



QUEEN'S
UNIVERSITY
BELFAST

BUILDING EQUITABLE INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH COLLABORATIONS

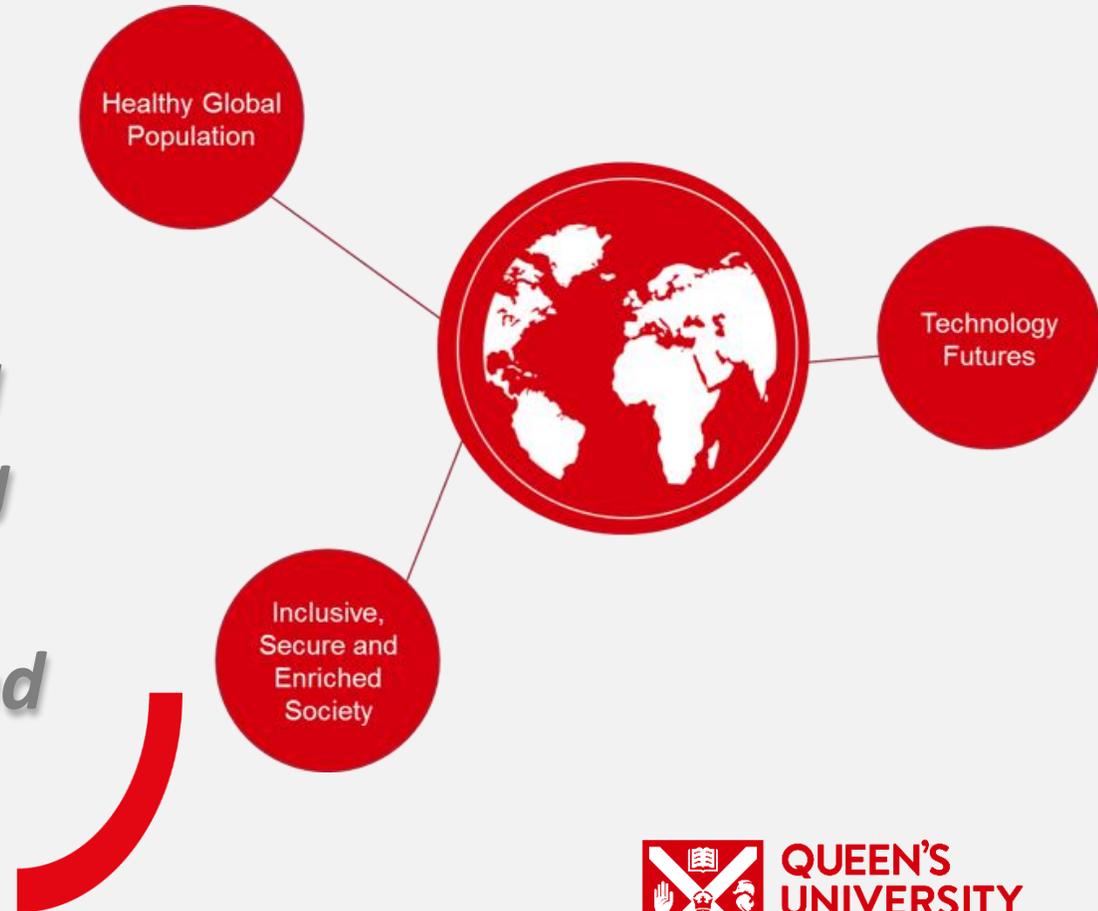
*Nikki Kernaghan
Head of Global Research Partnerships*



Institutional Vision & Strategy

STRATEGY 2030: Our Research Shapes Worlds

'Our vision is to be a global research-intensive university, generating internationally leading research coupled with outstanding teaching and learning, focused on the needs of our society, locally and globally'.



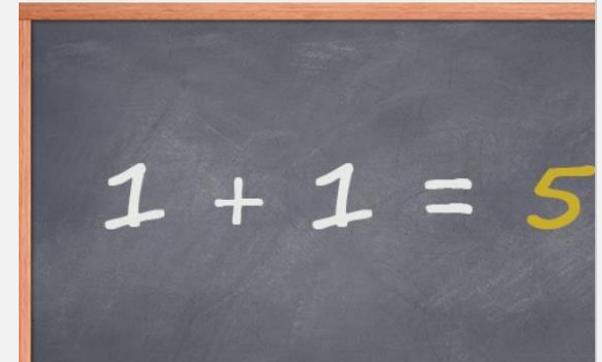
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Defining Partnership



