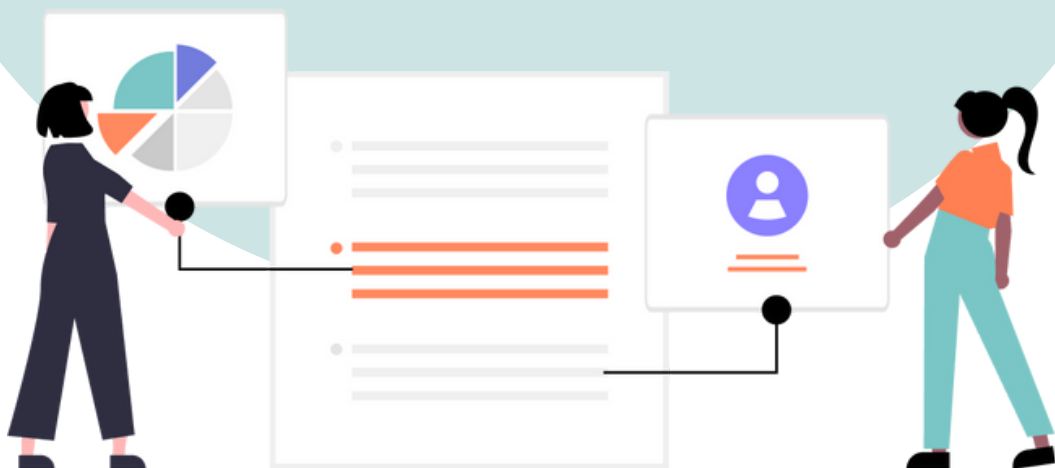




# ANNUAL REVIEW

2022/2023



## Introduction

As the newest member of Interface, I am delighted to share this update on our activities to date. In the past year, we have been working towards businesses having the right support at the right time to innovate and grow their operations. A key part in our ability to anticipate and facilitate this access to academic expertise is our broad remit, focus on local relationships and establishing strong business systems.



While we have highlighted our progress in key areas below, I was keen to emphasise our recent implementation of the Interface partner portal, where I have been really encouraged by our recent efforts to date in digitalising this service. The Interface partner portal was implemented to improve the Innovation Voucher application process, to make it quicker and easier for all applicants to apply online for an Innovation Voucher and to track its progress. The digitalisation of the process has many benefits; bespoke links can be created and shared with other contributors, the application can be accessed at any time, and importantly it enables speedy approval processes.

For me personally, it is an exciting time to have joined Interface. We are committed to our role as a broad based resource in support of the work the Scottish Funding Council is driving in Scotland's innovation ecosystem. In the past year we have seen the launch of several Scottish Government strategies and reviews which set out recommendations and actions across key themes for the economy, innovation, skills and entrepreneurship. For the many of us playing a role, these recent reports outline an ambition and blueprint for us all to work towards.

For the Interface team these reports are timely, as we as an organisation have been reflecting on how we can innovate and meaningfully impact at scale, and play a role in creating a more collaborative Scottish innovation ecosystem. The team, with our many stakeholders, has been working hard towards identifying how we will deliver against a refreshed set of strategic goals. Importantly, as we reflect on our activity and strategic priorities for Interface in the coming year, we remain committed to creating inclusion and access. We are excited about our ambition, and we look forward to working with many of you.

We are delighted to highlight our progress from our year in bringing together Scotland's academic and business communities to deliver economic, environmental, and social prosperity for Scotland.

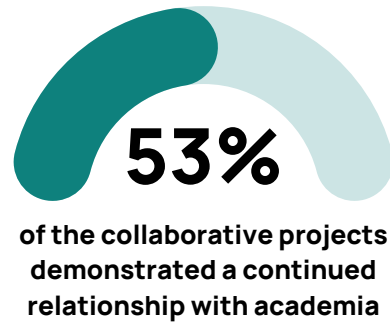
**Amelia Whitelaw, Interface Director**

# Making Connections

Our Scotland wide team is focussed on establishing and maintaining strong relationships with the business community, funding agencies, business support organisations and colleagues in our universities, colleges and research institutes.

