

A Collaborative Project with Business (CPB), also known as a Consultancy Project, is a great opportunity to develop what you've gained from your studies into a 'real world' setting. It is also an important step in your career development. This leaflet provides some hints and tips for sourcing your own project with business.

Finding a Project, Where to Look

There are many avenues you can explore to find your own project.

- Speak to academic staff, they may have contacts in organisations or know individuals who have offered projects in the past, or who might consider this.
- The Careers Service may be able to suggest organisations to approach.
- Don't forget your own contacts; speak to family, friends and fellow students.
- Utilise contacts from previous employment.
- Find relevant events to attend through industry bodies, Chamber of Commerce, Scottish Enterprise etc.
- Use social media e.g. create a LinkedIn profile and join relevant groups.

Marketing Yourself

The Careers and Employability Service will be able to provide you with support on a number of topics, including:

- Making applications (CV's, covering letters, application forms, LinkedIn)
- Career development planning
- Recruitment procedures, including practice interviews

Please book an appointment via www.stir.ac.uk/careers/student.



Making a Professional Approach

First impressions count! Make sure your approach to organisations is professional.

- Research the organisation and what is current within the sector.
- Have some clear ideas for potential projects; ensure this is aligned with the company activities.
- Find out who would be best to speak to within the organisation, a speculative application addressed to a specific individual is much more likely to be read and is easier for you to follow up.
- Tailor each application.
- Follow up on your initial contact, show them you are genuine and keen.
- Before attending events, research who will be there and decide what you want to get out of it.



Students network with staff and external organisations to explore Collaborative Projects with Business at the University of Stirling.

Top Tips – Meeting Academic Requirements:

A CPB needs to meet the requirements of all stakeholders. Be aware that these may be different from each perspective – yours, the external organisations and the academic supervisors. It is therefore essential that you scope your project in detail and that everyone agrees on their roles and responsibilities – a Project Agreement form has been developed to help you with this.

Ensure **you understand** the learning outcomes and academic requirements - talk to your Programme Director to ensure the CPB will meet these and that this is an acceptable form of project. Make sure the organisation is aware of your academic requirements and learning outcomes and that the project must be completed within specific deadlines.

“One of the reasons for deciding to progress with a masters at the University of Stirling was not only the strong reputation of the course, but also the opportunity to carry out a collaborative project with business. This offers vital experience often missing from similar courses, giving graduates a competitive edge and increasing employability.”

Katrina Shiells, MSc Environmental Management

Setting Expectations

- Ensure the company understands all of their roles and responsibilities. Use the MMM Project Agreement
- Ensure that you understand all the outcomes required by the organisation.
- Arrange a meeting with the organisation and your academic supervisor early in the process (well before the project starts).
- Regular meetings between all parties are beneficial
- Ensure the company will provide an induction & an area to work in if your CPB is being hosted by them.
- Know what is the best way and times to contact the organisation supervisor.
- Ask about:
 - confidentiality and non-disclosure
 - expenses
 - health and safety

Checklist

Once you've secured a project, use this checklist as a reminder of what needs to be done before you start.

- Has the organisation appointed a project supervisor?
- Has the academic supervisor engaged with the organisation and approved your project?
- Have all parties agreed on deadlines and project outcomes?
- Has the Project Agreement been completed?

" Many external organisations are keen to develop projects with students. Time is precious, so make every second count, be proactive, professional and confident"

Dr Eunice Atkins
MMM Project Coordinator

The University of Stirling was a founder member of Making the Most of Masters, funded by the Scottish Funding Council. The MMM process and toolkit is now used by many Universities in Scotland and beyond.



For further information on Making the Most of Masters, resources and case studies of previous projects, please visit

www.stir.ac.uk/mmm/



Sourcing a Collaborative (Consultancy) Project

A Quick Guide for Students

