

Mind the Gap: Case Studies in Social Innovation from the University of Cambridge

A vibrant collage background. In the center, a woman with dark hair is looking through a magnifying glass. To her left is a glowing lightbulb. Below the lightbulb is a stylized atom symbol. In the bottom left corner is a microscope. Behind the woman is a large, classical building with many windows. To the right of the woman is a stylized rocket ship. The background is composed of various colored shapes and patterns.

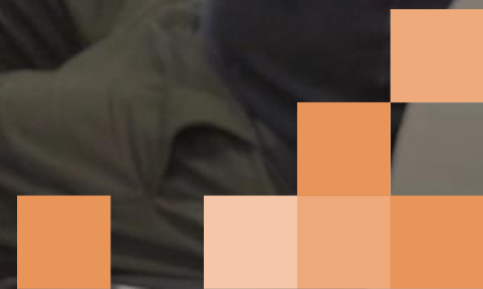
Dr Emma Salgård Cunha

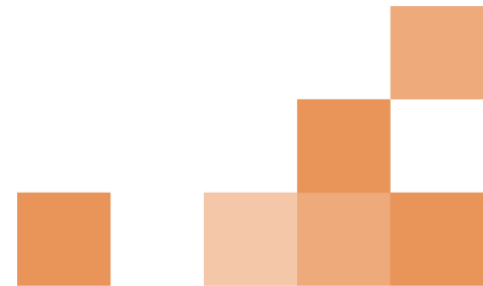
Commercialisation Manager, Arts Humanities and Social Sciences

University of Cambridge Enterprise



Cambridge Enterprise exists to help the university's innovators, experts and entrepreneurs make their ideas more commercially successful for the benefit of society, the economy, the individual and the University.

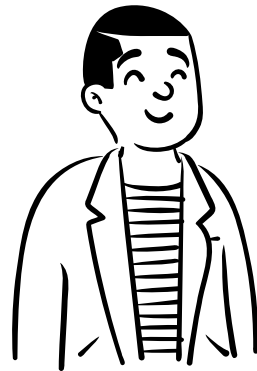






Research commercialisation is a powerful way to enhance and sustain research impact.

UK Research and Innovation
Economic and Social Research Council Impact Toolkit



'...an effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, beyond academia'

Research England, REF 2023



What is research commercialisation (and why do it)?



Commercialisation turns ideas, discoveries, inventions, expertise and know-how into products and services that have **impact**.

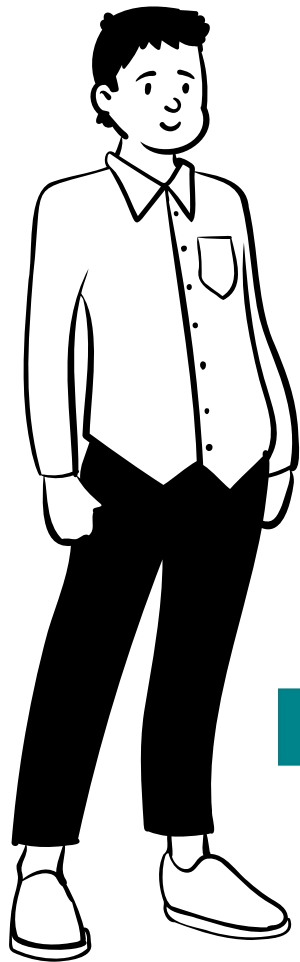
Research dissemination
and public engagement
at scale

Solution-focused, application-focused,
beneficiary-focused knowledge transfer

Financial sustainability for
high-impact projects
beyond grant funding

Entrepreneurial
and outward-facing
approach
to research impact

Working with **non-
academic partners**
to create real-world
products and
services



