

Innovation Broker

Belong to Something Amazing...

We are looking for highly skilled Innovation Brokers to join our forward-thinking team. In this key role, you will drive collaboration between academia and industry, fostering strategic partnerships that accelerate innovation and contribute to the development of an Advanced Manufacturing Super Cluster. As an Innovation Broker, you will be supporting one of our two live CR&D projects.

About the Projects

The NWCAM2 project revolutionizes the Health and Life Sciences sector by empowering SMEs to adopt advanced, sustainable manufacturing processes and technologies. Addressing the region's shared challenges, it bridges gaps in R&D adoption, technological capacity, and cross-border collaboration. By focusing on additive and digital manufacturing and next-generation materials, NWCAM2 fosters innovation and accelerates the transition to net-zero operations. Its dual approach (combining both three-year deep dive R&I projects and shorter one-year SME-focused implementations) leverages expertise across Northern Ireland and Ireland to drive sustainability, reduce carbon emissions, and enhance SME competitiveness. Delivering 30 groundbreaking projects, the initiative promises transformative impact on productivity, sustainability, and global market presence.

The ONEHEALTH project pioneers a transformative approach of integrating human, animal, and environmental health to address critical public health and agrifood challenges. Through strategic cross-border collaboration across Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, ONEHEALTH leverages AI and data integration to drive innovation, improve health outcomes, and fuelling economic growth. Partnering with the Momentum One Zero City Deal Innovation Centre, the initiative unites SMEs, research institutions, and health and agrifood systems to overcome limited collaboration and scalability issues. Its dual-strand approach combines deep AI research with a fast-paced, engineer led, accelerator programme, delivering groundbreaking solutions and positioning the region as a global leader in 'One Health' innovation.

About Catalyst

We are a non-profit organisation that supports science and technology innovation in Northern Ireland with buildings and hubs in Belfast and Derry/Londonderry where companies can use our flexible workspaces to operate from. We use the profits generated from our property portfolio to deliver entrepreneurial support programmes, facilitate funding, inform policy and accelerate technology-based research and development, by linking with academia and government.

Working at Catalyst

A certified Great Place to Work® and recognised as one of the top 100 Workplaces in the UK for 2024, receiving awards for Best Place to Work, Best Workplace for Development, Best Workplace for Employee Wellbeing, and Best Place to Work for Women, Catalyst is one of Northern Ireland's most exciting employers.

With a strong vision of Opportunity for all from world-leading innovation, this is a workplace brimming with ambition to create social, cultural, and economic advantage. We are a force for good, bold in our approach with integrity at our core and passion in everything we do.

Diversity and Inclusion at Catalyst

Diversity and inclusion aren't boxes to tick on a CSR list. At Catalyst, they are part of our DNA, lived, breathed, seen, and heard across our community, projects, and co-working spaces.

We not only want to foster and empower a culture of innovation, but also an environment where people can be their true, authentic self and thrive, and we are proud to be recognised by the Diversity Charter for achieving silver status, with ambitions to progress to Gold.

As an equal opportunity employer, we recruit based solely on the individual's ability to perform the role, and that's allowed us to create an inclusive workplace which celebrates the diversity of our teams and community.

Key Information

- Full time, fixed term contract for up to 4 years.
- Attractive benefits package – including flexible working options
- Competitive salary between £50,000 - £60,000
- Options to be based in either Belfast or Derry-Londonderry.

Employee Perks

- Competitive Benefits Package including Private medical insurance for you and your dependents
- Generous pension contribution
- Generous life assurance policy
- Enhanced parental leave packages
- Free open access to company organised events
- Free parking on-campus

What are we looking for?

As an Innovation Broker, you'll play a pivotal role in turning collaboration into real-world impact. Working at the crossroads of academia and industry, you'll help transform cutting-edge research into tangible commercial outcomes that strengthen the Health and Life Sciences sector across the island of Ireland.

You'll build trusted relationships, understand the goals of each partner, and create the right environment for innovation to thrive. From supporting the commercialisation of research and intellectual property to shaping partnerships that deliver measurable economic growth, you'll help create an environment that moves ideas from the lab to the marketplace.

We're looking for someone who naturally brings people together. You'll be curious about new ideas, confident navigating both academic and business environments, and motivated by the opportunity to turn knowledge into lasting impact.

Main Goals:

1. Facilitate the commercialisation of academic research and industrial collaboration to achieve measurable regional economic impact.
2. Build and maintain strategic partnerships between academia, industry, and government stakeholders.
3. Drive innovation in key sectors such as Health & Life Sciences, RegTech and Advanced Manufacturing.

Core Responsibilities:

1. Develop and execute strategies for connecting academic research with industrial applications.
2. Work with university stakeholders to support IP commercialisation.
3. Identify and cultivate strategic partnerships with stakeholders across sectors.
4. Ensure research projects align with commercial needs and market demands.
5. Lead negotiations on contracts, partnerships, and collaborative R&I agreements.
6. Support reporting of key performance indicators to funders.
7. Promote the dissemination of research findings to maximize impact.

Daily Tasks:

1. Conduct regular market and sector analyses to identify opportunities for commercialisation.
2. Engage with research staff and industrial partners to plan collaborative projects.
3. Develop innovation roadmaps for companies.
4. Lead or support contract negotiations and manage the documentation process.
5. Build and maintain relationships with stakeholders across academia, industry, and government.
6. Monitor the progress of collaborative projects and troubleshoot challenges.
7. Prepare and present reports on project outcomes and metrics.
8. Coordinate and attend relevant workshops, events, and meetings.

Essential Criteria:

1. Demonstratable experience in commercialisation of innovation including familiarity with intellectual property protection and exploitation.
2. Proven ability to build and sustain partnerships with diverse stakeholders with a particular track record in academia and the private sector.
3. Experience of complex negotiation e.g. contracts with senior stakeholders
4. Familiarity with regional innovation economy.
5. Outstanding networking, analytical, and communication skills.
6. Flexibility to travel regionally

Skills and Qualifications:

- **Skills:**
 - Strong strategic planning and business development skills.
 - Excellent interpersonal and stakeholder management abilities.
 - Proficiency in Microsoft Office and data presentation tools.
- **Desirable Qualifications:**
 - Degree/Post-Graduate Degree in a related field.
 - An established network within relevant industry sectors.
 - Experience in international collaboration.

Special Requirements

- Proof of right to work in the UK
- On occasions to work evenings and weekends
- Full current driving licence

Criteria may be enhanced to aid shortlisting. Exceptional candidates who do not meet the criteria may be considered for the role provided they have the necessary skills and experience