- *An ongoing collaborative relationship among or between organisations and stakeholders,*
- *Aligned interests around a common vision,*
- *Combination of complementary resources and competencies, and shared risks,*
- *Maximize value creation*
- *Deliver benefit to each of the partners*

<https://thepartneringinitiative.org/>



Partnership Definitions

- **Strategic/Institutional Partnership:** operates across a range of subjects



- **Individual Partnership:** researcher(s) working on a common project

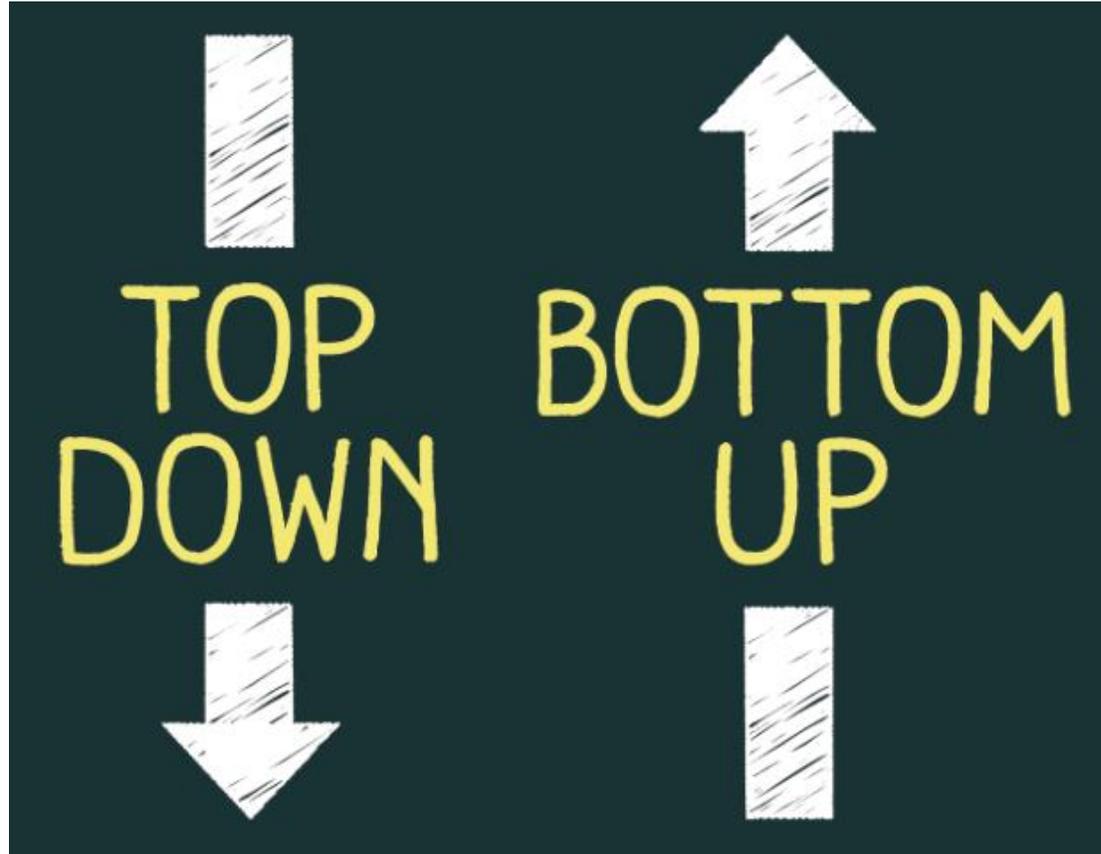
- **College/School Partnership:** focused on a specific research interest



- **Informal Partnership:** based on common research interests

Partnership Development

- *Few partnerships*
- *More difficult to establish*
- *Driven by institutional strategy*
- *Better resourced*
- *Multidisciplinary*
- *Easier to expand*
- *Wider engagement*



- *Many partnerships*
- *Easier to establish*
- *Driven by staff interest & academic freedom*
- *Resourced challenged*
- *Academically siloed*
- *Difficult to maintain*
- *Single point of failure*

BRIDGING THE GAP

Queen's Approach:

- *Mapping bottom-up partnerships to institutional priorities*
- *Developing regional groupings to identify existing strengths*
- *Pump-priming and bi-lateral with key partners to support project development*
- *Broadening partnerships to include Education, Recruitment & Reputation initiatives*



