

auril
08-09
Annual
Review

Overview

AURIL is the premier membership body for those institutions engaged in all forms of Knowledge Transfer (KT). It enjoys widespread international recognition through its success in influencing government and other stakeholders' policies and representing the sector's views at all levels.

It has strong working relations with the Confederation of British Industry, Universities UK, the UKIPO, Department of Health, the Department of Business Innovation and Skills, Technology Strategy Board, HM Revenue & Customs and higher education funding and research councils: In partnership with those bodies it has produced many widely-used publications and represented the sector's views to government, industry, funders and stakeholders at all levels;

AURIL's strength lies in its KT organisational membership base and the broad range of issues and topics it embraces. When KT with Government encouragement, began to move outside universities to public research, arts organisations and the NHS, AURIL demonstrated that it was sensitive to changes in its external environment by broadening its membership base to include these constituencies.

Over the last few months we have been made increasingly aware of pressures on all forms of public funding. AURIL has made great strides in making the case for and establishing KT as a permanent route of funding. Now, more than ever, the sector must be united in defending that funding. AURIL's special relationship with stakeholders means that we are best placed to make that case.

Auril 08-09

The 08/09 year was under the excellent stewardship of Prof. Oisín MacNamara (Northumbria) and the "official" season started with the annual conference in Glasgow (9/10 October). The venue for the conference was Glasgow's spectacular City Halls. The Drinks Reception was hosted by the Lord Provost and was followed by the Conference Dinner at the prestigious City Chambers.

The very full programme included the following sessions:

- HEFCE Evaluation of 3rd Mission
- Social & Economic Impact
- Technology Strategy Board and its relationship with Universities
- Finance Act & Charity Law
- Mentoring
- Creative Industries Session
- Student Enterprise
- Post RAE - Research Excellence
- State Aids
- IP Pooling & Bundling
- Patent Research Exemption
- Scottish Model for KT Funding
- RCUK - Emphasis on KT and New Initiatives
- Translating University Research into an Industrial Context
- KT Governance

Illustrating the depth and breadth of our members interests and activities.



“

HEFCE is pleased to stand together with universities leaders and their professionals to highlight and celebrate the role that HE can play in the economic downturn, and hear from business thinkers on what we should do better.

The rapid response of the HE sector to the country's challenges has been impressive. We believe this has been made possible by the long-term support for HE interactions with businesses, public services, communities and voluntary sectors and the wider public - through Government and HEFCE policy commitment and funding, and the dedication and innovation of HE leaders and their professional staffs. ”

**David Sweeney, Director
(Research, Innovation & Skills), HEFCE**

Company Matters

The incoming Chair is Davena Rankin (Glasgow Caledonian University) and the Vice Chair Alun Tlusty-Sheen (Westminster)

The annual elections were held in July 09 and we were sad to lose Caroline Quest (QML and past Chair), Mark Allanson (Bolton) and Jan Hilton (Manchester Science Park) all of whom give great support to the association.

We welcome onto council Deborah Lock (Kingston University), Dave Bembo (Cardiff) with Linda Baines (Science and Technology Facilities Council) being re-elected as Treasurer (and is now also Company Secretary).

Brian McCaul has decided to stand down as Company Secretary after 5 years but remains on Council with responsibility for ICT issues. Council therefore combined the post of Treasurer and Company Secretary as both posts have direct contact with Companies House.

Significant changes had been made to the operational procedures of the company. AURIL has now employed a part-time book keeper which has made a significant difference to the account reporting procedures. The financial year 2007-08 was the first time we will have had all our records recorded on the SAGE system. A "Special Resolution" passed at the 08 AGM revised how our accounts are audited and meant we were able to take advantage of the new procedures for small business procedures at a significant financial saving.

Membership

Membership has remained steady at 1,495 with more organisations taking advantage of the additional members' scheme. Membership of the sector is growing rapidly and AURIL is committed to widening its base both within institutions to all those who are involved in KT and non- HEI organisations.

Strategic Plan

During the year Council reviewed its Strategic and Financial Plans. Several key principles were reinforced.

- Value for money for members
- Representation of the KT sector
- Being able to respond to stakeholders' consultations
- Membership services based on members' needs (including CPD, communications, and networking)
- Operating a well resourced and efficient office

The following are the key elements and agreed deliverables of our strategy.

