

# The University of Nottingham School of Biosciences

The School of Biosciences research contributes to the improvement of animal and human health, environmental sustainability and economic efficiency. Our activities have embedded a cultural change within the University that recognises impact alongside excellence as an integral part of our research and teaching.

In the School of Biosciences, our research focuses on the discovery and application of fundamental knowledge from “Farm to Fork” to improve animal and human health, environmental sustainability, and economic efficiency.

We deliver our impacts in a variety of ways, including through engagement with students, local communities, industry, funding agencies and government, provision of seminars and workshops, development of web materials, and representation at national and international events.

We have embedded a cultural change within the University that recognises impact alongside excellence, as an integral part of cutting edge research.



Students from a local primary school experiencing the excitement of studying in a laboratory environment

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## Delivering Impact

We have developed a multi-stranded approach to encourage impact from excellent research. An externally-facing ‘impact’ website, targeted towards a lay audience, publicises our research and teaching activities. Internal ‘workspace’ sites share best practice on establishing linkages between research and impact, and facilitate engagement with schools and local communities. Embedded within the School’s annual activities are events that allow interaction with the local community, end users, alumni, prospective bioscientists and students from a widening participation background. We have engaged our postgraduate community through debate, competition, and the requirement to include an impact statement in their thesis. Our activities are publicised to colleagues through an impact newsletter and senior management have recognised our contribution as an exemplar for the University.

We established a Knowledge Transfer and Outreach Group to drive the excellence with impact agenda in biosciences. The community now recognises what impact means, staff know that the impact of their work is valued, and understand that they will receive support in delivering it. New impact initiatives, originating from within the community, are at the planning stage. Impact training is now a compulsory part of the postgraduate training programme. Longer term, the University intends to integrate our impact template across all its campuses and use our experiences to embed impact into staff development and promotion practices.

## Involving everyone

We identified a desire for technical and administrative staff to be more informed on biosciences research and its global impacts and introduced a series of “knowledge transfer” seminars, where academic staff present their work to a lay audience. In 2010, seminar topics included bioenergy, GM and food security, healthy living, milk and meat production, and veterinary drugs and biodiversity. This has resulted in non-academic staff feeling better integrated into the School and having a wider understanding of the department’s work. We have now invited our audience to suggest subjects for 2011. So far these include food safety, veterinary molecular medicine, brewing science and probiotics.



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Our ‘knowledge transfer’ seminar series has provided a vehicle for sharing information with staff and building an even stronger community spirit

## Engaging with potential end-users

Cereals is the UK’s leading technical event for the arable industry, including growers, manufacturers and suppliers, researchers, and funders. The event identified a prime opportunity for us to showcase research and interact with key stakeholders. In 2009 we secured funding to establish the Nottingham Cereals stand and presented posters, crop samples and digital and interactive displays of our work and our Cereals 2010 “Using the Whole Crop” display built on this success. Our plans for Cereals 2011, which will focus on food, fuel and the environment, are well underway and will be supported by a bespoke website. Cereals is now firmly established as central to the School’s annual impact activities.



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Growers, researchers, and funders visiting the University of Nottingham to discover the impact of cutting edge research being carried out on cereal crops

## Contact

Professor Jerry Roberts  
Head of School, School of Biosciences  
University of Nottingham  
Sutton Bonington Campus  
Loughborough  
LE12 5RD, UK



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**Website:** [www.nottingham.ac.uk/biosciences](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/biosciences)

**Email:** [jeremy.roberts@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:jeremy.roberts@nottingham.ac.uk)

**Tel:** +44 (0)115 951 6339

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2011



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.