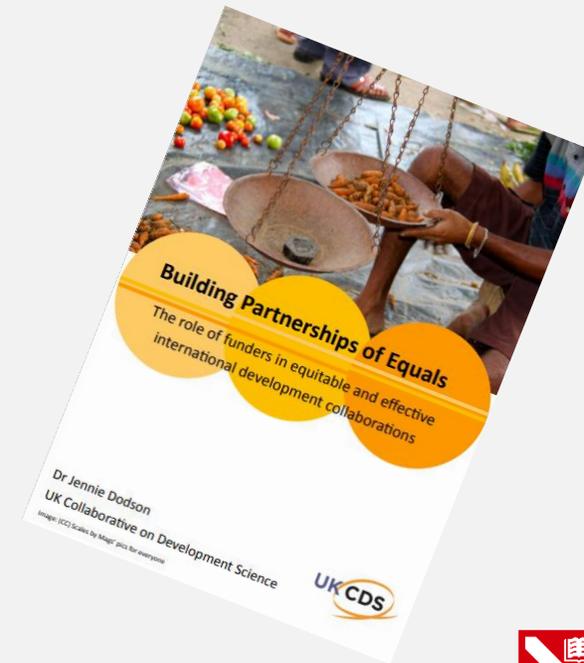
The Partnership Lifecycle



Defining Equitable Partnerships



- *Partnerships in which there is mutual participation, mutual trust and respect, mutual benefit and equal value placed on each partners contribution at all stages of the research process.*



<https://www.ukcdr.org.uk/what-we-do/our-work/equitable-partnerships/>



Key Principles for Equitable Partnerships



Research in international contexts:

- *Partnerships should be transparent, based on mutual respect and deliver mutual benefits*
- *Must be relevant to the country in which it is carried out*
- *Should be sensitive to differences of cultural, political or other opinions, and aware of differences in income, status or power*
- *Should identify possible risks and develop a framework of responsibilities and possible actions in advance*
- *Should be subject to an ethics review in the UK and the host country (if needed)*
- *Should seek appropriate informed consent (as needed)*



Cape Town Statement

Cape Town Statement on fostering Research Integrity through Fairness and Equity

Preamble

The 7th World Conference on Research Integrity (7th WCRI) was held in Cape Town in May 2022 with the conference theme "Fostering Research Integrity in an unequal world". Participants at this conference recognised that unfair and inequitable research practices remain prevalent at all stages of research from proposal development to funding application, data collection, analysis, sharing and access, reporting and translation. These practices can impact the integrity of research in many ways, including skewing research priorities and agendas with research questions that are irrelevant for local needs, power imbalances that undermine fair recognition of knowledge contributions within collaborations, including unfair acknowledgement of contributions to published work, lack of diversity and inclusivity in collaborations, and unfair data management practices that disadvantage researchers in low resource environments. Furthermore, a drive towards open science as a pillar of research integrity fails to recognise the financial burden placed on under-resourced researchers and institutions, and the reality that highly trained and well-resourced researchers in HIC may disproportionately benefit from re-analysing openly shared data by LMIC researchers. In response to these challenges the following statement of goals, values and recommendations aims to contribute to the growing global recognition that fairness and equity are essential requirements of integrity in all research contexts. This statement advocates for fair practice from conception to implementation of research and provides 20 recommendations aimed at all involved stakeholders. These recommendations are grouped under values that were identified as important underpinning considerations in discussion groups at the 7th WCRI. These values include diversity, inclusivity, mutual respect, shared accountability, indigenous knowledge recognition and epistemic justice [1] (ensuring that the value of knowledge is not based on biases related to gender, race, ethnicity, culture, socio-economic status et cetera).

The Cape Town Statement advocates for fair practice from conception to implementation of research and provides 20 recommendations aimed at all involved researchers.

Recommendations

- Diversity and Inclusivity as a Pathway to Fair Practice and Attribution
- Fair Practice from Conception to implementation
- Mutual Respect as a Pathway to Trust
- Shared Accountability
- Indigenous Knowledge Recognition and Epistemic Justice

Goals for Research Integrity

Research should deliver accurate, replicable, and unbiased results reported responsibly, with the appropriate acknowledgement of all stakeholders. To be valuable, trustworthy, and usable in local settings the research should be translatable into locally relevant and locally owned and accessible interventions or policies, where applicable. Research integrity educational programmes and other related initiatives should support researchers to reflect these goals in the planning, conduct, and dissemination of their research.

