

Industrial CASE Awards - Feeding the Innovation Pipeline

Industrial CASE Awards play an important role in feeding the innovation pipeline by connecting UK academia with industrially-led research projects. As an agent for the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC), Chemistry Innovation currently manages over 50 Industrial CASE Awards. The technical themes of these projects are linked directly to the innovation priorities of the UK chemistry-using industries and involve PhD and post doctoral researchers from over 35 UK Universities.

Since formation in 2006, Chemistry Innovation has developed an excellent track record for attracting strong Industrial CASE Award proposals from industry (over 50 each year) and for operating a robust and transparent allocation process.

In the past four years (2006-9), Chemistry Innovation has directly allocated 24 Industrial CASE Awards and

EPSRC

Pioneering research
and skills

helped secure an additional 28 projects through the Regional and EPSRC CASE pool competitions.

Key criteria for assessing project proposals include:

- alignment of the scientific and technical challenges of the project to the innovation priorities of the UK chemistry-using industries
- breadth of potential commercial benefit to UK plc
- timescales and degree of technical difficulty
- strength and benefit of the collaboration.

WHAT ARE INDUSTRIAL CASE AWARDS?

Industrial CASE Awards are three and a half year post-graduate awards funded by the UK Research Councils. They are allocated directly by the Research Councils or via agents such as Knowledge Transfer Networks and Regional Development Agencies.

Industrial CASE Awards enable companies with a UK research and/or manufacturing base to take the lead in defining and arranging projects with an academic partner of their choice.

Industrial sponsors pay a minimum contribution of 25% of the total project cost directly to the University (ca. £21,300) with the remainder paid by the EPSRC.



CASE Award Researchers and their Industrial Sponsors at the 2009 Associates Meeting

ENSURING EFFECTIVE KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

Supporting researchers throughout the duration of an Industrial CASE Award project is a key aspect of the management process adopted by Chemistry Innovation.

End of term reviews focus on project outcomes, ensuring that generic knowledge is captured effectively and that opportunities to exploit the developed technology across a broader end-user base are examined fully. Where extended research is required, Chemistry Innovation can provide assistance in sign-posting researchers to other funding sources e.g. Knowledge Transfer Partnership.

In March 2009, over 90 researchers, academics and industrialists involved in CASE Awards and collaborative research projects funded through Chemistry Innovation, met at the University of York for a two-day **Associates' Meeting**.

This bi-annual event provides a unique platform for Associates to share knowledge and experiences on their Industrial CASE Award projects via poster presentations and networking. It also provides valuable training for the Associates on career development, communication skills and the innovation process.