



UNIVERSITY - INDUSTRY COLLABORATION COLLOQUIUM

Season IV

11-12 December, 2024

@ Century City Conference Centre

Overcoming institutional barriers to expand the scope of collaboration

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South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC)



Dr Morne Mostert

Research Director –
Mindset Index

**This conference is an investment,
not an expense!**

EVENT BACKGROUND

University-industry collaboration (UIC) has long been a vital catalyst for technological advancement and economic growth. In recent years, universities have increasingly become hubs of entrepreneurial activity, with many institutions now introducing incubators, accelerators, and innovation labs that help students and faculty transform ideas into startups. Industry partners, particularly large corporations, often serve as mentors, investors, or even acquirers for university spin-offs.

As the world becomes more interconnected, and as the pace of technological change accelerates, UIC is evolving into a more sophisticated and dynamic partnership model. The future of these collaborations promises to bring even deeper integration between academia and industry, fostering innovation ecosystems that can solve some of the most complex global challenges of our time. This will require an increasingly interdisciplinary approach, where experts from multiple academic fields collaborate with industry to tackle problems such as cybersecurity, bioinformatics, and advanced manufacturing.



SYNOPSIS

This season, the conference aims to strengthen the bridge between academic research and industrial application, providing a fertile ground for networking, knowledge exchange, and the development of new collaboration models. Whether you're an academic, industry leader, or policy-maker, the fourth season of the University-Industry Collaboration Colloquium promises to be an enriching experience that will inspire and equip you for the future of collaboration.

Prominent experts from both sectors will explore the future directions and innovations in UIC, focusing on digital transformation, sustainability, entrepreneurship and interdisciplinary research. The role of governments and policy frameworks in unlocking and supporting these avenues for collaborations will also be discussed. Participants will gain insights into how universities and industries can co-create value, drive economic growth, and address societal challenges through collaborative efforts.

This is the region's premier event that offers a unique opportunity for networking, knowledge exchange, and the development of new partnership frameworks that can unlock future opportunities in both academic and industrial settings. Whether you're a researcher, industry professional, entrepreneur, or policy-maker, this conference will provide valuable insights and actionable strategies for harnessing the potential of university-industry collaborations.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- » Emerging trends in collaborative research (AI, Big Data, and Beyond): How university-industry collaborations are leveraging these to push the boundaries of research and development.
- » Principles of sustainability and green innovation: As the world confronts climate change and environmental degradation, sustainability has become a top priority for industries. Universities are at the forefront of research in renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, circular economies, and carbon capture technologies. Industry partners can leverage this research to drive the transition to greener practices.
- » Policy and governance in university-industry collaborations: The role of government policies in facilitating or hindering collaboration, and governance models that ensure mutual benefits.
- » Complexities of managing intellectual property rights in joint research initiatives: Managing IP rights, patent strategies, and legal aspects of university-industry collaborations
- » Investigating various funding models: Public-private partnerships, venture capital, and philanthropic support that drive successful collaborations.
- » Assessing the success of university-industry collaborations: Methods and metrics for evaluating the impact and success of collaborative projects.
- » Harmonizing academic and industry objectives: Aligning the different cultures, goals, and timelines of universities and industries for successful collaboration.

KEY PARTICIPANTS



Universities

Faculty members, researchers, and tech transfer offices looking to commercialize their research or partner with industry.



Industry

Representatives from corporations, startups, and industry associations who are looking for innovative research solutions and collaborative opportunities.



Government

Policymakers and officials from government agencies that support university-industry collaboration through funding, regulations, and policy frameworks.



Entrepreneurs and Startups

Individuals seeking to turn academic research into commercial ventures.



Investors

Venture capitalists, angel investors, and other financiers interested in funding research-driven innovation and commercialization.

