

## INNOVATION VOUCHERS

Are you a SME looking to take forward an innovation which will help your company grow? Then you can take advantage of a SEEDA sponsored initiative which gives you the chance to receive a voucher worth up to £4,000 to spend on innovation and research with a knowledge partner (i.e. a university or similar).

Typical uses of an innovation voucher may include

- Technical validation of a technology;
- Developing a prototype or demonstrator;
- Consultancy from experts or specialists;
- Using knowledge base facilities or equipment.

Currently, there is access to innovation vouchers in the following areas:

- 1 Creative industries, and other sectors where a company could benefit from creative assistance.** This is a broad definition to provide support for a wide range of companies, not just those in the traditional creative industry sector. Further details at [http://www.innovationgrowth.co.uk/solent/innovation\\_vouchers](http://www.innovationgrowth.co.uk/solent/innovation_vouchers) . If you want to know more, then contact Jolie Kane at Solent Innovation & Growth Network: telephone: 01489 889882, email: [jolie.kane@innovationgrowth.co.uk](mailto:jolie.kane@innovationgrowth.co.uk)
- 2 Sustainability: construction, energy and waste management.** This voucher scheme provides access to support from any university, or similar organisation, for innovation and business improvement within the sustainability agenda:
  - Construction: retrofit, design or build of properties to improve efficiency and reduce environmental impact.
  - Renewable sources: efficiency and better management
  - Waste: re-use and recycling of materialsFurther details on <http://www.envirobusiness.co.uk/innovation-voucher.html> . If you want to know more, then contact Graham Raven (Voucher Scheme Manager) Tel:01608 645134 Mob: 07771 561195, email: [g.raven@sky.com](mailto:g.raven@sky.com)
- 3 Access and Expertise from the Science & Technology Facilities Council** to enable development of products, processes and services. There is no specific sector focus. A company could access expertise / facilities at all STFC centres, including Harwell – depending on need. Further details are at: <http://www.stfc.ac.uk/Knowledge+Exchange/6094.aspx>. If you want to know more then contact: Gavin Tracey, Tel: 01865 484204. Email: [gavin.tracey@stfc.ac.uk](mailto:gavin.tracey@stfc.ac.uk)

## CONSULTANCY VOUCHERS

In addition to the Innovation Voucher Scheme, which is open to all companies in the South East, Oxford Brookes University also has a Consultancy Voucher Scheme which offers small to medium-sized companies a voucher of up to a maximum of £4,000 which will purchase approximately 8 days' worth of time on a specific programme of consultancy work with Oxford Brookes University. This scheme is not restricted to any particular theme or area of expertise.

Eligible companies must have:

- fewer than 250 employees
- an annual turnover of less than 50 million euros
- at least 75% of their ownership not owned or controlled by a company that is not an SME

Priority will be given to companies that:

- have not previously received consultancy or contract research services from Oxford Brookes University
- are based within 60 miles of the University

Further details at: [http://www.brookes.ac.uk/business\\_employers/research/consultancy\\_vouchers](http://www.brookes.ac.uk/business_employers/research/consultancy_vouchers)

If you want to know more then contact:

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## **NPL TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION FUND**

The National Physical Laboratory has just launched a new Technology Innovation Fund which provides an exciting and rare opportunity to work with NPL for a fraction of the normal cost. You can draw on NPL's unique combination of industry knowledge and world-leading scientific expertise to help your business.

The NPL Technology Innovation Fund offers UK businesses three levels of support to service a range of measurement issues.

**Advice surgeries** which give you face-to-face time with NPL scientists, or relevant member of staff to discuss particular measurement issues. Surgeries are often held alongside other events you might be attending.

**Consultancies.** NPL will provide technical help on specific issues for up to 10 days. NPL also give a level of matched funding in relation to the company's contribution, extending the consultancy term - enabling greater amounts of work to be undertaken.

**Research Clubs** which join up companies with similar problems. Companies pay a joining fee, which contributes to research time in areas dictated by the club members. Research clubs are anticipated in the following sectors - Advanced Manufacturing, Energy, Sustainability, Healthcare, Defence & Security, and Digital Economy.

Further details at: <http://www.npl.co.uk/technology-innovation-fund/> . If you want to know more, then contact Peter Benson, Tel: 20 8943 8746, email: [peter.benson@npl.co.uk](mailto:peter.benson@npl.co.uk)

## **BUSINESS VOUCHERS**

The Retail Industry Business Engagement Network (RIBEN) Business Voucher Scheme is awarding SMEs a £3,000 voucher to purchase academic support for 'business relevant' university research expertise from one.

RIBEN Business Vouchers are aimed at small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) who work in the retail sector who would like to take their first steps in engaging with University experts to address a business question. This could be in the form of a short term piece of market research, advice on business processes, or consultancy on branding and marketing

Each voucher is worth £3000 and can be used to fund roughly a week of effort, depending on the skills required.

For more details go to: <http://www.riben.org.uk>.