Concluding remarks

This is not the first set of principles or similar, focusing on research fairness and equity particularly in collaborations, and these documents have informed our discussions. They include the Swiss KPFE (The Commission for Research Partnerships with Developing Countries) [2], the Global Code of Conduct for Research in Resource-Poor Settings [3] and the BRIDGE Guidelines which also linked research fairness to research integrity in the context of epidemiological research [4]. Furthermore, we would also like to acknowledge that while this statement can encourage stakeholders to act, a tool already exists, namely the Research Fairness Initiative (RFI) [5], that can assist both RPIs and funders with evaluating their current practices. After completion of this evaluation the tool assists stakeholders to identify implementation steps that can lead to improvement of fair and equitable research and innovation partnerships and practices. The RFI was discussed in some detail in the 7th WCRI pre-conference paper and informed discussions at the 7th WCRI [6]. The Cape Town Statement specifically links the issue of research fairness and equity with research integrity broadly. We hope that by doing so this statement will strengthen the call to recognise fairness and equity as an essential component of research.

Recommendations to uphold values and achieve research integrity goals

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVITY AS A PATHWAY TO FAIR PRACTICE AND ATTRIBUTION

- Researchers should recognise the value of collaborating with colleagues from different disciplinary, geographical, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds and strive to achieve this diversity, especially when doing research in contexts and environments that are different from their own.
- Research Performing Institutions (RPIs) should develop and implement policies, structures and processes that support and promote diversity and inclusivity in their research.
- Funders from high-income countries (HICs) should aim to avoid so-called "helicopter research" by including diversity stipulations in funding calls and funding local researchers directly.
- Journals and publishers should question the practice of excluding local researchers from low-income and middle-income countries (LMICs) from authorship when data are from LMICs and have a low threshold for rejecting such papers.

- Research teams should identify mechanisms to enable planning and budgeting that minimise power and opportunity imbalances in teams and make roles explicit early.
- Full cost transparent budgeting is an essential mechanism to enable fair practice and ensure equitable resource allocation.
- Data access, use, sharing and openness requirements should not unfairly disadvantage LMIC collaborators.

SHARED ACCOUNTABILITY

- Research fairness requires a commitment from all stakeholders to address deficiencies in research capacity and systems in LMIC contexts.
- LMIC governments need to recognise the value of funding research to support locally relevant research priorities and be accountable for reducing reliance on HIC funders.
- RPIs should prioritise the development of adequate research support systems to support researchers, including support for research management capacity development and open access page costs where possible.
- HIC funders should incorporate some funding for local capacity development, mentorship, and research support systems.
- Funders should take steps to minimise the negative impact of currency fluctuations on LMIC collaborators when they agree to fund research that involves HIC and LMIC collaborators.
- RPIs from HICs collaborating with researchers from low-resource settings should ensure their researchers engage in fair practice and where possible and appropriate, contribute to local capacity development and strengthening of research management systems and processes.

FAIR PRACTICE FROM CONCEPTION TO IMPLEMENTATION

- All research stakeholders should be aware of potential power imbalances in their research collaborations and ensure their actions do not exacerbate them, but rather contribute to redressing imbalances.
- Funders should specifically identify and adopt practices that support fairness and equity in research collaborations and avoid practices that undermine fairness such as unfair indirect cost allocations to LMICs.
- Barriers to 'open science' participation by researchers working in low-resource settings need to be identified and addressed by publishers, and other appropriate national and global stakeholders, such as science councils, funders, and similar institutions. Journals and publishers should adjust page costs for authors from low-resourced environments.

INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE RECOGNITION AND EPISTEMIC JUSTICE

- The unique value of indigenous knowledge must be recognised. Researchers and community researchers from Indigenous communities are often best placed to articulate and ensure this value into beneficial outcomes that can have impact.
- All stakeholders must ensure adequate recognition and respect of Indigenous knowledge; avoidance of exploitation and stigmatisation of such knowledge by external researchers is essential.
- Researchers involved in co-creation of Indigenous-led knowledge must ensure collaborations are grounded on mutual trust and respect and result in appropriate benefit-sharing and recognition.

MUTUAL RESPECT AS A PATHWAY TO TRUST

- Research priority and agenda setting should include all research partners. HIC research agendas should not be imposed on LMIC collaborators.

