Societally relevant research that makes a tangible difference is at the heart of Bournemouth University’s work. With the tagline ‘creating, sharing, inspiring’, BU combines excellent education, research and professional practice to galvanise its students to enrich the world. Here, International Innovation takes a closer look at the University’s unique approach and cutting-edge research, discovering what makes it a crucial academic player in global innovation.

ECONOMIC IMPACT
BU is a vital component of the local economy, generating an impressive £1 million each day in economic activity in the South West. It is one of the largest employers in the region and attracts 40 per cent of its students from less than 40 miles away. The institution is actively engaged in the local recruitment of students and many of BU’s students remain in the local area to work with companies such as Lush, the Royal National Lifeboat Institution and AFC Bournemouth.

In 2013, the University commissioned a study analysing its economic impact in order to paint a detailed picture of the wider benefits it brings to Dorset and the South West. Among other findings, Professor John Fletcher and Dr Yeganeh Morakabati revealed that BU had directly created 1,390 full-time equivalent jobs and generated income of over £182 million throughout the region.

BU IMPACTS ON THE LOCAL COMMUNITY AND ECONOMY IN A NUMBER OF WAYS:

- Contributes a well-educated, highly-paid work force
- Builds partnerships between academics, businesses and other organisations
- Generates research that responds to societal needs
- Offers free public engagement events
In 2011, the Research & Knowledge Exchange Office (RKEO) was established to support all research and knowledge activity at BU, ensuring academics receive dedicated and high-quality support throughout the research and knowledge exchange process and inspiring academics to engage with research. Within this remit the Knowledge Exchange and Impact Team (KEIT) conducts corporate-level initiatives that promote knowledge exchange with multiple audiences.

**THE UNIVERSITY IS FUNDAMENTAL TO [ECONOMIC GROWTH IN THE REGION] BECAUSE WE HAVE THE INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION IN TERMS OF OUR CREATIVE AND DIGITAL EXPERTISE. WE ATTRACTION A REALLY GOOD GROUP OF STUDENTS AND THEY’RE EXPOSED TO WORLD-LEADING RESEARCH AND WE’RE DOING OUR BEST TO RETAIN THEM...ONCE THEY GET ACROSS THEIR GRADUATION STAGE**

John Fletcher, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research and Innovation at BU

Enhancing its success are the University’s collaborations with a range of institutions, industry and policy makers to deliver world-leading research that is grouped into unique themes. This, combined with public engagement with other research users, ensures BU’s research delivers impact where it is most needed. One example is BU’s Dementia Institute (BUDI), which was established by social care research expert Professor Anthea Innes. BUDI takes an innovative approach to research, and involves people with dementia and their carers at every possible opportunity.

Two of their recent projects include the BUDI orchestra and research into dementia friendly tourism. The BUDI orchestra gives people with dementia an opportunity to learn new musical skills, while also evaluating the effects of the initiative on their lives.

Research into dementia friendly tourism was a collaboration between BUDI and Professor Stephen Page of the Faculty of Management. As people live longer, dementia is becoming a global issue. People have the expectation that they will still be able to participate in leisure and tourism activities into old age, but the difficulties associated with dementia can make this more of a challenge. The research explores the opportunities this presents for businesses, and how destinations can become dementia friendly.

**THE IMPORTANCE OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT**

BU ensures the knowledge and expertise available at the University benefits people and organisations across Dorset, and its extensive involvement in public engagement affords the institution the opportunity to break down the perception of closed walls surrounding research. An example of this is BU’s Festival of Learning, which is set to run for its third consecutive year on 11-17 July 2015 and showcases a selection of over 100 free to attend events, sessions and research activities.

**IN PARTNERSHIP**

A novel model for supporting and conducting health research in Dorset is the Bournemouth University Clinical Research Unit (BUCRU), which assists researchers in improving their output across the University and local National Health Service (NHS) trusts, with a focus on health research that has relevance to the NHS.

One example of BUCRU’s research is a collaboration between BU, the Dorset MS Service at Poole Hospital and the MS Society. Together they have developed a group-based fatigue management programme, FACETS - Fatigue: Applying Cognitive behavioural and Energy effectiveness Techniques to lifeStyle.

The programme combines lifestyle strategies with cognitive behavioural approaches. Results have shown that 40 per cent of participants who received FACETS plus their routine care had a meaningful improvement in fatigue levels, compared with 19 per cent of those who received current local practice only.

