguistics, Philology and Phonetics*

# Oxford University Startup Incubator: we are here to support entrepreneurs



Oxford University Innovation recognises that within the Humanities Division there is a growing appetite for engagement in creative and entrepreneurial thinking which can lead to the development of a startup based on these fresh ideas.

The Startup Incubator at Oxford University Innovation can help support budding entrepreneurs to do just that.

We can tailor the support you need to fit the specific challenges of your new venture. The Oxford University Startup Incubator is aimed at members and ex-members of the University of Oxford wanting to start or grow entrepreneur-driven ventures that are not University spinouts.

The Oxford University Startup Incubator has been in operation since 2011 and has:

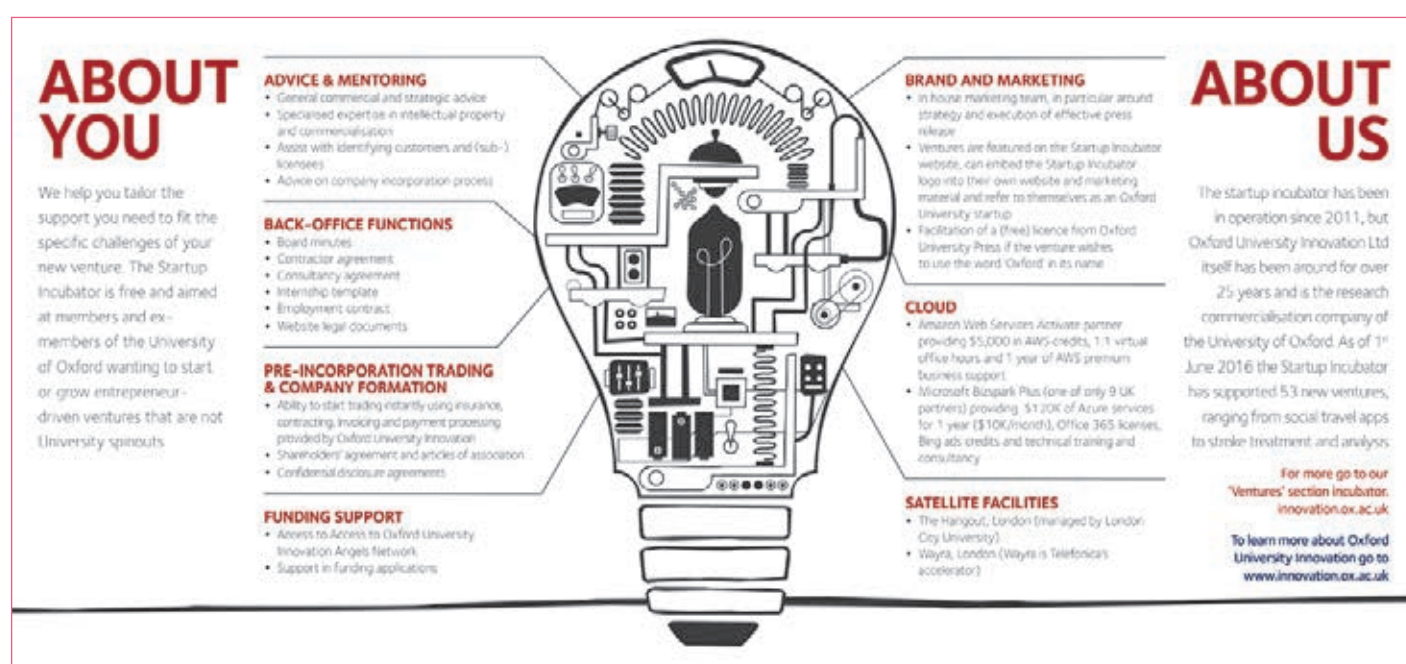
- taken in over 50 startup ventures ranging from the medical domain to social media data analysis
- worked with them on minimum viable product development and initial commercial traction
- supported incubator ventures in attracting over \$40 million from a range of public and private sources.

