

# Cardiff School of Biosciences

Cardiff School of Biosciences has an embedded innovation management structure and proactive Innovation and Engagement team to maximise research impact by delivering effective communication and supporting a culture of commercial partnership and social engagement.

Cardiff School of Biosciences is one of the largest bioscience departments in the UK and is known for the pioneering stem cell research of Nobel laureate Sir Martin Evans FRS.

Its researchers deliver impact in areas that span from neuroscience, mental health, physiology, cancer and stem cell biology, to the environment and climate change, and promote novel interdisciplinary research such as biophotonics and biomechanics in treating joint disease. The School's pool of research expertise provides extensive opportunities for knowledge exchange and strategic partnership.



Cardiff School of Biosciences new £4m extension. Inset left: Biosciences icon for Excellence with Impact, Inset right: Professor Sir Martin Evans

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## Delivering Impact

We take a three-track approach to ensure delivery of maximum impact.

- **Robust innovation management** is embedded within our senior faculty. Senior academic researcher Professor Adrian Harwood, heads an Innovation and Engagement team that facilitates exchange between our research staff and external stakeholders such as business, government and the general public.
- **Communication is vital** to bring our partners together and promote the impact of our research for the benefit of all. Our mission is to ensure a rapid flow of information to deliver innovation, provide a sound basis for policy decisions and develop a clear public understanding of the biosciences.
- **Realising our potential** is achieved by nourishing a research culture of commercial partnership and innovation, through delivery of technical skills and enthusiasm for public engagement.

Through these approaches, we are recognised for our positive interactions with business, government and social partners. We are engaged with commercial enterprise at all levels and work together with our Technology Transfer office to maximise knowledge exchange and commercialisation opportunities. Where appropriate, we have formed our own spin-out companies to deliver novel innovation. We aim to build further on all of our interactions to create a network of knowledge flow and strategic partnerships.

Internally, we have a thriving innovation and engagement culture and have acquired a cultural memory of know-how and best practice to ensure a sustainable platform for future delivery of our impact.

## Raising awareness of mental health research

Mental Health has a major global socio-economic cost, but is poorly funded in comparison to other medical research. Our Brain Awareness Mental Health Campaign was initiated to raise awareness of mental health issues, demonstrate current progress and improve public support for research funding.

The event was conceived as part of International Brain Awareness Week 2010, but further activities have been developed, including “meet the researcher” science café events, a “Brain Trail” at the Techniqwest science centre and Sci-screen film/discussion sessions. Future events will be sustained through the public engagement programme of our new Neuroscience and Mental Health Research Institute.



High School students at our “Science of Me” event during Brain Awareness Week 2010 (in partnership with Techniqwest Science Discovery Centre, Cardiff)

## Treating traumatic injury

Progenteq is a staff spin-out company founded in 2010 by Professor Charlie Archer, based on his discovery of stem-like cells within articular joint-cartilage. By growing these cells on a commercial basis, the company aims to offer the first allogeneic therapy for knee cartilage repair.

The company was spun-out via the commercialisation company Fusion IP, with venture capital and TSB support.

More than 2 million patients per year in the US and Europe suffer traumatic knee cartilage damage, a potential >£1bn market. Beginning with professional sports injuries, the company ultimately aims to provide treatment for osteoarthritis and other degenerative cartilage damage.



Main: arthroscopic knee surgery. Inset top: isolated cartilage progenitor cells. Inset bottom: expanded progenitor cell population forming cartilage tissue

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The BBSRC Excellence with Impact 2011 scheme ran from 2008 to 2010. It was developed to reward and esteem those university departments most active in embedding a culture that recognises and values the achievement of impact alongside excellent research.