- Partner with KT continuous professional development providers to exploit, develop and deliver the AURIL competency framework. Promote the brand with minimal financial risk.
- Engage with the FE 157 Group with a view to them taking part in one of the KT regional seminars.
- Make a fresh attempt to broaden membership base among PSROs and NHS IP hubs.
- Lobby Government and other stakeholders on 'hot topics'.
- Explore opportunities to partner, collaborate and continue discussions with other KT associations and stakeholders to use and develop new services, and promote events.
- The Chair would be appointed for a year with an option to extend for a further year up to a maximum of 2 years in total.

- Continue the practice of Council comprising 10 members elected by AURIL members appointed for 2 year period – rolling elections
- Focus its international strategy on developing its 'partnership' with Proton and exploring the scope for collaborating with LES (but not limited to these groups).
- To consult on a fair and equitable fee/membership structure.
- Exploit the social network site GinnN and review the communications mechanisms (website, JISC)
- To establish a group consisting of senior members of Council – the Chair, Vice Chair and Immediate Past Chair. This will give continuity over a 3 year period and will also help induct the Vice-Chair. This group will support the Executive Director but be subordinate to the Council.
- To invite the Company Secretary to prepare a revised Memorandum and Articles of Association, to account for any of the above company changes, to be presented at the next Annual General Meeting (09 AGM).

Key Issues / Topics

Surveys and Polls

- **Conference**
We surveyed the membership on the potential content and venue of the 09 Conference. The fact that the Conference is at maximum capacity is evidence that the members got it right and had their fingers on the sectoral pulse
- **Lambert Model Contracts.**
We carried out a survey (based on the original AURIL survey carried out 3 years ago) on the use of Lambert Agreements and the Toolkit. The results were delivered at the Lambert event in February and at the general Lambert meeting in May 09 by Brian McCaul. We had an excellent response to the survey and also amended it for the CBI ICARG group to get the industry view.
- **Business Links**
We polled the members through the GinnN network to get a better understanding of KT offices relationships with Business Links. The outcome of the poll resulted in the programme being a topic at the 09 conference,

“We cannot be complacent. We will have to work very hard to convince Government, of the importance of continued investment in higher education and of the folly that would be slipping back into the old pattern of efficiency savings upon efficiency savings, which seriously threatened to undermine universities' core strengths.”

Baroness Diana Warwick, CEO, UUK

Solutions for Business:

(Business Supplication Programme)

AURIL has been part of the group considering how the number of business support schemes can be reduced, more focused and effective and have a lighter touch. The programme will be channelled through Business Links who are keen to point out that they did not want to hinder in any way what universities were doing but see this as an "enhancement" to current HE activities

Following our poll on members' interaction with Business Links both AURIL and BIS were keen to get the KT practitioners view of how the programme can be delivered. The result is an interactive session at the 09 Conference. This is a classic example of AURIL working in collaboration with government on the operational issues and practical delivery on what is agreed is a rational policy.

Business / University / Charity Collaboration & VAT

AURIL has played a significant role in the discussions with HM Revenue & Customs and the Charity Commissioners to clarify the tax position on KT activities relevant to HE's charitable status. The discussions could have taken even longer but we were keen that guidelines should be issued as soon as possible, in case concern within the sector led to stagnation of KT activity.

The guidance was finally published on the 9th June. We circulated it to members and also published it on the website along with the BUFDG guidance notes (finance directors group).

Lambert Meeting

As one of the founding partners of the Lambert Group we continue to play an active part. There have been several meetings of the Inner (detailed drafting) and Outer (policy) Lambert Groups. They are now working on drafting a standard Material Transfer Agreement. With our encouragement Lambert has agreed to maintain the larger group as a useful sounding board to comment on various KT issues.