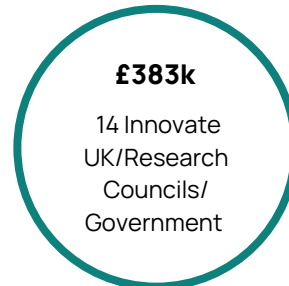
This year we enabled 313 projects between businesses and Scottish universities, colleges, and research institutes. These businesses were located in:

- Aberdeenshire & Tayside – 20%
- Edinburgh & Lothians – 23%
- Forth Valley & Fife – 5%
- Glasgow and Clyde Valley – 17%
- Highlands and Islands – 18%
- South of Scotland – 11%
- Outside Scotland (UK and International) – 6%



Collectively, these projects create positive impact as they have the potential to create new products, processes and services; increase turnover, profits, productivity and exports; and safeguard and create new jobs. In addition, 87% of the collaborative projects also demonstrated positive impacts against responsible business themes of environmental sustainability, social inclusion, equality and diversity.

Some of these projects went on to secure further funding opportunities including:



## Partnerships



Over the past five years we have provided project support to [InGAME](#), a world class research and development centre for the video game industry, and their collaborative Research and Development Voucher Scheme. The evaluation work carried out by Interface included much of the key data for the recent Economic Impact Report. The centre is expected to generate an estimated £84.7m gross value added (GVA) for the UK economy in 2023-2032, with £55.3m GVA and 115 jobs generated in Tay Cities Region.

We are a partner in a consortium, led by Abertay University and involving the University of Edinburgh, 4J Studios, and TechScaler by Codebase for UKRI's Convergent Screen Technologies and performance in Realtime (CoSTAR) programme. The £7.5m programme is being co-funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), Screen Scotland and Scottish Enterprise, to host one of four new labs specialising in the future of virtual production that will revolutionise the UK's film, TV and performing arts industries.

We continued to support colleagues from university, college, research institute and ecosystem partners, in our collective ambition to improve and scale knowledge exchange and innovation in Scotland. Members of our team attended 148 events and were invited to present or exhibit at 44 events including the [PraxisAuril](#) annual conference where we shared our experience and learnings of "student knowledge exchange", an emerging element in the knowledge exchange sector.

We delivered webinars with partners across Scotland including Social Enterprise Scotland, Community Enterprise in Scotland (CEIS), Scottish Enterprise, KE Concordat, Universities UK, CENSIS, Perth & Kinross Council and the Universities of Strathclyde, Queen Margaret, Edinburgh and the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, with a focus on visitor management in tourism, reducing carbon emissions, support for social enterprises and commercialising research opportunities.

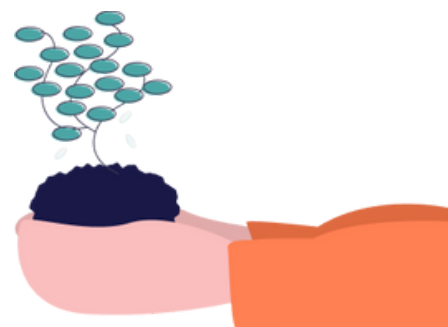
## Funding Programmes



In the past year we broadened the role that we played in identifying and securing funding opportunities for academic and business collaborations. Through our relationships with Scottish Government, Scotland Food & Drink and Food and Drink Federation (FDF) Scotland, we delivered two additional funding programmes with a combined value of £160,000. These funding programmes were developed in support of industry and national strategies including the Scottish Inward Investment Plan and Scottish Food and Drink Recovery Plan.

We continue to manage and deliver the Innovation Voucher programme on behalf of the Scottish Funding Council to enable organisations, universities and colleges to fund research and development projects.

A total of 123 Innovation Vouchers were awarded with a value of over £670,000. In addition, Scottish Enterprise funded 11 Advanced Innovation Vouchers worth over £120,000 to build sustained relationships between businesses and academia.



# Celebrating Success

**100%**  
of companies reported  
they were either extremely  
satisfied or satisfied with  
the level of support  
received from Interface.

We were delighted to host the annual [Scottish Knowledge Exchange Awards](#) in the City of Discovery, Dundee. Seven universities and 48 organisations celebrated wins across eight awards categories.

The awards were sponsored by Salix Finance (headline sponsor) and category sponsors were HGF Ltd, Community Enterprise in Scotland (CEIS), Zero Waste Scotland, PraxisAuril and SCI Group. The highlights video of the Awards can be found [here](#).



Videos of the individual shortlisted entries can be found [here](#).

We continue to demonstrate the impacts and benefits of what we do through our portfolio of case studies, developed with our business and academic partners, covering all sectors, regions and academic disciplines. Uncover our full range of case studies [here](#).