Education, publication, licensing

Policy influence,
advocacy, advice

Community engagement, arts, media

Developing a commercial product

People

Knowledge

Society

Economy







**Research
tools and
methods**



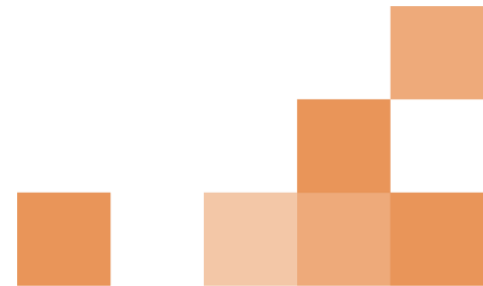
**Content and
design**

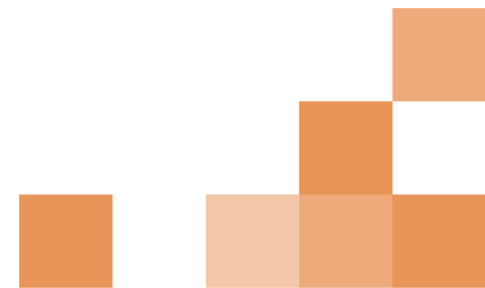
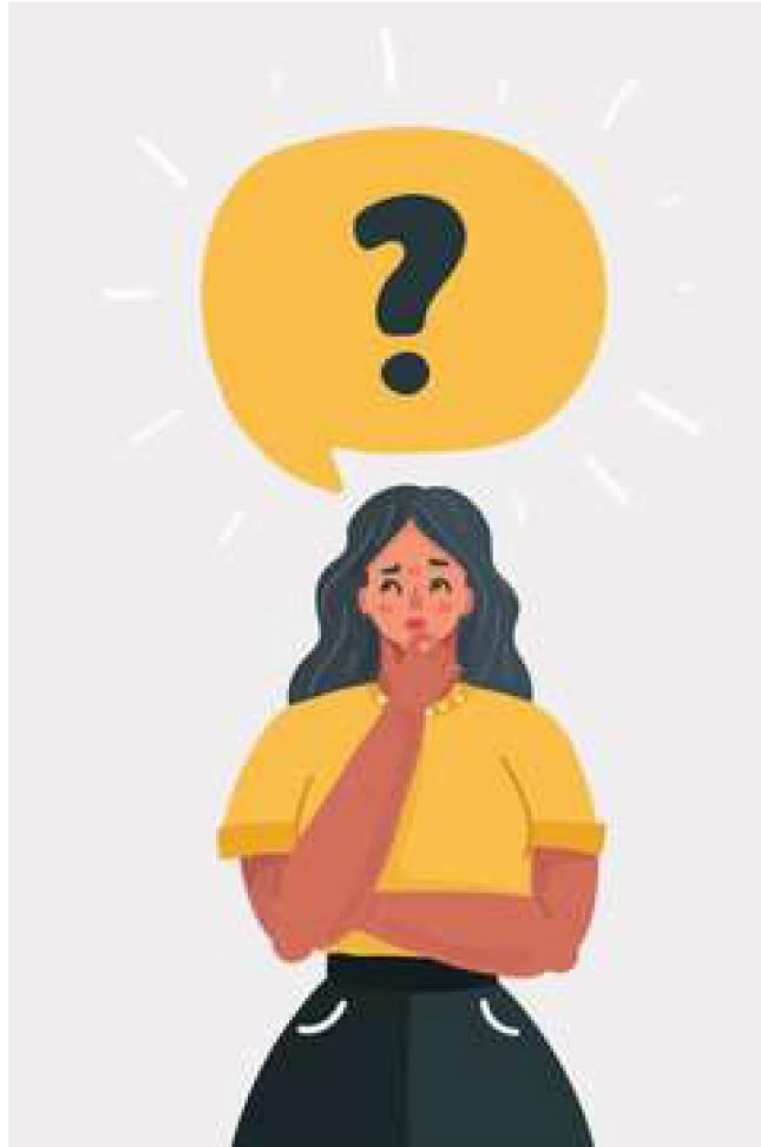


**Software
AI/ML**



**Social
interventions**





Language?