“Universities can act as catalysts for the growth of business, as sources of knowledge and as connectors, linking with Government and development agencies as well as with companies,”

Prof. Oisin MacNamara, Chair

Partnerships

Stakeholders

Our relationships with key stakeholders continue to strengthen as is evident by the number of joint events we have held and the contribution we have made to the formulation of HEIF metrics and research into embedding KT within the HE sector:

We will continue to develop these relationships with pertinent government and funding bodies, such as UUK, BIS, SFC, HEFCE, RC's etc., so that they have confidence in our capacity to work with them as the preferred body to represent the whole breadth of the KT profession in the public sector. This is a core activity of the AURIL directorate and it is through these relationships that we continue to influence policy and strategy.

We are currently working with the UKIPO to revise the "Strategic Guide to IP" publication

Institute of Knowledge Transfer (IKT)

AURIL continues to work with the IKT and has signed a Partnership Agreement with them which encourages promotion and dissemination of events and activities. The agreement allows AURIL members to take advantage of the IKT Mentoring Scheme and gives AURIL representation on the KT Board.

ProTon

We continue to engage with ProTon which has proved invaluable for contact with the European Commission and has enabled us to feed into policy and strategic documents, e.g. "Responsible Partnering" – Guidelines for collaboration between PROs and business.

Knowledge Transfer Centres

In the past year we have had some interaction with the KTN Centres helping them forge links with KTP Centres and would like to develop this intermediary role in the future. It also helps us maintain or links with industry.

Paul J Palmer, Director, Integrated Products Manufacturing KTN, said "I have been pleasantly surprised at the positive response regarding links to KTP centres. The AURIL list has a good reach. The tally is now standing at 35 centres round the UK and Northern Ireland".

FE Colleges

We are intending to further investigate the possibility of linking with FE colleges which have significant KT activities (mostly the 157 Group). In "Further Education Colleges - Models for Success", the Minister of State for Lifelong Learning, Further and Higher Education, said:

"We also want colleges to be recognised for the valuable role they play within their local communities, offering a wide range of opportunities and resources from which local people and businesses benefit".

As a first step we held a joint seminar with the 157 Group on economic development and working with RDAs.

“Universities have a positive role to play; the Government's new policy of 'Industrial Activism', rightly places universities at the heart of the strategy for recovery. Universities are going to be critical and investment in research – or in science at least – must be protected.”

Baroness Diana Warwick, CEO, UUK

Membership Services

Continual Professional Development

Since 2000, AURIL has developed a competency framework for the continuing professional development (CPD) needs of KT practitioners engaged in developing and supporting knowledge exchange links, relationships and partnerships between universities, other public research organisations, private sector research bodies, industry and a range of external organisations involved in KT activity.

The Framework was first published in 2001, updated in 2003 and the current version was published late in 2006. The Framework has been produced in the light of developments and feedback from a wide range of users and stakeholders including its application to KT Practitioners operating across a range of sectors and across the EU.

While AURIL is not a training provider in its own right, the Council (via the CPD Committee) has decided that in maximizing our resources we will encourage use and development of the framework.

• Using the Framework

AURIL is looking to collaborate with providers to use the Framework and develop events, courses and programmes at all levels based on or associated with it. Potential collaborators are invited to complete a proposal form which will be considered by the AURIL CPD Steering Committee and recommendations made to Council for endorsement. Proposals are evaluated using criteria such as 'fit' with AURIL, quality of provision, proposed, assessment arrangements, enhancement of AURIL's reputation and brand, the organisation's reputation and standing, and due diligence for commercial organisations completed satisfactorily.

The Framework is available free of charge to AURIL's members and other public sector organisations and on an appropriate basis for commercial organisations, so please let us know if you are interested in working with us.

• Current CPD partners

We are currently in discussion with up to three key providers on ways in which we can make this happen. These included CHEMPaS, (The Centre for Higher Education Management and Policy at Southampton). We hope to be able to announce details on AURIL's CPD website shortly. We have also signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Technology Transfer Tactics, a US based publishing company enabling AURIL members to access TTT resources at discounted prices.

• Reviewing and Developing the Framework

The Framework is an evolving document which we will continue to assess and revise according to developments and feedback from users, and will contribute to the understanding and development of professional standards for KT organisations and professionals. Since the Framework was last reviewed 3 years ago, we have set up a working group to reassess it. The working group includes members of AURIL CPD Steering Committee and other interested parties.

“It is not just about universities selling their products to businesses. Serendipitous interactions often open up many of the most exciting opportunities for growth.”

