



Oxford-Cambridge  
**SUPERCLUSTER**

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Please reply to: Dr Andy Williams  
Chair, Oxford-Cambridge Supercluster Board  
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Date: 23/07/2024

Rt Hon Sir Keir Starmer MP  
Prime Minister  
10 Downing Street  
London SW1A 2AA

Dear Prime Minister

## KICKSTARTING KNOWLEDGE INTENSIVE ECONOMIC GROWTH

Congratulations on the mandate that the country has given your new Government. We know that the Knowledge Intensive sectors are ready to help deliver your economic goals, aided by significant global and UK private capital that wants to be invested alongside these industries. We are writing to you as the Oxford-Cambridge Supercluster Board, leading businesses, universities, and global scientific enterprises, to outline our key policy recommendations and present an analysis of the economic prize available through our strategy to support Britain's internationally competitive, knowledge-intensive sectors.

Our Board's policy priorities are geared towards unlocking the region's true potential to become a global scientific Supercluster, which can support the discovery and adoption of innovation right across the UK.

Our analysis indicates that the Oxford-Cambridge region, boasting an unmatched density of research, scientific talent and global enterprise, currently contributes approximately 7% of UK GDP. However, the constrained scale of the cluster presents a significant hurdle to greater productivity gains. We believe that with the right reforms, the UK can cultivate the champions of advanced industry and capitalise on its scientific expertise on the world stage.

It is first essential to join Oxford, Cambridge, and the places in between with East West Rail (EWR), as that is the only way to create the critical mass necessary for the region, and the UK, to compete globally. Specifically, the Oxford-Cambridge region has the potential to add an additional £50bn per year to the economy by 2030 (equivalent to around 2.5% of additional GDP), with further growth possible if the benefits of EWR and local rail projects are fully accomplished. This includes several stalled projects where significant private capital would be unlocked. Unlocking growth in this region will bring extensive, direct, and spillover effects across the whole country and provide a model to drive cluster growth within other regions.

## Policy Recommendations to Unleash Science and Technology-led Economic Growth

To achieve this, we propose six critical policy areas designed to attract, retain, grow, and cultivate British companies with transformational capacity on UK growth, jobs, productivity and global reach. These policies are:

1. Make the Oxford-Cambridge region the 'crown jewel' of European science and innovation.
2. Accelerate the delivery of lab space through the introduction of an 'innovation' use class.
3. Allocate each regionally and nationally significant infrastructure project its own independently supervised taskforce.

4. Improve R&D incentives and permit permanent top-up tax relief for new-to-market R&D.
5. Broaden training in R&D-intensive industries through the early introduction of a Growth and Skills Levy.
6. Work with universities to support spinouts, and with industry to ensure start-ups have access to the finance they need to grow.

I attach full details of these recommendations for your further consideration.

### An Active Industry Partner to Government

The Supercluster Board is proud to celebrate Britain's world-class knowledge and intellectual curiosity and is ready to collaborate with Government to realise the immense potential of the Oxford-Cambridge region, and the broader UK scientific ecosystem. Our ambition is to bring our innovations to the world and create economic and social prosperity for everyone across the country.

We would be delighted to discuss these recommendations and our analysis further and welcome the opportunity to engage with your Ministers as they develop plans to deliver the national missions you have set out.

We are copying this letter to your Cabinet colleagues in Treasury, Cabinet Office, DSIT, DBT, MHCLG, and DFT.

Yours sincerely



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Chair  
Oxford-Cambridge Supercluster Board



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Senior Vice-President, Discovery Sciences  
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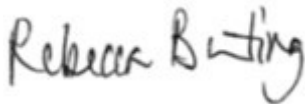
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Buckinghamshire New University



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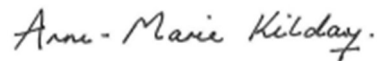
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University of Bedfordshire



Professor Roderick Watkins  
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Chief Executive  
Railpen



Professor Anne-Marie Kilday  
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University of Northampton



Artem Korolev  
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Mission Street



