Adopting Responsible Innovation to Accelerate Your Route to Impact

Case study - From research to innovation, the Nebuflow™ story

EPSRC Impact Acceleration Account 2020-2022

University of Glasgow

IAA Strategic Aim

To increase the global impact of the University through greater levels of external engagement and entrepreneurship

- Deliver this by building on previous IAA investments, and a focus on 4 core objectives:
    - Networking & Relationship Building
    - Funding Mechanisms
    - People Support
    - Training

- Funding awarded - £1.13m

Spotlight on engaging with stakeholders

- A stakeholder is a key individual or a group who is/are impacted by the project and/or are critical to the project's success.

- Engaging externally with a wide variety of stakeholders is key to putting responsible innovation into practice.

- You may already know of and interact with stakeholders within your research networks. However, if you are looking to expand your network or to move into new areas, you will need to identify stakeholders.

- The short introductory video highlights the innovation ecosystem as a good starting point. Reaching out to individuals within this space, for example, individuals in the innovation centres may help you establish connections.

- We have also outlined three case studies of colleagues within the University who have used IAA funding to help them interact with stakeholders.

- The Impact Acceleration Account team and individuals within Research and Innovation Services at the University are also a great resource and should be at the top of your list!

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Nebuflow

The following section features an interview with **Elijah Nazzarzedeh,** a researcher and entrepreneur at the University of Glasgow, giving his account of engagement that helped him develop his Nebuflow product to go from research to an innovative product.

https://nebuflow.com
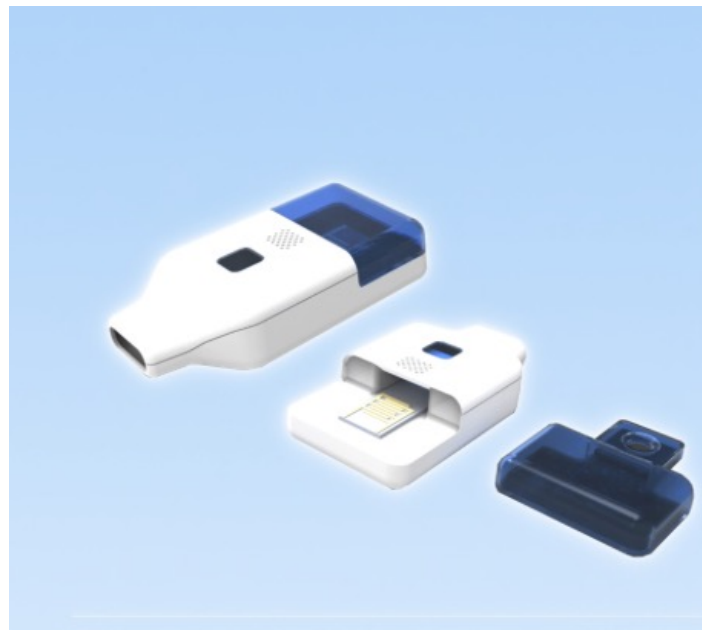
Describe how your research transitioned from the lab to an external product, and how you decided on the final application? As I remember you said there were at one stage, multiple applications on the table?

- We were aware of the need for better control on aerosol droplet size in various fields such as mass spectrometry and respiratory drug delivery. Therefore, I started my market research with an open mind and looked at a wide range of potential applications such as thin film deposition, spray drying and pesticide delivery, to name a few. I also looked at other applications that can have lower barrier to entry.

- I analysed my data from different aspects such as the user need, industry traction and market value/price. In many of these applications, I could not find good traction from industry. Also, for some other ones, e.g. in the fast-moving consumer goods, the market is very competitive with low price tags. These can be very challenging for a new technology.

- Considering various parameters and the interests from industry, we concluded that respiratory drug delivery is the best application. However, I am still monitoring other opportunities and interests.

We were also very interested in your story of stakeholder engagement. How you went about this, and how you found the correct people, to support your commercial journey and the shaping of your product?

- I started by reaching out to people in the field including university researchers, clinicians, nurses and market experts. I did lots of searches to find these people, sent emails or contacted them through LinkedIn. I also tried to find the events that these people are attending ranging from trade exhibitions to very specialised conferences for clinicians and training events for nurses. In addition, I made contact with communities such as charities and union/societies for clinicians/nurses to ask for contacts/introductions.

- It wasn't always straightforward. I could have sent out emails and LinkedIn invitations for days without a single reply or meet people in exhibitions who don't like to talk. However, there were many helpful people who either directed me towards or made introductions to other people and other companies.

- I also I met people who could talk for hours about the issues they have, and that was a real measure for the need (and pain) of different people in the supply chain. In short I can say it could be very frustrating at times but you can usually find very helpful people.

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References

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