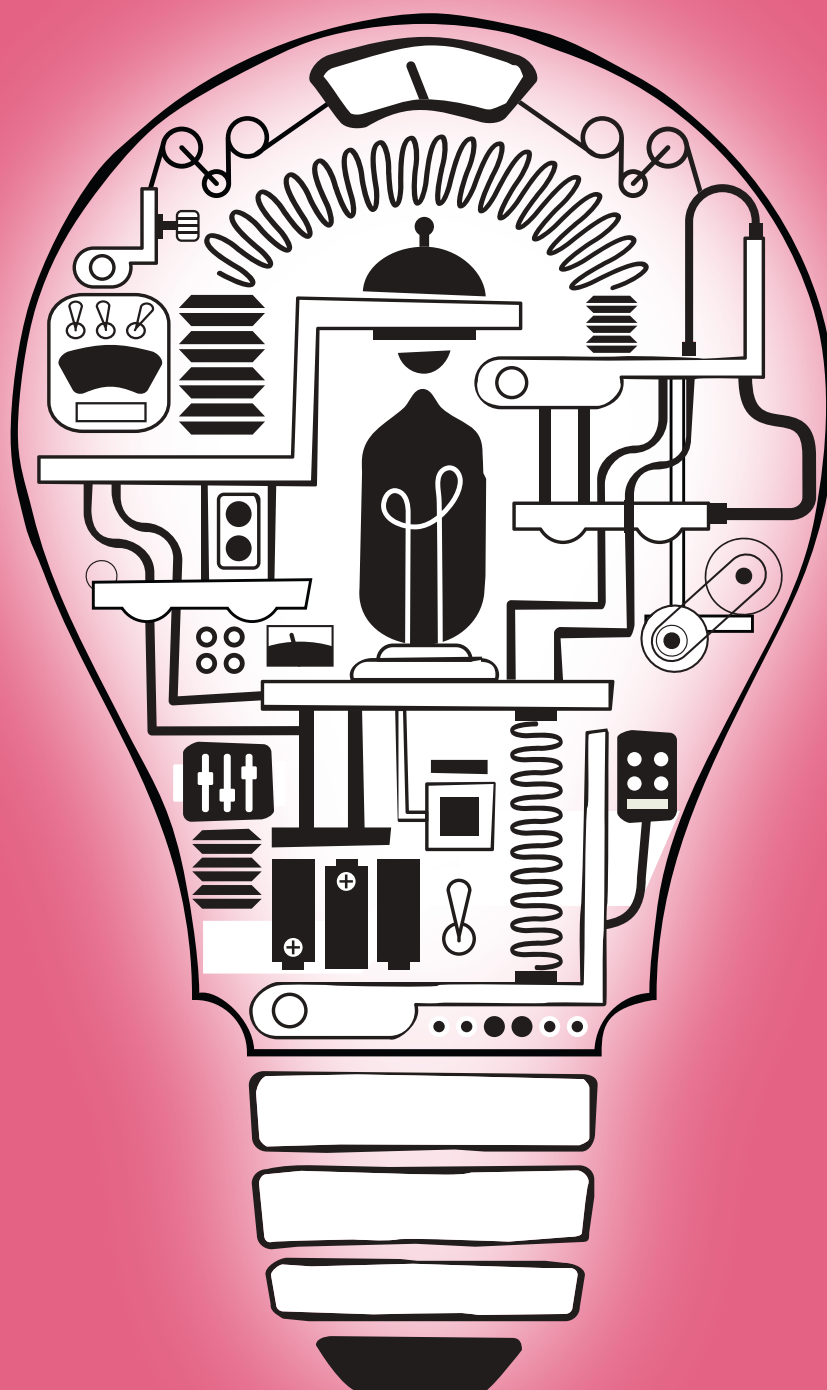
We typically support founders from the idea stage, but also take in and successfully accelerate more mature ventures. We have built our programme from the ground up for an academic environment – we realise you may not be able to work full time on your venture from day one and have set up our process and structure to accommodate this.

In particular this applies when there is no requirement for expensive protection of a patent or expensive research facilities, or product design, validation or trials. However, there is often a need to carry out some significant technical or commercial development to create the business opportunity, e.g. building a user-friendly front end for software or building a customer base. This work is time-intensive but does not (at least in the first instance) require external financial investment.