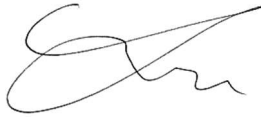
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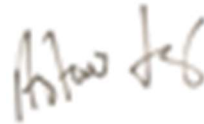
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Dr Tim Moonen  
Co-Founder and Managing Director  
The Business of Cities



Nick Pettit  
Senior Partner  
Bidwells



Dr Mairi Gibbs  
CEO  
Oxford University Innovation

Cc

The Rt Hon Rachel Reeves MP, Chancellor of the Exchequer;  
The Rt Hon Angela Rayner MP, Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government;  
The Rt Hon Pat McFadden MP, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster;  
The Rt Hon Jonathan Reynolds MP, Secretary of State for Business and Trade;  
The Rt Hon Peter Kyle MP, Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology;  
The Rt Hon Louise Haigh MP, Secretary of State for Transport

## About our Signatories

### **Oxford-Cambridge Supercluster Board**

The Supercluster Board is a group of more than 45 leading scientific enterprises, internationally recognised universities and global investors. It is dedicated to harnessing the immense potential of the Oxford-Cambridge Supercluster to accelerate the UK's journey towards becoming a science and technology superpower.

### **AstraZeneca**

AstraZeneca is a global, science-led biopharmaceutical company that focuses on the discovery, development, and commercialisation of prescription medicines used by millions of patients worldwide. With a proud 100-year heritage in advancing UK science, today AstraZeneca is based in five locations across the UK, with its global headquarters in Cambridge.

### **University of Oxford**

University of Oxford has been ranked first in the Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings since - a record eight consecutive years. The University of Oxford contributes around £15.7 billion to the UK economy and supports more than 28,000 full time jobs.

### **University of Cambridge**

Established in 1209, the University of Cambridge is the fourth-oldest university in the world and ranks in the top five of The Times' world university rankings. With a global reputation for innovation the University of Cambridge has been the birthplace for 23 businesses valued at more than \$1bn.

### **Professor Sir John Bell GBE CH**

Professor Sir John Bell GBE CH is President of the Ellison Institute Oxford and Regius Professor of Medicine at University of Oxford. In 2011 he was appointed UK Life Sciences Champion, in 2015 he was appointed Knight Grand Cross of the British Empire (GBE) and Companion of Honour (CH) in 2023 for services to medicine, the life science industry and public health. He authored the UK Life Sciences Industrial Strategy and played a leading role in the UK's vaccine taskforce.

### **Airbus**

Airbus is a leader in designing, manufacturing and delivering aerospace products, services and solutions to customers on a worldwide scale. With around 150,000 employees and as the largest aeronautics and space company in Europe and a worldwide leader, Airbus is at the forefront of the aviation industry.

### **Legal & General**

Legal & General is a leading UK financial services group and major global investor. Legal & General is one of the world's largest asset managers and has £1.159 trillion assets under management.

### **GSK**

GSK is a global biopharma company with a purpose to unite science, technology and talent to get ahead of disease. Operating in more than 75 countries and employing 70,000 people worldwide. GSK has one of its global R&D centres in the UK and invested £6.2bn in R&D in 2023, with vaccine and medicine sales in the same year exceeding £30bn

### **AVEVA**

AVEVA is a global leader in industrial software, sparking ingenuity to drive responsible use of the world's resources. The company's secure industrial cloud platform and applications enable businesses to harness the power of their information and improve collaboration with customers, suppliers and partners.

**Darktrace**

Founded in 2013, Darktrace is a global leader in cybersecurity AI, delivering complete AI-powered solutions in its mission to free the world of cyber disruption. Its 2200+ employees protect 9000+ customers from the world's most complex threats, including ransomware, cloud, and SaaS attacks.

**Abcam**

Abcam is a ~£360m revenue global life science company, that supports its customers at the forefront of life science research. Part of the \$187bn market cap Danaher Corp its innovative products are used by hundreds of thousands of scientists worldwide.

**Oxford Properties (OMERS)**

Oxford Properties Group manages nearly \$83.6 billion of assets totalling 160 million square feet across four continents. Oxford was established in 1960 and is owned by OMERS, the Canadian pension plan for Ontario's municipal employees with \$128bn in net assets.

