The north west science strategy: review of challenges and opportunities

Perry, B and May, T

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The North West Science Strategy: Review of Challenges and Opportunities

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University of Salford

Presentation to North West Science Council
16th July 2007

http://www.surf.salford.ac.uk
Excellence and Relevance: Towards an Alternative Discourse?

Global

Excellence

Relevance

Regional/Local

Relevant Excellence

Excellent Relevance

Second-rate science

http://www.surf.salford.ac.uk
The Science Strategy

Excellence

Regional Support for Science
- Create a ‘Northern Golden Triangle’
- Retain and adapt science base in place
- Develop alliances outside the region
- Build centres of excellence
- Strategic sites – Manchester, Daresbury, Merseyside and West Cumbria
- Focus on research-intensive universities
- Emphasis on high-tech, high skills

Relevance

Science Support for the Region
- Continued engagement with large R&D companies
- Interaction of SMEs with the knowledge base
- Knowledge transfer processes: expressing needs and adjusting programmes
- Flows of people across HEI-business boundaries
- Culture of entrepreneurialism
- Skills and development – linking to existing regional skills and sectoral partnerships

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**Strengths**

- High private sector R&D investment
- Internationally strong across a range of sectors
- Good academic links and collaborations
- High graduate output
- Strong strategic partnership between senior industry and academic players
- Match between academic and industrial base in key sectors
- Ability to make hard choices and prioritise
- Demonstrated capacity for policy learning
- Open lines of communication with national policy-makers in different sectors

**Weaknesses**

- R&D focussed in a small number of large companies
- Low non-HEI public sector investment
- Lack of knowledge regarding ‘emerging opportunities’
- Not ‘top of the mind’ for investors
- Science and knowledge
- Few explicit connections with wider HE network
- Little embeddedness in regional context
- Engaging with cities, enrolling other partners
- Public engagement and raising aspirations
- Perceptions of the science agenda
- ‘Science +’ Agenda
The 'Missing Middle'

SPACE OF COMMUNICATION: Active Intermediaries

Cultures of Enquiry
Cultures of Reception

Funding volume and source
Institutional position and research support

Time-scales and levels of activity (international, national, regional)
Partnerships and collaborations
Disciplinary contexts

Staffing and job security
Organisational change and stability
Strategic capacity and commitment
Partnerships and collaborations
Organisational learning mechanisms

Funding volume and source

RESEARCH

PRACTICE

http://www.surf.salford.ac.uk
Implications: The ‘Science +’ Agenda

- The Nature of Interventions: Active Intermediaries
- Engagement and Leading by Example: The Science Bus
- Enrolment: From Science Cities to Urban Knowledge Arenas
- Demystifying the Agenda: Learning from Case Studies
Business and the Knowledge-Based Region

- Gatekeeper meetings
- Tailored summary of findings
- Communicate business priorities to policy-makers
- Organise business-oriented seminars
- Write articles for business press
- Evaluate the process in terms of mechanisms for social science knowledge transfer to business