PRELIMINARY AGENDA

DAY 1: WEDNESDAY, 11 DECEMBER

07: 30 – 08: 30

Registration & Morning Mingle

08: 30 – 08: 35

Chairperson's Opening Remarks

08: 35 – 09: 15

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Developing an Optimal Value Proposition for all Parties

The goal is to create a collaborative platform that maximizes benefits for universities, industries, and other stakeholders, including students and government agencies. Here's a step-by-step guide on how to achieve this:

Identifying common goals and aligning interests

- Defining clear roles and responsibilities to reflect each party's strengths while allowing for fluid collaboration where expertise overlap
- Creating a well-defined governance framework to manage decision-making, resource allocation, intellectual property (IP) agreements, and conflict resolution
- Creating a flexible IP framework that outlines ownership, licensing, and commercialization rights for each party
- Leveraging funding and incentives

09: 15 – 10: 00

Significance of IP Policies in Fostering University-Industry Collaborations

IP policies play a pivotal role in aligning the goals of universities and industry. They help to manage critical aspects related to expectations, protect the interests of both parties, and ensure that the results of academic research are efficiently translated into commercial products and services that benefit society.

Without clear IP policies, collaboration can be hindered by uncertainties over ownership, usage, and financial rewards. This topic will look at the following:

- Clarifying ownership rights
- Flow of knowledge from academic research to commercial applications
- Facilitating licensing and commercialization
- Balancing academic freedom with commercial interests
- Mitigating legal risks

10: 00 – 10: 30

Coffee/Tea Break

10: 30 – 11: 30

FIRESIDE CHAT

The world wants to regulate AI, but hasn't quite figured out how: Can countries guard against the risks of AI without stifling innovation?

As the world seek to regulate artificial intelligence, a unified approach remains elusive. Countries struggle to align on what aspects of AI should be regulated, how enforcement should occur, and who should oversee these processes. The fragmented global landscape poses significant challenges, as nations face competitive pressure to develop optimal regulatory frameworks. Is AI a collaborator or competitor in creative industries? What should be the key policy priorities for governments as AI adoption accelerates? What would an ideal regulatory framework look like to maximize AI's potential while ensuring responsible governance?

Panellists will examine these critical questions, offering insights into possible pathways for responsible AI governance.

CONTINUE.....

11: 30 – 12: 15**Pursuing Equitable Funding for Global Research Partnerships: Insights from Global South Perspectives**

- Understanding funding disparities between the global North and South, and their implications for equitable partnerships
- Limited access to resources, bureaucratic hurdles, and other challenges to international collaboration
- Foundational elements of equitable funding, including transparency, inclusivity, and fair distribution of resources
- Addressing power imbalances in research partnerships.

12: 15 – 13: 15**Networking Lunch****13: 15 – 14: 15****Developing Adaptive Pathways for Geopolitical Instability, Economic Volatility, Social Transformation and other Unpredictable Events**

Industry-academia collaborations are influenced by changing circumstances, while contracts have a tendency to be rigid. In today's rapidly shifting global landscape, traditional models of university-industry collaboration are under pressure. Developing adaptive pathways is crucial for ensuring that these partnerships remain resilient and responsive in the face of uncertainties. This session will explore strategies for building flexible, future-proof collaborations between universities and industries. Key discussions will focus on creating governance models that allow for quick adaptation, diversifying funding streams, leveraging digital infrastructure for remote and virtual collaboration, and aligning research and innovation with evolving societal and industry needs. Participants will gain insights into how to create partnerships that can withstand and thrive in an uncertain world, ensuring value creation for all stakeholders involved.

14: 15 – 15: 00**Using Publicly Available Information to Shape New Collaborations**

- Identifying opportunities through open data
- Mapping stakeholders and potential collaborators
- Leveraging publicly available research for cross-sector collaborations
- Real world case studies in collaboration formation
- Ethical considerations, transparency, and navigating the potential limitations
- Enhancing visibility for future collaborations

15: 00 – 15: 15**Mid-Afternoon Break****15: 15 – 16: 00****The Role of Big Data and Analytics in Driving Tech Transfer Decisions**

- Identifying market-ready innovations, with high commercialization potential
- Identifying gaps and overlaps in patent landscapes
- Matching innovations with industry needs
- Improving licensing and valuation decisions
- Risk management and forecasting
- Optimizing Resource Allocation

16: 00 – 16: 15**Reflections from First Day Takeaways & Chairperson's Closing Remarks**

CONTINUE.....