An example case study of a Humanities based incubator startup company TalkAbout Guides is shown on the next page. **If you have an idea and the time and energy to start your own venture, then please consider the new Oxford University Startup Incubator.**

*Roy Azoulay, Senior Technology Transfer Manager,  
Oxford University Innovation*





# TalkAbout Guides



## Nora Wilkinson, App & Team

Nora oversees app creation and coordinates our team. She helped curate the University Museum while an undergraduate at Harvard and is now pursuing a Master's degree in Art History at the Courtauld Institute.



“The Startup Incubator has been invaluable to growing our business and expanding our reach with an app for TalkAbout Guides. The Incubator is not just a fund – it is an opportunity to develop ideas and make connections. Roy and his team have provided us with sound business and legal advice, and through regular meetings have given us the tools we need to continue growing after our Incubation period.”

## Gabrielle Hughes, Creative

Gabe oversees museum partnerships and graphic design. She is a Rhodes Scholar and PhD candidate in Cultural Heritage Law at Oxford University, with Masters' degrees in Art History and Archaeology.

TalkAbout Guides are an innovative idea for an immersive interactive user experience for heritage and cultural exhibits.

These are conversation guides that take visitors on unique, self-guided journeys through museums and cultural heritage sites. Users follow trails of thematically-related artworks and artefacts, and the hand-held guides ask a series of questions about each object to spark discussion and the sharing of ideas. This may be a series of pieces about love, or death, or playfulness. The user is asked to reflect on memory or comedy or growing up. The user may be prompted to look really closely at an artwork and talk about what they see.

While many guides *tell*, TalkAbout Guides give context and then *ask*.

The questions help visitors:

**Look** more closely.

**Think** more deeply.

**Connect** the art with their own experience.

Answering questions together creates meaningful dialogue and interpersonal connections. It also builds personal bonds with art, encouraging repeat visits.

## How did the Startup Incubator experience help?

TalkAbout have a dynamic team made up of experts in art, philosophy, psychology, and heritage who care deeply about public humanities. Over the last 3 years, they have perfected the art of writing questions that provoke meaningful conversations for a visitor-centric museum experience.

## TalkAbout Guides website

[www.talkaboutguides.co.uk](http://www.talkaboutguides.co.uk)

The TalkAbout app for tablets and smartphones which has content for many museums and cultural heritage spaces can be found at [www.bit.do/TalkAbout-Guides](http://www.bit.do/TalkAbout-Guides)

Photo credit: David Iltis / <http://bit.do/David-Iltis>



**Joshua J. Chauvin, Strategy**

Joshua oversees TalkAbout's strategy and expansion efforts. He is a Rhodes Scholar and PhD candidate in Psychology at Oxford University and leads the mental health organisation It Gets Brighter.



**Dr Oliver Cox, External Affairs**

Oliver liaises with heritage sites and funding bodies. He is a historian and Knowledge Exchange Fellow at Oxford University and founder of the Thames Valley Country House Partnership.



**Andrew Lanham, Editorial**

Andrew oversees content-creation for TalkAbout trails. He is a Rhodes Scholar and PhD candidate at Yale University in English Literature and is a freelance cultural critic.

