

# You need QMU!



Queen Margaret University is working in partnership with small business. So how exactly can they help your business?

QMU has a range of academic expertise to help small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) overcome barriers to growth and survival and to realise business opportunities. Our experienced business development team provides a link between academics and SMEs. We understand the environment in which smaller companies are operating and can provide access to grants which can fund strategic developments.

With key strengths in the areas of food, drink and tourism, QMU is well equipped to provide specialist support to companies working within these industries. The University is able to harness its expertise in key areas of business to provide SMEs with access to academic know-how, intellectual property and well as outstanding facilities such as laboratories and clinics for scientific testing.

Food and drink is one particular area of expertise. Already a number of food producers have benefited from QMU's scientific and nutritional knowledge. For example, we have provided Belhaven Fruit Farm in East Lothian with valuable nutritional information which has played a pivotal role in the on-going promotion of its innovative and healthy 'IceDelight' iced dessert.

Another excellent example of a recent innovation project saw the collaboration of the well-known Scottish food manufacturer, Macsween of Edinburgh with QMU. Macsween which

produces haggis for the retail, wholesale and food service sector, required assistance with the development of a range of premium quality 'one minute' convenience meat products. As specialists in food and drink and with expertise in nutritional science and consumer issues, QMU provided a good fit with Macsween.

The company had significant expertise in food manufacture as well as knowledge of the convenience food market sector, but, for this project, it required external specialists to conduct a series of consumer testing trials. This provided them with vital feedback on areas such as taste and texture, as well as information which would help them develop packing design including ease of use, cooking method; product size and price.

Fiona Bathgate, Quality Manager at Macsween of Edinburgh, confirmed: "The collaboration with QMU worked very well. The University's involvement in the consumer testing of our new microwave Black Pudding was beneficial in the success of this product."

Sheena Devlin, Innovation Manager at QMU, explained: "Often small businesses have great ideas for how they can develop their businesses and are very innovative but require specialist areas of support to validate their product ideas. QMU's academic experts can dedicate time, attention and new skills to resolve problems and help develop new ideas and pathways. Importantly, advice is also available to companies on the availability of new funding streams which can support project development."

She continued: "The exchange of knowledge between businesses and academics is a win-win situation. It allows businesses to access specialist academic knowledge and skills as well as University business support managers. In turn, academics are

kept abreast of developments in modern business which they can then feed into their teaching practice ensuring that students gain industry relevant knowledge.”

Sheena said: “We know that QMU has many graduates working in Scotland and beyond who might be unaware that the University offers this type of business support. We are eager to re-connect with graduates who are now working in connected industries and help them develop their businesses.”

QMU’s engagement with SMEs is delivered through a Knowledge Exchange partnership involving Edinburgh Napier and St Andrews Universities. This initiative is supported by the Scottish Government’s SEEKIT Programme, the European Regional Development Fund and by the three partner universities.

Whether you are a QMU graduate hoping to develop your business, or a general member of the Scottish business community, QMU would like to talk to you about your business development needs. For an informal chat call Sheena Devlin on T: 0131 474 0000 or E: [sdevlin@qmu.ac.uk](mailto:sdevlin@qmu.ac.uk)