**Cambridge University Health Partners**

Cambridge University Health Partners (CUHP) mission is to improve patient healthcare by bringing together the NHS, industry and academia. Operating at the heart of Europe's leading life sciences cluster, Cambridge Biomedical Campus, where over 20,000 clinicians, academics and researchers work.

**Advanced Research Clusters (ARC)**

ARC is a science, innovation and technology platform with a 1.6 million sq ft portfolio and 7 million sq ft of development potential across the Golden Triangle. ARC was created by Brookfield, a leading global asset manager with over \$690 billion AUM, including over \$250 billion of real estate assets.

**Harwell Science and Innovation Campus**

The Harwell Science and Innovation Campus is a 700-acre science and technology campus in Oxfordshire. Over 6,000 people work at Harwell in over 240 public and private sector organisations, across sectors including Space, Clean Energy, Life Sciences and Quantum Computing.

**British Land**

British Land is a leading UK property company with £13bn of assets under management. British Land is the leading owner of campuses in the UK and is increasingly focussed on delivering new space for customers in high growth science and technology sectors in London and across the Golden Triangle.

**Oxford University Innovation (OUI)**

Oxford University Innovation is a technology transfer and consultancy company created to manage the research and development of University of Oxford spin-outs. Oxford University Innovation has assisted in the formation of more than 70 University spin-out companies, generating over £2 billion in unquoted and quoted market valuations for the University of Oxford.

**OXA**

Oxa is a global leader in autonomous vehicle software for businesses, developing software for self-driving vehicles. Having raised £115m in a Series C round in 2023 that included investment from Google, the company has now launched its first commercial offering.

**Oxford Science Enterprises (OSE)**

Oxford Science Enterprises is an independent, billion-pound investment company, created in 2015 to found, fund and build transformational businesses via its unique partnership with the University of Oxford, the world's no.1 research university

### **Cambridge Innovation Capital**

Cambridge Innovation Capital (CIC) is a leading venture investor backing and building category-leading deep tech and life sciences companies. CIC currently manages in excess of £0.5 billion and has invested in around 40 companies. CIC is a preferred investor for the University of Cambridge, Europe's top source of founders for venture-backed start-ups.

### **Oxford University Development (OUD)**

Oxford University Development (OUD) is a joint venture partnership bringing together the University of Oxford with the investment and development management skills of Legal & General as part of a £4bn partnership to create a blueprint for future cities.

### **Biomed Realty (Blackstone Group)**

A Blackstone Real Estate portfolio company, is a leading provider of real estate solutions to the life science and technology industries. Part of the \$168bn market cap Blackstone Inc, the world's largest alternative asset manager.

### **Brockton Everlast**

Founded in 2006, Brockton Everlast have invested into and / or developed over 20 million sq ft of properties that total over £7.0bn of assets. Since 2018, Brockton Everlast has focused on investing into Life Science real estate in Cambridge, Oxford and London.

### **Pioneer Group**

Pioneer Group creates innovation ecosystems at science and technology properties. Providing the environments in which businesses are more likely to succeed. Integrating start-up and scale-up venture development programmes, VC investment and real-estate Pioneer Group has a curated portfolio of 30+ investments in early-stage companies.

### **Bit.bio**

bit.bio is a synthetic biology company providing human cells for research, drug discovery and cell therapy. Its core technology reprograms human induced pluripotent stem cells into highly defined and mature human cell types with scalability and consistency. The company was spun out of the University of Cambridge by founder and CEO Dr Mark Kotter in 2016 and has since raised \$200m.

### **Kadans Science Partner**

Kadans Science Partner is a European market leader in the life science and knowledge intensive real estate sector, with a portfolio of over 27 campuses across the UK and Europe. Kadans is part of a £500m JV with Canary Wharf Group to create Europe's largest commercial lab building.

### **Oxford Brookes University**

Oxford Brookes University is one of the UK's leading modern universities and enjoys an international reputation for teaching excellence and innovation as well as strong links with business and industry. Brookes is ranked as one of the top ten universities in the South East of England.