Authors | 1st: Helen Allen [1], 2nd: Susan Branson [2], 3rd: Susan Branson [2], 4th: Susan Branson [2], 5th: Susan Branson [2], 6th: Susan Branson [2], 7th: Susan Branson [2], 8th: Susan Branson [2], 9th: Susan Branson [2], 10th: Susan Branson [2]

References | 1. Allen H, Branson S, et al. (2022) Cape Town Statement on Fostering Research Integrity in an Unequal World. *Research Integrity and Peer Review* 13(1):1-10. doi:10.21956/ripr.13.1.2022.1



Research Development Support

EXPERIENCE

- *Training via our Global Research Training Program*
- *Jump Start programme for ECRs to accompany experienced staff*
- *PDRA & Graduate Student mobility funding*

INFORMATION

- *Comprehensive data on existing collaborations*
- *Identify potential partners*
- *Mapping of research strengths with partners*

FUNDING

- *Mobility Funding*
- *Pump-priming initiatives, including bi-lateral seed funds*
- *Identify external funding calls*
- *Support proposal development*

Research Development Support

NETWORKS

- *Facilitated workshops*
- *Study tours and research delegations*
- *Conference funds*
- *Support network memberships*

ACADEMIC SILOS

- *Interdisciplinary sandpits*
- *Collaborative team projects*
- *Identify potential partners in other disciplines*

INSTITUTIONAL

- *Comprehensive International Partnership Strategy*
- *Regional sub-groups*
- *Support development of international MoUs/MoAs*
- *Liaise with other professional support teams*

Global Research Engagement



Category	Partner	Title	Country	Year	Former/Current	First Name	Last Name	School	RGD
Activities	Royal Irish Academy	Contribution to the work of national or international committees and working groups	Ireland	2018	Current	Philip	McGowan	Faculty Office AHSS	
Activities	UK Research and Innovation	Contribution to the work of national or international committees and working groups	United Kingdom	2018	Current	Philip	McGowan	Faculty Office AHSS	
Activities	Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona	Contribution to the work of national or international committees and working groups	Spain	2021	Current	Philip	McGowan	Faculty Office AHSS	
Publications	University of Glasgow	Correction: Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on family carers of those with profound and multiple intellectual disabilities: perspectives from UK and Irish Non-Governmental Organisations	United Kingdom	2022	Former	E.	McCann	Faculty Office AHSS	
Publications	Imperial College, London	Inhaled powder tobramycin (TIP): cyclical versus continuous treatment: iBEST Study	United Kingdom	2022	Former	V.	Brown	Faculty Office AHSS	
Publications	Novartis Pharma AG	Inhaled powder tobramycin (TIP): cyclical versus continuous treatment: iBEST Study	Switzerland	2022	Former	V.	Brown	Faculty Office AHSS	

Global Research Partnerships



Category	Partner	Title	Country	Year	First Name	Last Name	Former/Current	School	RGD ID	Total Awa
Activities	Academy of Finland	Contribution to the work of national or international committees and working groups	Finland	2017	Georgios	Karakonstantis	Current	School of Electronics, Electrical Engineering and Computer Science		
Activities	Academy of Finland	Contribution to the work of national or international committees and working groups	Finland	2017	Yvonne	Galligan	Former	School of Politics, International Studies and Philosophy		
Activities	Academy of Medical Sciences	Contribution to the work of national or international committees and working groups	United Kingdom	2020	Cuong	Cao	Current	School of Biological Sciences		
Activities	Action Cerebral Palsy	Contribution to the work of national or international committees and working groups	United Kingdom	2019	Oliver	Perra	Current	School of Nursing and Midwifery		
Activities	Action Mental Health and New Life Counselling	Contribution to the work of national or international committees and working groups	United Kingdom	2019	Katrina	McLaughlin	Current	School of Psychology		
Activities	Advance HE	Contribution to the work of national or international committees and working groups	United Kingdom	2019	Julia	Sinwart	Former	School of Biological Sciences		
Total										3,956,4

Global Research Partnerships



Research Links with Japan September 2023

	Capital: Tokyo
	Official Languages: Japanese (de facto)
	Population: 123,156,075 (338km ²)
	Currency: Yen (JPY)
	Time Zone: Japan Standard Time (UTC+9)
	Calling code: +81

Queen's University has established strong research collaborations with institutions and researchers in Japan. Between 2019 – September 2023, Queen's academics have secured over £1.2 million in funding for research engagement with Japan.

