

1. Collaborative R&D and Growth Funding Competition

The 'Collaborative R&D and Growth Funding Competition' will reopen in the Spring of 2024. This competition will see a significant sum invested in innovation projects with a focus on improving productivity and sustainability in advanced, high value dairy production.



Innovate UK, part of UK Research and Innovation, will work with the Digital Dairy Chain to invest up in projects, within the region of Cumbria, South and West Scotland, with a focus on one or more of the following:

- Novel and high value products from dairy systems
- Decarbonising dairy production and manufacturing
- Waste minimisation and resource recirculation
- Reduced environmental impact and increased sustainability, for example biodiversity, soil, air and water quality
- Sensor development and digitisation to improve productivity, welfare of staff and animals and product quality, including nutritional characteristics
- Value addition in the dairy supply chain

Your project activities can solve challenges at any point in the dairy value chain, including dairy farming, milk transport and logistics, as well as processing of milk and manufacture of other dairy products. Your project should demonstrate a realistic potential to support business growth, scale-up and job creation in Cumbria, South and West Scotland.

Your project must:

- Be collaborative and business led
- Have a total grant funding request between £50,000 and £350,000
- Last between 6 and 24 months
- Carry out a significant proportion of its project work in South and West Scotland or Cumbria
- Intend to exploit the results in South and West Scotland or Cumbria

Collaborations with Digital Dairy Chain research organisations (SRUC, University of the West of Scotland, University of Strathclyde, CENSIS) are encouraged to help further develop and translate research towards commercially relevant impact and wider societal outcomes.

For more information, please contact stuart.martin@sruc.ac.uk



2. Innovation Vouchers

Innovation Brokers are here to work alongside any business involved in the dairy supply chain to understand your challenges and to help you find or develop the right solutions.

Funding exists through Innovation Vouchers which encourage partnerships between a business or start-up and a university for an innovation project. Projects must be a novel/pioneering idea and lead to new products, processes, or services that will benefit the sector.

What is the value of the Innovation Vouchers?

The innovation voucher will cover up to 50% of the total project cost. A grant of up to £10,000 (covers the academic project costs and is paid directly to the university) provided the business contributes at least an equal value in cash or in-kind (such as staff time, materials or equipment) or a combination of both.

Who is eligible?

All SMEs, social enterprises/third sector organisations and sole traders with main business operations in South and West Scotland or Cumbria.

For more information, please contact ddc-innovations@strath.ac.uk

3. The Milk Round Technology Accelerator

This initiative supports individuals and SMEs with technology ideas that could improve efficiency in the dairy sector, reduce its environmental impact or help it to meet net zero targets. The programme offers hands-on technical, engineering and business support to help develop your concept and fast-track it to demonstration and testing.



Participants will receive a tailored support package that includes:

- ✓ Up to 15 days hands-on technical and engineering support.
- ✓ Mentorship.
- ✓ Carbon emissions impacts assessment.
- ✓ Access to user insights, research facilities and expertise.
- ✓ Introductions to partners to help support your business as it grows.
- ✓ Opportunity to test and demonstrate your innovation in a commercial setting.
- ✓ Follow-on investment advice to help bring your innovation to market.
- ✓ A budget of up to £10k to procure components and/or access third party design services and products.

For more information, please contact rachael.wakefield@censis.org.uk



4. Product Development Facilities

The 'Maker Spaces' in Cumbria and Ayrshire will give producers of dairy products and dairy-based food and drink the chance to develop new products or move from small-scale 'kitchen creations' into commercially viable production, with mentorship and training opportunities.

Participants will receive:

- ✓ Free access to bespoke NPD facilities in Cumbria and Ayrshire for SME's
- ✓ Mentorship from industry experts to produce new products or develop existing recipes
- ✓ Troubleshooting support for quality & production
- ✓ Signposting to collaborations with other suppliers/ producers/ retailers
- ✓ "Hands on" approach to training from traditional cheese making methods to modern automated processes

For more information, please contact Anthony.hobson@sruc.ac.uk