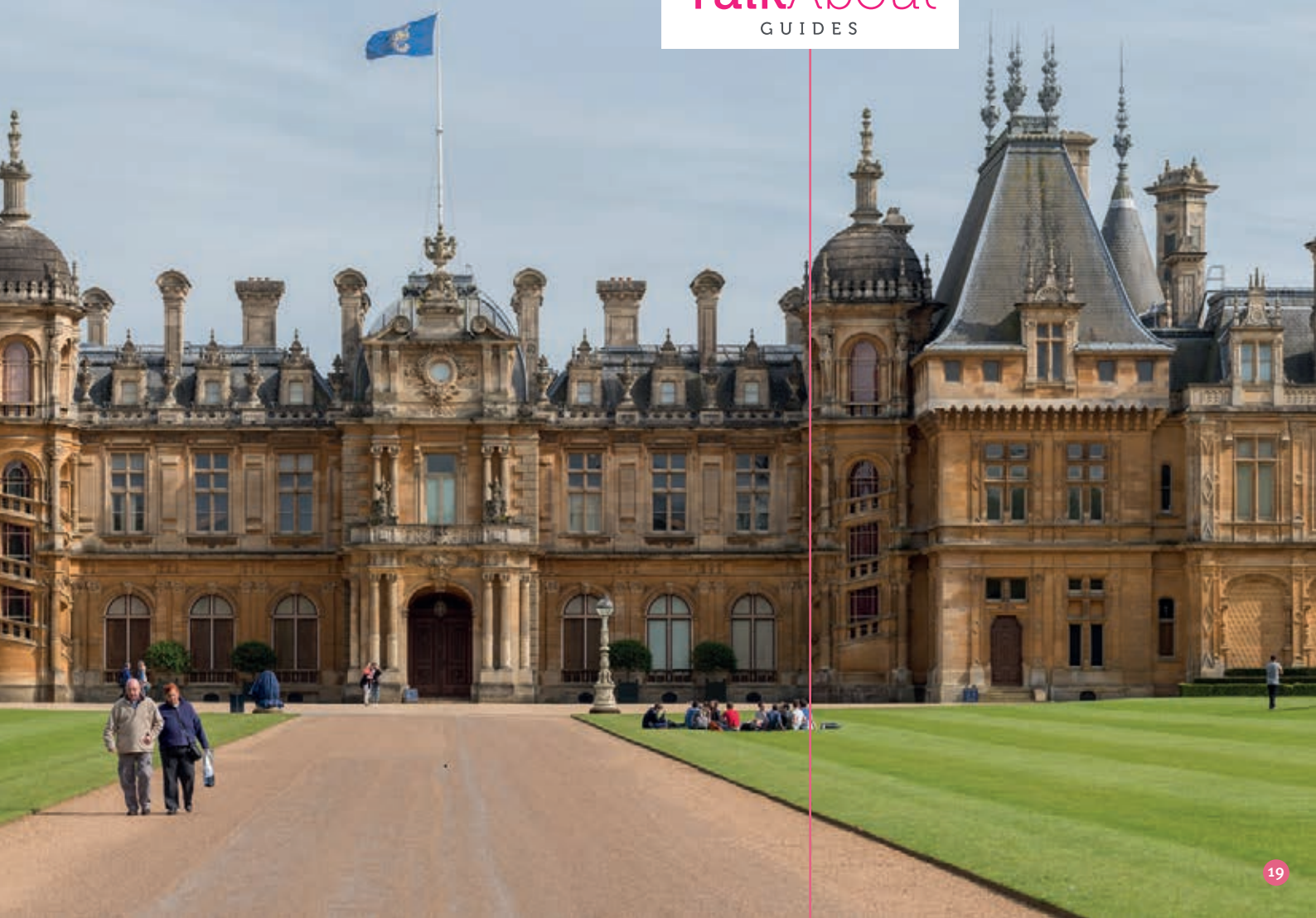


**Eliza Easton, Press & Museum Relations**

Eliza oversees liaisons with art galleries and press relations. She is an Oxford graduate, art historian and cultural critic and is Policy & Research Manager for the Creative Industries Federation.



**TalkAbout**  
GUIDES





Oxentia offers advice on innovation, impact, and entrepreneurship to other universities, research institutes, and government agencies, as well as to clients in the private sector. Since they began in 2004, they have worked in more than 50 countries, and in 2015, they were awarded a prestigious "Queen's Award for Enterprise (International Trade)", in recognition of their international growth.

**Oxentia conducted an impact assessment of Archeox, a major community-based archaeology project in East Oxford led by the University and funded by Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and the John Fell Fund.**

The project is hosted by the University's Department for Continuing Education (OUDE) and conducted in partnership with the School of Archaeology, the Ashmolean and Pitt Rivers Museums, and a range of local government-based, educational and charity organisations.

OUDE created Archeox in 2008 to involve members of the local community in uncovering the archaeological richness of East Oxford. The aim was to improve knowledge of the area while at the same time making a difference to people's lives. During the course of the project community members generated a substantial research archive, completing 3 excavations, 72 test-pits, extensive field surveys, and considerable archive and museum-based research.

To meet the HLF reporting requirements, Oxentia conducted an impact assessment

# Archeox: assessing the impact of a major community-based archaeology project

using qualitative and quantitative research techniques. This included a review and analysis of project outputs and activities, a survey of over 300 volunteers, and interviews with key stakeholders to gather opinions on the project's impact.