- **Three projects** have been funded by EC-Horizon 2020 with Japanese based collaborators (Table 1)
- **Funding for three projects** that include Japanese-based collaborators (Table 2). The current institutional engagement with Japan includes partnerships with Japanese Universities
- Additionally, since 2019, Queen's has **received funding for one project directly from a Japan-based entity** (Table 3).

Furthermore, since 2019, Queen's staff have **co-authored over 500 publications** with collaborating researchers from institutions in Japan. Top ranked collaborating institutions include the University of Tokyo; Kyoto University and Osaka University (Table 4). The leading subject areas include: Physics and Astronomy; Biochemistry, Genetics and Molecular Biology; Medicine and Chemistry. Note that information on co-authored publications is extracted from the Scopus citation database which has limited data on



Research Links with Belgium September 2022

	Capital: Brussels
	Official Language: Dutch, French, German
	Population: 11,702,123 (383/km ²)
	Currency: Euro (EUR)
	Calling code: +32

Queen's University has established strong research collaborations with institutions and researchers in Belgium. Between 2018 – September 2022, Queen's academics have secured over £10 million in funding for research engagement with Belgium. This includes:

- **Funding for 20 projects** funded by EC-Horizon 2020 with Belgium-based collaborators (Table 1).
- **Eleven projects** funded in collaboration with Belgium-based collaborators (Table 2).
- Additionally, since 2018, Queen's has received funding for **eight projects** directly from Belgium-based entities (Table 3).

Since 2018, Queen's staff have **co-authored over 700 publications** with collaborating researchers from over 45 institutions in Belgium. Top ranked collaborating institutions include KU Leuven and Ghent University (Table 4). The leading subject areas include: Medicine; Physics and Astronomy; Earth and Planetary Sciences; Biochemistry, Genetics

Table 1: QUB – EC-Horizon 2020 Awards

Years	School	Title	Belgian partner(s)
2021-2026	Biological Sciences	iNnovative Tools for Assessment and Authentication of chicken meat, beef and dairy products' QualiTies	Universiteit Gent (UGent)
2021-2026	Biological Sciences	Understanding microbiomes of the ruminant holobiont	Universiteit Gent (UGent)
2021-2025	Natural and Built Environment	City-centered approach to catalyze nature-based solutions through the EU Regenerative Urban Lighthouse for pollution alleviation and regenerative development	Universiteit Antwerpen; Beediversity (BeeoDiv)
2020-2024	Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences	Retinal and cognitive dysfunction in type 2 diabetes: unravelling the common pathways and identification of patients at risk of dementia	Federation Internationale Du Diabete Region Europe Aisbl – Idl Europe; Oxurion
2020-2024	Pharmacy	Mapping Exposure-Induced Immune Effects: Connecting the Exposome and the Immunome	Universite Catholique De Louvain
2020-2023	Biological Sciences	The training of early stage researchers for the development of technologies to monitor concentrations of micro and nanoplastics in water for their presence, uptake and threat to animal and human life.	Vrije Universiteit Brussel
2020-2022	Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences	Optical Fibre Dose Imaging for Adaptive Brachytherapy	Dosevue; Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB)
2020-2022	Biological Sciences	Tackling Antimicrobial Resistance through improved livestock Health and Welfare (HealthyLivestock)	Zoetis Belgium SA; Federation of Veterinarians of Europe
2019-2026	Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical	Taxonomy, Treatment, Targets and Remission. Identification of the molecular mechanisms of non-response to Treatments, Relapses and	Cliniques Universitaires Saint-Luc; European Federation Of Asthma & Allergy Associations Ideell Forening – E.F.A.; Janssen Pharmaceutica NV; Katholieke

Table 4: Collaborative Agreements with Canadian Partners

Agreement type	Dates	Canadian Organisation(s)	QUB School
Services Agreement	2021	PharmaTher Inc.	Pharmacy
Academic Agreement	2020-2024	University of New Brunswick	Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences
Sponsored Research Agreement	2020	Bold Therapeutics Inc	Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences
Collaboration Agreement	2019-2022	University of British New Brunswick	Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences
International Project Consortium Agreement	2019-2020	University of Guelph; National Research Council of Canada; Agri-Neo INC	Biological Sciences

Source: R & E Contracts Database

[Research and Enterprise - Research Link Papers - All Documents \(sharepoint.com\)](https://sharepoint.com)



Regional Partnerships

**North America:
16 Key Partners**

**Europe:
11 Key Partners**

**Brazil: Research
Agreement with FAPESP**

**South Africa: Research
Agreements with 6
institutions**

**China: Research
Agreements with 16
institutions**

**S E Asia Strategy
Group**





Establishing Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs)



What is a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)?