A new creative festival, BFX, celebrates the UK’s visual effects, animation and games industry and seeks to inspire the next generation of talent going on to work on award-winning movies and games. For example, excitingly, at the BAFTA’s in February of this year, BU graduate Andy Lockley and one of BU’s honorary doctorates Paul Franklin took to the stage to pick up Interstellar’s Special Visual Effects BAFTA.

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The key elements of BU’s strategic plan are:

### FUSION

**INSPIRING**
- Preparing students for the workplace
- Building personal and professional development
- Creating highly sought after employable graduates
- Supporting and staff and students

**SHARING**
- Fusing excellent education, research and professional practice
- Undertaking world-class research
- Offering real-world learning opportunities
- Delivering inspirational teaching
- Being recognised on an international scale as a thought leader

**CREATING**
- Delivering an outstanding, personalised student experience
- Creating a world-class learning community
- Developing strategic partnerships
- Building strong professional and academic networks
- Ensuring graduates are culturally aware and internationally mobile

**ENVIRONMENT**
- Providing world-class facilities
- Reducing impact on the environment

**FINANCE**
- Using resources efficiently to secure key strategic priorities
- Ensuring financial sustainability

**PEOPLE**
- Developing a high performing workforce
- Engaging and inspiring staff
- Promoting an excellent working environment
- Embedding a culture of excellent service

A unique combination of research, education and professional practice is at the core of the University’s vision and values, labelled Fusion. This approach combines inspirational teaching, world-class research and innovative thinking to create valuable and stimulating knowledge exchange. In 2012, BU launched its Strategic Plan 2012-18, which includes contributions from staff and students, who were invited to help shape and support the strategies and explains how the University intends to deliver its vision.

- The Environment Agency
- Natural England
- Centre for Environment Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS)
- British Trust for Ornithology (BTO)
- Ducks Unlimited local community

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WINNERS OF THE STUDENT PLACEMENT OF THE YEAR AWARD:

Adam McLeod Brown, Vauxhall Motors

“One of the key indicators of a successful placement is when a supervisor/employer turns around and says “what am I going to do when they leave”? In his time at Vauxhall Adam took the opportunity to fully immerse himself in the placement experience and to proactively get out there and be involved in as much as he could. He was able to build professional working relationships across the whole of the organisational spectrum and as a result has been able to establish himself as potential leader for the future within GM and enhance the perception of the value of BU placement students to a global audience within the organisation.”
- David O Neill, Placement Development Advisor

Scott Wilson, Rolls Royce Motor Cars

“In my opinion, Scott demonstrated an exceptional professionalism and an exemplary attitude towards his placement. I feel that he should be acknowledged for his development, approach and achievements. In addition, I believe it’s important that other students see just how much it is possible to achieve while on placement.”
- Andy Blackburn, Placement Development Advisor

OFFERING OPPORTUNITIES
As part of their studies students are offered a variety of placement options, which provide them with the opportunity to gain valuable and desirable skills before entering the workforce. In fact, BU has more students on a work placement than any other university in Great Britain and the highest proportion of graduates with work placements on their CVs.

[THE 2014 REF] DIFFERS FROM THE LAST ASSESSMENT IN 2008 AS IT NOW ALSO MEASURES THE ‘IMPACT’ OF OUR RESEARCH. THIS IS A MEASUREMENT OF HOW RESEARCH HELPS IMPROVE SOCIETY AND IT IS VERY MUCH AT THE HEART OF WHAT WE DO AT BU. WE HAVE INVESTED HEAVILY IN OUR RESEARCH AT BU AND I AM DELIGHTED THAT THIS HAS BEEN RECOGNISED BY OUR IMPROVED ASSESSMENT WITH THE REF

RESEARCH
BU’s research is socially relevant; geared towards real-world problem solving and influencing policy and informs the education it delivers. It has a number of multidisciplinary research centres, each focusing on a specific area of interest and runs an award-winning research blog and website, which share the University’s latest research and knowledge exchange news, and ensures knowledge is informed by society for the benefit of society.

December 2014 saw the publication of the Research Excellence Framework (REF) results, which served to confirm BU’s impressive research output, recognising it as a leading university. 96 per cent of the University’s research was rated at an international level, of which 18 per cent was deemed to be world leading. The University also scored highly on a newly measured factor – impact. The results showed that 97 per cent of BU’s research has considerable impact or above, with nearly one-third rated as having outstanding impact.

PROFESSOR JOHN VINEY, VICE-CHANCELLOR

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