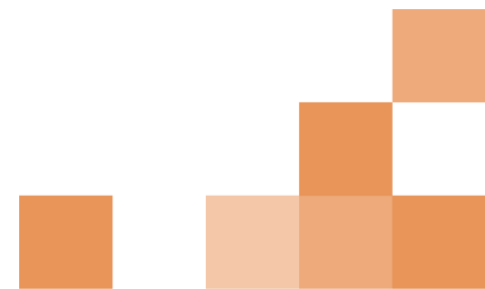
Our skills?

Raising
hopes?

Tech transfer
processes?

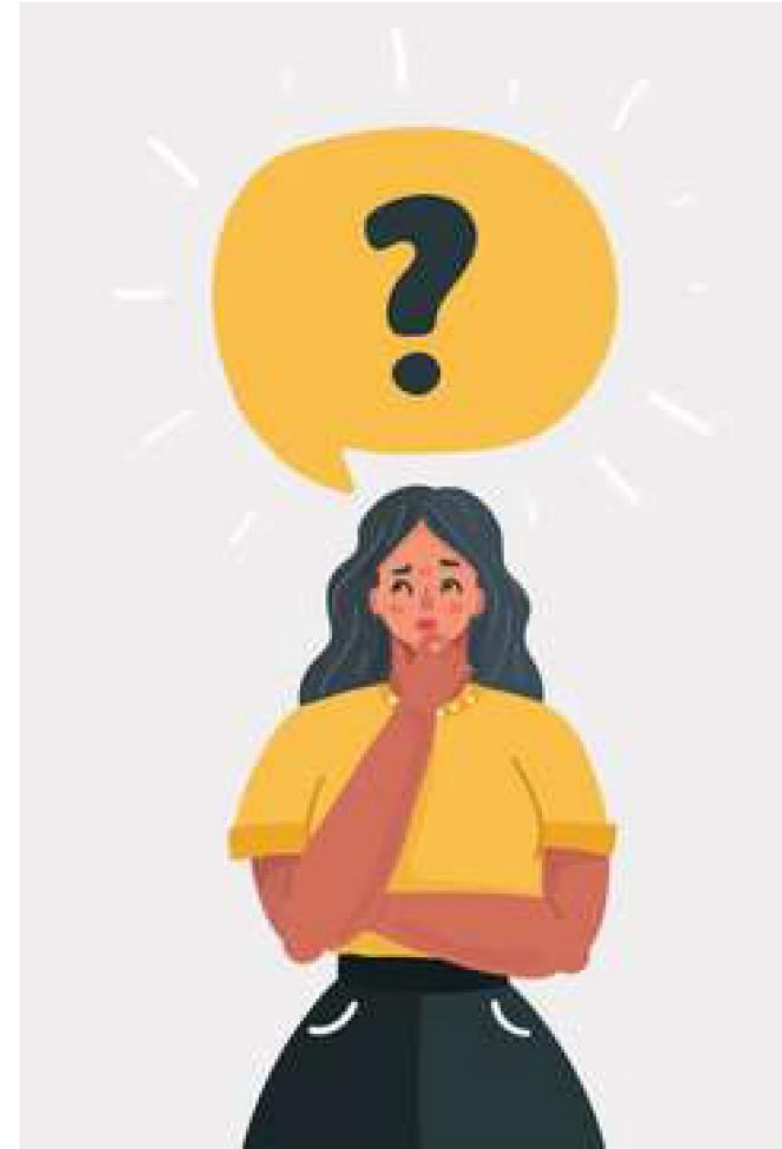
Misconceptions?