- *A MoU is a formal agreement between two or more parties. Companies and organisations can use MoUs to establish official partnerships.*
- *MoUs are not legally binding but they carry a degree of seriousness and mutual respect, stronger than a gentlemen's agreement. Often, MoUs are the first steps towards a legal contract (MoA or Collaborative Agreement).*
- *The purpose of a MoU is to acknowledge an ongoing and strategic relationship between institutions that is intended to be long term, and/or to evidence/support a grant application.*
- *It can cover educational partnerships, research activities or both locally or internationally.*

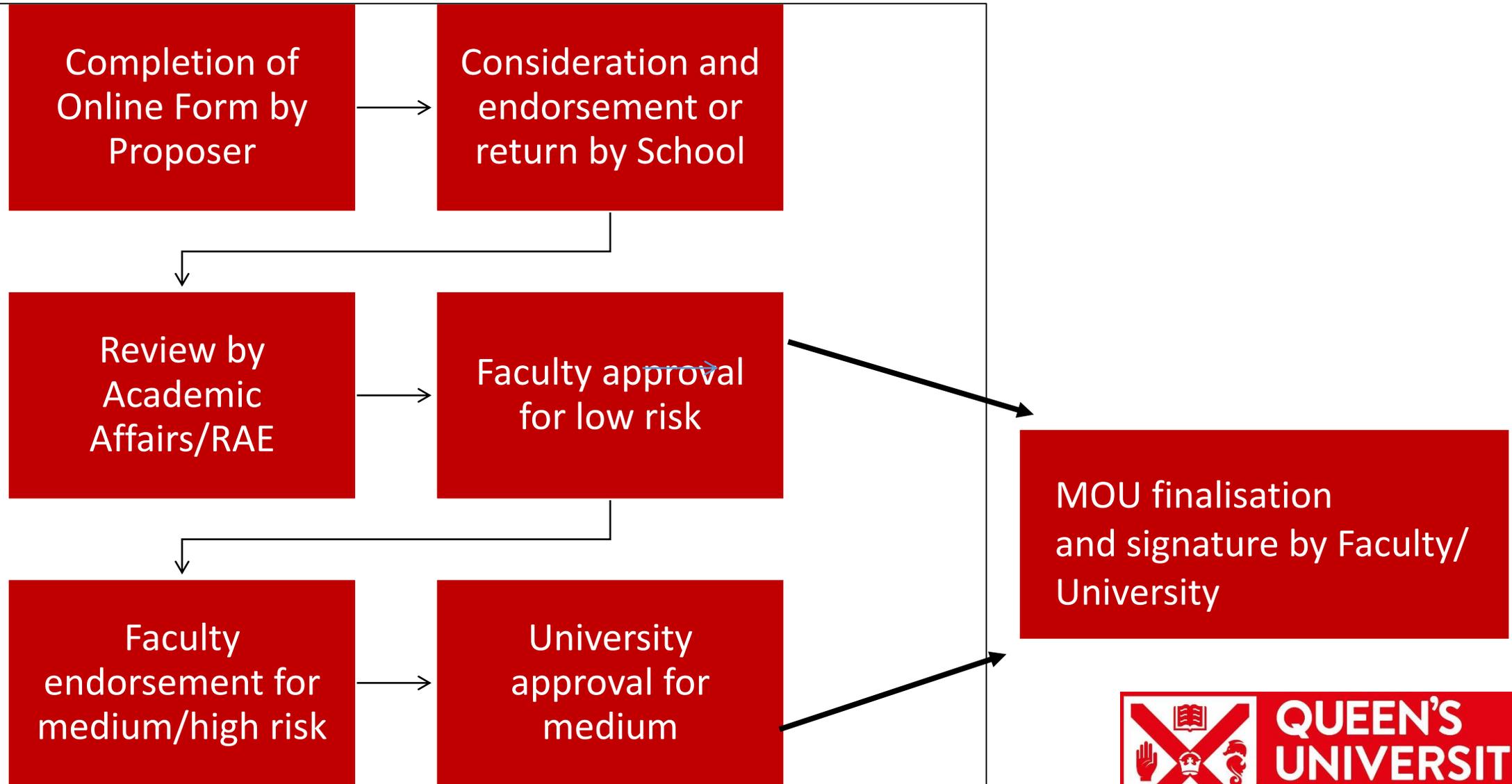


Typology of Risk - MOUs

Low Risk Arrangements	Medium Risk Arrangements	High Risk Arrangements
<p>MOU at programme or School level with a public provider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Submission by School• Approval by Faculty* <p>* subject to Due Diligence</p>	<p>MOU within a Faculty</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Submission by School• Endorsement of Approval to Proceed by Faculty• Approval by Committee	<p>MOU across Faculties/at institutional level/ with a private provider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Submission by School• Endorsement of Approval to Proceed by Faculty• Approval by Committee