Oxentia found Archeox to have had significant impact on participants, including increased knowledge, skills and educational aspirations. Oxentia also found that the project had been successful in reaching a wide range of participants in East Oxford: the project engaged over 200% of its target community, with 85% of survey respondents reporting they had met people from a range different ages or backgrounds during the project. Oxentia's data and analysis was presented in a final report summarising Archeox's impact across the HLF's key themes, and was also used to reinforce the research team's REF impact case study submission.

**Archeox has undoubtedly created a strong and positive impression on the East Oxford community and advanced archaeological research in the area considerably.**

By applying rigorous research techniques, Oxentia has been able not only to demonstrate to the client's funder that the project met its impact obligations, but also to use its findings to create a strong REF case study for 2020.



“ After four and a half years of intensive field, archive and training activity with the hundreds of volunteers registered on the Archeox project, myself as PI and the core team knew we were too close to the matrix of personalities and interests embodied within the project to undertake an objective, balanced evaluative process ourselves. Oxentia provided an ideal counterpart, offering a neutral but constructive voice and an assessment based on ideas and methods which were carefully developed in dialogue with the project team to cover the reporting framework required by the main funder, and key aspects of impact evaluation in the HE sector in general. ”

*Dr David Griffiths,  
Reader and Director of Studies  
in Archaeology, Department for  
Continuing Education*

The Archeox project was supported by Oxentia, prior to its rebranding from Isis Enterprise.



# Funding for startups: Social Impact Investment Forum



Great business ideas must be nurtured from conception with systematic support. Historically, Oxford University Innovation has provided this in the form of protecting, financing, and commercialising intellectual property with over 100 licensing deals and the incorporation of 20 spinout companies in the last year. This process has largely suited the commercialisation of research from Medical Sciences and the Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences Divisions that tend to generate intellectual property in the form of patents and copyrights.

Entrepreneurial initiatives from Social Sciences and the Humanities Divisions are less likely to have intellectual property associated with them and therefore have not benefited as much from this support structure. However,

the success of the Oxford University Startup Incubator, which nurtures and accelerates idea-based initiatives (over 50 incubatees to date), has proven that exceptional rewards can be achieved by creating new methods of support that are targeted to the needs of projects from these Divisions.

**Oxford University Innovation is addressing the remarkable opportunity of investing in the growing pipeline of idea-based ventures originating from the Humanities and Social Sciences Divisions by launching a new Investment Forum.**

The Forum will bring together seed investors and new opportunities from the Humanities and Social Sciences Divisions and will be active from 2017.

*Adam Workman, Head of New Venture Support and Funding, Oxford University Innovation*



## OxReach: rewards-based crowdfunding platform

Rewards-based crowdfunding is a collective effort involving a group of people (the "crowd" or backers) and a project creator. The creator requests the crowd to contribute small amounts of capital to fund his or her concept. In return for the crowd's contributions, rewards or perks are offered. These rewards are typically of higher sentimental value than purchase value. An example may be a card of thanks from the project creator.

**What have we done:** Oxford University Innovation has set up a rewards-based crowdfunding platform with the educational crowdfunding experts at Hubbub.net. Through the platform, members of the University can solicit additional financial support for high-impact philanthropic projects and ideas that they are most passionate about.

**You can check out the platform at:**  
[www.oxreach.hubbub.net](http://www.oxreach.hubbub.net)

**Why have we done it:** Previously, if an Oxford initiative fell between the silos of research and commercial funding there was a limited support network to enable the progression of ideas that will deliver on impact, but not necessarily on commercial return. The OxReach platform helps to fill this gap. The platform provides a formal but easy to use infrastructure for members of the University to leverage personal and professional networks to gain philanthropic funds.

**How you can get involved:**  
From March 2016 to March 2017 (pilot year) it is hoped that 10-15 campaigns will be launched on the site.

**Crowdfunding campaigns launched on OxReach, rather than other generic crowdfunding platforms, experience the following benefits:**

**Lower fees:** Standard fees on similar crowdfunding websites can be anywhere between 4-12% of the total amount raised. OxReach will not charge such platform fees as the platform is funded by the IT Services Innovation Fund.

**Standing out from the crowd:**  
The site will be dedicated to projects from the University of Oxford and will not get lost in a mass of other projects from outside parties.

**Professional advice:** The Oxford University Innovation team will provide advice and guidance on how to achieve fundraising success.

**For more information:**  
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