### **Cranfield University**

As a specialist postgraduate university, Cranfield's world-class expertise, large-scale facilities and unrivalled industry partnerships are creating leaders in technology and management globally. Cranfield has more the 5000 postgraduate students from more than 100+ countries

### **Buckinghamshire New University**

Originally established as a School of Science and Art in 1891, Buckinghamshire New University has been transforming lives for 130 years. The university has around 9000 students from over 100 countries.



### **Anglia Ruskin University (ARU)**

ARU is an innovative global university with students from 185 countries, It was named Times Higher Education University of the Year 2023 and is one of the top ten UK universities for education, social work and sports science courses in the Guardian League Table 2023.

### **University of Bedfordshire**

The University of Bedfordshire is an internationally recognised and award-winning institution with a heritage going back more than 100 years. Its student population is made up of around 20,000 students from around 115 countries.

### **University of Northampton (UON)**

UON is one of the youngest universities in the UK but is already leading the way in adding value to society through social impact. UON was placed in the top 100 in the 2024 Times Higher Education Impact Rankings for reducing inequality, supporting students and improving sustainability.

### **Railpen**

Railpen is one of the UK's largest and longest established pension funds with 500,000 members, with its largest client being the Railways Pension Scheme. Railpen manages about £34 billion in fund assets, including property assets for the science and technology sector within the OxCam region.

### **Silverstone Technology Cluster**

The Silverstone Technology Cluster (STC) is a cluster of 150 businesses in the Advanced Engineering, Electronics and Software sectors. STC focuses on business growth and helping businesses to scale up; while also raising the profile of STC members at a national and international level.

### **Cambridge Ahead**

Cambridge Ahead brings together 51 of Cambridge's most influential business and academic institutions, representing a workforce of over 40,000 people. Through evidence and analysis Cambridge Ahead advocates for sustainable and inclusive growth that improves quality of life across the region.

### **Mission Street**

Mission Street is a market-leading Science and Innovation platform. The current portfolio comprises over 1.5 million sq ft in key strategic locations within Oxford, Cambridge and Bristol. Mission Street was founded in 2017 as an independent investor, developer and operator of innovation real estate.

### **OBN (UK) Ltd**

OBN is the not-for-profit Membership organisation supporting and bringing together the UK's life sciences companies, corporate partners and investors. It has a network of c.500 member companies, located across the Golden Triangle and beyond.

### **Advanced Oxford**

Advanced Oxford brings together 38 of Oxfordshire's major knowledge-intensive businesses and institutions to support the long-term development of the Oxford region as a dynamic and prosperous place to work and live. Members include Oxford Nanopore, Oxbotica and Oxford Science Enterprises.

### **England's Economic Heartland**

England's Economic Heartland is the sub-national transport body for the region stretching from Swindon across to Cambridgeshire and from Northamptonshire down to Hertfordshire. It advises the government on the transport infrastructure to realise the region's economic potential and deliver net zero.

### **One Nucleus**

One Nucleus is a not-for-profit Life Sciences & Healthcare membership organisation headquartered in Cambridge. It supports more than 470 institutions, companies and individuals in the Life Sciences sector providing local, UK-wide and international connectivity.

### **Arc Universities Group**

The Arc Universities Group (AUG) represents nine universities across the Arc, including Oxford and Cambridge. The AUG universities play a major role in national innovation and the Arc's scientific clusters, delivering £13bn to the UK economy and generating 17% of all UK university spinout companies.

### **Oxford to Cambridge Pan-Regional Partnership (OCP)**

The OCP represents 26 local authorities, covering 5 county areas and one combined authority and representing a combined 3.8million residents. The OCP is formed of leaders from local government, business boards, universities and government.

### **Bidwells**

Bidwells has operated in the Oxford-Cambridge region for more than 185 years and has advised the region's science and technology sector since the 1970s when it created Cambridge Science Park for Trinity College. In 2021 Bidwells was involved in 83% of all OxCam life sciences investment deals.

### **The Business of Cities**

The Business of Cities is focused on equipping cities and companies with the urban intelligence they need to innovate, compete and succeed. Working with global institutions it provides thought leadership, chairing, advice and analysis. Engaging in more than 200 cities in 50 countries over the last 15 years.