Prof. Oisin MacNamara, Chair, AURIL

Communications

AURIL has continued to use the tried and trusted JISC mail network whilst at the same time being the first KT association to establish a fully-fledged social network. AURIL was a partner in the establishment of the Global Innovation Network (www.ginnn.com). Shortly afterwards the IKT came on board and many other associations, including the IKT have established a presence on the network – which have now grown to 3300 members.

This has given AURIL a more significant web presence and access to those interested in KT from outside the existing closed JISC network.

The GlnnN platform is under-going a redesign and it is anticipated that a more mobile friendly version will be available. An interim design refresh is due in the next few weeks.

The office has done sterling work in terms of ensuring the memberships' awareness of the GlnnN network, but as an organisation we have not yet maximised this presence with the sort of concerted online campaigning that the IKT has launched and continues to operate via GlnnN. But periodic posts and surveys have drawn attention (though at least once also some controversy). It is likely that we are not maximising the advantage that AURIL initially stole in respect of this online presence. It is also notable that other organisations are now investing considerably more effort in the development of their online networks.

At the moment we have the rapid JISC route of communications and the richer GlnnN capability. Perhaps the best way forward is some fusion of the two. We will begin discussions with JISC as to how we could develop this idea – openness to attract interest, rapid communications and the option of closed groups for privileged information for paying members. This “Freemium model” appears to be the emerging web business model and therefore supports the increased use of the GlnnN network.

AURIL Website

The Website continues to function well and meet the needs of the organisation for a more traditional static website. It is considerably cheaper and more flexible than the previous Plone version. A few remaining compatibility issues potentially remain with Firefox for MAC, but it works well with IE, Firefox and Chrome for PCs.

Other Online Networks

The significance and growth of other online networks is also evident, and other KT associations are starting to use these as communication devices effectively. Many KTOs have all established a presence on Twitter and it is recommended that we secure an account. This would complement our GlnnN presence and would also suit our Executive Director's peripatetic life-style (pending or in addition to the more mobile version of GlnnN).

Mentoring

It is not a coincidence that mentoring has become so popular over the few years. For many of us, work has become faster paced, unpredictable and more challenging than ever before. We want to plan our next career step, yet it is difficult to know which move to make. We get deeply involved in complex projects, and when problems arise we are so close that we find it hard to see a way forward. We might struggle to balance our role as working parents, yet worry that admitting it will affect our career. Some of these issues we will happily discuss with our line managers; others we would rather not. Instead, we would appreciate an independent perspective – someone to listen to and challenge us without our having to worry about the consequences of our discussions.

AURIL members have access to the IKT Mentoring scheme and we would encourage you to sign up on line.

Events

Knowledge Transfer: Delivering a Route to Growth - How HE Institutions can add value to the UK economy
Chair: Oisín McNamara - 7 May 2009

The Economic Downturn Event, sponsored by HEFCE and supported by UUK was a great success. It was attended by 270 individuals and we had over 40 posters presented.

AURIL is very conscious of the contribution Institutions have and can make to help business in the current economic situation. The research generated and the consultancy services provided by UK universities are world class. This research should be put to good use, both to assist in economic development and for the social and public good. Universities are keen to make that happen.

Over the last decade the government has invested heavily in helping universities nurture their business links. Members have been doing really good work over the last few years AURIL was keen to host this event to increase awareness of the contribution of knowledge transfer in meeting the downturn challenge, short and long term, and to share good practice across the HE sector on what is working on the ground.

- All the speakers agreed that if the UK is to be catapulted out of the current economic situation, it is vital that businesses embrace innovation and adopt the latest technology to make their companies more competitive. SMEs are particularly vulnerable in this climate but equally they are more flexible and can adapt more quickly. Members are there to help and will do everything we can to assist in that process.

The event had contributions from national policy-makers including representatives from AURIL; NESTA, Thales/Robert Gordon University; UUK; SEEDA, HEFCE. Corus and CIHE. The event attracted considerable press coverage.

AURIL/157 Group: Innovation for Economic Growth through Development Agencies and the Tertiary Education Sector working together
Chair: Alun Tlusty-Sheen - April 2009

We were delighted to work with the FE 157 Group to deliver this seminar on how Development Agencies partner with their tertiary education partners, Universities and FE Colleges showcased projects that are innovative in the way they are working together and/or the impact they are having.