The typology is underpinned by sectoral benchmarking and CPG/Education Committee discussions. Planned activities include the development of standard templates; inclusion of digital processes; and provision of staff mentoring and support.

MOU Approval Process



MOU Template

Appendix 2



QUEEN'S
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INSERT PARTNER
LOGO/CREST

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Between

The Queen's University of Belfast
Belfast
BT7 1NN
Northern Ireland

And

XXX University

Date:

Memorandum of Understanding

1. This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was made on the ____ day of _____, 201_.

Between: The Queen's University of Belfast (hereinafter called Queen's) and the XXX University (hereinafter called XXX).

2. The purpose of this MOU is to promote co-operation between Queen's and XXX. The two institutions agree as follows:-

2.1 Each institution will encourage contact and co-operation between their faculty/school and administrative staff, departments and research institutes.

2.2 Within fields that are mutually acceptable, the following general forms of cooperation will be pursued:-

- Visits by and exchange of graduate students for study and research
- Visits by and interchange of staff for research, teaching and discussions
- Exchange of information
- Joint research activities

2.3. Each party understands that any subsequent financial arrangements will have to be negotiated on an activity by activity basis and will depend on the availability of funds. Specific details for the implementation of these activities will be developed mutually for specific projects. This MOU will have, from time to time, annexes attached to it with regard to these specific projects and any financial arrangements negotiated.

2.4. If the MOU remains dormant for three consecutive years it will be deemed to have lapsed. Where the MOU continues to be active, the two institutions agree to review it after five years from the date hereof. A party may terminate it at any time by mutual consent or by six months' notice in writing to the other parties.

SIGNATORIES

Signed on behalf of The Queen's University of Belfast

Pro- Vice-Chancellor

Date

Signed on behalf of the XXX University

Position

Date

[Global Funding \(sharepoint.com\)](https://sharepoint.com)

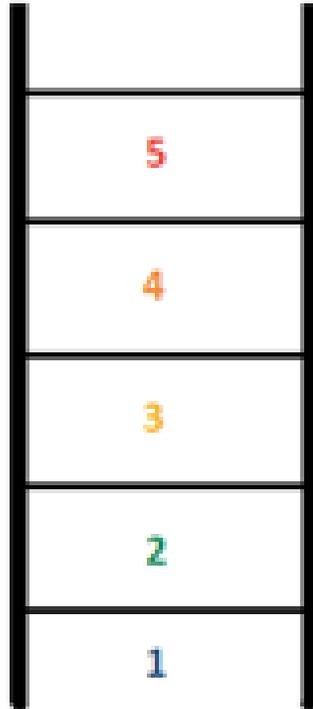


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PARTNERS

QUEEN'S - WITS PARTNERSHIP



- A Agreement in place with some collaborations
- B Some staff/student mobilities undertaken
- C Seed funding provided by both partners
- D Some joint degrees in place
- E A few large-grant applications made

Currently:

- Several Collaboration Agreements established
- Bilateral seed-funding programmes
- Staff and student mobility initiatives
- ~100% increase in co-authored publications

Exploring:

- Targeted pump-priming to catalyze large-scale funding applications
- Extending the partnership to other disciplines



QUEEN'S - WITS PARTNERSHIP

Bi-lateral Seed Funding:

- *Projects in Pharmacy, Public Health, Biological Sciences, Natural and Built Environment, Chemistry & Chemical Engineering and Electronics, Electrical Engineering & Computer Science*
- *Several follow-on grant applications (e.g. NERC, NIH)*
- *Capacity-building for ECRs (e.g. involvement of PDRAs and PGRs in several projects)*
- *Workshops & Conferences (e.g. Symposium on Biocatalysis and Biomass)*
- *Private-sector partners secured (e.g. local NI Pharma company)*
- *Policy Recommendations (e.g. using SMS to promote healthy behaviours in young women)*
- *Multiple co-authored papers and chapters for student thesis and dissertations*