DAY 2: THURSDAY, 12 DECEMBER

07: 30 – 08: 30

Registration & Morning Mingle

08: 30 – 08: 35

Chairperson's Opening Remarks and First Day Recap

08: 35 – 09: 15

Using PhD & Apprenticeship Programmes to Drive Industry/Academic Engagement

This session will offer valuable insights for academic leaders, industry professionals, and policymakers on how to effectively use PhD and apprenticeship programs to deepen collaboration, address industry challenges, and build a workforce ready to meet future needs. The discussion will cover:

- PhD programs as catalysts for innovation
- Apprenticeships as talent pipelines that meet industry demands
- Focusing on the win-win nature of these partnerships, where academia benefits from access to industry insights, funding, and data, while companies gain early access to talent and the latest academic research
- Funding models and knowledge transfer
- Success stories and future directions

09: 15 – 10: 00

Boilerplate agreements: Are they useful?

Boilerplate agreements, or standardized contracts with pre-set terms are particularly common in collaborations, licensing, and other business transactions. While they are useful for routine, straightforward transactions, offering speed, efficiency, and consistency, they also lack flexibility and have potential for imbalance that make them less suitable for complex or high-stakes agreements.

To maximize their benefits, it's essential to periodically review and update these agreements and tailor them where necessary to meet the specific needs of the parties involved. Ideally, legal counsel should still review even boilerplate contracts to ensure that they fit the circumstances of each transaction. This session will provide a comprehensive analysis of the practical benefits and potential risk of boilerplate agreements, offering insights into when and how they are most effective.

10: 00 – 10: 30

Coffee/Tea Break

10: 30 – 11: 15

Patent Trolling and Defensive Patenting

This practice has garnered significant controversy, as it is often seen as exploiting the patent system for financial gain without contributing to technological advancement. While it can be seen as a protective measure, it may also stifle innovation by creating large patent portfolios that discourage smaller players from entering the market or pursuing new developments. This session will explore ethical dilemmas, examining the fine line between legitimate patent enforcement and exploitation of the system. It will also discuss potential legal reforms and alternative solutions to ensure that the patent system promotes innovation, fairness, and technological progress.

CONTINUE.....

11: 15 – 12: 00

Working with Funding Organisations to Leverage Science and Science Funding

Funding organisations often have specific strategic priorities, whether related to global challenges like climate change, public health, or technological innovation. They come in many forms: government agencies, non-profits, corporate entities, and venture capital firms - all of which have different expectations, timelines, and reporting requirements. This session will explore how researchers and institutions can align their projects with the goals of these organizations to increase the likelihood of securing grants and financial support.

12: 00 – 12: 30

Surviving Hyper-Growth: Scaling Strategies for Startups without Losing Culture

- Establishing core values early
- Hiring for cultural fit and alignment
- Creating a scalable onboarding process
- Maintaining open communication channels
- Decentralising decision-making

12: 30 – 13: 30

Networking Lunch

13: 30 – 14: 30

MINI-WORKSHOP

Continuous Personal Reinvention for a Fast-Moving, Innovation-Infused World

This intervention is designed to empower individuals to adapt, grow, and thrive amidst constant change by embracing personal reinvention as a lifelong strategy.

Through a combination of interactive exercises, self-assessment tools, and actionable insights, participants will explore how to cultivate a mindset of flexibility and resilience. The workshop covers key strategies for aligning personal and professional growth with the latest industry trends, technological shifts, and evolving market needs.

14: 30 – 15: 00

Collaborative Innovation Ecosystems: Building Strong University-Industry Innovation Hubs

Innovation hubs created through university-industry collaboration are emerging as vital engines of technological advancement and economic growth. These collaborative ecosystems bring together the strengths of academia—cutting-edge research, talent, and creativity—and the resources, market knowledge, and practical application capabilities of industry. This session explores the strategies and best practices for establishing and nurturing strong university-industry innovation hubs. It focuses on how universities and businesses can co-create environments that foster open innovation, knowledge exchange, and commercialization.

15: 00 – 15: 15

Mid-Afternoon Break

15: 15 – 16: 00

The Future of Work: Co-Developing Skills for Emerging Industries through University-Industry Collaboration

- Anticipating the skillsets required for fast-evolving sectors
- Curriculum co-creation
- Developing internship programs, apprenticeships, and co-op placements
- Reskilling and upskilling programs
- Building soft skills for the future of work

16: 00 – 16: 15

Chairperson's Closing Remarks



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Signature:

By completing & signing this form, the authorizing signatory accepts the terms and conditions as stated on the registration form

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ATENDEE INFORMATION

Titel	First Name	Surname	Designation	E-mail	Mobile

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