SEEDA and University of Portsmouth presented on Business+...LDAs (a pilot cross University mini-KTP project); Yorkshire Forward and University of Leeds on CPD4 Health Innovation, LDAs on working with FE Colleges in London to support SMEs and the City of Bristol College led South West Composites Gateway.

AURIL/IKT: University Knowledge Transfer in the Age of 'Open Innovation' workshop – March 2009

The 'entrepreneurial university' is actively involved in managing its knowledge assets and facilitating their exploitation. However, technology transfer from universities, which has traditionally focused on commercialising intellectual property, is facing new challenges. On one hand, knowledge transfer happens in many different ways and not all ideas and knowledge can be protected as intellectual property. On the other, some firms have become concerned that overprotective IP policies and full economic costing make university collaboration too slow or too expensive.

The workshop addressed the issues arising from the challenges for university knowledge transfer including questions on strategies, goals and objectives; organisation and process; and knowledge transfer and its relationship with its stakeholders. The speakers at this workshop comprised both academic researchers and practitioners.

Facilitating Collaborative Research: The Lambert Tool-Kit
Chair: Brian McCaul - February 2009

AURIL was approached by the UK Intellectual Property Office to run an event on the Lambert Model Contracts and in particular the newly issued Consortium Agreement.

The seminar covered the background to Lambert and Intellectual Property from the Intellectual Property Office and Government Angle, the Industry View, included a workshop, Case Studies and a group discussion

Speakers included representatives from UKIPO; Northwood Reid Solicitors; GlaxoSmithKline, Technology Strategy Board and the University of Leeds

Incubation, Incubators, Fledglings and Mother Hens: exploring the issues involved in supporting new CCI businesses
Chair: Anne Craig, January 2009

Incubation for the Cultural and Creative Industries needs a different approach to other sectors, and attendees included people with a responsibility for enterprise development and incubation in the Cultural & Creative Industries. This interactive workshop aimed to;

- explore the different models in place around the country;
- gather information on what works, what to avoid, costs and collaborations and
- prepare the groundwork for a "Warts and All" guidance booklet

The event was opened by Prof Stuart Bartholomew, the Principal of The Arts Institute at Bournemouth and speakers included UK Business Incubation, the National Council for Graduate Entrepreneurship, Performing Arts Network and Development Agency and the Enterprise Pavilion.

Other Events in 2008

IP Management Event – "Selling the University Silver"
Chair: Caroline Quest - July 2008

The central topic of this event, run in association with ESRC, focused on the pros and cons of universities 'outsourcing' or entering into formal partnerships with external commercial technology transfer intermediaries.

The discussion opened with two well-received and highly intelligent cases made for and against the outsourcing of - some or all - of the commercialisation activity relating to licenses and spinouts.

The first argued the case for using high quality VC-backed intermediary services in long-term committed University-intermediary partnerships. The second argued against the formation of exclusive or quasi-exclusive legal relationships with IP commercialisation companies and provided a great checklist of potential errors that could be made if the outsourcing of commercialisation support is not thought through.

Presentations were made by, IP Group, The University of Warwick, IPSO Ventures, Heriot-Watt University, Imperial College London, University of Reading, University of Leeds

FP7 - Challenges and Opportunities
Chair: Linda Baines - May 2008

The EU Commission's Research and Development Programme, Framework 7 (FP7) has been running for almost a year: Universities and public sector research organisations have submitted proposals for funding and their success rate has been mixed. In addition small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) seem reluctant to participate in FP7 projects and the uptake by SMEs in the UK is lower than in other EU member states such as France and Germany.

This workshop was an opportunity to share experiences of FP7, understand the challenges and barriers of collaborating in FP7 projects, working with SMEs, the use of model consortium agreements, programme and project management tools on an interactive basis. AURIL collated feedback and results gathered at the event and fed them into the Commission.