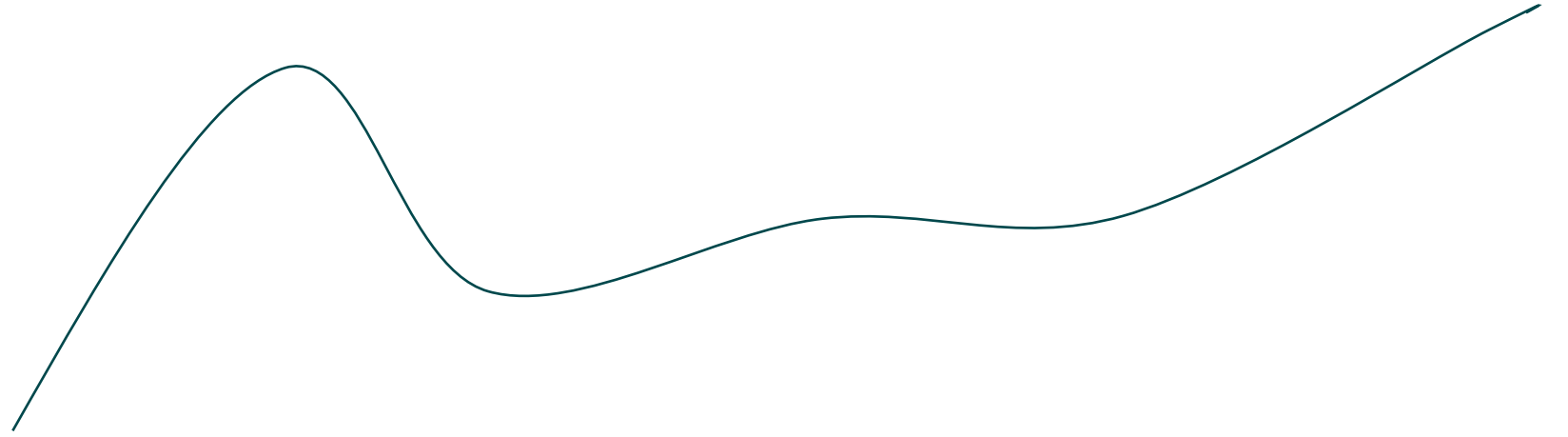
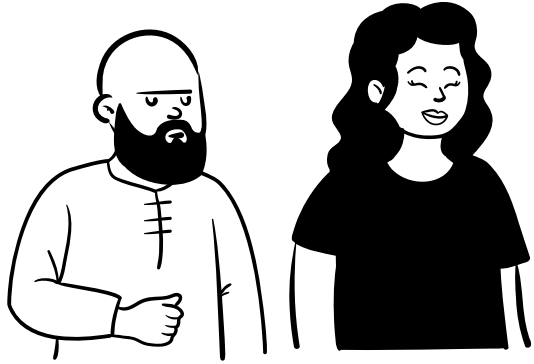
Networks?



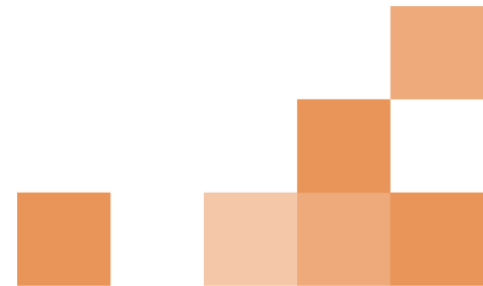
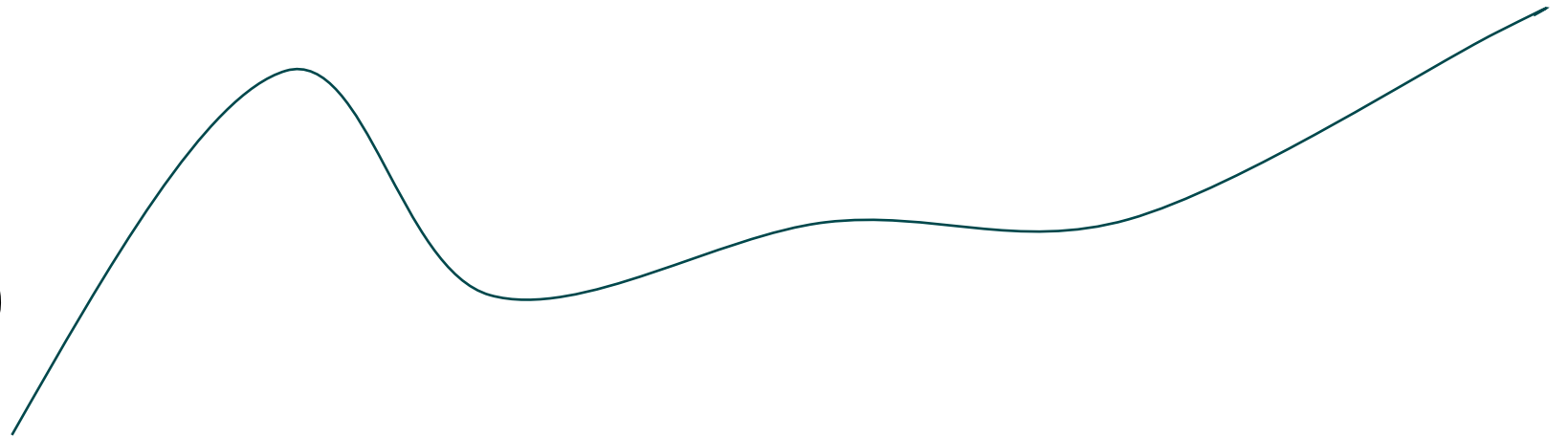
Getting started

