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The Council for Industry and Higher Education explores the role of university research in business and market innovation

The CIHE today releases ‘Absorbing Research’, a report that explores how collaborations between universities and business can have a positive impact on the economy and wellbeing of the UK.

The report, sponsored by Research Councils UK, investigates the nature, scale and contribution of university research to company innovation processes. It focuses on how university and business can work together to co-create solutions to the challenges we face today. To get the most out of university-business collaboration, the report found a company’s ability to acquire and absorb research was critical to the success of effective knowledge exchange.

In the report, CIHE make a number of wide-ranging recommendations to Research Councils UK and other agencies about how they can better support university-business research collaboration. CIHE calls for the use of financial levers to change behaviour ensuring both sides of collaborations better understand each other. Further recommendations include ensuring commercial skills are built into career progression programmes for young researchers, enabling them to work more effectively with companies.

Dr David Docherty, Chief Executive of CIHE said:

“Companies and universities need a shared understanding of how research can contribute to economic growth. Businesses recognise that university researchers can generate novel ideas and think at ‘right angles’ to their own R&D staff. University research has a distinctive contribution to make in creating value through supporting company innovation processes.”

The report ‘**Absorbing research: The role of university research in business and market innovation**’ is based on the findings from 22 case study companies and can be found at www.cihe.co.uk.

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Notes to editors

The Council for Industry and Higher Education (CIHE)

The Council for Industry and Higher Education (CIHE) is a strategic leadership network of senior business leaders and Vice Chancellors working together to enhance economic competitiveness and social cohesion. The CIHE's strategic leadership network focuses specifically on where businesses and universities can combine to help resolve some of the most intractable challenges we face on climate change, new energy sources, the future of engineering and life-sciences, the digital and creative economies and financial services.

CIHE has recently launched two strategic task forces to explore where businesses and universities can better work together on relevant research and on creating the right jobs for the right graduates. The task forces are to focus on the areas of engineering and manufacturing, and the digital and creative industries. More information can be found at www.cihe.co.uk

Research Councils UK (RCUK)

RCUK is the strategic partnership of the UK's seven Research Councils. We invest annually around £3 billion in research. Our focus is on excellence with impact. We nurture the highest quality research, as judged by international peer review providing the UK with a competitive advantage. Global research requires we sustain a diversity of funding approaches, fostering international collaborations, and providing access to the best facilities and infrastructure, and locating skilled researchers in stimulating environments. Our research achieves impact – the demonstrable contribution to society and the economy made by knowledge and skilled people. To deliver impact, researchers and businesses need to engage and collaborate with the public, business, government and the third sector. www.rcuk.ac.uk