Presentations: were from FP7UK, Eversheds LLP, Culmentor, TI Partners

Development Agency and HEI Innovation Event

Chair: Alun Tlusty-Sheen - April 2008

This exciting event attracted a lot of attention and it was attended by many non members. Topics discussed were;

- The Success of LEAD: Sustainability of a Leadership and Management Programme for SMEs (University of Lancaster),
- Maximising the Economic Potential of the Riccarton Campus (Scottish Enterprise & Heriot-Watt University)
- Great Western Research - Catalyst for Collaboration (South West Regional Development Agency and University of Bristol)
- Developing Regional and Institutional Research Strategies (MATRIX - NI Science & Industry Panel) and Queen's University Belfast)
- Encouraging Academic Entrepreneurs and Knowledge Transfer (East Midlands Development Agency and University of Nottingham)
- The Innovation Nation: UK Government Science & Innovation White Paper; Implementing Race to the Top and Innovation Nation (recent DIUS publications) were discussed

HEIF 4 Strategic Plans Event

Chair: Caroline Quest - February 2008

AURIL members were naturally very interested in which form their institutional HEIF 4 strategies should take, so we ran an event with HEFCE which addressed the proposed strategies for use of formula funding allocations. As you can imagine the event was very well attended with a lively question and answer session.

There were presentations on:

HEIF 4 Institutional Strategies from HEFCE and DIUS plus Institutional Presentations from: Northumbria, Queen Mary, Reading, Keele and Reading

“Universities are one of several very powerful national assets. Countries should focus on core strengths, industrial and institutional, and build on them.”

“Universities can act as local anchors, holding communities and regional clusters together because they tend to stay put and can form an essential counterbalance to the forces causing companies, workers, markets and sources of capital to relocate”.

"Universities are best placed to capitalise on collaborations across sectors. They are the test bed and natural home for bringing disciplines and people from different backgrounds together. ”

Jonathan Kestenbaum, CEO, NESTA

The Incoming Year

Chair: Davena Rankin (Glasgow Caledonian University)

It is a great honour for me to have been elected as Chair of AURIL and over the coming year I hope that I can live up to the high standards set by my predecessors. For me, AURIL's strength comes from the diversity and inclusivity of our membership base. We have members from throughout the UK and also enjoy close links with AURIL Ireland. Moreover, this year, all four home nations are being represented on Council. Devolution has allowed Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales to mould their own KT landscape to reflect their needs. As such, one of my main objectives for the coming year is to strengthen and broaden our links with key stakeholders in the devolved countries to complement the close ties we already have in England. This will present an excellent opportunity to learn from best practice in each of the countries and it is only natural that AURIL leads the way by facilitating this process.

As the leading UK body representing government funded organisations engaged in Knowledge Transfer, our main role is one of advocacy. AURIL draws membership from nearly all the HEIs in the UK and Ireland (with international organisations joining as associate members), NHS IP Hubs and Public Sector Research Establishments (PSRE). This diversity is one of our greatest strengths. It allows us to access a wealth of knowledge that enables us to respond to and influence the agendas of key stakeholders, such as the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills, HEFCE, UK Governments, the research councils and industry. The diversity of our membership base also allows us to justifiably state that we are the voice of Knowledge Transfer organisations when responding to consultation exercises.

Knowledge Transfer covers a broad spectrum of activity and we draw our membership from all areas, from those working in community and social engagement through to industrial Technology Transfer. Our conferences and specialist events provide space and time for our members to network while our mail base allows the distribution of information and offers a forum where problems/issues can be discussed and debated. Several of our key stakeholders even use it to conduct research into the changing Knowledge Transfer landscape.

AURIL has been at the leading edge of developing Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for KT Professionals. AURIL's KT CPD Framework was originally researched and designed in 2001 and it is currently undergoing its second review/update. AURIL's role within the framework has evolved over the years and we now work in partnership with several organisations (both in the UK and overseas) to deliver training and materials to enable the framework to make a real difference.

In these economically uncertain times, Knowledge Transfer and the potential benefits it can bring will increasingly come under the spotlight as policy makers look at ways of making the "knowledge economy" a reality. In this sense, AURIL has a vital role to play in ensuring that our voices, requirements and concerns are heard where it matters most: with our stakeholders, at Whitehall and in the devolved administrations. AURIL is only as strong as our members and I look forward to working with you to promote Knowledge Transfer.

Davena Rankin

AURIL Council 2009 - 2010

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