- **Building relationships with departments and researchers**
- **Understanding the links between public engagement, policy impact, community based projects, co-creation and commercialisation**
- **Gaining capacity and skills to support AHSS at Cambridge Enterprise**





Engagement



Steady state?

- **Building relationships with departments and researchers**
- **Understanding the links between public engagement, policy impact, community based projects, co-creation and commercialisation**
- **Gaining capacity and skills to support AHSS at Cambridge Enterprise**

One new commercialisation project disclosed to us per week

Additionally, c. 40 AHSS consultancies per year

Portfolio of around 60 projects, 30 at mature stage

"The market research we had to do for the competition helped us accelerate our start-up tremendously. We were also put in contact with the most amazing mentor: a very experienced industry veteran who helped with business strategy, long term funding advice, and even client relations. The connections we made with Cambridge Enterprise will take us beyond what we have achieved in the competition alone."

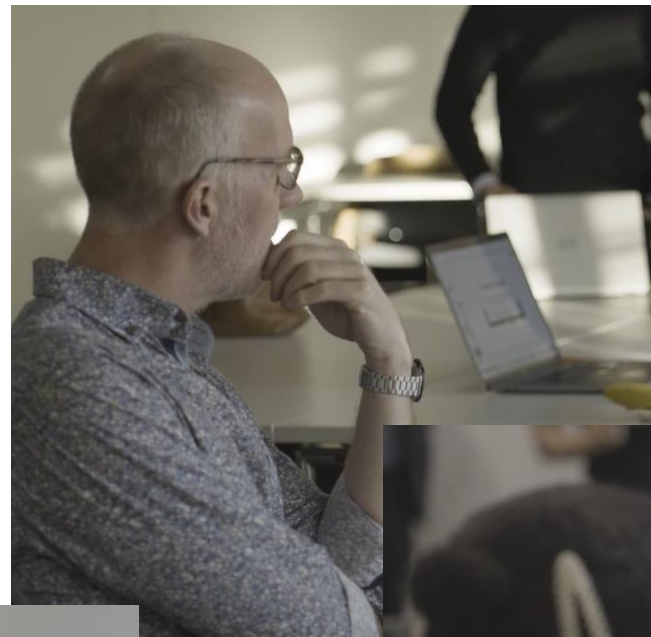
Simon Baker
Versed AI
Postdoc Business Plan Competition Winner 2019





'safe space'

*'structural
networking'*



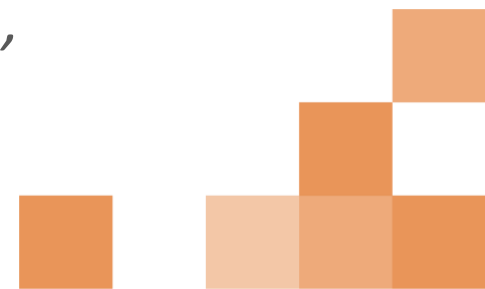
*'felt like far more
than mentoring'.*



*'a change in
perspective
programme'*



'serendipitous moments'





- Creative Cambridge

- ImpactU

- Software and Data 101

- GOCIA



Thank you!

Stay in touch
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